



MANY VOICES, ONE CALL – The Strategic Plan to 2026

***President's Report***

June 26, 2023

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**Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

TRIO celebrated 29 students who have completed the TRIO Student Support Services program and are graduating with associate's degrees or certificates. Students and their supporters were invited to attend the SGA Award Ceremony where they received a certificate of recognition for their efforts. Then, at Commencement, TRIO's graduates were recognized with red stoles to adorn their graduation gown. TRIO graduates include students going on directly into bachelor's degree programs, students staying at SUNY Schenectady for additional credentials, and students going into the workforce.

Dr. Allyson Keyser, Professor, programmed diverse repertoire for the Wind Ensemble Concert including works by Kevin Day, Julie Giroux, Dana Wilson, Ralph Vaughan Williams, and Mark Camphouse and a work commemorating Rosa Parks' influence on the Civil Rights Movement.

**Delivering a Meaningful Student Experience**

This spring semester Workforce Development and Community Education has partnered with Project Excite. Project Excite offers funding for certifications in the IT/Cybersecurity industry. We have 11 registrations to date, \$30,050 in revenue with \$3,950 in profit over revenue. This brings out total Ed2Go profit over revenue to \$8,862 through the end of March.

The College will be embarking on a project this summer focused on increasing the retention rates for our matriculated students. The project is modeled after a presentation given by the City Colleges of Chicago (CCC) at the 2023 Achieving the Dream Conference. Six staff members visited CCC for a two-day training on May 31st and June 1st. Present at the training, from SUNY Schenectady was, Dale Miller (Director of Institutional Research), Yaoshang Lou (Data intern in the office of IR), Mitzi Espinola (Assistant Director of Advisement and Retention), May Silvestri (Testing Center Coordinator), Pamela McCall (Interim Dean of Academic Affairs), and Mark Bessette (Assistant Dean of Financial Aid and Access). Present from CCC was five members from their District Office and 13 members from Harold Washington College (HWC). Over the two-day training the CCC staff provided a high-level orientation to the Student Success Framework and implementation strategies when they launched the initiative at HWC. This training laid the groundwork for SUNY Schenectady as we build out the retention initiative this summer.

Vice President of Development and External Affairs, Marianne Sennecca and Director of Enrollment, Laura Sprague, met with a representative from Fulton Montgomery Community College to talk about their support of international students.

Michelle Ragucci, Director of Academic Services, developed and administered an end of semester student survey to gather data regarding tutor use, satisfaction, and Learning Center recommendations to inform future planning and decision making.

Assistant Director of Career Services, Dawn Jones, continued outreach and began hiring for the 2023-2024 Federal Work Study Program allowing for meaningful student employment experiences and grant funded support to multiple offices. There are currently 3 students working under federal work study for the 2023-2024 academic year.

The Career Services Team served 262 unique students through in office appointments (not including events, workshops and classroom visits) during the 2022-2023 academic year. Of those, 128 were Career and Technical Education students for which the 2022-2023 Fall to Spring Retention was measured and recorded at 84%. An increase of 8% from the previous year.

Assistant Director of Career Services, Dawn Jones, with the assistance of the Career Services team implemented the annual Launch Your Career Day, a professional Development and Networking event targeted toward recent and upcoming graduates. The day consisted of a mini career fair, Resume and Job Search Workshops as well as a professional headshot event.

Mitzi Espinola, Assistant Director of Academic Advisement and Retention, Pamela McCall, Interim Dean of Academic Affairs, and Laura Sprague, Director of Admissions, met to strategically plan for a registration day at Schenectady High School.

Susan Hatalsky, Professor, and Courtney Withey, Assistant Professor, chaperoned 17 students to Italy with Study Abroad program

### **Building Organizational Effectiveness**

The College welcomed 170 graduates, 50 faculty, and 1300 guests to the Music Building parking lot for the 53rd Commencement exercises. New this year was the addition of 1000 chairs placed under a 40 x 120-foot open gable tent. All participants and spectators were also treated to inspirational comments from Assemblyman Angelo Santabarbara, Mayor Gary McCarthy, Schenectady County Legislator Gary Hughes, and SGA President Jennifer Diaz.

