

President's Report
October 2022

Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Sherman Ortiz and Steve Fragale held a misconceptions Jeopardy in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month. The categories featured representation percentages, differences in culture, and the geography differences and common misconceptions people face. The answers to the question were in the format of multiple choice or placed with the answer in the question.

Sherman Ortiz with Steve Fragale, Dean of Student Affairs, SGA, Leomani Alvarez, student worker, and Denisse Rodriguez and Hewa Mohammadi, students, worked together to presenting modern unique questions Hispanic/Latinx students face today. Jeopardy was held in Elston cafeteria Thursday September 29th.

On Wednesday, September 14th, Interim Chief Diversity Officer Alicia Richardson, along with Tiombe Farley, Director of EOP, Pamela McCall, Director of College & High School Partners, Dr. Babette Faehmel, Professor of History, and Thairy Echevarria, Admissions Counselor, attended the YMCA Black and Latino Achieves Event to re-launch the program. During the event, past achievers spoke, and Lieutenant Governor Antonio Delgado gave the keynote address.

On September 21, 2022, Karen Tanski, Executive Director of Marketing and Public Relations, met with Interim Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) Alicia Richardson and Director of College & High School Partnerships Pam McCall to identify and develop a plan for additional communications supporting Hispanic Heritage Month, happening between 9/15/22-10/15/22. They also began the process to plan for future celebration months such as Pride Month, Indigenous People's Month, Black History Month, and others.

On September 27, 2022, Michelle Kraines attended the SUNY REACH Pathways Workshop to develop career pathways and credit for prior learning process to make education accessible and improve racial equity for adult credentials in higher education.

On September 27, Karen Tanski met with CDO Alicia Richardson to review the College's advertising and marketing campaigns from the prior six months and discuss ideas to further incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion in marketing and communications as Karen Tanski develops the strategic marketing plan for the College.

On Tuesday, September 27, an Office of Diversity and Inclusion sponsored event took place at 7:00pm in the Music Building. The Hispanic Heritage Month event, "Listening Session and

Discussion of Music by Latinx Musicians”, was a wonderfully engaging conversation moderated by Professor David Gleason (Adjunct Instructor of Ethnomusicology) , and included the following panelists: Alex Torres (director, composer and bassist - Alex Torres and His Latin Orchestra), Walter Ramos (composer, singer and director - Mundo Nuevo), and Tony Garcia (multi percussionist - Alex Torres and His Latin Orchestra). Audience members listened to music by Latinx music artists, and learned about the origins of Salsa and Merengue, particular musicians and their contributions, as well as their major influences.

On Friday, September 30th, Interim Chief Diversity Officer Alicia Richardson, Professor Babette Faehmel, and student moderator Amira Stevens-Salih, along with two other students, recorded a podcast episode dedicated to the Office of Diversity and Inclusion theme for the year: “The Moves That Matter”. The student participants discussed the moves and actions that made them feel seen, heard, and helped to foster a sense of belonging on campus.

The integration of Blackboard Ally into our D2L instance was finished and now students can easily download content in multiple formats (including MP3 audio & BeeLine Reader). This radically increases the inclusivity of our online content. Implementation of the new development process and use of a new course template have improved the accessibility of our courses.

As part of the College’s celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, this September, in conjunction with the CDO, Teaching and Learning Specialist David Wolf will be teaching two sessions on Salsa and Merengue. The sessions will both include kinesthetic instruction on the dance and details on the cultural-historical aspects of the two dances.

Collection Development and Electronic Resources Librarian Giovannine Matheron continued her work in the Allyship Professional Development Cohort. She is currently in talks with a keynote/workshop speaker for October 10 and participated in producing a video to advertise Allyship week.

Teaching and Learning Specialist David Wolf worked with the DEI committee to finalize plans for SUNY Schenectady’s first Allyship week. It will consist of multiple sessions about various aspects of allyship. To prepare for the event, he scripted and edited a promotional video.

Assistant Professor Vanessa Traver gave a tour of the Joan Dembinski Confections Laboratory for his Honorable Excellency Ambassador Dr. Chola Milambo, Zambian Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations and his guest the Zambian Diaspora Spokesman Stephen Banda. She explained the bean-to-bar chocolate making process and talked about the specialized equipment used in the lab.

Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Cheryl Renée Gooch, served as an invited guest commentator for the annual Octavius Catto Medal program at the Union League of Philadelphia. Her topic: “Citizenship and Voting Rights”.

Delivering a Meaningful Student Experience

Dean of Business, Criminal Justice and Law (BCJL) Dr. Hector Iweka met with 2000 alumni students, former adjunct and Foundation Board member Chris Wessell to collaborate on the development of written and video case studies to improve the Division's "learning by doing" approach to teaching.

