



MANY VOICES, ONE CALL – The Strategic Plan to 2026

**President’s Report**

December 16, 2024

**PROMOTING DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**

*Office of Diversity and Inclusion*

Catia Laird de Polanco, Chief Diversity Officer, and Jacquie Keleher, Director of Library Services, hosted two Books Beyond Borders reading group sessions to discuss “There There” by Tommy Orange for Native American Heritage Month. The Spring 2025 reads have been announced: “James” by Percival Everett for Black History Month, “The Personal Librarian” by Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray for Women’s History Month, and “The Other Americans” by Laila Lalami for Arab American Heritage Month.

On November 12, 2024, Catia Laird de Polanco, Chief Diversity Officer, attended a LGBTQIA+ History Month Panel that was co-hosted by SUNY’s Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and the Office of Executive Recruitment and Leadership Development.

On November 14, 2024, Catia Laird de Polanco, Chief Diversity Officer, attended a National Inclusive Excellence Leadership Academy workshop that explored change management strategies.

### Academic Affairs

This month, Oscar Bogran, Adjunct Instructor of Art was recognized for his work with students and Safe, Inc. and their efforts to raise awareness of human trafficking. He was the subject of a front page, feature article in The Daily Gazette entitled *Art as Activism*. (1.4)

On November 4 and 25, Jacquie Keleher, Director of Library Services, and History Professor Dr. Babette Faehmel hosted the first and second sessions in their AI Unlocked Series for students. The first session focused on ethical uses of AI in college and the second focused on writing effective prompts. (2.5)

On November 7 & 8, Ingrid O'Connell, Professor from the School of Hotel, Culinary Arts, and Tourism and Kessa Cooper, HCAT student attended the MPI Fall Focus conference in Rochester, NY. Topics were varied and most notably included a workshop exploring SPARK AI, an exclusive event tool designed by industry professionals. The Keynote speaker was Chase Brunson, who is recognized as one of the foremost transgender rights advocates in the meetings industry and often serves as a subject matter expert on DEI best practices. (1.4)

On November 16, Ralf Schauer, Distinguished Professor Emeritus gave a presentation to the Saratoga Grange, an agricultural and environmental organization in Saratoga County entitled "Building toward a Sustainable Future, the intersection of immigration and agriculture of Guatemala and New York State". He discussed his volunteer experiences working in Guatemala with *Masons on a Mission*, human and environmental conditions and their impact on our need for workers in NY in the agriculture, construction, and forestry sectors. (1.4)

On November 18, Jacquie Keleher, Director of Library Services, participated in the SUNY Online Educational Resources (OER) Leads meeting. The meeting focused on correctly reporting the use of OER by our Instructors to SUNY and introduced new OER tools. Instructors at the College have been increasing their use of OER and it is important to record usage accurately. This is an important aspect of keeping the cost of college down for our students and it also affects operations of the College Bookstore. (1.5)

November has been especially busy for Giovannine Matheron, Collection Development and E-Resources Librarian. She explored professional development centered around the topics of Students and Generative AI, Auditing library collections for DEI, Restorative Justice and LGBTQ+ History. (Gen P1)

### Strategic Initiatives and Planning

The Office of Admissions hosted Instant Admissions programs at twelve local high schools across November, including seven districts that offer district-wide free lunch programs. In-county districts Schenectady, Mohonasen, and Scotia-Glenville participated in November dates. Earlier and more robust communication between the College and schools allowed for a fuller student experience with receipt of a print acceptance packet, personalized enrollment advisement, and formal acceptance email on the same day to increase engagement and follow through (Gen. P1).

Kevin Rivenburg, Director of Admissions and Matriculated Enrollment, and Mark Bessette, Assistant Dean of Financial Aid, presented at Schenectady High School's Financial Aid Night, more than 50 students, parents, and vision supporters from the senior class attended to learn about the general college financial aid process and SUNY Schenectady's opportunities. Schenectady County Higher Education

Promise and the November 16, 2024 Open House were highlighted and included in flyers handed out to participants (Gen. P1; 2.3; 2.4).

