

## ► In The News

# HCC returns to in-person graduation ceremonies June 4

HOLYOKE — For the first time since 2019, Holyoke Community College will celebrate its new graduates with an in-person ceremony at the MassMutual Center in Springfield.

HCC's 75th Anniversary Commencement will take place on Sat., June 4, starting at 10 a.m. at the downtown Springfield arena. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, graduation ceremonies for the classes of 2020 and 2021 were held virtually.

With infection rates in decline and community mask mandates lifting, HCC's College Affairs Committee advised that an in-person Commencement

could be held safely this year.

"It is with great enthusiasm that I announce that we will be able to celebrate this important moment for our students in person this spring," HCC president Christina Royal said in a March 16 message to the HCC community. "The ceremony will include all of the pomp and circumstance and unique HCC energy we have always looked forward to at Commencement."

As in past in-person ceremonies, HCC will honor the professor recognized with the Elaine Marieb Award for Teaching Excellence, who will lead the procession of graduates, faculty and staff

into the arena and give a commencement address to the Class of 2022. The ceremony will also include student performances and speeches.

"Most of all, we will deliver a day our students truly deserve and have worked so hard for," Royal said.

Graduates from HCC's classes of 2020 and 2021, who were not able to celebrate their graduations in person, will be invited to participate in Commencement this spring as the college celebrates its 75th anniversary as the oldest community college in Massachusetts.

"This year's Commencement takes on even greater meaning as we also cel-

ebrate the college's 75th anniversary," Royal said. "Like each of you, I look forward to this opportunity to celebrate our students' success."

Once confirmed, information regarding safety measures as well as other event details will be posted on the Commencement page on the HCC website: [hcc.edu/commencement](http://hcc.edu/commencement).

In advance of Commencement, HCC will also be hosting cap and gown pickup celebration events on campus in May.

"This is the perfect time for our community to come together and show our students how proud we are of their achievements," Royal said.