

**College Council Meeting  
November 1, 2018**

Voting Members Present: Mr. Basch, Dr. Venables, Mr. Catalinotto, Mr. Cozzolino, Mr. Law, Mr. DiCarlo (phone), Ms. Seque (Student Association president), Dr. Balant (nonvoting faculty representative), Ms. Cohen-La Valle (nonvoting alumni representative),

Campus Administration President: President Christian, Provost Arnold, Vice Presidents Halstead, Wright, Marks, Eaton and Blaisdell. Guests: Tanhena Pacheco Dunn, Associate Vice President, Human Resources, Diversity and Inclusion, and Co-Chair, Diversity and Inclusion Council; Reynolds Scott-Childress, Assistant Professor, Department of History, and Co-Chair, Diversity and Inclusion Council.

The meeting was called to order at 3:10 p.m.

Interim Chairman's Report:

Mr. Basch introduced himself and welcomed Council members and the seated audience to the meeting. There were approximately 100-125 members of the public in attendance, including students, faculty and staff. Mr. Basch asked the audience to exercise common courtesy during the meeting and noted that there would be an opportunity for comment later in the session, as part of a public forum.

Mr. Basch proposed adoption of the minutes of the September 6, 2018, meeting. Dr. Venables moved to accept the minutes, Mr. Law seconded the motion, and they were approved by voice vote.

Mr. Basch said that he was quite pleased so many people were in attendance to view the Council's meeting. He said he understood that the Hasbrouck Complex building names are an important issue and of interest to students, faculty, the campus community and public at large. He noted that all parties are welcome to the meeting.

President's Report:

President Christian thanked everyone for attending the meeting. In the interest of time and in recognition of the keen interest in the topic of the Hasbrouck Complex building names, the president said that he would keep his report brief and focused on that topic. He thought it would be most appropriate if Council members deferred any questions about his report until the body discussed the Hasbrouck Complex building names resolution at hand today.

The president reminded the audience that the Council was conducting an official business meeting. He asked that attendees refrain from showing approval or disapproval for speakers, including College Council members, so as not to create a chilling effect for individuals who speak.

President Christian said that Council members were recently provided with information responsive to questions that arose at the body's last meeting. That included:

- More extensive evidence of slave ownership by the original Huguenot patentee families; and
- Confirmation by SUNY legal counsel after their review of State Education Law that while the Council has the authority to name buildings and grounds, this and other Council actions are subject to the approval of the SUNY Board of Trustees.

The president noted that the Council also received copies of two resolutions supporting the removal and replacement of the Hasbrouck Complex building names, consistent with the Diversity and Inclusion Council recommendation and President Christian's recommendation. One was passed in spring 2018 by the Student Senate. The other was passed this fall by the Faculty Senate by a 51 to 0 margin with two abstentions.

President Christian then summarized several points that he wrote about previously to the College Council.

He said that he sees it as unfortunate if we treat slavery on other continents and in other periods of history as equivalent to the background most relevant to the issue we face on campus and in our nation today. Colonial slavery in the Americas has had a unique and enduring impact on education, employment, health and nearly all systems of this country. And not every Colonist chose to engage in the practice; the Quakers consciously did not. The president said that we all live with this enduring legacy and how it continues to play out in our society, especially – on a college campus - in the daily experience of students of color. But students across all demographics are increasingly calling for institutions to be accountable to the values of inclusion. If we are not able to demonstrate our ability to evolve in our understanding, we will not be able to serve future generations of New York citizens, as is our mission.

President Christian noted that he heard the characterization that by recommending these names on the Hasbrouck Complex buildings be replaced the College is “erasing history.” He said that he disagrees with that view and to the contrary wants to be certain that we portray relevant history more fully. That includes the history of Huguenot patentees and their descendants and their positive contributions, along with the history of slavery. It also includes the history and contributions of enslaved Africans and their descendants and the indigenous peoples who were here before the Europeans and Africans. These people have been treated through our history as the “other” -- their stories have often been ignored or minimized, another specific legacy of history.

The president said that he spoke at the previous September 6 meeting about the deepening empathy that he developed throughout last year's review process for students and others whose life experiences are quite different than his. He listened to students and others talk about the alienation they felt to live, eat and sleep in buildings named for those who enslaved Africans. His direct experience and the careful analysis of the Diversity and Inclusion Council made it clear to him that only by changing the names could we honor those experiences and perspectives. The president said that he hopes Council members as well can be open-minded as they consider this issue and give more weight to the evolving population at SUNY New Paltz and their particular needs – helping the College be increasingly attractive to a wide range of students from diverse backgrounds. Increasingly, they are the students of our future.