Kevin Rivenburg, Director of Admissions and Matriculated Enrollment, and Anna Sherman, Admissions Advisor, hosted the class-wide direct admissions program with Duanesburg Central Schools on November 6, 2024. Collaboration between the College and the high school allowed for 50 students' contact information to be entered into Slate CRM in advance to receive custom communications and a personalized acceptance letter specific to Duanesburg and Schenectady County residents, including the Schenectady County Higher Education Promise. The presentation led to 26 of the 50 graduates submitting applications, exceeding the number of submission in the last three years for the school district (Gen. P1; 2.1; 2.4).

Kevin Rivenburg, Director of Admissions and Matriculated Enrollment, and Anna Sherman, Admissions Advisor, organized two School of Music-specific school tour groups with Dr. Christopher Brellocks, Dean of the School of Music. Special presentation and tour stops included interactive activities in the recording studio, practice spaces, and the auditorium to raise awareness of music careers, music education, and SUNY Schenectady's programs for these students on field trips while on route to attend other music-focused activities in the Capital Region (Gen. P1; 2.3; 2.4; 2.5).

ASAP Program created and distributed a November newsletter to current ASAP students (1.4).

#### *Schenectady College and Career Outreach Center*

On November 13, 2024, SCCOC hosted the second annual Community Connections: A Partnership Networking Breakfast at The Edison Downtown. Approximately sixty leaders from the community were in attendance. Attendees had the opportunity to learn about the services offered by SCCOC, as well as network with one another.

Ms. Jaimee King, Executive Director of SCCOC, met with the Director of the Family Life Center at City Mission to discuss potential participant housing referrals for their program.

Ms. Elizabeth Cowan, Participant Services Specialist of SCCOC, attended the School at Northeast's College and Trade Fair to connect with high school students and their families.

Ms. Elizabeth Cowan attended the Partnering for Progress: Navigating WIOA Together event hosted by the Columbia Green and Capital Region Workforce Development Boards.

## DELIVERING A MEANINGFUL STUDENT EXPERIENCE

### Academic Affairs

On November 4 - 8, TRIO celebrated their First-Generation students. Activities were held throughout the week and culminated with First-Generation Day on the 8<sup>th</sup> to commemorate the Higher Education Act of 1965 which expanded opportunities for underserved populations. To honor the occasion, TRIO organized gratitude boards placed around campus and an Open Mic Hour for students to share their experiences as the first in their family to go to college. (2.3 & 2.4)

On November 6, Jay Larkin and Kim Otis, Professors from the School of Hotel, Culinary Arts, and Tourism represented SUNY Schenectady at CTE Works 2024 held at the Saratoga City Center. The event provided an excellent platform to connect with over 1400 local high school students in grades 9-12 who are researching career opportunities. They highlighted the unique opportunities available to students interested in pursuing careers in the hospitality industry and they extended invitations to students and their advisors to visit SUNY Schenectady for personalized tours. (2.4)

On November 8, Early College in the High School and Schenectady County School District staff chaperoned a student visit to SUNY Plattsburgh to raise awareness of transfer opportunities. (2.4)

On November 16, Mary Silvestri, TRIO Director and the Academic Specialists brought 30 of their students on an exciting day trip to New York City including a visit to SUNY New Paltz, where students toured the campus and explored potential transfer opportunities. They also went to Rockefeller Center and toured the iconic Radio City Music Hall. The adventure continued with a Broadway show, followed by a visit to the top of the Empire State Building. (2.3 & 2.4)

On Monday, November 18, 2024, LPP staff and Katelyn Litwak, an Intern from University of Albany studying for her Masters in Social Work and the Early College High School Success Coaches Kiersten Janis and Jessica Krawec brought a group of 50 high school students to SUNY Morrisville for a college informational visit. (2.4)

