



MANY VOICES, ONE CALL – The Strategic Plan to 2026

President's Report

March 17, 2025

PROMOTING DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Academic Affairs

Dr. Sine Rofofsky collaborated with the New York State Talking Book and Braille Library to obtain an institutional account through the Begley Library and to obtain information to share with the college community about this free resource for all print-challenged persons to access materials available in public libraries. They have shared this with EOP, TRIO, the Learning Center, ASAP, Academic Advising, ADA office, and LPP. (Gen. P1)

Michelle Ragucci, Director of Academic Services and Susanna Adams, Coordinator for the Office of ADA Transition Services, hosted a Testing Center Open House for students interested in learning about testing services, and provided opportunities for them to practice using the adaptive software. (1.3, 1.4)

On February 13, Schenectady County Connects (Job Training Agency) staff joined LPP high school students after school to present an interactive Job Application Workshop. Students learned important tips and skills needed to successfully complete the job application process. (1.4)

Schenectady College and Career Outreach Center

On February 15, 2025, Schenectady College and Career Outreach Center (SCCOC) staff, tabled at the EOC Exhibition at the NYS Association of the Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic & Asian Legislatures Inc.'s Conference. SCCOC sponsored two participants', Ms. Maribel Benton and Mr. Ramone Barnhill (a SUNY Schenectady student), attendance for the event.

Ms. Dara Orederu, Associate Executive Director of SCCOC and Ms. Jaimee King, Executive Director of SCCOC, met with Ms. Lindsay Byard, Workforce and Recruitment Coordinator of The Boys & Girls Club of Schenectady to discuss partnership and referral opportunities.

Ms. Jaimee King met with Captain Cufari and Mr. Jamel Muhammad, Inmate Services Coordinator of Schenectady County Correctional Facility to develop a plan for SCCOC staff to provide educational and employment support services to inmates to better equip them for success upon release. SCCOC staff attended Schenectady Municipal Housings PCC program meeting to network with community agencies.

DELIVERING A MEANINGFUL STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Academic Affairs

All month long, Dr. Babette Faehmel has been participating in SUNY Civic Fellow meetings to develop a Civil Discourse Rubric for the forthcoming required SUNY GenEd skill of *Civic Discourse* and on February 9, she facilitated a breakout session entitled Democracy in the Classroom as a presenter in the Public Good U: Strengthening the Case for Higher Education Conference offered by SUNY-CUNY. (Gen P2)

This month, as part of their work for the IITG grant for AI in Education, David Wolf, Director of Instructional Design and Online Learning and Dr. Babette Faehmel worked together to develop a [Build-a-Bot Workshop](#) to train faculty on how to program GPTs to be AI Tutors for their classes. (2.5)

In a collaboration with SUNY Center of Professional Development, Dave Wolf and the other the grant leads coordinated the presentation of *Teaching with AI: Building Critical AI Literacy While Advancing Existing Learning Outcomes* featuring Community College and AI specialist, Anna Mills. Attendees included more than 10 staff from the College and over 100 others from across the country. (2.5)

Mary Silvestri, Director of TRIO and Janice Lindemann, TRIO Academic Specialist brainstormed to develop a new idea to build literacy and help students develop critical skills necessary for writing papers. Skill assessments have been seamlessly incorporated into the activities, to determine their effectiveness. Janice hosts weekly *Word Quest* workshops and TRIO students enjoy themselves while trying to become the next “Knight of TRIO”. This February, over 30 students participated and their feedback is overwhelmingly positive! (2.3, 2.5)

On February 5, LPP began a new partnership with the Schenectady County Public Library (SCPL) to provide academic enrichment opportunities after school geared toward increasing students’ writing skills. SCPL staff visited Mont Pleasant Middle School to work with LPP students to create their own Zines and students also received a brand-new book of their choice. SCPL staff will visit the LPP After-School program monthly for the rest of the school year. (2.4)

