



SUNY Office of Government Relations Newsletter

Dear Friend,

Welcome to the August edition of the SUNY Office of Government Relations newsletter! Here is what we have been up to!

EOP Kicks Off!

August marked both a closing and beginning for SUNY's Educational Opportunity Program (EOP). As EOP summer programs across 54 campuses concluded, a new wave of incoming freshmen prepared to step into their first semester in college. Our office was proud to be a part of that transition, meeting students where they are and reinforcing how State investment translates directly into opportunity. We spoke with SUNY EOP summer program participants and EOP Ambassadors about government relations and advocacy, and the vital role students themselves play in sustaining programs like SUNY EOP. We also joined members of the SUNY Board of Trustees, Chancellor King, elected officials, SUNY's Office of Opportunity Program, and EOP alumni at the second annual Building Futures: EOP Summer Send-Off. EOP remains one of SUNY's clearest expression of SUNY's Four Pillars. Our team will continue advocating to ensure the program has the resources it needs to keep changing lives across New York.

Apply for the SUNY Washington Internship Program

The SUNY Washington Internship Program offers students an unmatched opportunity to live, work, learn, and grow in the nation's capital while earning academic credit through hands-on internships at government agencies, congressional offices, nonprofits, museums, and advocacy organizations across Washington, DC. Beyond professional development, students gain civic engagement experience through community service, deliberative dialogues on pressing public issues, exclusive access to signature events like Capitol Hill networking days, White House tours, and behind-the-scenes visits to institutions such as the National Archives and Library of Congress. Students leave with strengthened resumes, career clarity, lifelong friendships, newfound confidence, and a deeper understanding of public service and leadership. Thanks to funding provided in the FY26 enacted State budget through the New York Career Connect Initiative, SUNY will now be able to provide up to 25

students with additional financial support to participate in the program; assisting with associated costs such as housing, transportation, meals, and more. Applications are now open for Spring 2027 (deadline October 1, 2026) and Summer 2027 (deadline February 1, 2027)! Learn more [here](#).

[Apply for the SUNY Global Engagement Program](#)

The SUNY Global Engagement Program (GEP) connects students interested in international affairs with prestigious internships in New York City, including at the United Nations, the Foreign Policy Association, Human Rights First, the Council on Foreign Relations among others. The GEP is a full-credit semester program, offered during the fall, spring, and summer terms, and is open to students from all majors. Students seeking a high-impact service-learning experience, a full semester of academic credit, and the opportunity to gain experience in New York City can apply through the GEP application portal. Applications are now open for Spring 2027 (deadline October 1, 2026) and Summer 2027 (deadline November 30, 2026)! Learn more [here](#).

[Campus Tours](#)

This month, our office has been on the road, joining Chancellor King and legislators at campuses around the state including SUNY Buffalo State University, Corning Community College, SUNY Oswego, SUNY Optometry, Jefferson Community College, Tompkins Cortland Community College, and SUNY Cortland. These visits give us the chance to talk directly with students about their future goals and career aspirations, see firsthand the facility updates and new investments taking shape on our campuses, and discuss the new initiatives happening on campus thanks to funding from our federal, state, and local partners.

We look forward to sharing more updates as campuses welcome students back in the upcoming weeks!

Sincerely,

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Haljazir Headley
Undergraduate Fellow

Trivia

Which SUNY launched the first associate degree nursing program in the United States?

