

President's Report
January 2021

Expand Access and Increase Student Success

On December 1, the new *Christopher Del Vecchio-Dzikowski Memorial Scholarship* was established. Christopher brought a very special kind of enthusiasm to his work at the College and created meaningful connections with colleagues and students alike. Chris' experience in SUNY Schenectady's Disney College Program as a student, helped shaped his customer service philosophy, which he practiced every day. He was thoughtful, articulate, caring, hardworking, energetic, and full of humor. He had the ability to make people feel that they were important and valued, and he was always ready to assist a colleague or student, lend advice, and engage in good conversation. In addition to being a member of the Class of 2011, Chris took part in the President's first Leadership Academy. He was a true ambassador for the institution, a loyal donor to the Foundation, and an involved alumnus. The outpouring of contributions in Chris' memory has resulted in more than \$5,000 for the scholarship fund since his passing last month.

Assistant Professor Cayla Gaworecki and Interim Business, Criminal Justice, and Law Dean Kelly Majuri attended the SUNY Placement Symposium on December 4. The event focused on increasing access to research-based best practices and it will support the continuing effort to implement the College's new placement processes for mathematics and the approach to supporting student success in gateway mathematics courses during their first year of college.

Professor Alicia Richardson successfully completed the first semester of teaching *First Year Seminar* for students who identify as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color). Typical of evaluations she received is the following:

This class really helped me as a BIPOC student transition into college learning a lot from emailing a professor correctly to more ways to take notes effectively, which are my main takeaways as well. The module and assignments that stood out was the app review; this one stood out and helping me out a lot because I still use that app and found other great apps to help me with my school work. I learned a lot about my school and who SUNY Schenectady staff members are and they are only one phone call away to help you in any way they can. I think I need a lot of self-discipline in order to be successful. I feel like SUNY Schenectady is an amazing school with staff member who do a lot for their students especially in these hard times where we are learning on screens; they still made sure to be great teachers.

On December 3 – 5, Interim School of Music Dean, Dr. Edward S. Marschilok, represented the SUNY Schenectady School of Music at the New York State School Music Association's (NYSSMA) Cyber Summit. As part of the Summit, Dr. Marschilok set up and staffed a virtual booth containing information on SUNY Schenectady's School of Music for viewing and informing the Summit attendees, which included music

teachers, students and parents. Conference attendees also had the opportunity to video chat with Dr. Marschilok.

On December 7-9, Director of Library Services Jacquie Keleher and E-Resources & Collection Development Librarian Giovannine Matheron attended several sessions of the SUNY Library Consortium virtual conference. These sessions focused on how SUNY libraries will continue to work as one unit to provide equitable access to library resources for all SUNY students at the best pricing available.

Associate Professor, Dr. Allyson B. Keyser (trumpet), gave two virtual masterclasses/workshops to trumpet students at Guilderland High School on Tuesday, December 22.

To date SUNY Schenectady has performed 1530 student COVID-19 tests. We have identified three positive students through the Surveillance Pool Testing. We have been able to mitigate spread through our student population over the fall semester. We will resume testing on Monday, January 4, 2021.

This past month, the Foundation received an additional \$2,000 in renewed annual scholarships for a grand total of \$33,000 for 2021-2022, including the following:

- ❖ \$1,000 for the Price Chopper / Market 32 Scholarship
- ❖ \$1,000 for the Jason D. Woodward Scholarship

The Stewardship Officer worked with Student Success to finish awarding fall 2020 scholarships and to continue to populate the AwardSpring software program for Fall 2021. The application opens to students on January 25, 2021.

Ensure a quality, relevant, coherent and innovative curriculum

Interim Business, Criminal Justice and Law Dean Kelly Majuri, Academic Affairs Dean Jessica Gilbert, and Assistant Professors Cayla Gaworecki and Michael Stamets attended the SUNY Data Planning for Action Workshop on December 10. This workshop provided valuable insights into best practices for data collection and analysis relevant to the final stages of the Strong Start to Finish (SSTF) grant and Guided Pathways.

In support of access and student success, Director of Library Services Jacquie Keleher, participated in the Fall 2020 Long Night Against Procrastination (LNAP) which was held virtually from Monday, November 30 – Friday, December 4, 2020. The LibGuide created for the event had 417 views with many hits focused on participating in the “live” virtual events. During the virtual library drop in session on Thursday, December 3, immediate research assistance was provided to two students.

On December 4, Interim Liberal Arts Dean Eileen Abrahams attended a CUNY Graduate Center Sociology colloquium, in which MacArthur Fellow Tessie McMillan Cottom gave a lecture and led a discussion on “Higher Education, Digital Transformation, and COVID-19.”

