

## WELCOME TO SPRING SEMESTER

January 14, 2022

Dear MassArt Community,

Happy New Year to all of you and welcome to the Spring 2022 semester!

I hope you had time over the break to be with family and friends and that you are returning to campus, classes, and studios – in person and on-line – with good health and good energy.

At the end of last semester, it was so rewarding to have a chance to see the brilliant and beautiful work of our students, as galleries were brought to life and reviews took place. Across the campus, art and creativity were on full display, including the staff show “After Hours,” providing opportunities for thoughtful conversations and reflections, and a chance for the campus community to come together in a shared experience, and to remind ourselves of the unique and important mission of MassArt.

It has struck me, as I am sure it has you, that much of what we are seeing across the arts and cultural communities reflects the complexity of the challenges we have been living with and responding to over the course of the pandemic. I encourage you to hold on to the work you are creating and producing – it will help us to tell the story of how individuals, institutions, and communities were influenced by these historic times. It will serve as a critically important example of how the arts help us to capture the human experience, to come together, solve problems and build more equitable and just communities.

As we approach the Spring 2022 semester, being in community is critically important – we lose something if we are not. This week’s [Spring 2022/COVID Safety](#) communications have described our remote start to the semester, and the ways we’re working together to take precautions, follow public health guidance, and to remain in community. I am grateful to all of you who have carefully followed our COVID protocols, protecting yourselves and our community, throughout the pandemic.

I am delighted to let you know that we will be welcoming 43 new transfer and exchange students to our MassArt community as we begin the Spring semester. And just yesterday, we sent early action acceptance letters to 568 applicants for our next incoming class – an increase of 20% in early applications over last year. Many thanks to our team in Admissions!

Our Student Development Housing team tells us that move-in to the residence halls is going well, as we will be welcoming 700 students back to their campus homes from January 13<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>.

I want to share information about a few upcoming January events. On January 18<sup>th</sup>, please join us for [MassArt’s Opening Day](#) for an upbeat kick-off to the Spring semester. We will honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the annual Colleges of the Fenway [MLK Celebration Breakfast](#) on January 28<sup>th</sup>, hosted by MassArt this year – I hope you will be able to take part in this important event. And on January 27<sup>th</sup>, I am excited to participate in a higher education panel as part of the [The Ad Club Equity Project](#), a day-long event

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designed to explore ideas for creating inclusive environments, and making progress in the areas of equity and inclusion.

The Provost search is fully underway – the [prospectus](#) is complete, and our search firm Lindauer is actively reaching out to help us build a strong and diverse applicant pool. This important work will continue through the Spring semester. We will keep you updated on progress and a big thanks to all who are serving on the Provost Search Committee, led by Co-Chairs Maureen Keefe and Marc Holland. We also have 17 faculty searches underway across several departments. A big thank you to our colleagues in Human Resources, for whom it has been a very busy time!

While we were on break, several Facilities team members were hard at work installing 34 new “easy open” windows in the Tower building, cleaning ventilation systems, installing updated Covid signage in elevators and the dining hall, and adjusting dining hall furniture for physical distancing protocols, among other projects. Our thanks to Howie Larosee and his hardworking team for all they did to get us ready to return, and to our Public Safety colleagues who were here throughout the break!

As we move through the Spring semester, we will do so with a continued focus on the health of our community. It is our greatest hope that we will be able to come together, in person, for major events like the MassArt Auction planned for April 9<sup>th</sup>; the Fashion Show on May 14<sup>th</sup>; the All School Show in April/May; and Commencement, planned for Thursday, May 19<sup>th</sup>.

We have a dynamic semester before us, and while there are certainly challenges ahead – there is so much to energize and inspire us. While under different circumstances, and nearly 55 years ago, I’m struck by the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. from his address “Where Do We Go From Here?” that “we must walk on in the days ahead with an audacious faith in the future.” I’m thrilled to begin this new year with all of you – we get to do work and provide an education that changes lives, sparks creativity and curiosity, and provokes conversations and problem solving that supports a hopeful, audacious future.

See you on [Opening Day!](#)



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*MassArt is a public, independent institution that prepares artists, designers, and educators from diverse backgrounds to shape communities, economies, and cultures for the common good.*