

# alumNEWS

Spring 2017

## “Biotechnology is in Our Genes” in New Biotechnology Laboratory and Research Facility

Tracy Ramlochan started out as a Liberal Arts major, switched to Human Services and then was ready to follow her true passion of a career in the medical field. Now a Science major with a concentration in Biology, she’s among the first group of students taking classes in the new Biotechnology Laboratory and Research Facility.

The College held a ribbon cutting for the new facility, on the sixth floor of Elston Hall, in late March. It houses two learning laboratories, a research center and dedicated microscopy area with state-of-the-art equipment throughout.

In Tracy’s Biology II Lab, she uses equipment including a compound light microscope to analyze gram stains of E. Coli bacteria. “I’ve always been a hands-on learner,” she said. “I really like being in the new lab because the equipment is excellent and I like the fact that the professors let us do our own thing for a while during the experiments, but always guide us.”

It’s this type of training that sets the College apart, said Dr. Keylon Cheeseman, faculty member in the Division of Math, Science, Technology and Health who teaches in the new facility. “This is a big advantage for students because it’s essential when it comes to biotechnology that students have the hands-on training,” he said. “They need to have intimate knowledge of the equipment for any type of position.”

In his Biology II Lab, Dr. Cheeseman leads students through an experiment in bacterial transformation. Similar experiments have helped biotechnologists discover new avenues for the production of therapeutic molecules including insulin.

Along with the new facility, the College initiated two new degree programs in Biotechnology (A.S.) and Biological Technician (A.A.S.) this semester. Biotechnologists study the genetic, chemical and physical attributes of cells, tissues and organisms to create and improve products and processes in fields including medicine, agriculture and environmental conservation. Students in the A.S. program are planning to transfer to a baccalaureate program in biotechnology and related fields. Those in the A.A.S. program complete internships and are qualified to work in a laboratory setting with training in biology, chemistry, microbiology, cell biology and genetics.



Tracy Ramlochan (right), who is majoring in Science with a Biology concentration, works with Jeffrey Garcia Perolto, Science major. Dr. Keylon Cheeseman guides them through an experiment in the new Biotechnology Laboratory and Research Facility.



Officials celebrate at the ribbon cutting of the new Biotechnology Laboratory and Research Facility. (l. to r.) Hayden Paneth, Science major; Dr. Keylon Cheeseman, faculty member in the Division of Math, Science, Technology and Health; Honorable Gary McCarthy '77, Mayor of Schenectady; Honorable Karen B. Johnson, Vice Chair of the Schenectady County Legislature; Dr. Penny Haynes, Vice President of Academic Affairs; Andrew Vines, Dean of the Division of Math, Science, Technology and Health; Dr. Renato Tameta, Professor; Dr. Steady Moono, President; Keion Clinton, Associate Professor and Sharon Small, Information Processing Specialist.



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## Dear Alumni and Friends,

Often, I share with my students how fortunate I was to have supportive parents even though they had minimal formal education. As I look back, I am so thankful for their investment in me – they provided me with guidance, encouragement and loving care. Frankly, without their support I wouldn't have accomplished much in life.

In the same way, SUNY Schenectady County Community College (SUNY SCCC) is a sure bet for our students as we enable them to achieve their goals. I am aware that some of our students may be unsure of their career plans, but here at SUNY SCCC they find direction, care and faculty/staff mentors. As an institution, we are committed to enhancing our students' experiences so that they are empowered to achieve their dreams. The College recently joined the Achieving the Dream National Network to enhance our student success focus. Additionally, we continue to add new programs to meet our community's workforce needs. All of us are truly committed to making SUNY SCCC a place where our students are empowered to accomplish their goals. I personally thank you being part of our story!

Sincerely,  
**Steady H. Moono, Ed.D.**  
 President



## Spring 2017 Concerts in the Carl B. Taylor Auditorium



(front row, l. to r.) Ezra Glatt and John Carroll  
 (back row, l. to r.) Adjunct Faculty Member and Director Kevin Grudecki '93, Madeline Civill, Michael Adams, Michael Hugo '16. In addition to teaching guitar in the School of Music, Kevin Grudecki '93 is the Director of one of the Guitar Ensembles that will be performing in the Taylor Auditorium on May 1, at 7:30 p.m. Read more about Kevin in Class Notes on page 8.