On February 13, the College hosted Harmony Zhu, a 19-year-old award-winning pianist studying at Julliard. She played several pieces of her choice and engaged with students in an onstage Q&A session. This was an outreach program sponsored by the Albany Symphony and their Programs Manager, a recent School of Music graduate arranged in anticipation of her performance with the Albany Symphony at Troy Savings Bank Music Hall. (Gen. P2)

February 18-19, Chef Gino Minacapilli, from the Marco Polo Institute (from Italy), worked with HCAT students to orchestrate two gourmet Italian Dinners for forty and eighty guests respectively as part of their Banquet and Quantitative Foods classes. This provided a great cultural exchange opportunity for our students, and four visiting Italian students visiting the United States for the first time and touring culinary institutes as part of their capstone activity before graduating. (2.5)

Michael Henderson, Director of EOP and Tiffany Wilson, EOP Student Success Coach are serving 52 students this Spring. They are proud to announce that on February 3, Najaya Knuckles was selected as a recipient of the Norman R. McConney, Jr. Award for Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) Student Excellence. This award is the highest SUNY honor for EOP students; recognizing those who have shown positive academic trajectories despite challenges faced during their academic careers.

February has been a very busy month for Dawn Jones, Director of Career and Transfer Services and her staff. They hosted the HCAT Career Expo that garnered a record response of 50 students and 20 employers attending. Dawn ramped up her participation in FYS classes, visiting weekly to inform students about all of the great things Career and Transfer Services has to offer including MBTI Class and Career Assessment workshops, upcoming Speed Networking Events and the Spring Transfer Fair. (Gen. P2)

Strategic Initiatives and Planning

The SUNY goal for monthly ASAP student contact is 85% of students. The SUNY Schenectady ASAP program has achieved an 89% student contact rate for the month, exceeding the goal. ASAP had 489 student contacts in the proceeding 4 weeks with an average of 24 student contacts a day over the last month (2.1; 2.3).

ASAP Academic Advisor, Lakota Levandowski, organized and instituted academic groupings of students based on classes and created online communication groups using the technology program GroupMe for students in the ASAP program (2.3; 2.5).

Kevin Rivenburg, Director of Admissions and Matriculated Enrollment, attended Broadalbin-Perth School District's College and Career Night. The event brought approximately 100 people from the neighboring community to engage in a variety of career and college workshops and panels. Kevin led a presentation on scholarships for a broad audience of students and parents interested across topics, while also participating in the Health Careers Panel, the general College Q&A Panel, and exhibiting at the fair outside of the auditorium, extending the awareness and thought leadership to a wide audience (Gen. P2).

Kevin Rivenburg, Director of Admissions and Matriculated Enrollment, coordinated the offering of special lunch engagements at the Casola Dining Room for local counselors, teachers, and educators. Invitations were sent to in-County and local guidance contacts to offer a Casola lunch experience while engaging with former students in their learning experience. Guests receive a tour of campus including highlights and stops at academic programs and services, increasing awareness and affinity to the College, our teams, and our programs (2.3; 2.4).

Kevin Rivenburg, Director of Admissions and Matriculated Enrollment, organized a new visit experience over the local school districts' winter break (February 17-21) to encourage earlier and more engaging visit experiences during that period, as well as to expand the number of individual students who could visit campus individually. Twenty-three unique students and family members were able to book appointments for individual tours, culinary tours, or small group information sessions and tours while being offered personalized admissions advising and tour routes catered to their interests. This increased the typical guest size by more than double compared to the prior and following week, even in spite of being impacted by one and a half snow days that closed campus during that time (2.4).

Dr. David Clickner, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives & Planning, attended the Achieve the Dream Annual Convening, DREAM, February 18 - February 21, 2025, along with Dr. Mark Meachem, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Jessica Gilbert, Dean of Learner Support. Attending the DREAM conference allows for the increased development of support and knowledge to bring back ideas and information that are supported through SI&P as well as to other teams throughout the College to build upon our Achieving the Dream Leader College status. The sessions ranged from *AI in the Classroom* to *Leveraging Short-Term, Grant-Funded Projects for Institutional Change* to *Advancing Equity in Challenging Times: Data Driven and Institutional/Support Strategies* (Gen. P2).