President Christian noted that he would also appeal to Council members to respect an exceptional process of campus and community engagement. This process brought members of our campus together to understand shared values, was forward-looking in scope while not ignoring the past, and generated overwhelming support for the change the College is recommending. That support comes from students, faculty, staff, many alumni, our campus leadership team, and the president. The president said that he has kept the SUNY Chancellor and the Chair of the Board of Trustees informed of the College's process from the very start, and of his position. They have been supportive and are eager to hear the outcome of the College Council deliberation.

In sum, the president emphasized that this has been a very serious undertaking, and he hoped that as the Council charged with acting in the best interests of the College and its future, members would give full consideration to the depth and breadth of thought and effort invested in this process.

President Christian closed his report with a comment about process. He intentionally structured this effort to keep our focus on whether these building names should change or not, without the complication of considering alternative names. The Council's consideration today is the first step in what we should all regard as a process that must involve two steps, which should be closely linked. If the Council votes to change the Hasbrouck Complex building names, the next step will be determination of the new names. The Council should lead that process with community input, and approval of the new names is within their authority. If we move ahead, the president encouraged the Council to complete that step early in the spring semester. If the Council votes to change the names and when new names are determined, we would take a single resolution to the SUNY Board of Trustees – to change the names and replace them with the new ones. The current names on the Hasbrouck Complex buildings will not be removed and replaced until after that step is completed.

Following the president's report, Mr. Basch asked the Council, members of the administration, and guests, to introduce themselves.

#### Student Association President's Report:

Ms. Seque thanked her fellow Council members and the audience for attending today's meeting. She then introduced a three-minute video that was created to bring a voice to the students who responded to the campus's survey about changing the Hasbrouck Complex building names.

#### Public Comment:

Following the video, Mr. Basch outlined the parameters of the public comment period. He asked audience members to refrain from applause or any other reaction, favorable or unfavorable, to comments made to the Council. Mr. Basch said that he wanted everyone to have the opportunity to speak their mind freely without audience reaction.

Mr. Basch said that the Council is aware of near unanimous resolutions from the faculty and Student Association that support changing the Hasbrouck Complex building names. He also highlighted the Diversity and Inclusion Council's report on this issue. He noted that the report is an in-depth study that details the history and sentiments of various constituencies regarding the

present names of the Hasbrouck Complex buildings. Mr. Basch said the Council reviewed the report while evaluating this issue and would now listen to public comments that they would also consider as part of their deliberative process.

For more than 90 minutes, audience members, including students and faculty, offered public comments to the Council about the Hasbrouck Complex building names. Nearly all of those who spoke expressed strong support for changing the building names.

#### Resolution Regarding Hasbrouck Complex Building Names:

See attached resolution. Ms. Seque introduced and read a resolution to the Council that recommended the removal of the names of Huguenot patentees from the Hasbrouck Complex buildings. She said that the resolution is about the future and a new era, as society and student body demographics are changing and students, including those in attendance today, are not okay with buildings being named after slave owners. Ms. Seque said today's meeting was an opportunity for students to have a voice and express how they feel about this issue.

Mr. Basch moved to consider the resolution on the floor for discussion. Mr. Law seconded his motion.

Dr. Balant read a statement about the Faculty Senate's previous resolution endorsing the removal of the names of the Huguenot patentees from the Hasbrouck Complex buildings. See attached statement.

Mr. Cozzolino congratulated Ms. Seque for providing clarity about this subject and the courage to bring it this far for consideration. He also recognized the students who spoke during the meeting's public comment period. Mr. Cozzolino noted that the College has been working on this issue for about nine months, including through the Diversity and Inclusion Council report, and that the College Council was just provided with this information and recommendation to change the Hasbrouck Complex building names. While the rest of the campus has had time to digest the matter, the Council needs more time for due consideration.

Mr. Cozzolino recommended and made a motion that the Council postpone consideration of Ms. Seque's resolution until the body's next meeting to give members more time to process and decide where they stand on the issue. Mr. Law seconded the motion. Before the Council voted, President Christian said that he was disappointed to have consideration of the resolution postponed with little to no discussion among the Council at today's meeting.

Mr. Basch administered a roll call vote on Mr. Cozzolino's motion to postpone consideration of Ms. Seque's resolution until the next Council meeting in the spring semester. Those who voted in favor of the motion: Mr. Catalinotto, Mr. Cozzolino, Mr. DiCarlo, Mr. Law, and Dr. Venables. Those opposed: Mr. Basch, and Ms. Seque. Mr. Basch confirmed the motion's passage.