(front row, l. to r.) Trevor Norman, Joshua Walsh and Aries Nieuwkerk (back row, l. to r.) Adjunct Faculty Member and Director Paul Quigley, Taylor Clark, Andrew DeWolf and William Moore. (Missing from photo: Brian Fahey)

### Guitar Ensembles

Monday, May 1, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

### Vocal Chamber Ensemble

Tuesday, May 2, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

### Jazz/Percussion Ensembles

Wednesday, May 3, 7:30 p.m.

### Wind Ensemble

Friday, May 5, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

### Chamber Music/Brass Ensemble

Monday, May 8, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

### Capital Region Wind Ensemble presents *Manhattan Rhapsody* featuring **Mark Evans, Piano Soloist**

Sunday, June 4, 2017, 3 p.m. Tickets are \$10 for the general public, \$8 for non-SCCC students and free with SCCC ID.



The Capital Region Wind Ensemble concert featured the premiere of *Making the Darkness Conscious*, written by Professor Brett L. Wery, Music Director of the CRWE (pictured above on left with Assistant Professor Mark Evans).

Professor Wery said the piece is, "an anti-concerto for tenor saxophone. It was inspired by characters like Walter White of "Breaking Bad" who make all the wrong decisions for all the right reasons."



## Alumnus Ensures Orchids are a Main Attraction at Nation's Garden

You might say that at just 25 years old, Justin Kondrat's life has already come full circle.

For the past two years, he's been spending his days with Pinocchio, Viking Prince, Leopard Spots, Happy Days "Golden Dragon" and Merlin. Their scientific names might be a bit more difficult to pronounce, but each one of these beauties has a simple elegance.

At 15 years old, growing up in Galway, N.Y., Justin was just beginning to learn about the world of these rare, and sometime mysterious, orchids. He was lucky enough to have an experienced orchid grower literally in his backyard. "Glen Decker, who is world-renowned, lived down the road in Galway," said Justin, who was a Science major at the College from 2010 to 2012. "He showed me everything he knew about rare and endangered orchids from all over the world. That helped me find my love for orchids."

Now, as a Gardener at the United States Botanic Garden (USBG) in Washington, D.C., Justin has taken the passion he has carried with him for 10 years and the knowledge he gained at Cornell University (he's a 2014 graduate with his B.S. in Plant Science) and quickly gained a reputation as an architect of color, blooms and sophistication for the USBG's orchid collection.

The USBG Orchid Room showcases more than 100 orchids, a symphony of color that Justin refines on a daily basis. "Orchid flowers can last for one day or up to five months," Justin explained. After they have bloomed, Justin replaces the orchids with those from the USBG's greenhouse which is home to more than 4,000 orchids to "show the orchids in their best light."

Justin's philosophy is that each plant tells a story and it's his job to convey this to the millions of people from around the world who visit the USBG. "Orchids are so diverse, from all walks of life," he said. "I feel so empowered and enthused by helping to showcase this to the public."

Feeling empowered wasn't always a reality for Justin, but there was a shift whenever he was working in the garden with his grandmother Pearl Osowicki. "I grew up in a low-income family. I was a student with a learning disability, dyslexia and memory retention issues, but when I would go to my grandmother's house on the weekends, she showed me that first there were the beautiful tulips, then the hostas and the sunflowers and I gravitated toward that," he said. "When I was feeling down, horticulture allowed me to produce beauty and have a positive impact for those around me." Now it's his life's work. "Not a moment goes by that I don't think about plants. It's a way of life. It may be my profession, but it's also my calling."



*Justin tending to a tropical lady slipper orchid (*Paphiopedilum haynaldianum*), an orchid native to the Philippines, in the Orchid Room at the United States Botanic Garden in Washington, D.C.*

## Career and Transfer Services Still Here For You

As an alum of SUNY SCCC, the members of the Office of Career and Transfer Services are here to help with:

- Free access to the College Central job posting system
- Access to on-campus career fairs and recruiting events
- Online resources available at [www.sunysccc.edu/cts](http://www.sunysccc.edu/cts)
- Individualized guidance with a career and transfer advisor

Are you a business owner or recruiter? Please register your business with the office to promote your opportunities and take part in career events.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please visit the Opportunity Zone (Elston Hall, Room 221-i) Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., call (518) 836-2807 or e-mail [cts@sunysccc.edu](mailto:cts@sunysccc.edu).



## A Sure Bet – College Partners with Casino on New Degree Program

This semester, a new Business Administration—Casino A.A.S. degree program began at the College. SUNY SCCC and the new Rivers Casino and Resort in Schenectady have partnered on the program, designed to prepare students for entry-level management positions at Rivers and other local/regional casino operations. Student take classes in accounting, business law, business communication, the gaming industry, human resources and marketing.