Student Affairs

Wellness and Student Support Services

During this period, Robyn King facilitated a mediation session involving a faculty member and two students, ensuring a constructive dialogue and resolution. Additionally, she coordinated community outreach efforts, bringing in partners such as MVP Healthcare, New Choices Recovery, SAFE, Inc., Planned Parenthood, Feeding New York State, the NYS Office of Mental Health, Schenectady County Opioid Prevention, and Catholic Charities, which conducted SNAP screenings.

Robyn King conducted food pantry tours and consultations for various organizations, including the Schenectady County League of Women Voters, Feeding New York State, Russell Sage/Sage Graduate School, and Albany Medical College. In support of student education and well-being, she facilitated programs such as *Sexting 101*, *Relationship Pink Flags/Red Flags*, *Counseling as a Career*, and *Non-Physical Forms of Domestic Violence*.

Further engaging in institutional and community collaborations, Robyn participated in a Behavioral Intervention Team meeting and contributed to the Schenectady County Food Council's Advocacy Working Group and Access & Equity Working Group meetings. I maintained ongoing engagement with service providers and planning committees by attending the UNITE-US Providers' monthly meeting, the LMAP Planning meeting, the SUNY Homeless Liaison monthly meeting, and the SUNY Food Pantry Coordinators' monthly meeting.

Financial Aid

Financial Aid has been promoting 2025/2026 FAFSA and Scholarship completion. Emails and postcards have been distributed. Visits to FYS classes have been conducted where we discussed not only the FAFSA and scholarships but also promoted financial literacy and registration opening in March.

As of February 25, 2025, 450 students have started their Scholarship applications and we have received 1079 FAFSAs.

Student Government Association/Student Activities

The Spring Club Carnival was held on February 25, 2025, from 11:30 AM to 2:00 PM, bringing together students, faculty, and staff for an engaging and interactive experience. Over 14 clubs and organizations hosted tables to promote their activities, recruit new members, and encourage student involvement on campus. The event was well attended, with a strong turnout of students exploring club opportunities and networking with peers. The carnival contributed to increased student engagement and enthusiasm for campus life. The Spring Club Carnival successfully fostered student engagement and club visibility, providing a platform for students to explore involvement opportunities. With minor enhancements, future editions of the event can continue to grow and benefit the student community.

The Week of Love event took place on February 12-13, 2025, celebrating the season of love and appreciation. Organized by the Student Activities Department, the event aimed to spread positivity and community spirit among students. The event successfully engaged a large number of students over two days, with carnations and treats being fully distributed within the event's timeframe. Students appreciated the thoughtful gestures, and the initiative contributed to fostering a sense of community and belonging on campus. The Week of Love event was a successful initiative by the Student Activities Department, fostering student engagement and campus spirit. With minor enhancements, this event has the potential to become a cherished annual tradition.

The Pretty Gurl Bundles on Campus event was held on February 12, 2025, from 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Organized by the Student Activities Office, the event provided students with professional hair services at **no cost**, offering an opportunity to learn about hair care and styling techniques. The

event saw a strong turnout, with students expressing gratitude for the free professional services. Many took advantage of the opportunity to receive high-quality hair treatments while also gaining knowledge about proper hair care. The event fostered a sense of community and empowerment among students. The Pretty Gurl Bundles on Campus event was a resounding success, providing students with valuable hair services and education at no cost. The Student Activities Office effectively facilitated an event that supported student well-being and engagement. Future iterations of this event could expand upon its impact and outreach.

On February 12, 2025, Dylan Maher, Student Government Association (SGA) President, attended the SUNY Assembly Advocacy Day. This event brought together student advocates from SUNY colleges across New York State to engage with policymakers and promote increased funding for the SUNY system. Dylan Maher's participation in the SUNY Assembly Advocacy Day reinforced the importance of student voices in shaping higher education policy. The discussions with legislators provided a platform to address student concerns and advocate for tangible improvements in funding and resources. Dylan Maher's attendance at the SUNY Assembly Advocacy Day was a valuable opportunity to represent the student body, advocate for increased SUNY funding, and build connections with both policymakers and fellow student leaders. Continued participation in such events will be instrumental in advancing student interests at the state level.