Professor Ingrid O’Connell attended a webinar on December 10 hosted by NYSHTA entitled, “New York Paid Safe and Sick Leave, What it Means for Employers”. The webinar provided hospitality professionals with information on the new paid leave legislation that goes into effect January 1, 2021, and how it will impact employers.

Associate Professor, Dr. Allyson B. Keyser (trumpet), learned a music application called Audacity with which she compiled individual student recordings of the Brass Ensemble and Wind Ensemble members into ensemble performances. The grouped final performances will be placed on the School of Music's YouTube page.

On December 14, Foundation staff met with representatives from the Women's Fund of the Capital Region to discuss part-time scholarship needs and emergency fund requests.

On December 16, 2020, HCAT Dean, Dr. David E. Brough, attended a webinar hosted by the Kenneth Blanchard Companies entitled "Learning and Development Trends for 2021" featuring Jay Campbell, Blanchard's senior vice president of products and content. They shared the results and most recent analysis of their 2021 HR/L&D Trends Surveys. Over 1,000 leadership, learning, and talent development professionals took part in this year's survey, which examined the biggest challenges leadership and development professionals expect to face in the coming year.

On December 17 the first cohort of the Google IT Support Professional Certificate program completed their coursework.

Associate Professor Jay Larkin was part of the Empire State Society of Association Executives (ESSAE) Holiday Party as a virtual mixologist. ESSAE is a nonprofit professional organization for persons engaged in the management of voluntary trade and professional organizations. Mr. Larkin created and provided a recipe prior to the event for participants to make and he provided a demonstration via Zoom.

Preparations are underway to launch the 2021 mandatory employee training program. Phase 1 of the training is scheduled to begin on January 6, 2021 with phase 2 starting on March 15, 2021. A communication on the training requirements will be sent to all employees at the start of each training period. This year the college will continue to strive for 100% compliance with the training requirements. While we had a 70%+ compliance rate last year, we will insist on 100% compliance in 2021.

Our Human Resources and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion areas are working on the development of new programs to address the cultural and political divides that have been highlighted as an imperative for all businesses. These include:

Cultural Competency Program: As a central aspect of the Orientation/Onboarding process for new employees as well as current staff. The training will be designed to improve understanding of inclusion, and the principles guiding right conditions for every individual to achieve their full potential.

Sensitivity Awareness: The goal of this course will be to provide Supervisors and Administrators with an increased awareness about the unique opportunities and challenges involved in working with different people.

Topics will include:

- Self-awareness
- Self-monitoring and perception
- Emotions
- Listening skills, and
- Receiving and giving feedback

Topics will include terminology and regulations, identifying problematic behaviors and proactive strategies to increase diversity awareness.

Diversity Awareness: The goal of this program will include examination of behaviors, both unintentional and intentional, that can discriminate or contribute to a hostile work environment; ways to respond or even intervene in discriminatory acts that showcase positive reinforcing behaviors that show respect and appreciation for staff who are different than you.

Other programs in development include:

Investment in the Facilities Workforce: Development of an Online/Self Study program for Facilities staff leading to a Certificate in Facilities Management.

Staff Development: Developing and facilitating an environment where staff can be developed and grow.

Assessment of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives: Examine across the College our DEI initiatives in a collaborative and supportive manner, including updating the DEI Plan.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Webpage: Creation of a DEI webpage and blog.

Invest in Campus Renewal

The College's culinary kitchen and instructional space at Mill Lane continues towards completion. During December and January, our contractors completed build-out of the walls, ceiling grid, tile flooring, electrical, and lighting for the new space. Information technology infrastructure was ordered and a state-of-the-art teacher demonstration system was designed and approved by our teaching staff. Our kitchen equipment contractor delivered the large vent hood and other large kitchen equipment pieces for inclusion in the space. During January, our building contractors will install an epoxy floor, restroom furnishings, door hardware, interior windows and security camera infrastructure. The Mill Lane space is on schedule for completion in January of 2021.

The Begley Learning Commons is nearing completion. Our general contractor is substantially finished with the project; with the exception of installation of a stainless-steel cap on the 2nd floor glass railing and a few fit and finish punch list items. Our AV installer tested the AV equipment and will return in early January to complete set-up of this equipment. The Information Technology infrastructure in the new Learning Commons is operational and we anticipate receiving a battery back-up system for the IT servers in early January.

During December, the College and our County partners met to discuss additional work on the Learning Commons. Specifically, the College is moving forward with replacement and relocation of the Begley Building's air conditioning cooling tower, which is currently located on the 2nd floor of the building above the lobby. This tower is nearing the end of its service life and needs to be relocated outside of the building and placed on the roof. The County is engaging an engineering firm to begin design of the project which will be completed in the Spring/Summer of 2021.