President Christian asked the Council to consider a two-step action at its next meeting that would be scheduled in the spring semester. He requested that the Council consider acting on the postponed resolution introduced by Ms. Seque and the next step of deciding on replacement names for the Hasbrouck Complex buildings, should the resolution pass. In advance of that meeting, the president recommended that the Council form a subcommittee to develop and



implement a way to solicit community input on replacement names. If the Council votes to change the names the body would have already made progress and be able to vote on replacement names.

Mr. Law made a motion to form a subcommittee and study potential new names for the Hasbrouck Complex buildings and solicit community input. Mr. Cozzolino seconded the motion. Mr. Basch asked if there was any discussion on the motion. Mr. DiCarlo recommended addressing separately the issue of the resolution to change the names and the discussion about potential replacement names. Ms. Seque said she agreed with President Christian's recommendation about this action and agreed with Mr. Law's motion.

Mr. Basch administered a roll call vote on Mr. Law's motion to form a subcommittee and study potential new names for the Hasbrouck Complex buildings and solicit community input. Those who voted in favor of the motion: Mr. Catalinotto, Mr. Cozzolino, Mr. Law, Ms. Seque, and Mr. Basch. Those opposed: Mr. DiCarlo. Those not present at the time of this vote: Dr. Venables.

Wrap-Up:

Ms. Seque said that many audience members in attendance today may not have heard results that they had wanted. But she emphasized that the conversation would continue and asked attendees to have hope and faith that the resolution to change the Hasbrouck Complex building names would prevail. President Christian agreed with these sentiments.

Mr. Basch postponed the Budget Update from Vice President Halstead until the next Council meeting.

Mr. Basch adjourned the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Winters", written in a cursive style.

Richard Winters  
Director of Community and Government Relations

# **Resolution to Remove the Names of Huguenot patentees from the Hasbrouck Residential Complex**

*Submitted on behalf of N'della Seque, Student Association President and College Council Member*

**I recommend that the SUNY New Paltz College Council adopt the following resolution:**

Whereas, the buildings in the Hasbrouck Residential Complex were named for the original Huguenot patentees (Bevier, Crispell, Deyo, DuBois, Hasbrouck and Lefevre), who were the first European settlers in New Paltz and like other Europeans who settled in New York, they owned enslaved Africans, and

Whereas, the Huguenot patentees and their descendants made significant contributions to education and civic life in New Paltz, including supporting the institutions that became SUNY New Paltz, and

Whereas, the Hasbrouck Residential Complex names have become contentious on campus, and

Whereas, President Donald P. Christian initiated a process in August 2017 to consider and study the names of the Hasbrouck Residential Complex, and this charge coincided with the national discourse and conflict about statues and building names on other college and university campuses, and

Whereas, President Christian charged the Diversity & Inclusion Council to conduct a comprehensive and inclusive conversation and study during the 2017-18 academic year that resulted in the Hasbrouck Building Complex Renaming Dialogue Report and Recommendation), and

Whereas, the Diversity & Inclusion Council held multiple forums, soliciting broad input from students, faculty, staff, alumni, community members, Huguenot descendants and Historic Huguenot Street leadership, educated the community about the campus history, and studied how other colleges and universities have dealt with the legacy of slavery on their campuses, and

Whereas, the Diversity and Inclusion Council recommended that the names be removed, and

Whereas, the College Council has the authority to name buildings and grounds, subject to the general management, supervision, control and approval of the State University Board of Trustees (Ed.L. §356), now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the College Council accept the recommendation from the Diversity and Inclusion Council and President Donald P. Christian to remove the Huguenot patentee names from the Hasbrouck Residential Complex buildings (including Bevier, Crispell, Deyo, DuBois, Hasbrouck, and Lefevre), and be it further

Resolved, that the College Council replace those names, and be it further

Resolved, that the College Council recommends that the College administration find other ways to recognize the contributions of the Huguenot patentees and their descendants as well as the indigenous Munsee and the Africans who also lived here.

Date: October 19, 2018



### Dr. Balant's Statement to the College Council – November 1, 2018 meeting

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak. I would like to provide some background about the resolution that was endorsed by the New Paltz Faculty Senate, which you all have received, and also talk a bit about some aspects of my own experiences that may be relevant to this issue.

As the DI Council began its work, I attended one of the first forums. The lasting impression was the civil, respectful, and thoughtful way that students, faculty, and community members discussed the issues and shared their views- but I left the meeting undecided. "Was it really so difficult for our students? I wondered. Is such a major step truly warranted? After all, these events occurred long ago, when enslavement was a widespread practice. I assumed that the buildings were named for multiple generations of the patentee families rather than those specific individuals. I knew that the families had made many contributions to the community and college over generations, and that some of them had been involved with abolition efforts. Was it really appropriate to make this change? Would we be erasing history? How would it affect the town?