Ensemble-in-residence, the Musicians of Ma'alwyck, together with adjunct faculty Ann-Marie Barker Schwartz, Alfred Fedak, Norman Thibodeau, and Associate Professor Sten Isachsen, recorded audio with guest Gabriella Pizzolo (singer/actress from "Stranger Things" and NYC Broadway shows like "Matilda" and "Fun Home") and video off-campus with the assistance of students in Audio Recording III.

Assistant Professor Carol Maimone was invited to be the guest speaker at the Adirondack chapter of the American Academy of Professional Coders (AAPC) at Glens Falls Hospital. She presented on ICD-10-CM updates for 2023 and share about her teaching and the Medical Coding and Billing program at SUNY Schenectady.

Teaching and Learning Specialist David Wolf finished integrating Brainfuse Online Tutoring in D2L which allows students to schedule sessions with tutors.

Director of Library Services Jacquie Keleher hosted the first session in the "Come Watch With Us" series held at the media wall in the Begley Learning Commons with the short film, Labor's Struggle. The film highlights how industrialization changed work and Labor's struggle with industrialization.

Professor Babette Faehmel and Director of Library Services Jacquie Keleher co-hosted a Constitution Day event with Student Activities Advisor Sherman Ortiz where parts of the movie What Does the Constitution Mean to Me were followed by a debate/discussion about creating a new constitution for the United States.

On September 9, 2022, Lauren Lankau and Sarah Wilson-Sparrow attended the Cannabis Employment and Education Development (CEED) meeting with SUNY partners.
9/9/22 Lauren Lankau and Sarah Wilson-Sparrow met with culinary faculty members to discuss development of cannabis curriculum.

TRIO has launched the Success Seminar series, a collection of weekly workshops aimed at skill building, academic preparation, and future planning. Offered both in-person and online, the sessions take place on Mondays and Fridays, with topics including Textbook Reading Tips and Tricks, Note-Taking and Committing Info to Memory, and Campus Resources and Supports.

Mary Silvestri, Testing Center Coordinator, completed her DEI review, with CDO, Alicia Richardson and implemented two new changes to the Testing Center based on the process. These changes include more inclusive language with signage and more attempts to communicate with faculty to create a more equitable testing environment for students in the Testing Center.

Pamela McCall and Professor Matt Farron participated in the Schenectady High School Business Entrepreneurship CTE program external review. This included local business owners, college and high school instructors, as well as Schenectady City School District administrators.

The College has entered an agreement with LifeWorks which is an online platform to provide therapeutic mental health services to augment the College's own supportive counseling. The product is an application that students can use and offers 24-7-365 free, real-time access to licensed mental health counselors by phone, text, or video chat. We're grateful for this additional mental health support.

The Food Pantry usage is steadily increasing. On Sept. 7 we had 20 orders scheduled to be picked up--the most in any one day in Pantry history. Electrical outlets were installed in preparation for two new freezers to be delivered. Another student worker was hired, Maureen Mbangwa (a welcome addition to the staff!).

The financial aid office delivered a financial literacy interest survey to our fall 2022 students. The purpose of the survey is to identify financial literacy topics of interest, level of self-efficacy related to important financial topics, and the areas in which they felt least confident. 110 students responded to the survey which identified budgeting, savings, and investing as areas in which they were most interested. With home buying, taxes, debt management, and credit cards as they areas in which they felt least confident. This data will inform our event planning for the 2022-2023 academic year.

In August, the U.S. Department announced the Fresh Start initiative which provided a path for defaulted federal student loan borrowers to regain eligibility for federal student aid. Prior to this initiative, borrowers with a defaulted loan were ineligible for financial aid which was a barrier to their education. Upon this announcement, we identified 32 students who submitted a FAFSA to SUNY Schenectady but were previously ineligible for aid due to their default loan. The financial aid office contacted all 32 students to inform them of the Fresh Start initiative in an attempt to help them return to school. 7 of these students began classes in fall 2022 and 3 additional students expressed interest for returning in spring 2023.

Building Organizational Effectiveness

Our roofing contractors completed replacement of two roofs over the culinary kitchen area of Elston Hall. With completion of this project, all roof surfaces over the original Van Curler hotel kitchen were replaced during the past two years.

The Begley Lobby restrooms project was finished in early October. The former lobby restrooms on the right-side of the auditorium were renovated and two new ADA/Gender Neutral restrooms were added to the left-side of the lobby. Completion of the new restrooms provides the recommended number of facilities required without the need to open the learning commons space for auditorium hosted events.

A design engineer assessed the culinary kitchen fresh air intakes located on the roof of Elston Hall.

Work began in October for replacement of carpet and floor surfaces in Stockade Hall rooms 101 and 102. This is part of a larger project to refresh the college's two lecture center rooms that will include new flooring and educational technology. It is anticipated the new flooring work will be completed in mid-October 2022.

