

All College Development Meeting  
**PANDEMIC SUCCESSES AND POST PANDEMIC REALITIES**  
**WE WILL FORGE AHEAD TOGETHER**

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President/CEO  
May 7, 2021

Good-morning PTC, I am so pleased to have an opportunity to speak with you.

It is my hope that by the end of today's program, that you will be better informed, engaged and even prouder of the great work happening at PTC.

I would like to thank Dr. Peggy Betlyn, the Chair of our Board for joining this session, as well.

I am pleased to report that the overall state of our college is good, and in many cases, we are outperforming similar institutions during this unprecedented time in higher education.

If projections hold true, and we continue the work that we have started and execute to our plan, PTC will be poised for strong rebound growth, by the Jan 2022 Quarter. But there is much work to do and each of us must do our part, because each of us makes a difference. It is through our collective effort that we will achieve the success that we desire.

Now is not a moment for complacency, and it is not the time to be misinformed or uninformed about our path forward and the role that you can play to help us get there.

We are both fortunate and grateful to be on sound financial footing as a result of various dollars, acquired from local, state, and federal sources. These dedicated dollars must be used for very specific purposes as dictated by the funders.

We must therefore, use this time wisely to secure our position post-COVID-19, when these funds are no longer available.

PTC is focused on re-opening the College as quickly and as safely as possible. The most effective way to do so, at this time, is to encourage members of our community to get vaccinated against COVID-19, as a means of protecting each other.

PTC has coordinated with the Pennsylvania Health Department to offer both testing and vaccination clinics onsite. For more information please reach out to Terry Ducsay, the Dean of Nursing and Health Professions and our Return to Campus COVID-19 Administrator. Terry thank you so much for your continued hard work in this area.

We must also execute innovative strategies to effectively rebound from our current revenue losses, due to the pandemic, in enrollment, housing, and other auxiliary funds. It is only after we have adequately rebounded, can we once again implement well-earned performance increases.

One way that we can each help is to take an active role in recruiting and retaining students. When I am out, I often share information about the college and encourage follow-up. Please share your ideas and strategies. Each of us can serve as a college Ambassador by telling others about the PTC Magic.

I often tell my leadership team that we are all experiencing the pandemic together, but we may not be experiencing it in the same way. So, I encourage you to take care of yourselves and to check on each other. We are the PTC Magic, whether on campus or at home, and our resilience, will enable us to forge ahead!

I want to first thank each of you for your commitment to your optimism, hard-work, and certainly your willingness to pivot as we implemented major changes in response to the Pandemic and as we reimagine PTC.

Join me in recognizing our essential employees in Police and Security, Campus Facilities, the Mailroom and Bookstore—all of whom tirelessly stepped up during this period. Please give them a big PTC 123-Wow!

It is hard to believe that it has been more than one year since going remote and almost two years since my arrival at PTC and in such a short time, we have experienced so much together. PTC continues to achieve against the odds and to move forward, without hesitation. No matter the difficulty we face, we know that together we can accomplish miracles.

Keith Merlino sums it up beautifully when he says, “there are more than 5,000 universities and colleges across the nation, and we all struggle with the same problems, but what makes PTC so special is that we are kind while we struggle”. I actually think Keith is right – uniquely contained within the DNA of PTC is an awareness that collegial and collective effort are critical to our success.

The greatest example of this is the work of the Strategic Planning Teams that led to our five-year strategic plan, a plan that unites our College around clear priorities and directions so that we can navigate the future! This document represents the metric by which each of us and our college will be measured. I want to acknowledge the monumental work of the more than seventy-five members of our community that led and served on these teams and struggled together to define our future.

Our path forward will be determined by our ability to expand access to education and training to larger populations of students; enable greater success and retention, as we prepare students with skills of the future, for jobs of the future; to align our curriculum with workforce demands to ensure that PTC remains relevant in competitive markets; elevate public and private partnerships to secure new funding to expand our infrastructure and capacity; to enhance financial sustainability and stewardship by continuing to evolve our business and financial model; and to promote a culture of excellence and accountability that will distinguish our institution.

Our Strategic Plan frames the future of Pittsburgh Technical College, and makes it possible for the best to come.