Dutchess Community College

SUNY Orange

SUNY Purchase

Suffolk County Community College

LOOKING BACK: MONTHLY RECAP

SUNY News Highlights

- **SUNY Orange** nursing grads maintain NCLEX first time pass rate success. [Read more](#)
- Horse therapy on **SUNY Old Westbury** campus helps grieving children heal. [Read more](#)
- Chancellor King celebrates winners and participants of SUNY Startup Summer School **Demo Day**. [Read more](#)
- Chancellor King highlights undergraduate summer research programs for **Educational Opportunity Program** students during research symposium. [Read more](#)
- Governor Hochul announces **Empire AI Beta**, hosted at the State University of New York at Buffalo, is fully online as federal government takes inspiration from New York to launch state and regional AI infrastructure hubs. [Read more](#)
- **State University of New York at Binghamton** students gain insight through Malawi service-learning trip. [Read more](#)
- Groundbreaking held at **Monroe Community College** for new RochesterWorks Career Center. [Read more](#)
- Micron grant funds new program at **Jefferson Community College**. [Read more](#)
- **SUNY Buffalo State University** president Jennifer Burris is in the middle of a 100-day listening tour to learn about the campus needs and culture. [Read more](#)
- Chancellor King highlights SUNY student participation in **National Neurodiversity Leadership Summit**. [Read more](#)
- Chancellor King announces extended partnership with the **Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science**. [Read more](#)
- The **State University of New York at Buffalo** celebrates new fleet of electric buses. [Read more](#)
- **Clinton Community College's** Institute for Advanced Manufacturing opens for business. [Read more](#)
- Chancellor King and **Special Olympics New York** announce partnership to launch paid internships for SUNY students. [Read more](#)
- The **Fashion Institute of Technology** partners with **4As Foundation**, providing student opportunities within the advertising and marketing industry. [Read more](#)
- State Senator Thomas F. O'Mara meets with **Corning Community College's** EOP Summer Academy. [Read more](#)
- Chancellor King releases op-ed in the Buffalo News titled "**Public Higher Education Invests in Democracy**." [Read more](#)
- **Columbia-Greene Community College** launches new academic programs in education and health sciences. [Read more](#)
- SUNY Board of Trustees and Chancellor King announce appointment of Dr. Michelle Coach as the ninth president of **SUNY Morrisville**. [Read more](#)
- U.S. Department of Defense awards \$61.9 million contract to **SUNY Polytechnic Institute** to advance AI and defense-focused innovation.

[Read more](#)

- **SUNY Schenectady** starts Air Traffic Control training program. [Read more](#)
- The **State University of New York at Albany** welcomes largest first-year class in history. [Read more](#)
- **SUNY Upstate Medical University** opens therapeutic playground for children receiving inpatient mental health care. [Read more](#)
- Governor Hochul announces partnership between the **State University of New York at Stony Brook** and Brookhaven National Laboratory, expanding the nation's largest quantum network. [Read more](#)
- Governor Hochul announces the elimination of **mandatory fees** for SUNY graduate students working at state-operated campuses. [Read more](#)

SUNY Research Spotlight

Across the SUNY system, our campuses conduct a vast amount of groundbreaking research, producing innovations and insights with far-reaching benefits that extend across the world. Here are a few recent highlights:

- A **State University of New York at Binghamton** startup could lower cooling needs for AI data centers. [Read more](#)
- A **SUNY Brockport** student creates a new approach to STI prevention and care. [Read more](#)
- A researcher at the **State University of New York at Stony Brook** helps to reveal a chapter of mammal evolution. [Read more](#)
- Researchers at the **State University of New York at Buffalo** look into how AI and 'Ramanomics' could eliminate a major obstacle to studying living cells. [Read more](#)
- New research grants mark 'RNA Day' at the **State University of New York at Albany**. [Read more](#)
- A recent study at **SUNY Upstate Medical University** explains why teens sleeping in on the weekend can help them. [Read more](#)
- CSTEP students at **SUNY Old Westbury** dive into salt marsh exploration. [Read more](#)
- **SUNY Polytechnic Institute** is awarded \$15,000 Health Forward Foundation grant to advance respiratory care research. [Read more](#)
- Two **State University of New York at Albany** students spend their summer improving NOAA's hurricane and winter weather forecasts. [Read more](#)

Check out the [Research Connect Portal](#) to learn more about specific projects!

Alumni in Public Service Spotlight

The Alumni in Public Service Spotlight celebrates distinguished SUNY alumni who are making a meaningful impact in public service.

This month, we are excited to highlight New York State [Assemblymember Alicia Hyndman](#), a proud SUNY New Paltz (class of 1993) alum who currently serves as chair of the New York State Assembly's Higher Education Committee. A lifelong Southeast Queens resident, Assemblymember Hyndman has spent her professional and personal life dedicated to enhancing the quality of education for students. Prior to being elected, Assemblymember Hyndman served on her local New York City School District Community Education Council, advocating for the 36 elementary and middle schools in the district. She also worked at the New York State Education Department, New York College of Osteopathic Medicine of NYIT, and Brooklyn College.

Assemblymember Hyndman, thank you for leading the charge on the importance of higher education and for being one of our SUNY champions. We are proud to count you among the alumni we have the privilege of working alongside.