Michelle Ragucci, Director of Academic Services, designed and distributed Final Exam Trackers for students to help them prepare for final exam week. She distributed them throughout the Testing Center, the Learning Commons, and the other student success/access offices. (2.3)

The first half of November was extremely busy for the School of Music. They partnered with outside organizations to host a student educational clinic and community jazz performance, a strings masterclass by the Ulysses Quartet, a performance of 4-hand Piano music, the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) Art Song Festival in which current students and community members participated and under the direction of Mark Evans, Associate Professor and they also presented the opera *Amahl and the Night Visitors* with alumni and current students. This was the first ever full opera/musical theater production presented by The School of Music. Data was collected to determine whether future productions will support division recruitment goals. (Gen. P2)

### Strategic Initiatives and Planning

Kevin Rivenburg, Director of Admissions and Matriculated Enrollment, chaperoned the SUNY Schenectady bus trip for current students to attend SUNY Oneonta's Fall Open House on Saturday,

November 2, 2024. Sixteen current students attended to engage in campus fairs, academic program sessions, as well as dedicated transfer sessions and on-campus dining sponsored by the SUNY Multi-Campus Transfer Funds grant (2.3; 2.5).

The Office of Admissions hosted the annual SUNY Schenectady Fall Open House on Saturday, November 16, 2024. 136 unique prospective students and their guests (estimated at 350 in total with guests) attended fairs/expos, enrollment presentations, as well as interactive demonstrations hosted by Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, Schenectady College and Career Outreach Center, and Workforce Development & Community Education. Unique “signature” experiences that highlighted the College’s distinguishing offerings included refreshments served from the Mobile Food Service food truck, Mobile Classroom demo with virtual reality goggles, the opening of the Rise Gallery exhibit, and the first public opening of the eSports arena. The 136 checked-in student tally exceeds the 2022 and 2023 Open Houses by over 30 students, approximately 30%. Multiple staff members from across the College contributed to the success of this event and were in attendance on the 16<sup>th</sup> (Gen P2; 2.3; 3.1).

### Student Affairs

#### Wellness and Student Support Services

The holiday period is an extremely busy period for the food pantry. The food pantry served 169 households and 551 individuals during the November 1 through November 22 time frame. We have 125 participants signed up for Thanksgiving meals with 20 on the waitlist. Meals will be distributed on November 25 and 26. The food pantry also encourages spring 2025 course registration by providing their annual snack attack incentive with 15 participants as of November 23.

#### Financial Aid

Financial Aid Office Participation at Open House: The financial aid office participated in the Open House event on November 16th, which was a collaborative effort between admissions and financial aid. Mark Bessette, Assistant Dean of Financial Aid, partnered with Kevin Rivenburg, Director of Admissions, to cohost presentations aimed at simplifying the college application process. These sessions highlighted the ease of applying to SUNY Schenectady and provided a clear guide to navigating the financial aid application process. During the presentations, the Schenectady County Higher Education Promise Scholarship was prominently featured. This scholarship offers six credits' worth of assistance to eligible Schenectady County residents, emphasizing the institution’s commitment to making higher education accessible and affordable. In addition, Cynthia Decker, Assistant Director of Financial Aid, was present to meet with families and answer questions about the financial aid process at SUNY Schenectady.

High School Financial Aid Presentations: Mark Bessette, Assistant Dean of Financial Aid, conducted Financial Aid Night presentations at both Schenectady High School and Waterford-Halfmoon High School. At the Schenectady event, he was joined by Kevin Rivenburg, Director of Admissions, to provide a collaborative perspective on the college application process.

The presentations emphasized the importance of completing financial aid applications and understanding how financial aid integrates into the overall admission process. Additionally, the Schenectady County Higher Education Promise Scholarship was highlighted at both events, offering six credits' worth of scholarship assistance to eligible Schenectady County residents. These efforts aimed to inform students and families about the resources available to make college more accessible and affordable.