The best can only come if we stay the course, if we continue to plan and execute, if we work together, if we look for solutions, if we remain optimistic, if we focus on the outcomes that come from continuous improvement, and follow our north star, which is our strategic plan.

Our optimism should be reaffirmed daily as we witness the amazing things that PTC has accomplished during one of the most challenging periods in American Higher Education. The College Administration is committed to new levels of creativity, innovation and forward thinking and looks forward to working with you to discuss big ideas that will make a difference in the longevity of our college and the success of our students.

Another key planning team that is ushering forward big ideas is the exploratory committee tasked with studying the feasibility of Pittsburgh Technical College converting from a Quarter to a Semester System. This report is now being discussed at both the Cabinet and Board level and although a final determination has not been made, this team has generated critical discussion through their thoughtful analysis.

I would like to formally thank them for their work on this critical task.

- DR. TRACIE BRADY
- SAMANTHA BYCURA
- JESSICA COOPER
- ELIZABETH DEVITA
- CHEF NORMAN HART
- DAVID HERTZ
- TIM SAMOLIS
- JANE SNYDER
- DR. JOHN SCARPINO
- DR. MELISSA A. WERTZ
- DR. ADAM VRABEL
- DR. EILEEN STEFFAN

Throughout the 2020-21 Fiscal Year, I am pleased to report to the college community that PTC received 18 grants to support a new level of television advertising to promote our virtual open houses, increase overall community awareness, and to help drive enrollment. Special thanks to Marketing and Communications and the team that made this opportunity possible.

The Office of Institutional Development and many dedicated PTC faculty, staff and administrators have enabled a new level of capacity and institutional resources through three high coveted National Science Foundation Grants,

A special thank you to:

- NSF-ISMI Grant Team: Brian Maitland, Mark Malecki, Lauren Zito
- NSF-S-STEM Grant Team: Dennis McNeill, Dave Becker, Lee Cottrell, Nancy Feather, Dr. John Scarpino
- NSF-CERP Grant Team: Michael Russell, Michael Hodder, Wilfred Mutale, Dr. John Scarpino

And the more than 30 other individuals from Education, Career Services, Administration, Marketing, Human Resources, Finance and Accounting, IT, and Management who all played an important role in the solicitation and implementation of these grants. Thank you.

There are so many great things happening at PTC. I encourage you to read your college messages to stay up-to-date on all institutional operations and decision-making. This is even more important during this period of remote work.

No matter the challenges that come our way, PTC will forge ahead together, of this I am confident.

There is still much to be do and PTC can do it! We started our transformation prior to the Pandemic and we will see it through, because of each of you!

COVID-19 has forced colleges and educational institutions to reexamine everything they do and how they do it. This has been true for us as well, because PTC understands that Colleges that do not

plan, innovate and transform will simply not survive. Many of our nation's colleges have been forced to close their doors permanently. We are grateful that this is not our reality and is a result of a great deal of hard-work from each of us.

I am proud to say that PTC Forges Ahead. In Pennsylvania, 14 PA state universities have projected losses of \$70 million to \$100 million this spring semester, conceding that they will require a “dramatically” accelerated plan for reform.

PTC Forges Ahead. The Pittsburgh (Pa.) school district unveiled its latest plans to build two new schools, *while permanently closing seven others*, as part of a modernization plan, that also includes closing six district buildings as well as multiple relocations.

PTC Forges Ahead. PTC is coming through the Pandemic as a stronger more resilient institution because of our commitment and ability to seize hope with brilliance and passion. PTC will not only survive, but we will thrive because we are collectively courageous even through this unknown season. PTC is collectively grateful for this unique opportunity to forge ahead together. As we continue to build our bridge together, while crossing it – yes, I am confident of our ability to be successful.

When I arrived in July 2019, I asked you for three things: to **dream** with me; to not only **trust** me, but to trust each other; and **engage** with me to develop a plan for the future. We are a stronger more resilient college today because so many of you were willing to dream, trust and engage.

We have many things for which to be grateful and to celebrate as we continue our path forward.