Dr. Michael Roggow, Dean of the Division of Business, Criminal Justice and Law, noted that internships, part of the new program, are not only exciting for students entering the field, they're also valuable. "What's important is that our students will get good quality, hands-on experience, which is so critical to making them competitive for professional positions in this industry," Dr. Roggow said.

The first student in the program is Jamie Ingraham (pictured in the Casino Lab in Elston Hall). She took courses that she knew would be required for the program before it actually started. Now, she's completing coursework while working full time in the security area at Rivers Casino and Resort.

"I'm a big people person," Jamie said. "I like to be around crowds and when I heard the casino was opening here, that was it. I knew that was my chance to jump right in and make a career out of it." She said that earning her degree will allow her to attain a management position down the line.



## Students in Need Benefit from New Food Pantry



*Rich Lasek (right), Assistant Professor in the Division of Business, Criminal Justice and Law and Advisor to the Business Club, with club officers (l. to r.) Steve Forman, Vice President; Paul Lawry, Treasurer; Malisa Bipat, President; and Brittany Bogle, Secretary in the new food pantry in Elston Hall. The club assists with soliciting donations and recording inventory.*

From pasta and sauce to canned vegetables and soups, students in need are now able to access non-perishable foods through a new food pantry in Elston Hall. The pantry opened in February and is staffed by faculty and staff.

Robyn King, Counselor IV, is a member of the Student Success Initiative Sub-Committee that brought the pantry to fruition. "We hope to partially meet the food insecurity needs that some of our students have so that they can focus more on their studies and not worry about being hungry," she said.

A visit to the food pantry can help students with food for a week and they can visit the pantry twice a month. Students also receive information on locations where, if needed, they can receive additional food sources and daily hot meals.

The new food pantry was created through the sub-committee that was formed in 2016 and is part of the Achieving the Dream program on campus. Last summer, the College joined Achieving the Dream, a national network dedicated to community college student success and completion.

Interested in making a donation? Donations can be made to Robyn King in the Student Affairs Division, Elston Hall 222. Feel free to contact her at [possonrm@gw.sunysccc.edu](mailto:possonrm@gw.sunysccc.edu) for a list of suggested items.



## Delizioso! Italy Awaits Student Chefs and Professors

This summer, students will again hone their cooking skills in Italy as they study with top chefs, restaurateurs and food producers.

Ten students, Chef Rocco Verrigni, Professor, and Chef Michael Stamets, Assistant Professor, both of the School of Hotel, Culinary Arts and Tourism, will travel to Rome, Ferrara, Parma and Asti, visiting restaurants, the Parma Reggiano cheese factory, farms and vineyards along the way.

The College has been partnering with the Marco Polo Institute on the Program Abroad in Italy. This will be the second summer that a group from the College has made the gastronomic adventure to Italy and the first time students are earning college credit. Chef Verrigni, who was the driving force behind the program, said that it's the opportunity of a lifetime for his students. "There is no replacement for experiencing firsthand international cuisine in the country of origin," Chef Verrigni said. Chef Stamets, who traveled to Italy last year, described the trip this way, "This experience gives the students a chance to immerse themselves in the food and culture of Italy in an intense trip visiting various producers of products as well as taking multiple hands-on classes in various regions."

SUNY SCCC continues to explore and identify study abroad opportunities for all of its students.



Student chefs in Italy last summer.



### FOCACCIA WITH ROSEMARY

#### Ingredients:

For two rectangular molds gastro norm

1000 gr.	Flour "00"
30 gr.	Salt
50 gr.	Granulated Sugar
50 gr.	Beer Yeast
50 gr.	Olive Oil
350 gr.	Water
350 gr.	Whole Milk
80 gr.	Fresh Rosemary

#### Preparation:

Make a dough with direct and smooth movements. Let the dough rest for 30 minutes covered. Spread dough in greased pans, make small holes, brush with extra virgin olive oil and bake 220 Celsius for 30 minutes.

## #tbt-Commencement2007



(l. to r.) Barbara Jones, Associate Professor/Aviation Liaison, with graduates in 2007 from the Aviation Science degree program. They've all done SCCC proud. Jacob Blaauboer is a pilot flying for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Admin (NOAA) in Florida. Luke Wrest is a pilot on a Citation Jet for Tradewinds out of Oxford, Conn. Andrew Greco is a wind turbine engineer for GE in Schenectady. Amber Tobin works in the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services and Erik Larsen is a pilot flying a Citation Jet for Tradewinds out of Oxford, Conn.



