MEMORANDUM

January 28, 2020

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Kristina M. Johnson, Chancellor

SUBJECT: Awarding Honorary Degrees in Absentia

Action Requested

The proposed resolution authorizes the awarding of two SUNY honorary degrees in absentia and/or on a date different from what was initially approved in Board of Trustees' Resolution 2019-72, by the Health Science Center at Syracuse and Monroe Community College.

Resolution

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

Resolved that the State University of New York Health Science Center at Syracuse be granted authority to award an honorary degree to Sir Frederic Ballantyne, GCMG, MD in absentia, in accordance with the Guidelines for the Awarding of Honorary Degrees, as last amended June 2018; and, be it further

Resolved that Monroe Community College be granted authority to award an honorary degree to Dr. Alice Holloway Young on February 3, 2020 and/or in absentia if necessary, in accordance with the Guidelines for the Awarding of Honorary Degrees, as last amended June 2018.

Background

According to the Guidelines for the Awarding of Honorary Degrees, “Honorary degrees may be awarded in absentia, but only upon recommendation to the Board by the Chancellor in the case of extraordinary and compelling circumstances….” Further, the Guidelines note that the presentation of honorary degrees may also be permitted outside normal procedures in unusual circumstances.

The Presidents of the Health Science Center at Syracuse and Monroe Community College have provided information to the Chancellor sufficient to demonstrate the need to modify initially approved plans for the awarding of honorary degrees to Sir Frederic Ballantyne and Dr. Alice Holloway Young respectively,
including well-reasoned challenges to the nominees’ ability to travel to receive such honorary degrees.

Sir Frederick N. Ballantyne, GCMG, MD, has been a visionary leader, physician, statesman and humanitarian on the island of St. Vincent for the past five decades. Dr. Ballantyne was Chief Medical Officer for the island and also served a term as Governor-General, an appointment by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Dr. Alice Holloway Young served as a founding trustee and long-time Chair of the Board of Trustees of Monroe Community College. She celebrated over 60 years of distinguished serve to the Rochester City School District with increasingly senior positions including Supervising Director of Elementary Instruction, Director of School Integration Programs, Vice Principal and Principal.

The initial approval of both candidates was given by the Board of Trustees on November 20, 2019, as recommended by the Chancellor and by the University-wide Honorary Degree Committee, and formal approval to award the honorary degree was granted by Chancellor Johnson on January 3, 2020.