Another addition to the Learning Commons project will be the renovation of the restrooms located in the lobby of the Begley building near the entrance to the auditorium. The College and County are engaging Envision architects to design the updated restrooms to replace the current facilities that are original to the building. Envision plans to have building design documents ready for construction bidding at the end of January with construction to occur during the Spring of 2021.

Progress continued on other capital projects during December. A contract was finalized between C2 Architecture and the County for design of the Elston Hall Admissions and Welcome Center. Design work on this project will occur during the winter of 2021. Contractors from Ryan Biggs will meet with College personnel on the Elston Façade project in early January to take samples for any hazardous materials involved with the project. Bid documents for the Emergency Generator are being drafted to solicit proposals in late Winter for installation of the generator. The County is working with the successful contractor on a design agreement for the Route 5 Sky Bridge project.

Delivery of Discover Schenectady's informational kiosk planned for the Elston Hall commons was delayed due to December's large snowstorm. Installation was rescheduled for January 2021.

The College continued conversations with Livingston Energy Group concerning installation of EV (Electric Vehicle) charging stations. Livingston shared with the leadership a proposal for installation of EV pumps in four locations around campus. Each location would be near existing buildings so the length needed to run power cables would be minimal. This plan will be shared with the broader College leadership to discuss impact on current parking. Livingston's proposal would require no financial outlay from the College if accepted. The entire project would be supported by grants and rebates from National Grid and NYSERDA. Livingston would manage those grants and any cash flow necessary to implement the project.

The College continues to track and manage employee-related COVID cases. To date, we have reported 51 employee cases to SUNY. These break down as follows:

- 7 Symptomatic
- 17 Close contact w/positive individual
- 7 Proximate exposure - Enough to warrant concern
- 2 Travel related
- 10 Test results (Positive)
- 8 Precautionary

In concert with the Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs we continue to monitor changes to the CDC, New York State, and county quarantine protocols.

Employee recruitment has slowed due to the COVID pandemic and revenue issues facing the College. There are currently four searches underway which include the Vice President of Academic Affairs, a faculty instructor in Business, Criminal Justice and Law (BCJL), the Associate Executive Director of the Schenectady College Career Outreach Center and a Sr. Bookkeeper in the Student Business Office.

Strengthen and Expand Community and Strategic Partnerships

On December 1, Executive Director of Workforce Development and Community Education, Sarah Wilson-Sparrow attended the Greater Capital Region Career Center - Community College Partnership Meeting which brings together community colleges and the workforce development boards to discuss collaborative workforce opportunities.

On December 2, Program Coordinator, Christine McLear attended the Education and Business Partnership Committee meeting with the Capital Region Chamber of Commerce.

On December 2, Executive Director of Workforce Development and Community Education, Sarah Wilson-Sparrow presented at a virtual industry roundtable in partnership with Tompkins Cortland Community College, human services organizations and workforce development partners on initiating an Alcohol and Drug Counseling Aide apprenticeship program.

On December 9, Program Coordinator, Christine McLear and Director and Sarah Wilson-Sparrow attended the Mohonasen Business Advisory Board Meeting.

On December 10, Executive Director of Workforce Development and Community Education, Sarah Wilson-Sparrow presented at the state Education Opportunity Center (EOC) Director's meeting highlighting apprenticeship alignment with EOC offerings.

On December 11, Program Coordinator, Christine McLear and Director and Sarah Wilson-Sparrow attended the Greater Capital Region Workforce Development Board meeting.

On December 11, Executive Director of Workforce Development and Community Education, Sarah Wilson-Sparrow attended the Capital Region Workforce Development Board Executive Committee meeting.

On December 11, 2020, Associate Professor, Dr. Karen Hosmer (oboe), performed as concerto soloist with the Albany Symphony Orchestra in a live-streamed concert at the Universal Preservation Hall in Saratoga, NY. The Concerto was "Extra (ordinarily) Fancy" Concerto for Two Oboes by Viet Cuong. Beethoven Symphony, No. 1 was also on the program.

On December. 11, 2020 adjunct instructors Susan Fedak, (voice) and Al Fedak (organ) performed in a "Festival of Lessons and Carols" at Siena College.

