



MANY VOICES, ONE CALL – The Strategic Plan to 2026

***President's Report***  
September 2022

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**Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

Throughout August, School of Music staff helped onboard new students so they could access College support services.

On August 8, 2022 Lauren Lankau and Sarah Wilson-Sparrow met with employees of the City Mission to discuss apprenticeship and assist them with enrolling in the Certified Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counselor (CASAC) program. In addition, she met with Tamara Calhoun to discuss student recruitment for a Child Development Associate (CDA) Micro-Credential.

On August 25, 2022 Sarah Wilson-Sparrow and Lauren Lankau met with SUNY Admin, the Department of Labor, Mohawk Valley Community College and Dutchess Community College to discuss expanding pre-apprenticeship opportunities.

On August 25th, 2022, Interim Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) Alicia Richardson and Dean Eileen Abrahams hosted a Fall Institute Week session on the proposed four-year Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion plan for SUNY Schenectady. The campus community was introduced to the 2022-2026 plan; CDO Richardson and Dean Abrahams reviewed the process by which the plan was developed, highlighted the vision, mission, strategic goals, and timeline included in the plan, and talked through the action steps outlined in order to achieve the goals.

Also, on August 25th, 2022, CDO Richardson led a Fall Institute Week session where attendees were asked to examine aspects of the search process through a DEI lens. Participants reviewed DEI definitions and different search tools, considered the impact of new practices, and engaged in a mock search committee interview. In addition, they were encouraged to interrogate past practices and suggest changes to make the process more equitable and inclusive.

Equal Opportunity Program (EOP) students took part in a field trip to Soul Fire Farm through the EOP Summer Program. Soul Fire Farm is land used by Black and Indigenous Farmers that provide programming and education about farming, farming practices, and cultivation centered around food security.

The Office of Human Resources (HR) continues to work collaboratively with the CDO on taking a deeper dive into DEI and consider changes to make the search process more equitable and inclusive. During Faculty Institute Week, HR joined the CDO in a session entitled DEI and the Search Process. Session attendees examined aspects of the search process through a DEI lens, reviewed DEI definitions and different search tools, and engaged in a mock search committee

interview. In addition, participants were encouraged to evaluate rubrics, rewrite interview questions and conduct a mock interview to analyze where biases get in the way of the search process.

Upon Board approval of the revision to Policy 2.12 Non-Discrimination Statement at the August Board meeting, HR has added the updated diversity statement to all job postings to encourage qualified job seekers from diverse backgrounds or with physical limitations to apply. The Statement was updated to show SUNY Schenectady as a more inclusive workplace that celebrates diversity and prioritizes inclusion.

### **Delivering a Meaningful Student Experience**

Student Activities Advisor Sherman Ortiz coordinated what has become the College's 'Welcome Week' tradition during the first week of classes. New and returning students were greeted with a friendly and engaging cross section of staff members at entranceways and at the admissions tent in the middle of the quad. Hundreds of students received cold water bottles, tasty snacks, and directions to their classes and various student support offices.

New Student Registration days were conducted on throughout August. These special registration days for new students involved working with Admissions, meeting with a Student Success Coach, an Academic Advisor, and taking part in a career/advising/registration session. This allows for individual attention and wrap around services.

Mary Silvestri and Pam McCall, points for the Welcome Center, coordinated efforts in preparation of opening the Welcome Center. Efforts included training on Starfish to best utilize programing within the Center, preparing a technology plan with IT, working with security to create a safety plan, and meeting with support services to determine workflow patterns and best practices to best benefit students. Furthermore, to support student services in the Welcome Center, a knowledge database is being built to house a campus Q&A.

Tiombé Farley - Director of the Equal Opportunity Program (EOP), and Michael Henderson, EOP Success Coach provided a three-week intrusive summer program for new SUNY Schenectady EOP students. Students had the choice of attending online or in person and took part in Math and English preparation for the fall semester and took part in numerous presentations from support services offices. The theme of the Summer Program was food insecurity and how it is currently impacting the world at large via the war in Ukraine, local communities, and college students.

The Early College High School program completed its six-week summer session, which ran from June 28 through August 5. A total of 212 students participated both in person and virtually in over eleven college courses. Individual as well as embedded tutoring was provided through the Learning Centers. Students who needed laptops to work from home were provided with devices, in addition to free supplies and books as funded through the Early College High School grant program.

Student Affairs and Administration negotiated 2022-23 agreement for the academic year with the Capital District YMCA for student use of the downtown Schenectady branch. This agreement includes additional provisions to include agreed upon hours of operations, student access to parking, a mid-year evaluation and revised termination clause language.

On August 17, 2022 5 EKG students successfully completed their course of study. 4 of these students passed the NHA exam on 8/19 and became Nationally Certified EKG Technicians. The 5th student deferred testing until September.

On August 19, 2022 13 CNA PCA students successfully completed their course of study. 13 of these students received their PCA certificates. 7 of the 13 students passed the New York State Nurse Aide Exam and 6 students are scheduled to retest in Sept 20.

### **Building Organizational Effectiveness**

The Office of Human Resources (OHR) conducted a Search Committee Process Update and Training during Faculty Institute Week. Several changes to the Search Committee process have been implemented for the purpose of compliance with Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action laws and to streamline the process in making it more efficient for shortening the time it takes to complete a search. An Applicant Screening and Interview Rubrics, Applicant Pool Certification Form and a Guide for Search Committees were reviewed.