A group of grads wait anxiously to enter Proctors during Commencement 2007.

Many of our readers remember crossing the stage to receive their degree or certificate. The members of the Class of 2017 will celebrate their own milestone on Thursday, May 18 at Proctors during the College's 47th Commencement. Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul is this year's Keynote Speaker.

## New Scholarships

**The Cornelia A. Bregman Memorial Scholarship for Women Returning to Education** has been established by the Greater Capital Region Endowment Fund, which is affiliated with the Capital Region Women's Network. The group focuses on education, empowerment, and enrichment for women of the Capital Region. The scholarship, for \$1,000, will be awarded to two female students who are at least 25 years of age and have documented financial need.

"The goal of our scholarship program is to aid women who are changing, starting, or advancing careers due to under-employment, lack of appropriate education, or other circumstances," said Eileen Howe Bird, a representative of the Capital Region Women's Network. "We hope that the funds will help those who have encountered situations that hampered or delayed their earnings capacity or job stability."

The scholarship is named for Cornelia A. Bregman, an enthusiastic and passionate supporter of young women.

**The Reverend Eloise Frazier Award** has been established by the Schenectady Human Rights Commission's Martin Luther King, Jr. Coalition. The scholarship will provide a \$1,000 award to a student majoring in Human Services, with preference given to a person who demonstrates a commitment of time working on behalf of civil and human rights in the community.

Spearheading the new award is Angelicia Morris, the Executive Director of the Schenectady Human Rights Commission and a member of the SCCC Foundation Board. She also sits on the Special Events Committee and Scholarship Selection Committee for the Foundation.

The Reverend Eloise Frazier was the Founder of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Coalition and Chair of the Coalition for 17 years.

**The First Reformed Church of Schenectady Scholarship** will provide three students with a \$1,250 award. The scholarship was made possible by funding through a Covenant Fund for mission and benevolence, as part of the Church's commitment to the common good.

The scholarship was established by Dr. Bill Levering, the Reverend of the First Reformed Church of Schenectady and Vice Chair of the College's Board of Trustees.

## SCHOLARSHIPS: Did You Know?

- The SCCC Foundation awards \$200,000 on average each year to more than 200 students.
- Scholarships awarded by the SCCC Foundation range from \$250 to \$5,000, in many cases covering the cost of one semester of tuition (\$1,860).
- The average GPA requirement to be awarded a scholarship is 2.5, and donors can set other qualifying parameters such as community or campus involvement, musical talent, city or county of residence, and/or industry.
- The majority of scholarship recipients are selected by a Scholarship Selection Committee made up of faculty, staff, and members of the SCCC Foundation Board of Directors. Other scholarships are awarded based on recommendations by the five academic Deans.
- Scholarship donors have a special opportunity to meet their recipients at various scholarship events throughout the year, including Honors Convocation in May.

## Leave a Legacy by Joining the Keystone Society

A legacy gift transforms the lives of students.

A key to student success is the generosity of alumni and friends who include SUNY SCCC in their estate plans. The Keystone Society recognizes and honors donors who believe passionately in our educational mission and the dreams of our students to make the world a better place.

### YOU CAN MAKE A LEGACY GIFT:

- With a bequest through your will.
- By naming Schenectady County Community College Foundation, Inc., as beneficiary of a life insurance policy, an IRA, retirement plan or a bank account.
- By naming Schenectady County Community College Foundation, Inc., as an income beneficiary of a trust.
- By securing a life income by establishing a Charitable Gift Annuity.

It's easy to become a member. If you have included SCCC Foundation, Inc., in your will or estate plans, please let us know so we can include you as a member. Please speak with your financial advisor/tax professional about any estate plans.

### KEYSTONE SOCIETY MEMBERS ENJOY:

- Invitations to special events with the President and others
- Special recognition in publications (with permission)
- Conversations with Foundation staff on how best to use their future gifts

For more information about the Keystone Society and legacy giving, please call Marcy Steiner in the Foundation Office at (518) 381-1442.

## Scholarship Recipient Has New Determination



Henry Epps (center) with (l. to r.) Jeanne Maloy, Chair of the Foundation Board of Directors; Karen Johnson, scholarship donor; Ann Fleming Brown, Chair of the Board of Trustees; and Dr. Steady Moono, President, during Honors Convocation last May.