- PTC is successfully changing from the unsustainable financial model with a sole dependency on student enrollment that existed when I arrived.
- Our new model includes strategies for innovative revenue generation, like our Corporate College, and with the support of our Board, PTC has expanded its investment strategy and will

be refinancing its debt to provide the college greater flexibility for growth.

- I want to acknowledge the work of my Cabinet, and thank them for their commitment to innovation and change.
- Special thank you to VP Jay Clayton and the talented finance team for skillfully positioning PTC to successfully compete for funding and developing measures for tracking and reporting.
- Connie VanCamp and her team, without complaint, have stepped up to handle, in addition to their daily operations, the heavy load associated with the administration requirements of \$20MM in CARES funds secured in the past year.
- Jill Bittell, PTC's AVP of Student Financial Services and her amazing team for demonstrating transformational impact in process improvements.
- And Peggy Henderson and Bill Showers for the implementation of the New Paymerang accounts payable system and many automated efficiencies over the past year that have saved the college thousands of dollars.
- PTC will be opening a new Health and Wellness Center in July and hiring its first full-time college counseling as a part of implementing a comprehensive model for student support.
  - We have expanded our engagement with several Foundations. The Citrone 33 Foundation recently committed \$75,000 a year. over the next three years. to support a new Director of Counseling Position to lead and develop programs and initiatives focused on Student Health and Wellness and is providing resources for four years for the JED Campus Mental Health Systems for our students.
  - Our partners at The Highmark Foundation will also be providing funding for a Part-Time COVID-19 Compliance Officer.

Please join me in recognizing the many faculty and staff, who have been on the front lines bringing these opportunities to PTC. **(When you hear your name please turn on your video so that we can see you and thank you for your hard-work. )**

- I recognize Brenda Psotka and Julie Throckmorton for tireless efforts to build capacity.
- Mark Malecki, thank you so much for all that you do to support PTC! You are simply amazing.
- Dr. John Scarpino, Dr. Dennis McNeil, and Mike Russell, thank you so much for your leadership.
- I also want to acknowledge Michael Russell, Lee Cottrell, Michael Hodder and Wilfred Mutale, who are leading our forward movement within the NSF Grant's for S-STEM and ATE CERP.
- A big thank you to Brian Maitland. David Becker, Nancy Feather, Eileen Steffan and Wilford Mutale for their leadership of these important projects.
- I am pleased to also report that the Remake Learning Network and the Columbia Gas Foundation have also invested in Educational Outreach and STEM learning for PTC students, and want to acknowledge Dana Schultz for her good work on these initiatives.
- PTC students will also now benefit from a fresh produce Student Food Pantry through the generosity of the PNC Bank Foundation, and we thank Chef Hart and Mark Bellemare for their great work.
- Congratulations also to Sunjay Bali, PTC's Executive Director of Corporate College – a self-sustaining operation designed to attract new funding through Workforce Training and Development – on securing his first training contract in less than ninety-days of his arrival, with another two pending.



You should also be aware of the many upgrades and new strategic partnerships that are emerging to support our financial sustainability.

- PTC has launched an innovative interstate partnership and articulation with The Power52 Foundation in Baltimore, Maryland, to create academic pathways to PTC's Electronics, Engineering and Trades Programs. A big thank you to Dr. John Scarpino for facilitating the development of this articulation.
- I would also like to acknowledge the excellent work of Dr. Melissa Wertz, in helping to launch and orchestrate the Presidential Event Series first national webinar, "Reimagining the Future of Higher Education," attended by more than 160 individuals representing over 90 institutions.

### **Departmental Shout Outs**

I asked members from the college leadership teams to send me individuals to be considered for the Unsung Hero recognitions during today's address and it was clear to me that every department needed a shout out under our current circumstances. So, join me in giving each a rousing PTC 123 Wow!

The complete list of all individuals being recognized will appear at the end of today's program, so stick around and see if your name made the list.

