



## **SUNY Office of Government Relations Newsletter**

Dear Friend,

Happy New Year! Welcome to the January edition of the SUNY Office of Government Relations newsletter.

The start of the year has brought a new legislative session, the release of the Executive budget, and a major winter storm. The Office of Government Relations kicked off the year meeting with legislators and continuing to visit SUNY's campuses. While we unfortunately had to postpone our Friends of SUNY reception this month due to the weather, we will have rescheduled for March 11!

Thank you to Governor Hochul, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, the State Legislature, and our congressional delegation for your steadfast commitment to SUNY's students, faculty, and staff.

With three years of historic increases in state funding and three years of system-wide enrollment gains, SUNY continues to be on the move. We are excited to continue to build on last year's momentum and keep you updated throughout the year.

Sincerely,

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## January SUNY News Highlights

- Governor Hochul's **State of the State address** showed a steadfast commitment to public higher education. [Read more](#)

- Governor Hochul's **Executive Budget** is released. [Read more](#)
- SUNY Chancellor King announces **Basic Needs Programs** to assist with housing, food, and transportation insecurity. [Read more](#)
- SUNY Chancellor King announces **Mental Health First Aid Grants**. [Read more](#)
- Governor Hochul announces an **Independent AI Center at Binghamton University**. [Read more](#)
- Governor Hochul announces SUNY to adopt **System-wide Science of Reading Policy**. [Read more](#)
- SUNY and NYU launch **The Higher Education Design Lab** to evaluate and accelerate innovations in higher education. [Read more](#)
- SUNY to spend **\$14.5 million on paid internships**. [Read more](#)
- SUNY Chancellor King announces **2026 Fellowship Class for SUNY Leadership Institutes**. [Read more](#)
- Governor Hochul announces **Empire AI SUNY Campus Partnerships**. [Read more](#)
- SUNY Chancellor King visits **SUNY Plattsburgh** to highlight Clinton Community College's successful co-location on the SUNY Plattsburgh campus. [Read more](#)
- SUNY Chancellor King visits **Columbia-Greene Community College** as part of his SUNY Reconnect tour. [Read more](#)

## Trivia

Which of the following SUNY institutions have former students currently playing in the NFL?

University at Albany

University at Buffalo

SUNY Cortland

All of the Above

## January SUNY Research Spotlight

Across the SUNY System, our campuses conduct a vast amount of groundbreaking research, producing innovations and insights with far-reaching benefits not only for New Yorkers, but for people across the globe. Here are a few recent highlights:

- The State University of New York at Albany announces seven new joint research projects that will use the latest IBM artificial intelligence hardware installed at UAlbany. [Read more](#)
- The State University of New York at Stony Brook University, in partnership with Redshred, has been awarded a contract to develop an AI-powered platform to support military operations. [Read more](#)
- Understanding how telomere length affects disease risk later in life. [Read more](#)
- Engineering, Life Sciences lead R&D growth at UAlbany. [Read more](#)
- The State University of New York at Binghamton University is studying how to boost remote work. [Read more](#)
- The State University at New York University at Buffalo is part of a joint \$17 million NIH grant to study temporomandibular disorders. [Read more](#)
- New Binghamton University technology aims to detect AI-generated media for users. [Read more](#)
- Stony Brook Heart Institute delivers world's first commercial plozasiran treatment for patients with rare lipid disorder. [Read more](#)

## LOOKING BACK ON JANUARY

### Governor Hochul's Executive Budget Proposal

On January 20, Governor Hochul demonstrated her steadfast commitment to higher education and SUNY by continuing to propose historic investments for our students, faculty, and staff across the system's 64 campuses.

Here are SUNY's highlights of the Executive Budget:

- \$54 million to maintain the resident undergraduate tuition freeze at State-operated campuses.
- \$8.5 million to expand SUNY Reconnect to eligible adult learners preparing for careers in logistics, air traffic control and transportation, and emergency management, as well as make it easier for adult learners to return to college to pursue nursing if they already have a prior degree
- Maintain the community college 100 percent funding floor
- \$8 million to scale ASAP | ACE to reach 10,000 students
- \$7.4 million for additional career connected internships
- \$2.8 million to double the Empire State Service Corps
- \$600,000 for emergency aid for students

- \$595 million for critical maintenance capital funding
- \$128.1 million to support the community college local sponsor capital funding match
- \$100 million for SUNY Downstate operational support
- \$150 million for hospital infrastructure funding

## First Day of Session

On January 7, the Office of Government Relations team joined Chancellor King to celebrate the start of the 2026 Legislative Session.