*"The scholarship meant that I was able to succeed in my academic studies and to achieve my goals that I set. It gave me an opportunity to increase my self-esteem and my self-worth. I had some obstacles in my way. That scholarship boosted my morale. Never in my wildest dreams did I think I would ever be able to receive a scholarship. It gives me more inspiration to go to the next level of my education and not be afraid to take the risk." – Henry Epps*

Life threw Henry Epps what could have been a devastating curve ball when he was diagnosed with multiple myeloma in January 2012. But, after stem cell treatment and a bone marrow transplant, Henry was more determined than ever to pursue and complete his degree.

When he first started taking courses at the College in 2005, his heart just wasn't in it. "Cancer brought out a lot of things in me," Henry said. "I won't let myself down this time."

A Human Services major and resident of Schenectady, Henry was the recipient of the Karen Brown Johnson Scholarship during last spring's Honors Convocation ceremony. He plans to graduate in May 2018 and then transfer on for his bachelor's and master's degrees in social work. "For a career, I'd like to work to help the disabled, economically disadvantaged, elderly and youth. I think I was put on this Earth to help people."

## Women's Fund Enters Seventh Year of Support for Students

Since its establishment in May 2011, the Women's Fund of the Capital Region Scholarship has provided \$125,000 in support to 25 students.

"Our mission is to provide funding and support to financially insecure and nontraditional female students," said Paula Marshman, Co-Chair of the Women's Fund. "We do this by investing in women's education through scholarships and emergency funds, and partnering with local organizations."

Since 2007, the Women's Fund has raised and awarded more than \$425,000 for grants, scholarships and emergency funds. Their \$20,000 annual donation funds a \$5,000 scholarship that goes toward tuition and fees for each of the four recipients. The scholarship is awarded to women who are returning to education after a period of absence.

In addition to providing financial support, members of the Women's Fund actively engage, empower and mentor scholarship recipients. Each year scholarship recipients are invited to the Trailblazers Luncheon, where impactful women from the community are honored.

At this year's Trailblazers Luncheon in March 2017 at Glen Sanders Mansion, Louise Florance, a scholarship recipient pursuing her degree in Culinary Arts and Hotel Restaurant Management, gave a moving speech about her experience as a student returning to school after 28 years in banking.



1. Louise Florance 2. Jamie Ingraham, Business Administration, receives the Women's Fund of the Capital Region Scholarship during Honors Convocation last year. She's pictured with Paula Marshman, Co-Chair of the Women's Fund of the Capital Region.

"Since going back to school, I have been lucky enough to be selected for an Internship at the Kentucky Derby, and made the President's and Dean's list... but the proudest moment I had was when I opened an envelope from the SCCC Foundation and the letter read that I was awarded a scholarship from the Women's Fund," she said. "It has validated not only my decision to go back to school, but my abilities."

In 2011, the Women's Fund also established a Women's Emergency Fund with the Foundation which provides financial support to women studying at SUNY SCCC who are faced with sudden and unforeseen financial hardship.

"Our commitment and collaboration with SCCC provides for strengthening opportunities, bridging economic inequalities and creating a more secure future for women in our community," Marshman said. To date, the Women's Emergency Fund has distributed more than \$14,000 in emergency grants to help women who otherwise might not have been able to complete their education.

For more information about the Women's Fund of the Capital Region, please visit [www.womensfundcr.org](http://www.womensfundcr.org).

If you'd like more information on how you can establish a scholarship, please contact Samantha Legere at (518) 836-2801, [legeresr@sunysccc.edu](mailto:legeresr@sunysccc.edu).



## Class Notes

### 90s

**Kevin Grudecki '93**, Performing Arts – Music, is the Director of the SUNY SCCC Guitar Ensemble and teaches guitar at the College. After graduating with his A.S. in Performing Arts: Music, Kevin went on to earn his Bachelor's in Music from Berklee College of Music and then his Master's in Music from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Kevin is also on faculty at the University at Albany, Anna Maria College and Dean College. He has performed nationally and internationally on more than 100 musical theatre productions which have taken him to Istanbul, Turkey, Macau, China, and tours throughout the United States and Canada. Kevin works with many jazz and new-music ensembles and is a composer and arranger of small and large jazz works, including pieces for the Guitar Ensemble that he directs at the College.