Workforce Development and Community Education

Throughout the month of February, Tricia Terleckey, Assistant Director of Workforce Development held workshops on the E-Badge Academy for all new DSP Micro Credential students through the OPWDD Grant.

Information Technology Services

In Progress – Improve campus wide Wi-Fi coverage.

- Wi-fi Coverage Audit: Audit complete awaiting report and plan for upgrading the entire campus.
- Next Steps: Audit is complete and now we need to have ComSource assistance to make the configuration changes necessary to fix our existing WiFi problems and then look for areas to possibly add additional WiFi devices.

Completed – Operations Team Activities

- Ticket Resolutions:
 - According to Remedy, the Operations team completed 339 tickets in the past month.

Completed – Equipment and Faculty Moves

- Aviation Equipment Preparation: Flight Simulator relocation from Center City to Stockade 301.
- Faculty Relocation: Faculty have been moved from the CST building to Elston.

Development Office

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

Vice President and Stewardship Officers Boink and Liuzzi are active Middle States participants.

Since September 1, the Foundation has provided \$2,453 in emergency funding to students in urgent need.

BUILDING ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Academic Affairs

David Wolf, Director of Instructional Design and Online Learning worked with SUNY Online and the SUNY Digital Learning Environment (DLE) governing body to implement a widget that reduces student confusion and Help Desk call volume by clarifying the begin and end dates in the course calendar. (3.4)

Strategic Initiatives and Planning

ASAP Executive Director, Kevin Dean, met with the new CSTEP Director to support efficiency and to ensure that the programs work effectively together (3.1).

Kevin Rivenburg, Director of Admissions and Matriculated Enrollment, and Anna Sherman, Admissions Advisor, collaborated with Jessica Gilbert, Dean of Learner Support, Michael Henderson, EOP Director, and Tiffany Wilson, EOP Student Success Coach, to expand inter-office collaboration and the use of Slate to support awareness, communication flow, data collection, and application management in Slate. A new inquiry form was launched allowing students to engage with and receive communications from EOP before they enroll. The EOP application was updated and launched earlier than in past cycles to allow for an easier review process and document collection. New automated acknowledgement and follow up communications have been written and scheduled to follow up with students after they engage with the program to increase follow through. Regular meetings have been scheduled at a regular cadence to review, refine, and create new Slate-based tools to increase EOP student recruitment (3.1; 3.3; 1.4; 2.3; 2.4).

Development Office

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

- Stewardship Officer hosted a meeting with scholarship donor Julie Panke and scholarship recipient Kourtney Brand
- The 2023-2024 Endowment report was mailed to 119 donors
- Stewardship Officer Leanna attended a virtual session for updates to the SUNY Empire State Diversity Honors Scholarship Program

Administration

The college's 2025-2030 Updated Facilities Master Plan, which provides a five-year plan for future capital projects was finalized during February. This comprehensive plan examined student enrollment, employee numbers, types of space and makes recommendations for major project investments in the college's infrastructure.

The Elston Hall Lobby and Lally-Mohawk Room project continues. Our contractors installed the glass storefront wall for the new Security Office, replaced the doors to the Van Curler Room with historically accurate period doors and painted all areas. During the next few weeks, surface areas will be cleaned and finalized, furniture installed and new lighting installed. The planned completion date for this project is March 17th.

Meetings on the Aquatic Center continued in February and March. Representatives from the College met with County leaders, project planning, architects, aquatic center advocates and Metroplex to further the project on both the construction and operational needs. Three representatives from the college will travel to Greensboro, NC to learn more about design, construction and operations of a successful aquatic center.

Meetings concerning the college-wide phone update project continued with our IT department. We received demonstrations from telephone vendors and tested compatibility with our existing IT infrastructure.

