

CRIES & WHISPERS

The Royal treatment

Holyoke Community College's trustees established a new award honoring the legacy of recently retired president **Christina Royal** and "her work as a champion of equity, diversity and inclusion."

The Christina Royal Equity Award will be presented annually to a college employee "who demonstrates a sustained commitment to advancing equity."

"The list of Dr. Royal's accomplishments is long and leaves us inspired, and woven through it all has been her commitment to advancing equity, diversity and inclusion," trustees chair **Robert Gilbert** said. "Therefore, we believe it is fitting that our faculty and staff, the heartbeat of this institution, be acknowledged and celebrated for their efforts with an award that bears her name."

The honor will include a plaque and monetary award from a fund that already totals more than \$10,000, according to the college.

Announced during Royal's final meeting with the trustees on June 27, she said, "Wow, it touches my heart to hear about this award in my honor. When I think about the work that I'm most proud of over the last seven years, it is actually bringing and elevating equity into the conversation and into our strategic plan, and having a chance to really dig more into the data and really look at how we are able to provide an environment where all students can succeed."

She added, "This means a great deal to me. It means that, beyond my tenure, the college is going to be committed to recognizing people doing this kind of work, and honoring and supporting and ultimately recognizing people who are making an impact."

George Timmons began his tenure as HCC president on Monday.



Holyoke Community College trustees chairman Robert Gilbert and retiring president Christina Royal are seen here at her last meeting with the board on June 27. An annual award was established to honor Royal's legacy of diversity and inclusion during her years at the college. (HOLYOKE COMMUNITY COLLEGE PHOTO)

Beach read

There's nothing like a good mystery to pass these hot summer days on the beach.

From **John Sjoberg**, chair of Spirit of Springfield and president of New England Business Machine, comes his second book, "A Killer Weekend on the Beach."

Set on the Gulf Coast, the description of the plot on Amazon reads: "This story brings four individuals from four very different places in their lives and intertwines them in a quilted fabric of uncontrolled destiny. Will you be next? Will your path change when you read this story? What is today's cause and effect for you? Here is their journey of no return."

Sjoberg's first book, "Murder in the Meadows," set in a New England town not unlike Longmeadow, where he and



JOHN SJOBERG

his wife, Western New England University communications professor Brenda Garton, live, was published more than a decade ago.

Distinguished reporting

Chicopee native **Dan Lamothe**, a national security correspondent with The Washington Post, was recently recognized with the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation Award for Distinguished Reporting on National Defense for work scrutinizing the U.S. military's evacuation of Afghanistan.

A Chicopee Comprehensive High School and University of Massachusetts Amherst alum who began his career with The Republican, Lamothe has been with the Post for the past nine years. He left Western Massachusetts to attend graduate school at the University of Maryland and spent almost six



DAN LAMOTHE