## Legislative Meetings

On January 12, Will and Maria joined Chancellor King to meet with some of our strong partners in the State Legislature. Thank you, Speaker Carl Heastie, Senate Higher Education Chair Toby Ann Stavisky, Assembly Higher Education Chair Alicia Hyndman, Senate Finance Chair Liz Krueger, Assembly Ways and Means Chair Gary Pretlow, Senator Monica Martinez, Senator Lea Webb, and Senator April N.M. Baskin.





## Governor Hochul's State of the State Address

On January 13, Chancellor King joined Governor Hochul and leaders from across the State as she delivered her fifth State of the State Address. Once again, the Governor outlined a vision that continues to build on SUNY's success in affordable excellence, developing cutting-edge research, and ensuring upward mobility.





## **Martin Luther King Day of Service**

On January 19, Julie and Maria joined Chancellor King, SUNY Trustee Courtney Burke, SUNY Trustee Luca Rallis, the Empire State Service Corps, and staff from various State agencies for a day of service at the United Way of the Greater Capital Region to assemble literacy kits as part of the organization's partnership with the Dolly Parton Imagination Library Program. Thank you to Dan Wrenn, Governor Hochul's Regional Representative for the Capital District, for stopping by!



## Federal Meetings

On January 22, Chancellor King joined Whitney in Washington for meetings with U.S. Congressman Josh Riley and Waded Cruzado, President of the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities (APLU).

During the meeting with Congressman Riley, Chancellor King expressed SUNY's appreciation for his strong support of federal research investments and his continued efforts to sustain funding for key student access and success programs. These include the Pell Grant, TRIO, GEAR UP, Postsecondary Student Success Grants, CCAMPIS, and Federal Work-Study—all of which play a critical role in expanding educational opportunity and supporting students across SUNY's campuses.

Chancellor King then met with APLU President Waded Cruzado to discuss shared federal advocacy priorities and ongoing collaboration between SUNY and APLU. Their conversation focused on protecting the indirect costs that are essential to advancing federally funded research. They also explored ways SUNY institutions can continue to partner with APLU to advocate for sustained and robust federal investments in higher education, research, and student support programs.



## SUNY Research Leadership Academy

On January 23, Assemblymember John T. McDonald III joined Will at the University at Albany to meet with fellows from the SUNY Research Leadership Academy. The **SUNY Research Leadership Academy** is a year-long faculty development program that develops leadership and communication skills among mid- and senior-level STEMM faculty throughout the SUNY system. A key feature of the Academy is the integration of the Alda Method®, a leading

communication framework developed by the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science, which works closely with the School of Communication and Journalism at Stony Brook University.



