



John Bennett
Distinguished Lasallian Administrator
2019-2020

It is a great honor and pleasure to present this citation to my colleague and supervisor, John Bennett. John has experienced Manhattan College and lived its Lasallian mission from many vantage points, beginning with his time here as a student, later as a staff member, and now, as Executive Director of Student Engagement. This gives John a distinct identity from a wide variety of experiences here at the college. John has embodied our Lasallian values, setting examples of leadership, showing his respect for human dignity, living his faith, exemplifying ethical conduct, and exhibiting a keen sense of social justice over the course of many years.

John works tirelessly in his position, dedicating many long hours outside the typical 9 - 5 workday, supervising and collaborating with students, appearing at Res Life functions, and being a positive, friendly presence on the campus. He treats people fairly, and has an uncanny sense of how to bring the best out in his subordinates, colleagues and student charges. One of John's finest skills is his ability to effectively manage his office staff. He understands that there is no cookie cutter approach to conceiving, executing and completing a task, and that every individual requires a particular managerial disposition to flourish in his or her area of expertise. This style of management instills a sense of purpose, and inspires people to achieve a high level of work quality, rooted in a feeling of personal responsibility and ownership. Those who work with John have no reticence in seeking his support and counsel on how to best focus unclear aspects of a given task. We who work with him know that John excels in clarifying gray areas of a task, thinking outside of the box for a creative and innovative solution, utilizing the resources at hand, or finding ones not previously considered. A terrific example of this kind of interaction was the development and implementation of two initiatives; a Performing Arts Scholarship program for incoming freshmen, and the music lesson program, whereby students are able to achieve academic credit, while pursuing and refining their knowledge and talent. John actively solicits and respects differing opinions of those that he works with. He argues his positions well, without extinguishing ideas that he may be opposed to. All of this is done in a remarkably collegial way, setting a wonderful tone and example for all to follow. John also has a remarkably good relationship with our students, who can always be seen in his office consulting with him on a daily basis.

John is clearly driven by our Lasallian values, and uses them as a guidepost for implementing Student Engagement policy. He is particularly concerned with the safety of our students. John is always considerate of those who are vulnerable or in need. I once witnessed him getting lunch for one of our commuter students, who forgot to bring food on one of his long days on campus. This simple, generous, selfless and unheralded act is typical for John. It was one of many I've witnessed, as he never seeks recognition or acknowledgement. John is clearly a man who is called to action, not for his betterment, but for benefit of his beloved community. I would be remiss not to mention John's passion and love for his family, his wife, Jen, and sons, Duke, Camden and Blake. Balancing family and a non-traditional college work schedule can be challenging. It is often necessary for John to be present at the school during weekends and late evenings. It is most apparent that John derives much of his personal energy from the love and devotion he has to family. And we are most supremely blessed to count John Bennett as a colleague, mentor and friend.

Prepared and delivered by Mr. Andrew Bauer, Director of Performing Arts, November 20, 2019