

PHENOM REPORT – Colleen Avedikian, PHENOM Representative to BrCCC

- 1. On January 16, 2019 the CHERISH Act was filed in the Massachusetts legislature.** This bill calls on the Commonwealth to fund its public colleges at the year 2001 per-student funding level rate, adjusted for inflation. This would result in an increase of \$500 million in funds for public higher education. Public college costs have risen faster in Massachusetts than in any other state. This has led to Massachusetts having the second highest growth in student debt in the country. In 2014, the state’s Higher Education Finance commission determined that Massachusetts underfunds its public colleges and universities by more than \$500 million. The CHERISH Act is supported by Fund our Future campaign, which is a coalition of groups including the Massachusetts Teachers Association, the Massachusetts Education Justice Alliance, the American Federation of Teachers and the Public Higher Education Network of Massachusetts (PHENOM). To learn more about the CHERISH Act, and the Fund our Future Campaign, please check this link: <https://massteacher.org/news/2019/01/higher-ed-bill-backed-by-fund-our-future-and-mta-is-filed>
- 2. The Massachusetts Public Higher Education Advocacy Day** at the State House is scheduled for March 21st, 2019. Students, Faculty, Professional Staff, Alumni of the state’s public colleges and universities are encouraged to participate. PHENOM will be working with Bristol Community College to organize transportation for the event. Details will be forthcoming.
- 3. PHENOM is hiring student organizers at Bristol Community College.** Duties include: Providing support for current PHENOM initiatives and outreach work including holding recurring PHENOM chapter meetings, plan campus events, and coordinate “Fund Our Future” actions on the campus. The Student Organizer will create weekly media content for PHENOM’s statewide Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. Additional responsibilities would include attending PHENOM’s Advocacy Day, creating campus-specific media and advertisements, and communicating with PHENOM Organizing Director and campus Faculty/Staff Organizer. All work will occur in Massachusetts. Time commitment: 10 hours per week at \$15 per hour. Please share with students. For more information, contact Colleen Avedikian @ colleen.avedikian@bristolcc.edu.