### 00s



**Billy Alm '02**, Teacher Education Transfer, went on to earn his B.S. in Physical Education from Newberry College in Newberry, S.C., in 2005. He is a Physical Education Teacher at Polk County Middle School in Columbus, N.C. He is also the Head Baseball Coach at Polk County High School. While at SUNY SCCC, Billy was a member of the Men's Baseball Team under Head Coach Tim Andi and Assistant Coach Jeff Keith. "They are the reason I am where I am today. They taught me work ethic and responsibility." Billy is pictured with his son Gunnar Alm and Joel Booker, who he coached at Polk County High School and who was drafted by the Chicago White Sox.



**Mary Rogan '04**, General Studies, helped to open the new Lucky Strike Social in Crossgates Mall last June and is now the Event Sales Manager. She previously held positions at the Albany Marriott and the Radisson Hotel Albany. She is an active member of the Capital Region Chamber's Young Professionals Network and serves on their Campus Connect Committee.



**Christopher Baideme '05**, Hotel and Restaurant Management, is the Business Manager of The Hungry Hollow, a family-owned sandwich shop opening this spring in Albany. He previously worked as an Assistant Manager at Dunkin' Donuts. He notes that SCCC and its connection with SUNY Delhi were instrumental in his career path.



**Zach Hasselbarth '09**, Business Administration, earned his B.A. in Business Management from Utica College in 2011. He is a Credit Consultant at Sunmark Credit Union and is also part owner of Twill, a start-up giving company in Albany, N.Y. While studying at SUNY SCCC and Utica College, Zach was a member of the Men's Baseball Teams at both institutions.

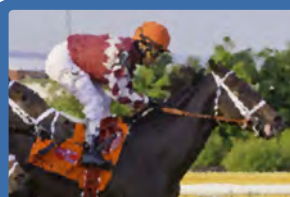
### 10s



**Missy Henry, '14, '15**, Hotel and Restaurant Management and Culinary Arts, is the Food and Beverage/Hospitality Coordinator for Tri-City ValleyCats Baseball. She previously owned her own catering company called Caroline's Kitchen.

To submit a Class Note, please visit our website at [sunysccc.edu/Alumni-Give/Alumni](http://sunysccc.edu/Alumni-Give/Alumni). We'd love to hear from you!

## Summer Meetups for Alumni and Friends



### Clubhouse Breakfast Friday, August 4, 2017 Saratoga Race Course

Join SUNY SCCC Alumni and friends for a buffet breakfast on The Porch of the Clubhouse at Saratoga Race Course... a unique opportunity to dine trackside while you watch the horses work out!

After your meal, enjoy a walking tour of the track's historic stable area (weather permitting). Trams bring visitors to the stable area every 15 minutes from 7:30 a.m. to 9 a.m.

Please RSVP to reserve your seats as seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. Admission is free, but there is a fee to enjoy the buffet: \$17.95 for adults and \$9.95 for kids 12 and under. There is a fee for trackside parking, which is refundable if you leave before 10 a.m. The track is cleared after the breakfast program, and you will need to pay Race Course admission upon re-entry for the afternoon races (Grandstand \$5 / Clubhouse \$8).

Register Online: [SCCCClubhouseBreakfast2017.EventBrite.com](http://SCCCClubhouseBreakfast2017.EventBrite.com)



### ValleyCats Porch Party Thursday, August 17, 2017 Joseph L. Bruno Stadium

Located in right field, "The Porch" is a two-tiered deck offering an elevated view of the action. Enjoy watching the game and having dinner with Alumni and friends, and then stay for fireworks after the game!

Included in the \$15 ticket price is your admission to the game (tickets to be picked up at "will call"), a deluxe picnic buffet with mini hot dog sliders, beef sliders, pulled pork sliders, mac and cheese, buffalo chicken salad, watermelon, chips and salsa, kettle corn, soda and water. Each guest will also receive a ValleyCats cap.

Register Online: [SCCCValleyCatsPorchParty2017.EventBrite.com](http://SCCCValleyCatsPorchParty2017.EventBrite.com)



## Education was Alumna's Key to Finding Hope

Theresa Taylor '11 has had several turning points in her life. There was the frigid St. Patrick's night a decade ago when she found herself walking up and down Caroline Street in Saratoga, going from bar to bar, trying her best to stay warm. She was in an abusive relationship, homeless, battling mental health issues and thought that she might not survive the night. But she summoned the strength to return to a shelter where she had stayed a few weeks prior and was placed in adult protective services, eventually settling into public housing and getting the help she needed to free herself from addiction.