FAFSA and Scholarship Preparation for the 2025-2026 Academic Year: The 2025-2026 FAFSA opened on November 21st, ahead of its published December 1st launch date. Nationwide, the rollout of the new FAFSA has been significantly smoother compared to last year. The Financial Aid office has completed all necessary setup in Banner and is prepared to begin receiving FAFSA submissions in December. The New York State TAP application is scheduled to open on December 1st. The financial aid office is ready to publicize the opening of the FAFSA and TAP, with mailings and postcards set to be distributed on December 15th. These efforts aim to ensure students are informed and encouraged to complete their financial aid applications promptly.

#### SGA/Student Activities

Student Activities Advisor Christina Charette and 4 SGA students attended SUNY's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fall Conference and Student Assembly in Syracuse November 15-November 17, 2024.

#### Workforce Development and Community Education

November 8, 2024, Matthew Maloy presented the Mobile Labs during Stem Day.

November 11, 2024, Lauren Lankau and Sarah Wilson-Sparrow presented at the Schenectady Kiwanis International meeting about Workforce Development and Community Education opportunities.

#### Information Technology Services

**In Progress** – Improve campus wide Wi-Fi coverage.

- **Wi-fi Coverage Audit:** Contractor has been scheduled to complete the Wi-fi coverage audit Dec 15. After their report we will proceed with the next phase of the project to improve Wi-Fi coverage.

#### Development Office

The Foundation has supported enrollment efforts by making certain Foundation scholarships, totaling \$20,700 available to Admissions to use as enrollment incentives, and reminding current scholarship students to enroll in spring classes to keep their Foundation scholarships support.

Foundation staff continue to organize and participate in Panera donation pick-ups each Monday.

Vice President and Stewardship Officer Liuzzi are active Middle States participants.

#### Marketing and Public Relations

In November, SUNY launched a new ad campaign supporting campuses that have rostered an eSports team through the SUNY league as well as campuses that have eSports arenas. With SUNY Schenectady fielding their first official team of 28 players in the Fall 2024 season, and a new arena set to open in December, the college was included in the marketing campaign. The paid campaign was placed in Twitch and YouTube, targeting 17-18 year olds, messaging program awareness and recruitment at SUNY schools. The landing page, <https://www.suny.edu/esports/> features options for interested students to select institutions to connect with that respective college(s)'s eSports coach or search for degree programs

within SUNY that are related to eSports. Within four weeks of the campaign running, SUNY Schenectady has received 71 leads. Karen Tanski, Executive Director of Marketing and Public Relations and Kevin Rivenburg, Director of Admissions and Matriculated Enrollment, have provided guidance and training for the college's eSports Coordinator and Team Advisor, Cooper Hewison, to engage with these leads as the first point of contact they communicate with, developed marketing materials to support the interactions, and advised on the processes to follow to nurture these leads. Custom email communications have been built within Slate to further engage these leads in the admissions process and Cooper is using Discord (a gamer-specific channel) to continue outreach to them. The ad campaign runs through December.

