

FHFA Inspector General espouses power of a degree at QCC's Commencement ceremony



Brian Tomney

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College's keynote speaker, Brian M. Tomney, addressed the College's 1,358 graduates at its 2022 Commencement ceremony, held at the DCU Center in Worcester on May 20. Mr. Tomney was nominated by President Joe Biden and confirmed by the U.S. Senate to serve as Inspector General for the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) earlier this year.

Mr. Tomney told the crowd that when he was younger, he wasn't concerned with getting a college degree, instead becoming an EMT while in high school and a firefighter shortly thereafter. However, when his local community college began offering a paramedicine degree, he decided to make the commitment to higher education and enroll in the associate degree program.

"Many decades later, it is this two-year degree that has been the stepping stone for every non-traditional step that my career has taken. From going into burning buildings and delivering babies, to meeting presidents and sitting in the White House situation room. From this two-year degree, a life of incredible opportunities was born. And to each of you sitting here today, those same opportunities await you," he said.

There are many emotions that can arise while graduating from a higher education institution and Mr. Tomney touched on many of these during his speech. While joy and happiness are the first emotions to come to mind, he recalled how during his law school graduation he was struck with fear.

"I had been hired by the Department of Justice and was moving to Washington, D.C. with my young son; and for the first time in 36 years mov-

ing more than 10 miles from my now aging parents. What if I had made a mistake? But I refuse to let fear and anxiety paralyze me. I try to harness them. So channel all your emotions. Channel the ones that don't feel so good into meaningful, productive energy. Remember and embrace your emotions today – and always. They are yours and each one of them is valid," he said.

In addition to his passion for community college, Mr. Tomney also encouraged graduates to explore public service.

"I cannot speak today without briefly reflecting upon and remembering the Worcester Six and the value of – if not the imperative of – finding ways to serve. In a job where all give some, they gave all. Find a path to service, no matter how big or small, and I guarantee you that it will always be the capstone of your well lived life," he continued.

Community impact is a large part of QCC's mission.

"Our graduates are truly a representation of the communities they live and work in. They span all ages and ethnicities, are traditional students right out of high school, non-traditional students, veterans, parents, first-generation college students, and immigrants who all have a goal of bettering their lives through higher education. They will now go out into the world and become the positive change makers for our society," said QCC Chair of the Board of Trustees Alex Zequeira. "As these graduates celebrate with families and friends, let us all be reminded of the transformational power of a postsecondary education. It changes the course of a person's life, their family's lives, and delivers a skilled workforce to our

communities."

Student greetings were given virtually by QCC Student Government Association President Shauna Connelly, who championed resilience in the face of difficulties.

"We, the QCC class of 2022, might be the last class of the pandemic. You are here because through some of the darkest times the world has seen, you chose to turn on the light, you chose to make something good happen for you. You need to be an active participant in your own life. Good things happen to those who do! Your future is bright because you chose to surpass all adversity and continue on your journey. Today QCC is going to hand you a torch to help light the way through your future," Ms. Connelly said.

QCC President Dr. Luis G. Pedraja also commended graduates on their resilience.

"I am amazed by you, by what you have endured to get you here today, and by what you accomplish every single day. You have faced many obstacles, but your determination and resilience, along with the support of friends and family, has brought you here today. I am confident that you will succeed and that you will transform our world. Look back on what you have accomplished and take strength from it. Bring the same grit and deter-

mination that got you here to what waits ahead of you. Keep striving to better yourself and to transform our world into a better place. In spite of the challenges of today, I believe the future is bright, because you are in it," he said.

A total of 1,003 degrees and 494 certificates were conferred upon this year's graduates.

For more information about QCC, contact Karen Hutner, Interim Director of Institutional Communications at 508-854-2842 or khutner@qcc.mass.edu.

Office Assistant

Part-time as needed
Typing, small projects,
online research

Call
508-450-8926

Come join us at the 2022
Southbridge's
MEMORIAL DAY
PARADE

May 30, 2022 • 10:00 AM

Starts in front of the Town Hall (GAR Monument), making a right on Main St. and ending at the Gold Star Mothers Monument

Speeches and honors will be given at the GAR, Honor Roll and Gold Star Mothers Monument

Memorial Day 2022 Cemetery Flag Placement-

The Veterans Council of Southbridge and Veteran Service Officer are looking for volunteers to help place American flags at Veterans graves in our town's cemeteries. The following will be the dates, times and cemeteries that we will meet at:

May 27 @ 9 am @ the New Notre Dame Cemetery (Notre Dame, Saint Hedwig's, and Morse Cemeteries)

May 28 @ 9 am @ Oak Ridge Cemetery (Oak Ridge and St. Mary's Cemeteries)

We are asking that if you would like to volunteer, please call our Town's VSO @ (508) 764-5436 so he can screen and put down your information.

We want to thank all those who will or would like to volunteer in the placement of these American flags! This time-honored event in the memorial of our Veterans who have perished is personal to a lot of our residents of our town and citizens of our nation.

UPCOMING EVENTS TO CELEBRATE THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY of East Brookfield

the youngest town in the Commonwealth!

THIS WEEK

Sat. May 28 @ 9:30 am
Historical Talk
Ed Londergan
Murder in the Brookfields (Spooner/Newton Murders)
TOWN HALL - FREE & open to the public

COMING UP...

Sat. June 4 • 2:00 pm & 3:30 pm Seatings
History and Dessert at Podunk Chapel
\$5.00 per person

Fri. June 10 @ 7:00 pm
Coast Guard Band
EB Elementary School
FREE (tickets required for entry)

Tickets for these events are available at the library or by email: EB100th@gmail.com

See Facebook @EB100th or tinyurl.com/EB100th for details on all events!

Join us this Spring!

Friday's Child

Khamari - 05/22
Age 14

Hi! My name is Khamari and when I grow up, I want to be a video game designer, music beat maker, and doctor!

A Khamari is an extremely creative young boy of African American descent. Khamari enjoys expressing himself by creating his own music, board games, and videos/plays! He thrives on receiving one-on-one attention from caring adults, but is also able to play independently. He loves to stay busy and is up for engaging in a range of activities. He is also very curious and loves to talk and ask questions.

Legally freed for adoption, Khamari would benefit being part of an energetic and loving family of any constellation, with or without older children in the home. A family for Khamari would be engaging, nurturing, and able to continue the beneficial services he has in place for him.

<https://www.mareinc.org/waiting-child-profiles#gallery/child/7498>

Can I Adopt?

If you're at least 18 years old, have a stable source of income, and room in your heart, you may be a perfect match to adopt a waiting child. Adoptive parents can be single, married, or partnered; experienced or not; renters or homeowners; LGBTQ+ singles and couples. As an adoptive parent, you won't have to pay any fees, adoption from foster care is completely free in Massachusetts.

The process to adopt a child from foster care includes training, interviews, and home visits to determine if adoption is right for you. These steps will help match you with a child or sibling group that your family will fit well with.

To learn more about adoption from foster care, call the Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) at (617) 964-6273 or visit www.mareinc.org. Start the process today and give a waiting child a permanent place to call home.