She binge drank sporadically as a youth, but began drinking heavily after she became homeless. "I found myself turning to alcohol and I spent the next year drinking myself into oblivion," Theresa said. "But I started going to domestic violence classes and Project Hope and Power in Saratoga. The women in the program talked about how they were empowered through education. I knew that was going to be what got me out of where I was at that time. I applied to SUNY SCCC. I still have the letter of acceptance. It was the beginning of the fulfillment of a lifelong dream."

Fast forward to a warm, spring day in 2011 when Theresa was in the Registrar's Office at the College. She was graduating that May in Chemical Dependency Counseling and thinking about earning another degree. Instead of being informed about classes, she was told that she was the recipient of a substantial national scholarship. When all was said and done, her Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Scholarships would total \$140,000, paying for the costs of earning her bachelor's degree from the College of Saint Rose in 2014 and master's degree from Syracuse University a year later, both in social work.

"Hope" is something Theresa embodies. It's a word she repeated during a recent Q. and A. from her home in Syracuse, N.Y., where she is now a Counselor II, covering mental health and substance abuse, at Syracuse Behavioral Healthcare.



### **What are some of the most important techniques you use every day as a health and substance abuse counselor?**

Meeting people where they're at. I sat with so many counselors myself during my 10 years of mental health treatment – therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists – and they were all able to find *me* inside this human being who was struggling, but had hopes and dreams just like everybody else. This wasn't the end of the road. My role is to collaborate with people to find what gives them a fulfilling life, and meaning. We all have struggles. Addiction is a disease, and people relapse, just like someone who is in remission from cancer can have their cancer return. I see my role as giving people hope, and providing them with recovery tools that they can apply to help stay clean and find freedom and peace.

### **What do you try to remind your clients of and, at the same time, yourself to stay healthy?**

Self-care – body, mind and spirit. A lot of times people turn to substances because of pain. It's hard work that my clients are doing, but at the same time they're learning that they can do hard things. It takes strength and self-determination. By working through pain, there's light at the end of the tunnel.

*"My professors at SUNY SCCC challenged me to think creatively and critically through rigorous, rewarding academics and experiential learning. In addition to my program in the sciences, I received a solid liberal arts foundation. The support services I received through TRIO Student Support Services enabled me to excel and compete nationally for more than \$140,000 in transfer scholarships." – Theresa Taylor*

### **Unfortunately, every day there are tragedies associated with the opioid crisis, particularly with young people. What are some things parents should know?**

Be aware. It can happen to anyone. In terms of prevention, the best thing is knowledge – stay informed, have real conversations with your children and loved ones. If your child or another loved one is struggling, there are good recovery programs that also support families. Get support so you can have a better understanding of what addiction is. If you're worried about a loved one overdosing on opioids, take a training class on how to administer Narcan (a prescription injection or nasal spray) and receive a Narcan kit. These are things that can save a life.

### **What would you say to someone who may be struggling and wants to make a change in his/her life, but doesn't know how?**

Go to meetings and call treatment centers. If you need detox or rehab or outpatient, go in and be assessed. There is hope and help out there...thankfully a lot. Seek it out and don't feel ashamed. You're not alone. There are so many others, like you, who are ready and willing to listen and can offer you support. It's hard work, but the supports are out there, you just have to reach out and grasp them.

*Theresa graduated from the Chemical Dependency Counseling A.A.S. degree program, a dynamic academic program that combines coursework in addiction and the social sciences with two field internships, preparing graduates for employment in residential, out-patient, and other rehabilitation centers.*



## Foundation Welcomes Alumna to Board

Susan Zongrone '85, an Associate Relationship Manager at Key Private Bank, has joined the Board of Directors of the Foundation. She is a member of the Public Relations Committee for the Capital Region Human Resource Association and Chair of the Program Committee for the Women's Business Council through the Capital Region Chamber. Susan is also a certified instructor at Siena College.

After graduating from SUNY SCCC with her A.A.S. in Hotel and Restaurant Management, Susan went on to earn her B.S. in Hotel/Restaurant Management from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

## Special Events Recap

More than 250 people enjoyed the 26th Annual Food for Thought & All that Jazz, an evening of music and culinary delights, featuring the talented students of SUNY SCCC. Net proceeds from the evening go toward supporting student access and success initiatives.



Big smiles from Culinary Arts students as they showcase their delicious creations.



The evening's Honorary Chair was Ruth Mahoney, President, KeyBank, Capital Region, shown with Ann Fleming Brown, Chair of the Board of Trustees, and Dr. Steady Moono, President.