On December 14, Chief of Staff, Paula Ohlhaus and Director of Campus Safety, Michael Munger met with Jason Lecuyer, Director of Special Events regarding finalizing logistics for hosting the December 16 County food drive in the College parking lot. This was the second food drive the College hosted with the County. Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, Sabrina McGinty, Executive Director of Workforce Development and Community Education, Sarah Wilson-Sparrow, and Executive Director of Schenectady College and Career Outreach Center (SCCOC), Dr. DeShawn McGarrity provided promotional materials from Admissions, Workforce Development and Community Education, and the Schenectady College and Career Outreach Center that were placed in all food boxes.

On December 15, COS Paula Ohlhaus virtually met with Public Health Systems Administrator & Public Information Officer, Carrie Dunn-Herrera regarding the success of the community testing site for County residents at the College West parking lot. The site continues to be consistently busy. We will be continuing this partnership with the County through February and then reevaluate. The site will be open from 8:30 am -1:15 pm on Thursdays.

On December 15, Executive Director of Workforce Development and Community Education, Sarah Wilson-Sparrow attended the Apprenticeship Programs at SUNY to discuss statewide Apprenticeship programs.

On Friday, December 18, adjunct instructor Brian Patneau (saxophone) performed a live broadcast of "It's a Jazzy Christmas" presented by Collaborative Studios at Universal Preservation Hall in Saratoga Springs, NY.

On December 18, the Stewardship Officer sent 14 personal holiday cards via Postable to targeted donors and prospects on behalf of the Vice President of Development and External Affairs.

On December 21, the Foundation mailed a December email update to alumni via Constant Contact. This edition touted the College's recent recognition by the Daily Gazette as "Best Local College", included year-end tax information, ways to give, the Holiday Trees of Hope event, and upcoming Workforce Development and Community Education classes.

On December 22, the Vice President of Development and External Affairs mailed "thank you" letters provided by the Stewardship Officer to sponsors of the ***Holiday Trees of Hope*** event.

On December 22, the Foundation mailed out a digital version of the Annual Report to Retirees via Constant Contact.

On December 22, Executive Director of Workforce Development and Community Education, Sarah Wilson-Sparrow attended the One Schenectady Workforce Coalition meeting to discuss COVID response, alignment of community efforts and workforce opportunities/barriers in the region.

On December 22, 2020, Professor Tammy Calhoun took part in a virtual recruiting event as part of an ongoing effort to mitigate the significant shortage of qualified early childhood candidates in the region. Professor Calhoun is working with the New York Early Childhood Professional Development Institute to become a part of a grant-funded initiative that is focused on providing training to local childcare workers.

On December 23, the Vice President of Development and External Affairs had a call with Bob Carreau of the Schenectady Foundation to discuss partnership opportunities.

Musicians of Ma'alwyck, with Adjunct Instructors Ann-Marie Barker Schwartz (violin), Norman Thibodeau (flute), and Assistant Professor Sten Isachsen (guitar) produced and distributed a short film of a serenade for Beethoven's birthday, available on [YouTube](#).

Associate Professor, Dr. Allyson B. Keyser, participated in a brass quintet called Brass Abbey. The group is currently compiling virtual Christmas music for the holidays.

David Wolf, Teaching and Learning Specialist, provided a virtual presentation at the *Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education's* held in Cape Town, South Africa. The presentation was titled, "Increasing the Effectiveness of Faculty Professional Development with Open Educational Resources and Instructional Video." A corresponding paper and video of the presentation will be published as part of the conference proceedings.

Adjunct Instructor Karlinda Caldicott (harp) recorded two short videos of Christmas songs which will be used by Burnt Hills United Methodist Church for their December 20, 2020, service. She continues to perform Sundays at the State Street Presbyterian Church in Schenectady at 10:15 am.

Adjunct instructor Kevin Grudecki (guitar) played for the multimedia project *The New Immigrant Experience* by Felipe Salles' Interconnections Ensemble. The recording is listed in the current issue of *Downbeat* as one of the top recordings of 2020.

The Stewardship Officer began a collaboration on a new alumni engagement project, "A Day in the Life" with Student Activities Advisor, Ben DeAngelis.

The Stewardship Officer designed a survey and contacted inaugural Promise Scholars to begin to gather information. We will follow them through their academic journeys and periodically update donors to the Promise Fund.

With help from Christine McLear and Sarah Wilson-Sparrow, Healthcare training classes are now promoted through Future Skills Exchange (FSX). FSX will market our courses to potential students and workers looking to either enter the healthcare training field, upgrade their skills, or advance their careers in the healthcare industry. This marketing tool will also benefit potential employers searching for healthcare training to support their entity.

Ensure the College's Financial Sustainability

On December 1, the Foundation mailed Promise Campaign updates and pledge reminders to donors.

On December 11, a second quarter holiday appeal mailed to 1,970 constituents.

