



SUNY Office of Government Relations Newsletter

Dear Friend,

Welcome to the January edition of the SUNY Office of Government Relations Newsletter!

We are excited to share the highlights of our work in what was an exciting January. The 2025 Legislative Session has started, and the 2025-26 Executive Budget has been released. From meetings with legislators to hosting the Friends of SUNY Reception, we kicked off the new year on a high note. SUNY is on the move in no small part because of Governor Hochul and the State Legislature's steadfast commitment to SUNY's students, faculty and staff.

Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to building on this momentum and keeping you informed with more updates (and pictures!) throughout the year.

Sincerely,

Will Schwartz
Vice Chancellor for Government Relations



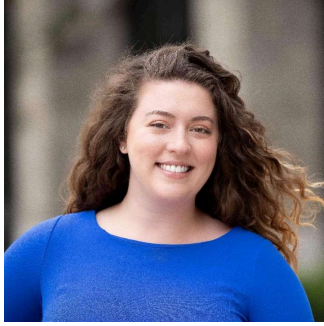
Will Schwartz
Vice Chancellor for
Government Relations
[Email Will](#)



Maria Volpe-McDermott
Director of Government Relations
[Email Maria](#)



Sydney Renwick
Assistant Director of
Government Relations
[Email Sydney](#)



Emily Van De Loo
Government Relations Specialist
[Email Emily](#)
518.971.1254



Abigale Fink
Executive Assistant
[Email Abigale](#)
518.320.1148

SUNY News Highlights

- Governor Hochul's **State of the State address** showed a deep commitment to public higher education and **building SUNY's momentum**. [Read more](#)
- Governor Hochul's Executive Budget reinforces her public higher education priorities with **\$114 million** in additional operating support to our State-operated campuses, **\$28.2 million** to provide free community college tuition, fees, books, and supplies for adult learners without a college degree, a **\$200 million fund** for research facilities, **\$450 million in capital funding** to SUNY Downstate's Medical Center, **\$200 million in capital funding** to Upstate Medical Center and more! [Read more](#)
- At **Onondaga Community College**, SUNY Chancellor John B. King Jr. joined Governor Hochul as President Warren Hilton provided an update on the campus's readiness to expand enrollment in academic programs tied to in-demand jobs thanks to Governor Hochul's New York Opportunity Promise Scholarship proposal which would offer **free community college tuition** for adult learners ages 25 to 55 in New York State. Chancellor King remarked, "SUNY's community colleges are incredible engines of upward mobility, and Governor Hochul's Free Community College plan will literally change the lives of New Yorkers seeking a degree in a high-demand field. SUNY campuses like Onondaga Community College are leading the way in meeting the needs of our adult learners and regional employers." [Read more](#)
- **Assemblymember Scott Gray** wrote an op-ed on **SUNY's Higher Education in Prison Program** and asserts the importance of having "more meaningful dialogue about higher education within state prisons" in the next legislative session. [Read more](#)
- We are excited to welcome **new members to the State Legislature** as well as returning members who are SUNY alumni! Currently, there are **over 60 SUNY alums in the State Legislature**. Check out our updated legislative [alumni poster](#).

LOOKING BACK ON JANUARY

First Day of Session

On January 8, we joined the Chancellor and SUNY Trustee Gio Harvey to celebrate the start of the 2025 Legislative Session.



Chancellor King pictured with Speaker Carl Heastie, Assemblymember Gabriella Romero, and Trustee Gio Harvey.



Chancellor King pictured with Assemblymember Tommy John Schiavoni. SUNY Trustee Gio Harvey pictured with Higher Education Chair Alicia Hyndman.



Congratulations to new Assembly Higher Education Committee Chair Alicia Hyndman! We look forward to working together.

Legislative Meetings

SUNY is grateful to our partners in the New York State Legislature. We look forward to working together throughout the state budget process.



Chancellor King and Chair of the Ways and Means Committee J. Gary Pretlow.



Chancellor King and Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins.

Governor Hochul's State of the State Address

On January 14, Governor Hochul delivered her annual State of the State address, highlighting her strong commitment to public higher education and outlining her clear vision for SUNY to provide an excellent, affordable college education while serving as an engine of upward mobility for all New Yorkers.



Chancellor King with Lieutenant Governor Antonio Delgado.



Chancellor King pictured with Assemblymember Dana Levenberg and SUNY Trustee Bob Duffy.

Leadership Institute Dinner

On January 21, SUNY hosted a Leadership Institute Opening Retreat Networking Dinner that was attended by Assemblymember Grace Lee, Assemblymember Michaelle Solages, Assemblymember Karines Reyes, Senator John Liu, and Assemblymember Alicia Hyndman. Read more about SUNY LEADS [here](#).





