



The State University  
of New York

## Office of the Chancellor

H. Carl McCall SUNY Building  
353 Broadway, Albany, New York 12246

SUNY Global Center, 116 E 55<sup>th</sup> St,  
New York, NY 10022

[www.suny.edu](http://www.suny.edu)

## **MEMORANDUM**

**July 28, 2025**

**TO: Members of the Board of Trustees**

**FROM: Dr. John B. King Jr., Chancellor**

**SUBJECT: Appointment of Valerie Dent, Esq. as Vice Chancellor for  
Community Colleges of the State University of New York**

### **Action Requested**

The proposed resolution appoints Valerie Dent as Vice Chancellor for Community Colleges of the State University of New York.

### **Resolution**

I recommend that the Board of Trustees adopt the following resolution:

**Resolved** that the appointment of Ms. Valerie Dent as Vice Chancellor for Community Colleges of the State University of New York, effective immediately, be, and hereby is, approved. Ms. Valerie Dent will receive a salary of \$275,000 per year.

### **Background**

Following a comprehensive and competitive search process, it is recommended that Valerie Dent be appointed as Vice Chancellor for Community Colleges. Ms. Dent is a highly respected and experienced leader within the State University of New York (SUNY) System, having joined SUNY System Administration in 2020. Among her many accomplishments, she led the successful implementation of SUNY's COVID-19 response, managed the execution of the "25-Point Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan," launched the SUNY Reconnect initiative, and

has consistently assumed key leadership responsibilities during times of transition.

Ms. Dent currently serves as Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Deputy for Student Success at SUNY System Administration. In this role, she provides senior leadership and strategic direction for the recently established and expansive student success portfolio, encompassing enrollment management, university life and opportunity programs, prison education, transfer initiatives, the Center for Professional Development, and the development and scaling of evidence-based workforce and degree-completion programs.

Since September 2024, Ms. Dent has served as Interim Vice Chancellor for Community Colleges. In this capacity, Interim Vice Chancellor Dent has built strong relationships with community college leaders, represented the SUNY Board of Trustees and Chancellor, and advised the Chancellor on all matters relating to the success of community colleges – including leading System-wide implementation of Governor Hochul’s SUNY Reconnect initiative.

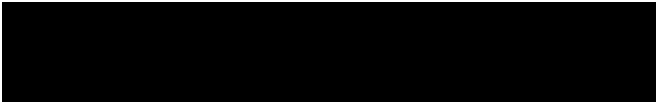
Ms. Dent brings deep knowledge of the SUNY system, strong working relationships with community college presidents, and a demonstrated commitment to student equity and institutional collaboration. Her proven ability to build cross-functional teams further strengthens her candidacy for this important leadership role.

Prior to joining SUNY, Ms. Dent served as first deputy commissioner of the NYS Division of Human Rights. She has also held a variety of public and private sector leadership roles, including at IBM; the law firm of Mudge, Rose, Guthrie, Alexander, and Ferdon; Grand Central Partnership; Bryant Park Restoration Corporation; 34th Street Partnership; and the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone.

Ms. Dent is a graduate of Vanderbilt University, where she holds a degree in economics, and Columbia University School of Law, where she earned her J.D.

A copy of Ms. Dent’s resume is attached.

# VALERIE PARIS DENT, Esq.



## **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

**State University of New York (SUNY)**

**2020-present**

***Interim Vice Chancellor for Community Colleges***

***Fall 2024-present***

- Responsible for the management of the office that supports all SUNY Community Colleges and maintaining strong relationships with Community College Presidents and other senior campus leaders.
- Leads the implementation of SUNY Reconnect, the NY State initiative that provides free community college to adults 25-55 in high demand fields.
- Expanding the collaboration with other System offices including Chancellor’s Office, Office of Workforce Development and Upward Mobility, Office of Student Success, Office of the Provost and Business Office.

***Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Deputy, Student Success***

***2023-present***

- Recruited for the role by Senior Vice Chancellor Donna Linderman upon the creation of the new Office of Student Success.
- Provides senior leadership, guidance, and facilitation of SUNY’s newly formed and wide-ranging Student Success portfolio, which includes, Enrollment Management, University Life and Opportunity Programs, Prison Education, Transfer Initiatives, the Center for Professional Development, Transfer and Articulation and Transformational Initiatives.
- Primary responsibilities include directly supporting the Senior Vice Chancellor for Student Success in the development and implementation of comprehensive strategic goals and objectives for the portfolio, interfacing with the managers in each unit, monitoring budget allocations and work plans, building relationships with internal and external stakeholders to support the development and enhancement of new and existing programs and initiatives focused on student success across the SUNY system.
- Directly supervises Office of Enrollment Management and the Center for Professional Development.

***Interim Chief Diversity Officer***

***2022-2023***

- Directed the Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion (ODEI) which included interfacing with and supporting Chief Diversity Officers on all SUNY campuses.
- Managed the ongoing implementation of the “25 Point DEI Action Plan” and other System DEI initiatives.
- Led the Search Committee for the appointment of a new Senior Vice Chancellor for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

***Deputy Chief Operating Officer***

***2020-2023***

- Continued leading SUNY Covid-19 response which included the development of guidance and compliance measures for Covid-19 testing on all 64 campuses and subsequent vaccine guidance.
- Managed communication with campus leaders and led the weekly meetings with Campus Covid Safety Monitors.
- Assisted in the development of the SUNY Covid-19 Dashboard which required working closely with members of the Chancellor’s Office, Office of Health and Hospitals and SUNY Office of Information Technology, among others.
- Established relationships with campus Presidents and senior leaders across the System to ensure compliance with statewide guidance and appropriate resource allocation.