Marketing and Public Relations developed a press event for the launch of the new eSports Arena, held on December 3, 2024. This included partnering with Student Affairs and the President's Office, as well as Sara Saplin, SUNY System Director of University Life and Opportunity Programs Operations, to develop the speaker portion of the program. Valerie Dent, Interim Vice Chancellor for Community Colleges and Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Deputy for Student Success Research, was secured to speak on behalf of SUNY. Daniel Van Buren, an SGA Member, President of the Gaming Club, and Fall 2024 eSports athlete, was tapped to be the student speaker. Steve Fragale, Associate Vice President of Student Affairs, Dr. Moono, and New York State Assemblymember Angelo Santabarbara also spoke. At the conclusion of the speaking agenda, guests followed the eSports team in entering the new arena as it opened for the first time to tour the area, which features 15 liquid-cooled MSI Aegis RS2 gaming PCs and 27" monitors, as well as consoles for Nintendo Switch, Xbox, and PlayStation. There is a two-person broadcast booth for calling all the play-by-play action. For those seeking a more casual atmosphere for friendly matches or more traditional board and role games, the gaming lounge offers a welcoming atmosphere where students of all skill levels are encouraged to be a part of the esports community. Marketing performed research to identify the local high schools in the capital region that have eSports teams or clubs in order to include their coaches, advisors, principal, and/or superintendent in extending an invitation to attend the event and bring awareness to the new facility and pathway opportunities for their high school eSports players. Four high schools sent representatives, including Schenectady School District, Berne Knox-Westerlo, Cohoes High School, and Niskayuna. All four schools have expressed strong interest in bringing their teams to tour the new arena and the campus as a whole. The Berne Knox coach also sits on the board for ESSEF (Empire State Scholastic Esports Federation), the body that helps support and grow eSports in Middle and High Schools across New York State and has expressed his plans to further promote the college to the ESSEF member schools. Extensive branding work was done by Marketing for the new arena, along with signage, promotional materials, web page, media advisories, press release, photography, videography, and social media. Reporters from CBS News 6, ABC News 10, NBC News 13, Daily Gazette, and WAMC were in attendance and all five outlets provided coverage in multiple broadcast segments that day as well as online stories and social media posts.

The four-week advertising campaign promoting the SUNY Schenectady Open House event concluded on November 15, and advertising was transitioned over to new messaging focused on driving enrollments for Spring 2025, Winter session, and the Schenectady Higher Education Promise. Advertising consists of a mix of radio, billboards, print, email, paid and organic social media, digital and geofencing ads, SEO, and the two LED entrance signs.

## BUILDING ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

### Office of Diversity and Inclusion

On November 1, 2024, Catia Laird de Polanco, Chief Diversity Officer, held a DEI Dialogues Series session to discuss *cultural competency* and *cultural humility* and the benefits and limitations of each concept.

Catia Laird de Polanco, Chief Diversity Officer, submitted evidence to Middle State working groups on Standards I and II.

### Academic Affairs

Dave Wolf, Director of Instructional Design and Online Learning programmed Brightspace to automatically enroll faculty members to an Academic Divisions Space where Deans will share information with them and also to automatically enroll EOP students in an EOP Development Area daily to ensure that they have access to tools and content to assist them. (3.4 & 3.5)

Lauren Gallo, Director of College in the High School and Theresa Polson, Early College and High School Project Director participated in IT BAUG meetings so they can plan initiatives focused on improving and streamlining college processes related to the use of Slate. (3.4 & 3.5)

This month, Dawn Jones, Director of Career and Transfer Services, attended Division meetings to provide consistent information about transfer processes and scheduled four on-campus recruitment events for employers and transfer partners. She also arranged a student trip to SUNY Oneonta for an Open House event to facilitate transfer pathways for our students. (3.1)

### Strategic Initiatives and Planning

Kevin Rivenburg, Director of Admissions and Matriculated Enrollment, coordinated with Dr. Christopher Brellocks, Dean of the School of Music, to utilize a Federal Work-study Student from the School of Music to research and compile a set of music educators, organizations, and contact information to promote School of Music events and campus engagement. Over 400 contacts from over 100 local high schools within a 100-mile radius of campus were collected from internet research and organized by role, school/CEEB for use in segmented communications. This contact list was utilized in Slate-based invitations to Percussion Day and Open House with personalized music and school-specific content to increase awareness and attendance of these influencers and the students they serve (3.1; 2.5).

Dale Miller, Director of Institutional Research, submitted three SUNY Systems reports and one New York Department of Education report. Mr. Miller analyzed Fall 2024 College in the High School enrollment data. Mr. Miller provided data for the following projects: enrollment data to Administration for budgeting, transfer data to the Registrar, enrollment data to Admissions, and planning data to HCAT (3.1; 3.3).

Kevin Dean, ASAP Executive Director, attended the Capital Region Chamber Annual breakfast event to honor Veterans. The event was held at the Glen Sanders Mansion (1.2; 3.2).



ASAP Executive Director, Kevin Dean, attended the virtual ASAP National Replication Collaborative convening conference (3.1; 3.4).