Governor Hochul's Executive Budget Proposal

On January 21, Governor Hochul showed her steadfast commitment to higher education and proposed historic investments for SUNY, which include significant funding for our campuses, students, hospitals, and community colleges. Here is an overview of the proposed budget highlights:

- **\$114 Million for State-operated Campus Support:** The proposed operating increase will ensure SUNY maintains its academic excellence, enhance affordability, and retain top-tier faculty and staff to serve our students.
- **\$28.2 Million for Free Community College:** The New York Opportunity Promise Scholarship will provide free tuition, fees, books, and supplies, after applicable financial aid, for adult learners ages 25-55 years old without a college degree, helping more New Yorkers earn an associate's degree in high-demand fields at our Community Colleges.
- **Maintain 100 Percent Community College Funding Floor:** The continuation of the 100 percent Community College Funding Floor avoids a \$76 million loss in state operating aid.
- **\$12 Million to Expand and Grow ASAP and ACE:** This expansion will grow these programs from 4,200 students today to 10,000 over the next two years.
- **\$200 Million for the New York State Innovation and Research Fund:** This capital funding will be used to enhance laboratory facilities, attract additional faculty, and foster groundbreaking research.
- **\$450 Million to Support SUNY Downstate Medical:** This capital funding will support the Downstate Advisory Board's recommendations to develop a sustainable future for SUNY Downstate's hospital. Additionally, the budget allocates \$100 million to cover operating deficits for a second year during this transition.
- **\$200 Million to Support SUNY Upstate Medical:** This capital funding will be used to start design, planning, and construction to deliver needed services to the region by expanding Upstate's emergency

department, modernizing and upgrading the burn unit, and adding operating room capacity.

- **\$25 Million Green Energy Loan Fund:** This funding will be used to administer a loan program for alterations and improvements to various facilities for energy and climate change mitigation projects.
- **\$550 Million in Critical Maintenance** funding at State-operated campuses and statutory colleges.
- **\$1.25 Million** for the **Timbuctoo** Climate Science Careers Summer Institute at SUNY ESF.

Friends of SUNY Reception

On January 27, we held the Friends of SUNY Reception in The Well of the Legislative Office Building. We had an amazing turnout, with over 200 elected officials, campus representatives, and other distinguished guests in attendance. It was a fantastic opportunity to celebrate SUNY's achievements and strengthen our partnerships with key policymakers who are shaping the future of higher education. We were honored to be joined by Governor Kathy Hochul who provided an exciting overview of her Executive Budget proposal that will benefit SUNY in many ways. Thank you to everyone who attended!



Chancellor King pictured with Senate Higher Education Chair Toby Ann Stavisky.



Chancellor King pictured with Senator Pat Fahy.



Chancellor King pictured with Will Schwartz and Senator John Liu.

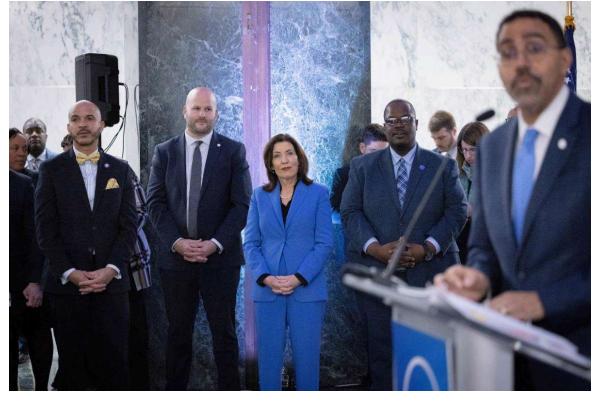


So many friendly faces! Pictured above: Chancellor King with Assemblymember David Weprin, Assemblymember Marianne Buttenschon, Senator Andrew Gounardes, Senator Jessica Scarcella-Spanton, Senator Monica Martinez, Assemblymember Tommy John Schiavoni, Assemblymember Yudelka Tapia, SUNY Trustee Gio Harvey,

Assemblymember Al Taylor, Assemblymember Clyde Vanel, and Assemblymember Noah Burroughs.



It was an honor to have Governor Kathy Hochul with us, sharing her powerful vision for SUNY excellence and her unwavering commitment to advancing public higher education. Her vision is paving the way for a brighter future in higher education.



Chancellor King pictured with Philip Fields, Secretary to the Ways and Means Committee, and Assemblymember Bill Magnarelli.



Chancellor King pictured with SUNY Trustee Marcos Crespo, Assemblymember Yudelka Tapia, SUNY Trustee Eunice Lewin, and Assemblymember John Zaccaro, Jr.



Chancellor King pictured with New York City Council Members Dr. Nantasha Williams, Sandy Nurse, and Althea Stevens, Senator Jose Serrano, New York City Council Member Crystal Hudson, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Senator April Baskin, SUNY Trustee Eunice Lewin and Assemblymember Harvey Epstein.

Looking Forward to February

- For **SUNY Financial Aid Day** on **February 8**, Hudson Valley Community College will host two free events to help high school seniors complete the college financial aid application process. More registration info can be found [here](#).
- Join us for a groundbreaking national conference exploring the vital role of public higher education as a public good in the 21st century. **The Public Good U Conference** is taking place **February 7-9** at the Albany Marriott. Register [here](#).
- SUNY will host several events during the New York State Association of Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic & Asian Legislators, Inc. Conference, including a panel sponsored by Assemblymember Eddie Gibbs called "Breaking the Educational Ceiling: Higher Education in Prison" on Friday, **February 14, from 1:00-2:15 PM in the Albany Hilton Ballroom**. On Saturday, **February 15, from 10:00 AM - 2:30 PM**, SUNY's University Center for Academic and Workforce Development (UCAWD) will host an EOC Exhibition in the Empire State Plaza Concourse showcasing students' talents, ranging from advanced manufacturing to construction skills. Lastly, SUNY's Arthur O. Eve Educational Opportunities Program will host its Second Annual Alumni Reception from **4:00 - 6:00 PM** in the **Albany Hilton Governor C Ballroom**. We look forward to you joining us!

governmentrelations@suny.edu

518.320.1148



The State University of New York (SUNY) | H. Carl McCall SUNY Building 353 Broadway | Albany, NY 12246 US

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