HR conducted two Interview Exchange Essentials training for all hiring managers. The training covered orientation to all requisitions to include the new Personnel Action Form (PAF) and recent new enhancements to the Recommendation for Hire form. Additionally, HR reviewed the process for reappointments for part-time professional staff with the recent release of the new part-time professional staff rates for 2022-23. The PAF is being used to track all job status changes and approvals for all employees in one central location. Examples of status changes and approvals include resignations, retirements, salary changes, leaves of absence, promotions, etc.

HR kicked off the beginning of the new semester on August 26, 2022 with an Employee Service Awards and Recognition Program. Our newest faculty, staff and promotions were recognized as well as celebrating milestones of a retiree's life, honoring those receiving an Emeritus Award, and recognizing the milestone years of service of our colleagues for 2019, 2020 and 2021. The College has not had a program since May 2019 due to the pandemic. However, the focus was on honoring our colleagues' perseverance and resilience despite the challenges we have all faced. One emeriti, and 93 colleagues for milestone service to the College over the past three years as well as the 2021-22 Chancellor's Award for Excellence recipients!

HR released mandatory trainings to all staff, and have adopted a new model for the release of trainings, such that all trainings are released at once (and we've provided a longer period of time to complete them) as opposed to smaller groups of trainings multiple times throughout the year.

Outdoor transit ads on CDTA buses and interior bus panels extended, running 8/29/22 – 11/20/22. This allows us to connect with ridership and provide a highly visible campaign during key high school prospective student decision-making period.

Billboards (digital on I-787 and I-90) and traditional poster boards (Erie Blvd/Freemans Bridge Rd; State Street; Rt 50 at Mourningkill; and NY Rt 5 at Yardboro) run from 7/18/22-8/15/22. The two digital billboards delivered a combined 199,576 ads.

The roof of the Center for Science and Technology (CST) building was replaced over the summer. Our roofing contractors shifted focus to the Elston Hall roof over the Culinary kitchens. This project is anticipated to be completed in mid-October.

Renovation of the Begley Lobby restrooms continued. Our contractors installed the vinyl flooring in the hallway outside the new ADA compliant restrooms in early September and were completing the project punch list items. Anticipated project completion is mid-September.

Structural reinforcement of the Begley Hall roof was completed in late August. This work was needed for the future external relocation of the building's cooling tower to the rooftop from the existing interior mechanical room. The new cooling tower is anticipated in January with installation expected in April 2023.

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

On two separate days, August 9<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022, the School of Music held auditions and offered on-the-spot advising for incoming students that resulted in a 13.5% increase in Music majors compared to Fall 2021.

On August 10, 2022, Lauren Lankau and Sarah Wilson-Sparrow met with the Schenectady Community Action Program (SCAP) to discuss possible partnership on a new grant. In addition, they coordinated a meeting with GE Renewal Energy representatives to discuss collaborations on the Port of Albany Wind project.

On August 12, 18 & 23, 2022, Lauren Lankau, Dr. Tiziana Rota and Sarah Wilson-Sparrow met with Grey Media to discuss marketing of apprenticeship and WFD & CE courses

On August 23, 2022, Lauren Lankau and Sarah Wilson-Sparrow met with GE and the Department of Labor to discuss apprenticeship opportunities. Also, on August 23, Lauren Lankau met with Teresian House and the Department of Labor to discuss apprenticeship opportunities for Certified Nurse Aides.

The Liberty Partnerships Program was funded for another five years (\$2.25 million; \$450,000 per year). The NYSED grant program supports 6th-12th grade students from Schenectady City Schools who may be at-risk of not graduating through evidence-based practices which aim to

prepare students for the rigors of post-secondary education and employment. The program will serve 360 students annually, an additional 35 students from previous years.

The College submitted to SUNY, paperwork for a State funding match of Federal CARES Act funding for the Information Technology Initiative Project that will provide \$1.6M in funds to update the college's IT infrastructure backbone to support distance and hybrid learning technologies. Two proposed vendor contracts related to this funding are under consideration at the September 2022 Board meeting.

The College submitted an expenditure plan to the US Department of Education for use of a recently awarded \$757,840 Supplemental Support under the American Rescue Plan (SSARP) grant. Fifty-percent of this award is for direct student support and fifty percent for institutional assistance.

SUNY Schenectady recently was notified of an additional \$951,005 in restricted State allocation through the State University of New York for 2022-23-year support of enrollment growth. Plans on how the college will utilize these funds is currently underway.

The Schenectady Foundation has granted the College funding to purchase two more freezers for the Pantry.

### **President's Outreach**

On August 6, 2022 Dr. Chola Milambo, Zambian Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations (UN), was on the SUNY Schenectady campus. Before his appointment as Ambassador to the UN, Dr. Milambo worked at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group in Washington, D.C., holding various positions, including Senior Adviser to the World Bank Group Executive Director for Africa Group 1 Constituency, and lead adviser for Botswana, Ethiopia, and Zambia.

Dr. Moono shared information with him about the College's innovative agreements signed this summer with the African Education Program (AEP) and the University of Zambia (UNZA). Through the agreement with the AEP, SUNY Schenectady and AEP are collaborating on plans for the College to provide educational offerings to vulnerable students including SUNY Schenectady courses/College in the High School courses, pathways for students to enroll at SUNY Schenectady, and scholarships. In 2006, AEP and its local implementing partner the Amos Youth Centre (AYC) opened a flagship Learning & Leadership Center in Kafue. More than 500 vulnerable children and youth currently take advantage of programs focused on quality education through academic tutoring, leadership development and volunteerism, gender equity, self-esteem building, period poverty elimination, HIV/AIDS and health awareness, entrepreneurship and financial literacy, nutrition and food security, and the arts and creativity.