Almost 100 students voted in the SGA officer election where a new President, Vice President, and Student Trustee were voted into service.

Eliza Arasim and Jared Wachenheim were recognized as the “Co-MVP’s” of the SUNY Schenectady Bowling Team at the SGA Awards Ceremony held on Friday, May 5th at the Van Curler Room on campus. Wachenheim has also been nominated for Region 3 Academic Team which will be selected on July 1st.

The Scholarship Selection Committee met on June 7 to award \$135,215 in scholarships for returning students.

An anonymous donor sent in an additional \$12,600 to fully fund a \$25,000 endowed scholarship in honor of retired paralegal Professor Jerry Evans.

The SUNY Schenectady Foundation received \$8,500 for the 2023-2024 Ernest L. and Florence L. Judkins Aviation Scholarship.

In late May, our contractors completed demolition of Chemistry Laboratory and the adjacent instrument room in the Center for Science and Technology. During June and July, flooring and ceilings will be replaced and rooms painted. In August installation of new laboratory furniture and counters will occur. We anticipate this new lab will be ready for the 2023-24 academic year.

Work continues on the Elston Façade project. Our contractors continue work to replace damaged brick and mortar. The Contractors are replacing cast stonework on the front of the building and have shifted some work to the South extension. This project is on track for completion in August.

On June 10th power to the main campus was switched to generator so our contractors could install new wiring to the soon to be installed campus generator during the following week. Power will be restored to the regular grid the weekend of June 17th. We anticipate installation of our new back-up power generator in July.

Meetings between program staff, our architects and county representatives were held in May and June to prepare drawings for the new Student Services Center to be located on the first floor of the Stockade Building. A near final draft drawing was prepared the week of June 5th for consideration by senior leadership. This project is on schedule for completion by mid-February 2024.

Work continues on the IT Infrastructure project. Our new switches and fiber optic cabling were activated in late May. The weekend of June 3rd, our IT staff brought on-line the new college-wide firewall.

The Office of Human Resources (HR) has been working on preparations for the Service Awards & Retiree Recognition event that will be held in August. This year, an extensive analysis was conducted of the employment timelines of our employees, in order to discern more accurate counts of service years. This analysis will be saved and can be used for future service award events.

For the month of May, HR has conducted seven new employee orientations and one search committee training.

We currently have 16 open searches which consist of one faculty, four CSEA, and 11 Professional positions.

HR continues to send updated information regarding COVID positive cases to the College community as well as updated guidance and updates impacting employees.

The Executive Director for Human Resources attended a Workplace 2023 Labor Law Conference for professional development. Labor and Employment Law updates were provided and breakout sessions were on best practices for workplace investigations as well as how recent developments in pay transparency, pay equity and government scrutiny are transforming the compensation landscape.

In the efforts of preparing for the self-study, the Executive Director for Human Resources attended two Middle States Webinars: Documenting Compliance under the Revised Standards and Applying, Assessing, and Documenting Board Governance. Highlights from these two sessions covered best effective practice in the development of documentation approaches for the Evidence Inventory in preparation of submitting self-study materials by standard, criteria and requirement of affiliation. Additionally, key aspects of effective board governance, including duties, responsibilities, and cultural aspects were reviewed as well as how to address strategies for successfully documenting and assessing board governance to demonstrate effective board governance during the self-study process and other accreditation activities.