Bids were received for the Auditorium Renovation project that came in over budget due to escalating construction costs. The college and the county will review options for this project.

Multiple departments within Administration and Academic Affairs received training on implementation of the FLAC Banner module. FLAC is the Faculty Load And Compensation module that will de-centralize and automate Adjunct Faculty assignment and payroll into our Enterprise system. The target implementation of FLAC is Summer 2025.

Marketing and Public Relations

The Marketing and Public Relations office partnered with Dr. Mark Meacham, Vice President for Academic Affairs, to develop and implement an 8-week campaign that would promote the enhanced transfer agreement with SUNY Oneonta. Using grant funding, marketing purchased advertising to reach two sets of students: our current students who may qualify for seamless transfer, and prospective students. Paid tactics include a direct mail, interior advertising panels on CDTA buses, digital advertising and geofencing, and email. Creative was produced in-house by the Marketing and Public Relations team.

Marketing also collaborated with Admissions to identify prospective students in the Slate CRM who have applied to SUNY Schenectady with a degree interest indicated on their application that aligns with transfer programs to Oneonta as well. Targeting this group would inform them of the benefits and opportunities available to them if they enroll and complete their degree at SUNY Schenectady. Similarly, Marketing worked with Institutional Research to identify current students whose program of study aligned with Oneonta degrees so those current students would receive messaging and be aware of the benefits, as well as encourage them to visit the transfer office on campus and the SUNY Oneonta transfer advisor for more information. Geofencing high schools within select zip code regions plus interests that match on both schools, and targeting parents of high school juniors and seniors is also part of the audience structure for the digital ad campaign.

Human Resources

Wednesday Wellbeing messages included:

- 1/29– The benefits of giving and receiving Compliments
- 2/5- Go Red for Women (Heart Disease Awareness)
- 2/12 – Random Acts of Kindness
- 2/19 and 2/26 Information about the Employee Wellbeing Fair (2/26/2025)

We conducted a survey on our past year of Wellbeing initiatives. 23 employees responded.

Here are the highlights:

- 16 attended at least 5 of the Wellbeing events offered in the last year
- 43% read all of the Wednesday Wellbeing messages (35% most and 22% some)

- 70% regularly read the HR Newsletter (30% occasionally, 0% never)
- Suggestions were made for upcoming topics
- 69.6% have found the new HR SharePoint site to be helpful
- Our employee wellbeing priorities are Emotional/Psychological, Financial, and Ethical/Spiritual
- 5 indicated interest in helping form a Wellness Committee
- The overall satisfaction with the Wellbeing Initiatives was 4.04 out of 5

We onboarded 20 new employees in the month of February; 16 of whom are students.

We had pre-retirement counseling sessions with 6 current staff members, including 2 with extenuating circumstances who have been on extended disability.

1095C documents were received, validated, and distributed.

We hosted our very first Employee Wellbeing Fair on February 26th.

- 66 Individuals attended
- 12 community partner organizations attended including
 - MVP Healthcare -(healthy living programs and blood pressure checks)
 - Benetech - (employee health plan benefits and wellbeing offerings)
 - Broadview Federal Credit Union - (financial wellbeing)
 - Ellis Medicine - (Registered Dietician)
 - St. Peter’s Health Partners - Healthy Babies and the Butt Stops Here Program
 - SUNY Schenectady Library Services
 - SUNY Schenectady’s Workforce Development Programs
 - Electric City Food Coop – community services and opportunities
 - Inner Bliss Yoga Studio – demonstrations and guided imagery sessions
 - Thrive Holistic Healing – chair massage
 - Shari Mantini and Lima Bean! - therapy dog
- 4 other community partners were unable to attend, but provided materials and raffle prizes (Capital EAP, Honest Weight Food Coop, Aligned by Erica, Create Studios)
- There were interactive activities including adult coloring pages, planting seeds, a gratitude table, table top corn hole, and posters for staff to share what brings them Joy, and how they contribute to our Mission.