### Development Office

#### **The Foundation continues to work to refine the scholarship program to maximize funding available to support the student experience.**

- Scholarship Donors continue to receive thank you letters from their scholarship recipients. To date, 127 notes have been shared. Here is an example of what our donors read:
  - *“Pursuing a career in music isn’t the easiest path to guaranteed success, but it’s with compassionate people like yourself that I’m propelled forward, fueled to dream, achieve, and give back.”* – Evelyn M. Currie Music Scholarship Recipient
- Stewardship Officer helped plan the Chef Jackie Baldwin Memorial Soiree raising close to \$7,000 in scholarship support
- Stewardship Officer attended Guitar and Bass Recital and shared videos of scholarship recipients with donors.
- Music scholarship donors were invited to attend the Chamber Music Series: Ahmal and the Night Visitors as well as several recitals happening on campus.

### Human Resources

We continued to provide Wednesday Wellbeing messages:

- 11/6- Diabetes Awareness Month – Physical Wellbeing
- 11/13 – World Kindness Day – Social and Psychological Wellbeing
- 11/20 – World Hello Day – Social Wellbeing
- 11/26 – Creative Leftovers – Physical and Environmental Wellbeing

We onboarded seven new employees in the month of November.

The month of November began with open enrollment for the 2025 employee benefits. We hosted our first onsite benefits fair in several years, with 14 vendor representatives. Employees learned about the various benefits through engaging conversations and a benefits scavenger hunt. Throughout the open enrollment period, daily Benefit Bits were shared with employees, spotlighting a different benefit each day. Outreach was also provided to employees on leave as well as retirees regarding their 2025 benefit plans.

We are beginning the preparations for the year end benefits reports, including the preparation of the 1095Cs, and have been reconciling the benefits data for a fresh transfer of data to payroll for the first pay period of 2025.

We currently have 12 total open positions which consist of two faculty, five Civil Service, and five Professional positions.

## Workforce Development and Community Education

November 13-15, 2024, Workforce Development and Community Education Division attended the CEANY Conference in Saratoga Springs. Sarah Wilson-Sparrow, Lauren Lankau and Michelle Kraines presented a workshop on Creating New Trade Titles for NYS DOL Apprenticeship.

November 18, 2024, Sarah Wilson Sparrow and Michelle Kraines attended Center for Economic Growth networking event around apprenticeship. Sarah Wilson-Sparrow participated in a panel discussion for employers considering becoming an employer sponsor for apprenticeship.

November 21, 2024, Sarah Wilson-Sparrow, Lauren Lankau and Michelle Kraines hosted an Apprenticeship Round Table regarding Medical Assistant for healthcare providers. 30 attendees from over 15 local employers and partners participated.

November 25, 2024, Lauren Lankau and Michelle Kraines met with representative from Caring Gene about becoming an educational partner for 1115 Waiver tuition assistance funding for healthcare students.

November 26, 2024, Sarah Wilson-Sparrow, Lauren Lankau and Michelle Kraines met with NYS Trucking Association about collaborating to offer Apprenticeship and other training opportunities in their industry.

## Information Technology Services

### **In Progress – Cyber Security**

- **Reducing Security Risks:** We have shut down or consolidated several unnecessary or infrequently used systems to minimize potential security vulnerabilities.
- **Print Server Consolidation:** Multiple print servers are being merged into a single point of maintenance, reducing costs, and streamlining management.
- **Enhanced VPN Security:** Testing continues implementing secondary Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) for all users accessing college assets via VPN, improving off-campus security.
- **Increased Account Encryption:** We have raised the encryption level for all user accounts and automated this as the default setting for new account creations.
- **Penetration Testing:** SUNY SOC Penetration and Vulnerabilities testing has been completed. While the final report is pending, we are confident there were no high-priority issues requiring immediate attention.

### **In Progress – SSO & MFA Migration**

- **Final SSO Transition:** Only two non-Banner applications remain to be configured for the new Single Sign-On (SSO) system. Completing this transition will result in significant cost savings.