Cracked and peeling vinyl flooring in the Gateway Hall child care center was replaced in early October 2022 to ensure a safe and pleasing environment for our on-campus childcare and school educational programs.

Electrical wiring was replaced in all major IT switch closets as part of the first phase of the College's IT Infrastructure project. This electrical upgrade allows for additional IT switch gear to be added to our IT closets as needed for replacement of our high-speed connectivity network. The college's inventory of building space on file with SUNY was updated to reflect the addition of Mill Lane, 13 State Street and reconfiguration of the Begley Learning Commons. Room size measurements and revised building layouts were updated to accurately reflect the college's physical space. This data is used for bonding purposes.

In early October, Livingston Energy installed six Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations on the college's new So. Church Parking Lot with assistance of a \$36,604 National Grid Make Ready Incentive grant. The EV station infrastructure was installed as part of the larger So. Church Street project.

Mary Silvestri, Welcome Center Triage Point, is working to create a knowledge database to assist staff in the new Welcome Center. This knowledge database, housed on the tawk.to platform, will allow staff to easily search and find information on offices and departments through an easily updated web database.

Anna Westerman, Academic Advisor II/VA Certifying Official, prepared for and worked with a VA representative for the VA Audit.

Dale Miller, Director of Institutional Research, with the assistance of Dr. David Clickner, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives & Planning, and Patrick Ryan, Vice President of Administration, completed and submitted the Middle States Annual Institutional Update as well as completing and submitting two New York State Education Department (NYSED) data reports and five SUNY required data reports.

COVID remains a threat in the capital region. The College was able to procure more than 5,000 rapid home tests to be distributed to students and employees to replace campus surveillance pool testing.

Human Resources (HR) has collaborated with Information Technology (IT) to develop a digital IT Access and Equipment request form for onboarding new employees. This new form eliminates an antiquated paper process for a more streamlined efficient digital process that gathers all necessary information for IT services to complete onboarding for new employees. It also electronically provides other offices, such as the registrar's office, with necessary information for new faculty/adjuncts, as well as notifying Union leaders of new members.

HR has revised the old Reference Check Form for conducting reference checks on final candidates. This form was reviewed by the attorney and updates were made accordingly. We currently have 18 open searches which consist of 3 Civil Service, 2 faculty, and 13 professional positions.

Teaching and Learning Specialist David Wolf worked with Open SUNY and the Digital Learning Environment to develop the SUNY Schenectady Course Template; a banded template added to developmental shells to ensure that D2L courses have uniform navigation and to encourage best practices for meeting the OSCQR rubric. A direct link to the bookstore has been added to the Course Template to ensure that developed courses provide students the ability to easily access the bookstore online and acquire the appropriate books.

Teaching and Learning Specialist David Wolf implemented a new course development process. To ensure archival integrity, faculty cannot manipulate previous versions of classes, however, they now have access to developmental shells in a separate folder to enable course revision and improvement. Each development shell comes preloaded with the SUNY Schenectady Course Template.

Teaching and Learning Specialist David Wolf has created and painstakingly hand-coded more than 620 development shells. Attempts to automate the process are progressing, with the goal of ensuring that all past and future courses have a parallel development shell in D2L to create a repository of pre-developed classes that faculty access in order to spend less time developing similar courses and more time on instruction. This increases our ability to evaluate and assess course quality and better prepare us for Middle States review.

Ensuring Financial Sustainability and Self-Sufficiency

The College's 2022-23 operating budget was passed in September by the SUNY Board of Trustees.

The College began processing \$506,517 in HEERF direct student support distributions received as part of the HEERF III and Supplemental Support (SSARP) grant received by the college in mid-summer of 2022.

SUNY Schenectady submitted a plan to SUNY System Administration on how it plans to spend \$951,005 in restricted State allocation during 2022-23 to support enrollment growth.

The Office of Administration released a Request for Quotes for the purchase of two medium-duty trucks needed to pull the new mobile classroom trailers funded by a SUNY mobile classroom grant funded project. Preliminary work also began on an on-campus site for a potential grant-funded garage to shelter the mobile classrooms and accessories.

Michelle Ragucci, Director of Academic Services and Perkins Grant Officer, submitted the 2021-22 Perkins Grant final report to the State Education Department, which outlined the College's spending, activities, and outcomes for this past grant year.

Thairy Echevarria, Admissions Advisor, David Gonzalez, Director of Athletics, Laura Sprague, Director of Admissions, Tiombé Farley, Director of EOP, Ben DeAngelis, Director of TRIO, Kiersten Janis, Student Success Coach, participated in several recruitment activities across the Capital Region. This included the CASDA College Fairs at Cohoes High School, Shenendehowa High School, Guilderland High School, Shaker High School, Bethlehem High School, Schalmont High School, and Hudson Valley Community College. Additionally, they have participated in the CDCA Caravan attending events at Tamarac High School, Troy High School, Waterford-Halfmoon High School, Stillwater High School, Mohonasen High School, The Heatly School, Hudson Falls High School, Ravena High School, Scotia-Glenville High School, Schuylerville High School, and LaSalle. Additional events include the FMCC College Fair and Lansingburg High School Open House.