I have always thought of myself as an empathetic individual. It was easy for me to think that I could empathize with students of color who live in the Hasbrouck complex, and that maybe it wasn't really all that bad. All of that changed for me when I received the packet of information, including the DI Council's report, that was mailed to the members of this body last August, opened the envelope, and encountered the article about the renaming of Thomas Hall at Bryn Mawr College.

My mother, my older sister, and I are all alumnae of Bryn Mawr College. When I was a student there in the 70's, I attended classes in Thomas Hall, did research in its dusty Archaeology library, and regularly went to coffee hour in its lofty Great Hall. I had no idea that M. Carey Thomas, the revered president who is often quoted as having said "our failures only marry" also believed in the "intellectual supremacy of the white races" and, per the article, stated that the immigration of 'backward people of Europe' [Slavs, Czechs, and southern Italians] and mixing of the races 'endangers our great position among the nations of the world.'

My grandmother was one of these "backward" people. She was of Ashkenazy Jewish descent. Her family moved from Belgrade, Yugoslavia to Vienna just prior to her birth in 1900. She engaged in "mixing of the races" by marrying a German neurologist during the 1920's. I owe my existence to my grandmother's sister and her husband, a renowned orchestra conductor in the US. They sponsored the emigration of my grandmother and her two children just prior to the outbreak of World War II. He himself was Jewish, a fact which he had to conceal to advance his career.

I cannot adequately describe the visceral reaction I had to reading that article, to reading those words of M. Carey Thomas, and realizing that my alma mater had not always been the "nurturing mother" I had believed it to be. Had my mother applied to Bryn Mawr after World

War I rather than World War II, she would not have been admitted, and nor would my sister, or I. Even worse, Thomas promoted the education of women- not for the sake of women's equality, but because she viewed it as a means to maintain white supremacy. The emotions I experienced are something I would never have imagined. After all, I graduated almost 40 years ago, and Thomas didn't enslave anyone, or send anyone to a gas chamber.

Had I known of this history during my undergraduate years, working and studying in Thomas Hall, or even going there for coffee, would have been abhorrent. Living in a building named for Thomas would have been intolerable. I now understand the ramifications, for many of our students, of living and dining in buildings named for the original patentees. I am humbled to learn that I am not so empathetic as I had always believed. I have recognized that for me, empathy is not an intellectual exercise; it is acknowledging that I most likely do not know, and perhaps can never fully internalize, what others experience and endure. I have come to understand the importance of listening to the voices of students and faculty for whom this is a significant issue. At this point, it no longer matters to me if the percentage of students who think the names should be replaced is a majority, a plurality, or even just one single student.

However, I am here to represent the College Faculty, not myself. Although many individual faculty had participated in the DI Council's work via surveys and open forums, that was not definitive; I needed to know the views of the college faculty as a whole. Consultation with the executive committee of the college faculty led to a resolution which was forwarded to the Senate. Senators then had several weeks to discuss the resolution with their constituencies. At the senate meeting on October 3, the resolution supporting the recommendations of the DI council received nearly unanimous support, with just one abstention.

I am confident that, if we move forward with these recommendations, we can develop a means to honor not only the contributions of the original patentees, but those of their descendants, while elucidating their full history, including their enslavement of Africans and their treatment of the native Munsee people. Developing an exhibit, monument, or contemplative space that accomplishes this could be a collaborative effort, involving students, faculty, the Historic Huguenot Street Association, and community members. It would speak volumes to current students and faculty, as well as alumnae and the community, about our commitment to the success of ALL of our students.

I would like to quote from the message sent out last week by Chancellor Johnson and H. Carl McCall, Chair of the SUNY Board of Trustees, after the mass murder in Pittsburgh. They wrote that SUNY was "created to provide a high quality education to any individual seeking to create new opportunities for themselves, including members of the Jewish and African American communities who were being denied entrance to other institutions. It is up to each of us to expose words or actions that foster intolerance of any kind."

If we are to uphold our values, if we are to be the kind of institution that provides a level playing field for all students; if we are to remain viable and credible as an institution that



welcomes and serves the young people of this state as the demographics of our student body changes during the coming decades, then we must act now- not to erase history, but to launch a new chapter in our history as we write it into the future. A vote, your vote, to advance the renaming to the Board of Trustees, is the first step towards that future. I urge you to take that step today.

Thank you.