### **In Progress – Collegewide Slate Enhancement Project**

- **Department Collaboration:** Engaging with various stakeholders (WFDCE, CHS, Financial Aid, Admissions, Student Success, etc.) to implement a Slate enhancement project. This initiative focuses on improving efficiency through automation and self-service capabilities.

### **In Progress – Replacement for Account Creation**

- **Upgrading Account Creation Systems:** Work has begun to replace the aging integration process for creating computer accounts from Banner to network systems. This is a complex project, but we are leveraging a year's worth of notes to address areas for improvement.

**In Progress** – Phone system replacement

- **System Overhaul:** A comprehensive project to replace the College's phone service is underway. The goal is to consolidate all systems into a single platform integrated with MS Teams Apps, providing enhanced productivity features. This project will require several months to complete.
- **Next Steps:** Final proposals are expected on Monday, December 2. After reviewing them, we will proceed with final demonstrations.

Administration

In late November, the engineer on the Elston Hall Lobby and Mohawk Room project determined the original electrical wiring in these areas of the building did not meet code and required replacement. Areas impacted include the Mohawk Room, Elston Main Lobby and the President's Office. In early December, County Engineers and EVP Ryan presented to the Legislature a change order to have this work completed as part of the current project. Plaster repair and wall construction continued through November. The project remains on schedule for completion in late January.

Required wall repair to major settling cracks in the Elston Hall basement were completed during November. This project was required per fire code to repair and caulk all masonry cracks in the building's basement. The fire inspector visited in early December and was pleased with the work completed. Official sign off is pending.

Work on the replacement of the Biology Greenhouse on the third floor of Elston Hall was completed in early December. This project created a new climate-controlled storage room off the main Biology Lab and additional ventilation within the Biology Lab. The new illuminated marquee sign facing the quad and I-890 is attractive and visible from a distance.

During the first week of December, new lighting and a ceiling is being installed in Elston 240 – the new Hyflex Classroom. With completion of this stage of the renovation, the project will be completed and ready for the Spring 2025 semester.

The College received a new dump truck in December as part of a recent capital project. The truck was purchased via the County's procurement process and was put into service upon arrival.

We are waiting for bids for the President's Terrace/Cafeteria project and the CST Entry project. We anticipate this work to begin in late January or early February 2025.

The new aviation Air Traffic Controller simulator was installed in the Stockade building during November. During December, the Flight simulators will be moved from Center City to the Stockade Building.

Work continued on the Aquatic Center project. The County and the College engaged TWA associates to assist with pre-project management activities to ensure all phases of the project were managed. Our first meeting occurred in early December to delegate responsibilities and review a project timeline. The working group will be meeting weekly.

*Student Affairs*

The food pantry continues to use the Clynk Bottles & Cans which yields hundreds of dollars every year to purchase personal care items for participants. Over 3,000 pounds of food has been purchased and inventoried for the month of November. Food pantry participants are receiving and filling out satisfaction surveys as part of assessment to assist with continuous improvement of service.

## ENSURING FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY

### Academic Affairs

On November 2, the School of Music held a Percussion Day featuring instruction recruiting event from three adjunct faculty, Nachiko Maekane, Andrew Janack, and Bob Halek who offered masterclasses for prospective students. The event also enabled local educators to earn 6 CTLE professional development credits and was promoted on Slate as open to groups and individuals. To further strengthen ties with local teachers, a follow-up workshop was offered three days later. (4.3)

On November 12, Dr. Hope Sasway, Dean of Math, Science, Technology and Health and Carol Maimone, Assistant Professor, held the first ever evening information session on the Medical Coding and Billing Certificate program to increase the likelihood that working adults and non-traditional learners could attend. MSTH has made a concerted effort to market this Certificate, and their efforts are paying off. Enrollment has increased five-fold just since it has been listed on the SUNY online programs website. (4.2)

Lauren Gallo, Director of College in the High School and Theresa Polson, Early College and High School Project Director collaborated with the Schenectady Foundation on a grant application to secure funding for tuition assistance for dual enrollment courses. (4.3)

### Administration

In late November, Administration requested from each division/department their 2025-26 budget requests as we start the budget making season. Divisions were asked to reduce expenditures by 6% in development of their budget requests.