Founder's Week presented by Marshall & Sterling was celebrated with a mailing to alumni, daily calls to alumni by students and Foundation staff, a Constant Contact email with a 29% open rate, and a follow up mailing to individuals who could not be reached by phone. New monthly gifts projected at a total of \$1,380 annually, and (2) additional gifts received in response to the follow up mailing so far.

Ten media mentions/engagements for September were spread across print/online news articles and television news coverage.

The School of Music held Round 2 of their inaugural High School Jazz Competition which is projected to be one of their major recruitment initiatives for the 2022-23 academic year. Six high school finalists performed in the auditorium accompanied by School of Music adjunct faculty David Gleason, Bobby Kendall, and Bob Halek, and judges included adjuncts Dylan Canterbury and Kevin Grudecki, joined by celebrity guest judges and jazz luminaries Geoffrey Keezer and Gillian Margot who also provided feedback. The entire competition was filmed and will be released in 2023 as a mini-version of "America's Got Talent" featuring these young jazz musicians. The Grand Prize is a recording session in the School of Music studio, and the top three will be featured as a soloist with the College Jazz Ensemble during their May 3, 2023 concert. \$1,000 scholarships will also be awarded to any finalist who attends SUNY Schenectady.

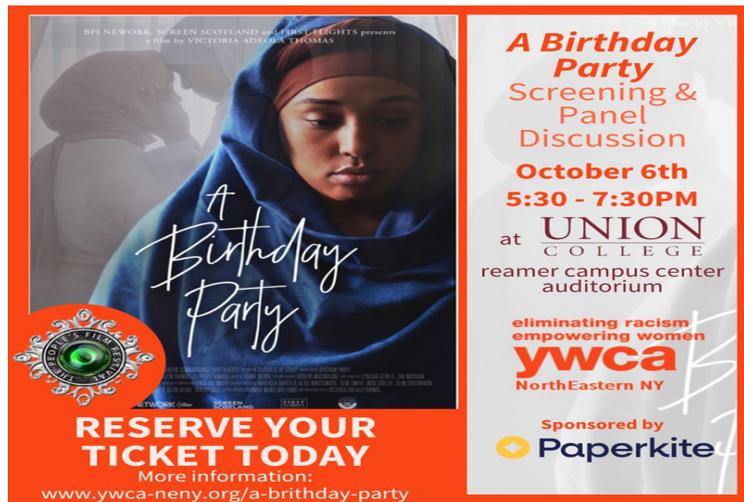
September 7, 2022, Lauren Lankau participated in a meeting the NYS DOL and Schenectady to promote sponsorship of apprenticeship and recruit for Child Development Associate Micro-credential.

President's Outreach

On September 20, 2022, Dr. Moono had the opportunity to greet and speak with the President of Zambia, The Honorable Hakainde Hichilema, at the Zambia Presidential Benefit Gala in New York.



On October 6, 2022, Dr. Moono served as a panelist for the film screening of “A Birthday Party” directed by Victoria Thomas, at Union College’s Reamer Campus Auditorium. This event was in collaboration with Union College, SUNY Schenectady County Community College, and The People’s Film Festival. The screening was followed by a live interview with Victoria Thomas and a panel discussion committed to looking at Domestic Violence through multiple valuable perspectives and uplifting immigrant communities and their stories.



A Birthday Party is a short film depicting twin sisters, Aisha and Fatima, making plans for their birthday. While Aisha enjoys a small surprise with her boyfriend Dan, Fatima has more sinister intentions involving her teenage daughter Sukeina. After a birthday lunch over which looms the memory of painful cultural practice, the sisters return to their homes in anticipation of birthday festivities. Aisha calls Fatima for advice on a recipe and is shocked to hear the voice of the aunt who performed a painful FGM procedure on them many years ago. Distraught at the thought that the same practice will be carried out on her adolescent niece, Fatima races over to her sister’s flat in an attempt to break difficult ties with tradition.

This film was chosen to illustrate the intersection of identity, culture, and the preservation of cultural norms while also addressing the effects of dominant culture on tradition. The goal of the film was to provide a multidimensional lens to a global perspective that allows for thought-provoking conversation and leads to true allyship.

Panelists include: Founder of The People’s Film Festival, Veronica Keitt, SUNY Schenectady County Community College President, Dr. Steady Moono, Executive Director and CEO of the Women of Color Network Inc., Anzala Alozie, and YWCA NENY’s Director of Clinical Services and Community Engagement, Sarah Caterina.