

Appropriations Committee Public Hearing on the Governor's FY 2022-2023
Proposed Budget for Higher Education Agencies

March 4, 2021

Testimony of **Kathleen H. Murphy**, Professor of Business, Gateway Community College, New Haven, CT.

I am providing first-hand testimony about why it is so important to invest in higher education in Connecticut. I graduated from Gateway Community College in 1985. I became a mother at 18 years old and was a first-generation college student. I wanted to earn a degree that would allow me to pursue my dream of being a healthcare provider while earning a living wage and having health insurance. The faculty and staff at GCC guided me through the beginning of my college experience. The staff members in the Financial Aid Office helped me apply for a Pell grant and counseled me about applying for food stamps and WIC. I needed their help, and they were right there in New Haven ready to support me. I would have given up without their assistance. They went above and beyond their job requirements. The faculty and staff at Gateway cared about me and provided guidance and mentoring long after my graduation.

I graduated with an A.S. degree in Nuclear Medicine Technology, was immediately employed at Yale-New Haven Hospital, and was able to support my family. I did not need food stamps or WIC anymore. The faculty and staff at GCC made a significant impact on my life. I am so proud to say that I am a professor at GCC. I love watching my students earn degrees and certificates that will enable them to provide for their families while working in careers they are passionate about. Community colleges are the gateway to successful futures for so many students in Connecticut. Our community colleges need adequate funding so they can continue to help students like me. Our graduates are vital resources for Connecticut businesses. Please support our students by increasing the monies appropriated to community colleges. Thank you.