The School of Hotel, Culinary Arts and Tourism, the Marketing and Public Relations department promoted the Mobile Food Truck's participation in the first-ever Downtown Schenectady Tater Trot on May 20, which garnered tremendous media exposure for the College and its culinary program. The SUNY Schenectady food truck was included in 10 separate news stories where our Sweet Potato Beignet over Coconut and Yellow Jack Fruit Cream with Pistachio Dust was specifically called out, and coverage ranged across News Channel 13, Spectrum News, News Channel 10, the Daily Gazette, and food blogs. A photo of our HCAT lab was featured on the front page of the Daily Gazette on 5/19 as the lead story promoting the event, and the Marketing team paired with Baker Public Relations to successfully pitch News Channel 13 with a sneak peek at Chef Gio Lontoc and student Ngambela Zulu preparing the pastries which resulted in news coverage that solely featured our imagery and entry. The video can be seen at <https://wnyt.com/top-stories/suny-schenectady-brings-tater-trot-to-schenectady-streets/> Our food truck's beignet entry won 3rd place out of 22 participating restaurants for the event.

Mitzi Espinola, Assistant Director of Academic Advisement and Retention, along with Pamela McCall, Interim Dean of Academic Affairs, Mark Bessette, Assistant Dean of Financial Aid, Mary Silvesti, Testing Center Coordinator & Tawk Manager and Dale Miller, Director of Institutional Research traveled to Chicago from May 31-June 1st to meet with members from the Chicago City Colleges to be trained on their Retention Score processes.

Lauren Gallo, Early College in the High School Student Success Coach Manager, hosted a First Year Seminar Curriculum Planning meeting with FYS summer instructors to better organize, align, and enhance FYS curriculum which services as the foundation course taken by all Early College students.

Mitzi Espinola, Assistant Director of Academic Advisement and Retention, Pamela McCall, Interim Dean of Academic Affairs, and Dr. David Clickner, Vice President for SI&P and

Academic Affairs met with Leslie Fischbeck from SOVA for the ASN Holistic Advising Awards Case Study Interview.

Ingrid O’Connell, Professor, attended the NYSTIA (NYS Tourism Industry Association) Conference April 19-20, 2023 in Oswego, NY. The annual conference brings over 200 NYS tourism professionals, destination marketing organizations, and tourism promotion agencies. Aside from networking with tourism professionals across the state, there were numerous speakers on the following topics: Transformational Stewardship and the Proposed Lake Ontario National Marine Sanctuary, Akwesasne Travel (Indigenous Travel Group), Legislative Update, NYS: The Best of America’s Great Outdoors, and Workforce Development: Creative Strategies to Recruit & Retain Workers).

### **Ensuring Financial Sustainability and Self-Sufficiency**

In preparation for the new Counselor I, Director Robyn King has been preparing an onboarding manual. Robyn has also participated in numerous opportunities for professional development including attendance at the Schenectady County Threat Assessment Task Force, new supervisor training, and a trauma-informed campus workshop. Additionally, Robyn is meeting with Jesse Aragona, the new Schenectady County Veteran’s Peer Support director in hopes of granting him community hub space to provide services to veteran students.

Mark Bessette (Assistant Dean of Financial Aid and Access) and Pamela McCall (Interim Dean of Academic Affairs) were chosen to participate in the New York State Community College Leadership Fellows Cohort 1. This program is a tailored program for community college leaders interested in advancing within their college and the field. New York was selected, along with Michigan and Texas, as part of a national scale-up project to replicate Ohio’s Leadership Academy for Student Success with funding from Ascendium Education Group, the ECOM Foundation and The Kresge Foundation. This program is designed to provide mid-level community college leaders with a solid foundational understanding of critical student success and change management concepts with technical assistance from NCII, Aspen, and the Ohio Success Center. The curriculum covers essential roles of leadership in student success, keeping students’ end goals in mind, the student experience, leadership traits that drive change, managing and advancing institutional change, and effective external partnerships and the leadership journey. The fellowship began on May 17th and will conclude in June 2024.

President Moono and Vice President Ryan met with the County Executive and his staff concerning the 2023-24 proposed Operating Budget and 2024 Capital project request. The Capital request was submitted to the County in late May and the Operating budget will go to the County in June.

The College received \$1,185,000 in one-time State Transformational Investment Funds as part of the 2023-24 State budget. Details on eligible expenditures and the process for accessing from these one-time resources is forthcoming from the State University of New York.