(l. to r.) Mike Saccocio, Executive Director of the City Mission of Schenectady; Karen Brown Johnson, Schenectady County Legislator and Manager of Planned Giving at Proctors; and George Goldhoff '84, President and CEO of PURE Canadian Gaming, the SCCC Foundation's Royal Gala 2016 Distinguished Honorees.

## STRATEGIC GOALS

In January 2016, the Board of Trustees approved the College's Strategic Plan "Our College, Our Future 2016-2020." Outlined in the plan are five strategic goals:

- 1. Expand Access and Student Success**
- 2. Ensure a Quality, Relevant, Coherent and Innovative Curriculum**
- 3. Invest in Campus Renewal**
- 4. Strengthen and Expand Community and Strategic Partnerships**
- 5. Ensure the College's Financial Sustainability**

The Foundation is committed to supporting students by taking steps to assist the College with these goals, but we can't do it without you! Call the Foundation today at (518) 381-1324 to see how you can help students realize their dreams.



## Corporate Champions Drive Success

Community partners are critical to SUNY SCCC's new Strategic Plan to meet the needs of 21st century students. Through participation in College initiatives, Corporate Champions are already making an incredible difference in the lives of our students:

- **Scholarship Support.** Corporate Champions can help expand access for students with financial need by establishing annual or endowed scholarships, or supporting the General Scholarship Fund. Contributions to the Minority Student Mentoring Program or the Student Emergency Loan Fund also help eliminate barriers to completion.
- **Program Support.** Corporate Champions have an opportunity to ensure that curriculum is relevant and innovative while impacting and engaging future employees by funding new programs, providing internships, speaking to classrooms, or serving on one of our advisory committees.
- **Sponsorship Support.** Corporate Champions that contribute sponsorship support to the Foundation's two annual events, the *Royal Gala* and *Food for Thought and All That Jazz*, help support the College where the need is greatest, ensuring SCCC's financial sustainability and allowing investment in campus renewal.

Strengthening and expanding our community and strategic partnerships is essential to student success. The Foundation is committed to growing partnerships with Corporate Champions and to enlist support from the business community.

For more information please contact Marcy Steiner at (518) 381-1442.

## Transformational Generosity – Giving That Shapes Futures

Sunmark Federal Credit Union has been a Corporate Champion and loyal supporter of the students at SUNY SCCC for several years. We recently asked Audrey Stone, Vice President of Sunmark Charitable Community Foundation, to tell us why giving to education is important to their organization.

### **Q. Why is financial education one of the Foundation's giving priorities?**

**A.** Generally, schools teach how to balance a checkbook but not the skills to make knowledgeable and informed financial decisions that impact the rest of our lives. It's the goal of both the Foundation and Sunmark to support organizations who provide these fundamental life skills. Too often people come through our doors in a devastating financial situation which often could have been avoided had they been given the tools to make better financial choices.

### **Q. How does giving to SUNY SCCC fit into Sunmark's mission?**

**A.** Part of Sunmark's mission is to "work together, achieve excellence and create value..." within our membership. Sunmark began as GE Turbine Federal Credit Union in 1937 in Schenectady with our first stand-alone branch on Broadway. Our headquarters is now in Latham, but it's important to us to support the community that made us who we are today. By supporting SUNY SCCC in its offering of innovative and accessible education, students are given resources they need to become contributing and empowering members of the communities in which we proudly serve.

### **Q. What kind of impact do you think Sunmark's support has on our students?**

**A.** I have heard students speak about how they would have been unable to continue their education if it were not for financial assistance they received at SCCC. Much of this assistance is funded by community partners through their support of the SCCC Foundation. This often gives students a break that allows them to continue growing, learning, exploring, finding or developing their passion.



(l. to r.) Members of the Sunmark Board of Directors – Audrey Stone, Vice President; Christina Coons, Treasurer; Bryan Delehanty, President; Alicia Delafrange, Secretary, joined by Eddie Lawless, Athlete, and Sarah Martinez, Senior Director of Development with the Special Olympics.

### **Q. What would you say to other organizations who are considering a partnership with SUNY SCCC?**

**A.** What we find unique in our partnership with SCCC is that we have an opportunity to see first-hand the difference our support is making. With staff volunteering as guest speakers and at Speed Networking events, and at fundraisers like *Food for Thought* and *All That Jazz*, we're exposed to two SCCC programs in action; the event is their classroom. It allows us to talk to the students we're supporting and hear what their education means to them. The students are grateful, appreciative and determined to make a difference with their education and they know the business community has an invested interest in their success.



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