- Congratulations to The Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence, have launched new "Faculty Round Tables," collaborative professional development forum for faculty.
- PTC has now successfully added fully online offerings for the AS Computer Programming, AS Criminal Justice, AS Electronics, and BS Information Systems and Technology.
- PTC is actively cultivating partnerships with area high schools to create dual enrollment, early college programs with West Allegheny, Pittsburgh Public Schools, Commonwealth Charter Academy, Nazareth Prep, and Agora Cyber Academy.
- I would like to thank Richard Bryant for his work with Oracle to extend our Academic Partnership Program to advance our BS Information Systems and Technology Database Management Class.

- Congratulations to David Hertz, Dr. John J. Scarpino, Richard Bryant and Michael Hodder from our School of Information Systems and Technology on their collaborative journal submission with Miami Dade College on the: Influence of Data-Driven Methods in Predicting U.S. Presidential Elections for a Special Age Range Using Social Media.
- Congratulations to our School of Electronics Engineering Technology on the January implementation of a new online electronics program, currently with 100% retention. Elizabeth DeVita's work with the electronics department to convert to an online curriculum was instrumental to our ability to start the online program in January 2021.
- PTC's new CAD Manufacturing Lab is now up and running and servicing students. An absolutely wonderful learning space. Mark Malecki, with Nick Otteni and Kasandra Otey, worked tirelessly to get the Lab up and operational for the April Quarter, putting in a 110%.
- Terry Ankeny – Terry often stays behind the scene but her “PTC Magic” touch is a trademark to our presentations and projects. Her true passion is faculty and staff support.
- Jennifer Foust, Heather Hinds and Morgan Withee: Thank you for going beyond the call of duty, and your demonstrated commitment to excellence. And Ashley Davis, for working in collaboration to develop a stronger nursing curriculum for student preparation.
- Please join me in recognizing the Commencement Planning Team and our Media Team for executing on excellent virtual commencement programs for our students. Amazing work!
- And our phenomenal Marketing and Communications Team for driving college formal communications strategies, pioneering our current brand positioning, and redesigning our website and expanding its navigational capabilities. Thank you, Jennifer Donovan, Rebecca Kondos, and Kimberly Norris.
- Bryan Chemini, you continued to knock it out of the park as the “Voice” and the spirit of PTC for last quarter's commencement celebration.
- John Skvarj and Deb Malkin, thank you for taking on the task of completely rewriting the Surg. Tech Curriculum, while maintaining a full-time load.

- Charles Eltringham, Lucas Troianos and Gralan Gilliam, thank you for all that you do to support PTC's Teaching and Learning environment.
- I give thanks to members of our General Education Team, a critical component to academically preparing students – Full Time: Deb Barnhart, Tom McDermott, Rich Doorley, Phil DiFilippo, Wendy McDivitt, Jessica Cooper, and Dr. Adam Vrabel; Adjunct: Linda George, Judy Corasaniti, Marie Hickmann, and Dr. Johnny Hrebik.
- Kristy Pierce – Thank you for stepping up, without hesitation, to assume many administrative tasks associated with ensuring smooth operations in the School of Healthcare, as Terry took on and expanded her role as our Return to Campus COVID Administrator.
- Kaitlin Cobourne – thank you also for stepping up to assume additional tasks as the Interim Academic Chair of the School of Nursing. You will play an integral role in supporting the School of Nursing and its assessment planning.

I would like to end my Presidential Shouts to Unsung Heroes by reading a note that I received. It reads: *Over the past year or so I think that we can say that many or even most of our employees from across all levels and departments of the college are shining stars! That being said, someone that most of you may not have met, but who is essential to the success of PTC, is Allen Gilbert of the Housekeeping Department. Allen is a strong team player, always pleasant and considerate, and works hard to assure that PTC's on-campus residence halls are clean and safe every day for our students. What other colleges have all summer to do, Allen makes sure is accomplished in a week or two: he is another example of PTC Magic.*

Join me with a resounding PTC 123 – Wow for Allen and every person and department at PTC, because we are each an important part of our colleges' magic and ability to forge ahead.

As President, one of the most important things that I can do is to celebrate your contributions to our amazing college and the students that we serve. And so, I conclude, as I started, the overall state of the

college is good, and in many cases, PTC is outperforming many peer colleges. But there is still much that we must do to secure our future. No matter the challenges that come our way, we will forge ahead together, because we are PTC and the best is yet to come. Thank you.