Our auditors from Lumsden and McCormick were on-site in early December to conduct transactional testing and review of controls. This three-day visit went well. Our auditors had some recommendations for improving efficiencies in processes and did not indicate any weaknesses of concern. Presentation of the 2023-24 fiscal year audit is scheduled for the February Board of Trustees meeting.

### Strategic Initiatives & Planning

The ASAP program has registered approximately 69% of the program's students for the Spring 2025 semester, on track with the weekly benchmarks and metrics in place for the program (Gen. P4; 2.1).

### Workforce Development and Community Education

November 12, 2024, Jason Lohraseb, Tiziana Rota and Lauren Lankau met with Anchor Health to discuss contact course delivery for Personal Care Assistant and Home Health Aide.

On November 14, 2024, Danielle Sloan and Lauren Lankau presented at the DOL SCC2 Employer Leadership Team & Community Partner meeting about healthcare apprenticeship opportunities.

On November 26, 2024, WFD&CE received permission from the New York State Education Department to deliver Personal Care Assistant training on the Mobile Training Labs.

## Development Office

### **The Foundation continuously builds and draws upon the strength of the Foundation Board members as advocates for the College:**

- The Foundation stuffed 125 Thanksgiving bags; one member raised over \$4,000 for Thanksgiving supplies.

### **The Foundation is creating a bold, new, positive case for growing flexible funding to support our students:**

- The Rising Together year-end appeal was mailed to 3,675 alumni and friends.
- Several private donors provided donations for specific items in the Thanksgiving bags after a simple phone call asking for their help.

### **The Foundation is working to increase fundraising effectiveness to grow 5% annually by engaging alumni, businesses, and the community:**

#### **Engaging our alumni:**

- Vice President and Joe April have been working with Joshua Murphy who will spearhead an alumni fundraising effort for the Rising Together Campaign. The outreach campaign will commence in January, after we determine the results of the direct mail piece.
- Vice President had lunch with alumna Joan Dembinski to thank her for her generous support and discuss her participation in Rising Together.
- Vice President met with alumna Heather Peterson to discuss her involvement in the alumni outreach effort with the distinguished alumni group.
- Vice President had lunch with retired professor, Jerry Evans and the anonymous donor who set up a scholarship in his name.

#### **Engaging our corporate and community supporters:**

- President and Vice President met with Executive Director of the Schenectady Foundation to discuss campaign support.
- Vice President attended the Fenimore Asset Management Holiday Investment Update at Glen Sanders Mansion.
- Vice President attended the Chamber's 2025 Economic Forecast at Rivers Casino.
- Vice President and Stewardship Officer attended the Chef Jackie Baldwin Memorial Soiree

#### **Notable Gifts:**

- \$3,000 from the Tri-County Council of Vietnam Veterans for their endowed scholarship.
- New faculty/staff payroll deduction gifts have brought the total to 33 donors, which generates nearly \$500 each month in support for the Foundation.

## PRESIDENT'S OUTREACH



*SUNY Schenectady President Dr. Moono, Jaimee King, Executive Director of SCCOC and Milo Orr, SCCOC Staff Assistant at the second annual Community Connections breakfast hosted by SCCOC on November 13, 2024.*



*SUNY Schenectady President Dr. Moono with Head Coach Trevis Wyche Jr. at the NY Phoenix basketball franchise announcement held on November 19, 2024, at the Schenectady Armory.*



*SUNY Schenectady President Dr. Moono, Board Chair Ann Fleming Brown and Chief of Staff, Tiombé Tatum pictured with the Student Government of NIPA during their trip to the Republic of Zambia in November 2024.*