We currently have eight searches which consist of one faculty, two Civil Service, and five Professional positions.

Information Technology Services

In Progress – Cyber Security

- Enhanced VPN Security: Testing continues implementing secondary Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) for all users accessing college assets via VPN, improving off-campus security.
- Penetration Testing: SUNY SOC Penetration and Vulnerabilities testing has been completed. We have created ticket to track and work on issue within IT and Logical Net
- Cyber Security Alert: Signed up on a free trial basis (Proof of Concept) Microsoft SAAS solution: We have the month of February to try this with its 24/7 call center.
- User Identity Validation: Ensure only authorized users on authorized devices can gain access to your critical company SaaS applications.
- Monitor & Detection: Detect unusual user activity or behavior using powerful SaaS application monitoring tools.

- Remediation: Stop detected threats automatically to protect against data theft, data-at-risk, and bad actors.
- Microsoft Security Recommendations: Ensure Microsoft security recommendations are implemented to boost your security posture.
- Vulnerability Assessments: Monitor your Microsoft secure score and ensure it stays in line with industry benchmarks.
- Restrict Shared drive (NFS) access: we interacted with all users involved to verify they no longer use the NFS drive and removed access. We are continuing to configure that users can only see what they are required to for their position.
 - The NFS drive has been secured. Groups were created and users were added to those groups. The group membership allows access to only the folders that those users need to use. We have also archived 54 folders that are unused for removal at a later date.

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.
- Kick off meeting complete actual work expected to begin in January.

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: Decision has (almost) been made pursuant to a visit from a potential vendor during fourth week of this month (starting 2/24/2025) for a review of physical equipment and testing of a new phone that we are considering buying.

Workforce Development and Community Education

On February 3 and 4, the WFD&CE division participated in DISC Training. The training was a personal assessment of work styles and helps to improve teamwork, communication and productivity.

On February 5, the WFD&CE and SCCOC divisions had a collaboration luncheon.

Schenectady College and Career Outreach Center

SCCOC staff has met with various campus offices to strengthen communication, increase area knowledge and review processes and procedures to strengthen the pipeline for SCCOC participants enrollment into SUNY Schenectady.

ENSURING FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Administration

2025-26 departmental budget requests were received in Administrative Affairs. The cumulative request was compiled to yield a college-wide request for resources. During February and March each department's request will undergo review to determine priority in relation to the college's mission and strategic plan.

Preliminary 2025-26 revenue projections were developed based on anticipated State, local sponsor enrollment and other revenue generating expectations. As is typical. The overall budget request is greater than anticipated resources which requires a collaborative effort to align revenues with expenditures.

The college's 2023-24 audit was completed by Lumsden & McCormick at the beginning of February. Our auditors will present the audit to the Board of Trustees at the March 2025 meeting.

Student Affairs

Wellness and Student Support Services

Robyn King attended an orientation session for future grant requestors through the Schenectady Foundation.

Development Office

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

- *Board members have supported efforts to gather auction items and Honorary Committee members.*

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

- *Food for Thought & All That Jazz has raised nearly \$62,000 of unrestricted support to date.*

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

Engaging our alumni:

- Stewardship Officers Boink and Liuzzi attended a virtual grants information session with the SUNY Schenectady Foundation
- Vice President and Senior Stewardship Officer attended a Food Insecurity Grant Session with The SUNY Schenectady Foundation
- Senior Stewardship Officer met with Kate Calder of C2 Design Group to talk about Sponsorship for Food For Thought & All That Jazz.
- Senior Stewardship Officer attended a virtual session hosted by FreeWill: Bequest Campaign Retrospective
- Senior Stewardship Officer visited Miriam Butzel, philanthropist to talk about Rise Gallery exhibits.
- LinkedIn engagement this month yielded 235-page views and 143 new followers
- 27% email performance open rate

PRESIDENT'S OUTREACH



President, Dr. Steady Moono and Head Coach and General Manager of NY Phoenix Basketball. President Moono donated tickets to students to attend their debut game on February 28, 2025.