***Chief of Staff to Chancellor***

***2020***

- Served as Chief of Staff to Chancellor Kristina Johnson until her departure from SUNY in Summer 2020.
- Primary responsibility included supporting the Chancellor in all initiatives and leading the development of system-wide COVID-19 guidance in consultation with NYS Executive Chamber and NYS DOH.

## **New York State Division of Human Rights (NY, NY)**

**2013-2020**

### ***First Deputy Commissioner***

- Chief Executive Administrator in charge of New York State enforcement agency responsible for investigating and prosecuting claims of discrimination under the New York State Human Rights Law.
- Primary liaison with NYS Executive Chamber on all agency matters and State initiatives.
- Advised the Commissioner on all agency operations and policy decisions.
- Responsible for \$14 million budget, including federal contracts with EEOC and HUD.
- Managed operations of 12 regional offices and over 160 employees. Direct reports include Regional Affairs consisting of all agency investigations, Finance, Personnel/HR, Training and External Affairs units.
- Implemented new policies and internal controls to ensure fiscal stability and successfully turned-around agency's historic financial losses and inefficiencies.

## **Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone (NY, NY)**

**2006-2013**

### ***Associate Counsel***

- In-house legal counsel for \$300 million federally authorized economic development organization charged with revitalizing Harlem and Washington Heights.
- Responsible for all grant and loan closings, including the preparation of all legal documents.
- Advise senior executives, grant program officers, loan officers and general administrative staff.
- Provide technical assistance to arts and cultural organizations on nonprofit governance and management including Apollo Theater Foundation, Harlem Stage, National Jazz Museum in Harlem, El Museo del Barrio, Studio Museum in Harlem, among others.
- Significantly reduced the time involved in the closing process following board approval of grants and loans.
- Liaison with the Board of Directors of UMEZ and BRISC (small business loan initiative).
- Work with outside legal and administrative staff at New York State Empire State Development Corporation and New York City Legal Department.
- Responsible for various human resources functions including personnel and management issues and disputes. Provided mediation and training where needed.

## **Independent Consultant (NY, NY)**

**2001-2006**

Managed various independent legal and consulting projects, including those focused on business development and education.

## **Clear Channel Adshel (NY, NY)**

**1999-2001**

### ***Vice President, Business Development***

- Government relations strategist. Provided lobbying and market development in the United States and Latin America for international "street furniture" company (public amenities financed by advertising revenue).
- Developed business relationships and opportunities in target cities, including Washington D.C., Philadelphia, Detroit, Atlanta and New York City. Primary contact for municipal officials including mayor's office, officials from transportation departments and parks department. Leveraged contacts to establish advantages for company in competitive bid process.
- Organized and represented Adshel at various industry and governmental conferences and functions, including the 2000 Democratic National Convention and the semi-annual meetings of the U.S. Conference of Mayors where company and brand were introduced and visibility significantly enhanced.
- Supervised Adshel's bus shelter contract in Washington D.C. where advertising revenues increased significantly with newly designed infrastructure installations.

**Grand Central Partnership, Inc., 34th Street Partnership, Inc.,  
Bryant Park Restoration Corporation (NY, NY)**

**1996-1999**

***Assistant General Counsel***

- In-house legal counsel for three nationally recognized New York City not-for-profit business improvement districts (“BIDs”) with aggregate operating budgets of over \$20 million.
- Provided legal advice and strategic planning to all legal and policy areas of each organization, including executive office, construction, park management, sanitation and security departments, tourist services, employee benefits.
- Responsible for drafting and reviewing contracts for all departments. Reviewed all procurements and ensured compliance with BID and New York City municipal procurement policy.
- Prepared Requests for Proposals and reviewed all submissions. Assisted with lobbying efforts at local and state levels. Served as representative of BIDs in various public capacities. Interfaced with officials of the City of New York on a wide array of issues.
- Assisted in collective bargaining negotiations and drafting collective bargaining agreements. Served as ongoing liaison between union and BIDs.
- Served as employer compliance officer and benefits and pension administrator for organizations. Responsible for employment guidelines, including sexual harassment policy, ADA requirements and FMLA policies.

**Mudge Rose Guthrie Alexander & Ferdon (NY, NY)**

**1993-1995**

***Associate, Public Finance***

Researched and prepared financing documents for a variety of tax exempt and taxable financing including those for municipalities, state and local financing agencies, nursing homes and public power agencies. Organized closings as bond counsel and underwriter's counsel. Provided research in the area of derivative products.

**IBM, U.S. Marketing and Services Division (Nashville, TN)**

**1985-1990**

***Account Systems Engineer***

- Technical marketing consultant to public sector customers in the Middle Tennessee area. Served on State and Local Government Marketing Team with responsibility of marketing and supporting IBM solutions to various Tennessee State agencies and K-12 education facilities throughout the state.
- Promoted to Account Systems Engineer in January 1989. Awarded 1990 Systems Engineering Symposium.

**EDUCATION**

**Columbia University School of Law (NY, NY)**

**J. D.**

- Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar; Writing and Research Editor, Journal of Law and Social Problems
- President, Black Law Students Association
- Columbia Human Rights Internship Program, Lagos, Nigeria (Summer, 1991)

**Vanderbilt University (Nashville, TN)**

**B. S.**

- Major, Economics, Minor Mathematics
- President, Black Student Association; Captain, Senior Gifts Campaign (Development Office)

**BOARDS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

- Advisory Board, Social Justice Initiatives, Columbia Law School
- Co-Founder, Write for the Future College Admissions Essay Coaching Service, a program to assist high school students with preparation of high quality college admissions essays.
- Life -Time Associate Member, Jack and Jill of America