On December 14, the Vice President of Development and External Affairs visited with top (anonymous) donor to give general College updates.

On December 15, the Foundation sent a Constant Contact to faculty/staff donors to the capital campaign who helped fund the Center for Excellence in Teaching.

The Foundation's Strategic Planning work is underway. On December 16, the Foundation Board participated in a SWOT analysis, and key stakeholders were identified and contacted with an invitation to participate in one-on-one interviews.

On December 19, the Foundation received a call with a verbal bequest commitment of \$25,000 from an alumna to start a new endowed scholarship.

On December 21, the Vice President of Development and External Affairs made personal deliveries of holiday treats to three major donors/prospects.

On December 22, a draft email was sent to Board Chair Lynn Manning, for her individual follow-up with Board members who have not yet pledged to the 2020-2021 Board Appeal.

On December 23, the Stewardship Officer scheduled a ViewSpark to send out on New Year's Eve. Ms. Senneca worked with Mark Evans to utilize a 2017 performance of "Seize the Day" by Totally Pitchin'. This will produce text messages and emails with a "donate" button included.

To support and help ensure the College's financial sustainability, Director of Library Services Jacquie Keleher completed a SUNY Center for Professional Development 12-week grant course. During the course, she focused on grants to help build and support community engagement in the Learning Commons. E-Resources & Collection Development Librarian Giovannine Matheron will complete the same course in the spring of 2021.

Development of the 2021-22 College operating budget continued during December. Each area of the College was tasked with development of a budget for the new fiscal year. Meetings between finance and various departments continued during December in anticipation of the due date in early January.

During December, our auditors from Lumsden & McCormick LLP continued testing transactions and requested information for completion of the audit. The audit is on schedule and we anticipate a presentation at the February 2021 Board of Trustees meeting.

In December, the College began labor negotiations with SEIU, which is the union representing adjunct faculty. To date, there has been an initial meeting and the exchange of proposals. Negotiations will continue into the first part of 2021.

During November and December, the College's human resources office conducted a variety of employee benefits initiatives in preparation of the annual open enrollment period. Activities include:

Conducted the first virtual Employee Benefits Fair on 11/2/20. Vendors were virtually available for employees from 1-3:30pm. Participating vendors included: Aflac, AIG, Benetech (FSA), Cana Rx, Capital EAP, Davis Vision, Empire BC/BS, Liberty Mutual, NYS Deferred Compensation, NYSLRS (ERS), Pro Act, TIAA and Voya.

Conducted the Annual Employee Open Enrollment from 11/2/20-11/23/20. Processed over 50 transactions (benefits changes, health insurance waivers, FSAs) from Open Enrollment effective 1/1/21.

Created a Benefits Vendor Contact Page on HR website: <https://sunysccc.edu/About-Us/Office-of-Human-Resources/Vendor-Contact-Information.html>.

Provided Virtual Individual Retirement Sessions with representatives from AIG, TIAA, VOYA and NYS Deferred Compensation throughout Fall 2020.

Provided webinars through Capital EAP about managing stress and anxiety, diet, mindfulness and motivating change in the Fall of 2020.

During the Fall of 2020, our Human Resources office engaged Benetech to conduct the College's first ever Employee Dependent Eligibility Audit

In November and December, the College solicited employees eligible for a health benefit waiver. Employees are eligible for a waiver if they have full coverage through a spouse, retirement or some

other mechanism. The waiver process resulted in 22 employees electing a waiver for themselves and/or family; which is four less than in previous years. The projected savings of the benefit waiver program exceeds \$462,000.

The CARES Review Committee has approved funding for 361 students in the amount of \$995,235 since April.

President's Outreach

On December 9, I along with VP Ryan and COS Ohlhaus virtually met with County Manager Rory Fluman, and Public Health Director Keith Brown regarding COVID Vaccine storage. The College and the County have signed a MOU allowing the County to use the College's -80 freezer for vaccine storage. We are in good stead with supporting this national issue.

On December 15, I held a special College COVID-19 Surveillance Pool Testing Open Forum to provide the College community with additional information on COVID-19 Surveillance Pool Testing as well as an opportunity for the College community to ask questions about our testing protocols and the virus. The forum was led by Sabrina McGinty, Edmund McTernan, Paula Ohlhaus and Patrick Ryan.

On December 16th, the Schenectady County Human Rights Commission held a ZOOM meeting, of which I participated in.

On December 18, 2020, Confidential Secretary Deborah Spass and Chief of Staff Paula Ohlhaus donated food to the City Mission on behalf of the College's Board of Trustees.

Wishing everyone a happy, healthy and safe new year!