## **SUNY LEADS Networking Event**

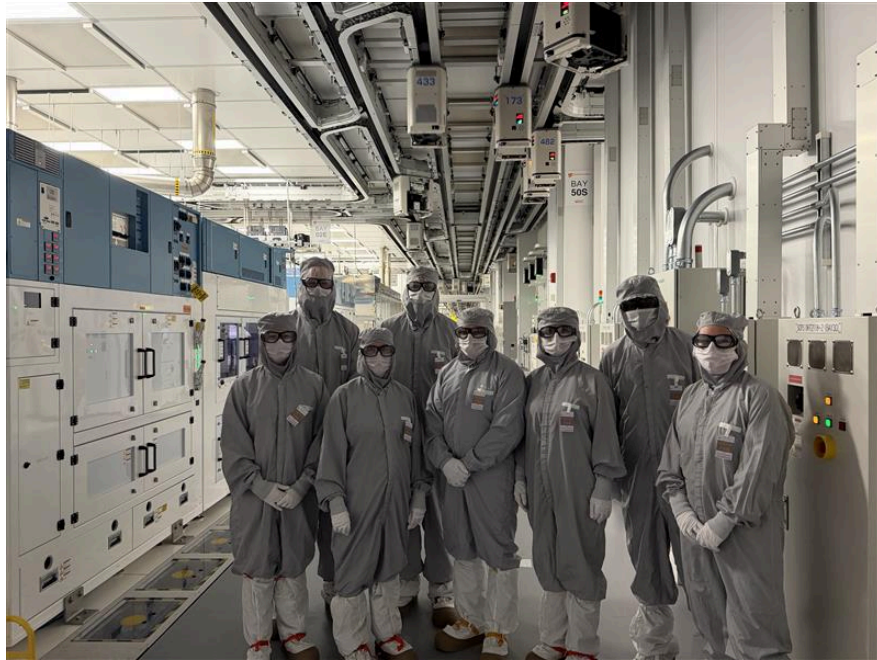
On January 27, Sydney and Maria attended the SUNY LEADS Networking Dinner, recognizing the leadership of the fellows while providing the opportunity to network with SUNY System Administration and Chancellor King. This year's dinner featured remarks from Senator John Liu, Assemblymember Michaelle Solages, Assemblymember Grace Lee, and Assembly Higher Education Committee Chair Alicia Hyndman. This was also the inaugural year for the Disability Support Leadership Institute.





## GlobalFoundries Tour

On January 28, Will joined Chancellor King, Senior Vice Chancellor for Research, Innovation & Economic Development Shadi Sandvik, and Assistant Vice Chancellor of Workforce Development Denise Zieske for a visit to GlobalFoundries to tour the Fab 8 semiconductor wafer manufacturing facility and meet with Dr. Tom Caulfield, Executive Chairman of the GlobalFoundries Board of Directors. The visit provided an opportunity for SUNY and GlobalFoundries to discuss future partnerships and collaborations. Thank you to GlobalFoundries for the great visit!



## Campus Visits

The Office of Government Relations kicked the month off with visits to Columbia-Greene Community and SUNY Purchase College.

On January 8, Maria joined Chancellor King at **Columbia-Greene Community College** for the fifteenth stop on his SUNY Reconnect tour. President Victoria Walsh, Chancellor King, Senator Michelle Hinchey, Assemblymember Didi Barrett, Hudson Mayor Joseph Ferris, and NYSUT President Melinda Person, along with workforce partners, visited the College's nursing simulation center and had a roundtable discussion about the success of SUNY Reconnect.



On January 22, Will visited **SUNY Purchase College** to meet with President Michael Steiper, Assemblymember Chris Burdick, Assemblymember Steve

Otis, Rachel Estroff, Chief of Staff to Senator Mayer, and students from NYPIRG and Purchase College's Student Government Association to discuss priorities and ways to continue to work together.



## Trivia Answer

SUNY produces amazing student-athletes! In honor of the upcoming Super Bowl, all three institutions have former students currently playing in the NFL.

The 2024 NFL Defensive Rookie of the Year, Jared Verse (Los Angeles Rams), attended the University at Albany.

The University at Buffalo has a number of former students currently playing - most notably Khalil Mack (Los Angeles Chargers), Joe Andreessen (Buffalo Bills), Cam Lewis (Buffalo Bills), and Shaun Dolac (Los Angeles Rams).

SUNY Cortland's former wide receiver Cole Burgess plays for the Pittsburgh Steelers.

## Looking Forward

- Applications for the Fall semester of the SUNY Washington Internship Program are now open! **Apply** by April 1, 2026
- SUNY will be hosting a reception highlighting the importance of our Arthur O. Eve Educational Opportunity Program on **Saturday, February 14 from 4-6 PM** at the Albany Hilton Ballroom during the New York State Association of Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic & Asian Legislators, Inc. Conference.

- Our **Friends of SUNY reception** has been rescheduled for March 11!

## Keep up with SUNY and the Office of Government Relations

- Take a peek at OGR's website [here](#).
- Want to look back on OGR's archived newsletters? Check out our page [here](#).
- Interested in SUNY research and innovation? Check out our website [here](#).
- Explore other careers at SUNY [here](#).

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