Learn more about Assemblymember Hyndman's time as a student in SUNY and how a SUNY education helped shape her career:

Major: Bachelor of Arts in Black Studies; Communications

Clubs/organizations: Delta Sigma Theta; Campus Police; Graphics Department; President of Black Weekend Organization; member of the Lady Hawks basketball team

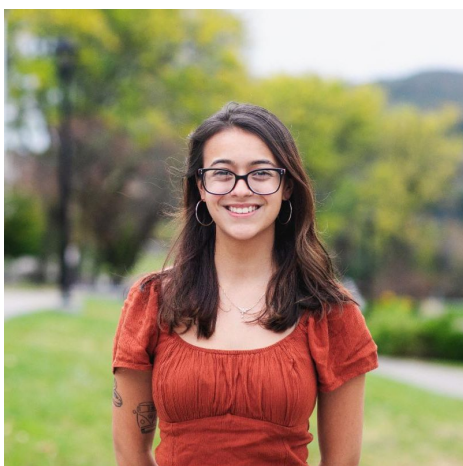
Favorite memory as a student: Becoming an RA was a huge deal because I could lower my bills. I also authored the first campus wide calendar under Cameron Reid, who I think was the Director of Student Affairs. She was good friends with Jack the Bursar who allowed me to defer payments.

How has your degree from SUNY helped you in your career? It has helped me to advance in my career.

Advice for current or future students: Press on. Do not get discouraged in this journey called life. Keep living.



Changing of the Guards



Please join us in sending well wishes to our Graduate Fellow Julia Rios as she moves on from our office to start her professional career as the new Assistant Director of International Student Services at Siena University. Thank you for all of your hard work and we can't wait to see the great things you accomplish!



Also, please join us in officially welcoming our Undergraduate Fellow Haljazir Headley, a junior at the State University of New York at Albany. Hal has been working diligently with us this summer representing our EOP program and we are excited to continue to work with him throughout the school year!

EOP Summer Send-Off

On August 18, Will, Sydney, and Hal joined Chancellor King, members of the SUNY Board of Trustees including Chairman Dr. Merryl Tisch, Vice Chairman Cesar Perales, Trustee Marcos Crespo, Trustee Camille Varlack, Trustee Stanley Litow, Assembly Higher Education Chair Alicia Hyndman, Assemblymember Chantel Jackson, Assemblymember Manny De Los Santos, and Executive Director of the New York State Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic, and Asian Legislative Caucus Bria Nickerson for the second annual Building Bridges: EOP Summer Send-Off. This event brought together SUNY EOP Ambassadors and alumni to welcome incoming freshman EOP students from Suffolk Community College, Nassau Community College, SUNY Purchase, Westchester Community College, SUNY Old Westbury, the State University of New York at Stony Brook, and Fashion Institute of Technology as they embark on their first semester at college and reinforce the importance of taking full advantage of EOP's resources.



Student Youth Day and SUNY Day at The Great New York State Fair

On August 27, Maria and Chancellor King visited The Great New York State Fair with State University of New York at Binghamton President Anne D'Alleva, SUNY Morrisville President Michelle Coach, SUNY Upstate Medical University President Mantosh Dewan, and SUNY ESF President Joanie Mahoney for Student Youth Day and SUNY Day. The group toured the fairgrounds with New York State Agriculture & Markets Commissioner Richard Ball and visited with students and faculty from Binghamton University, SUNY Morrisville, SUNY ESF, and SUNY Cobleskill. We even ran into the Speaker of the Assembly Carl Heastie and members of the Assembly! [Read more](#)



Campus Visits

Buffalo State University Facility Tour

On August 7, Will and SUNY Senior Vice Chancellor for Capital Facilities and General Manager of the State University Construction Fund Bob Haelen joined SUNY Buffalo State University President Jennifer Burris, Assemblymember Karen McMahon, Governor Hochul's Director of Community

Relations in Western New York Mo Sumbundu, and representatives from the offices of Representative Tim Kennedy, Senator Jeremy Zellner, Senator April Baskin, Senator Patrick Gallivan, Assemblymember Crystal Peoples-Stokes, and Assemblymember Jon Rivera for a tour of Buffalo State's capital facilities. The visit offered the opportunity to illustrate the importance of predictable and sustainable capital funding for SUNY and the capital needs that exist on campus.



Corning Community College

On August 10, Will and Hal toured Corning Community College with President Terence Finley and spoke with students participating in the college's EOP Summer Academy about government relations and advocacy. The EOP Summer Academy is a mandatory, free-of-charge program for incoming first-year EOP students to help prepare students for the rigors of college.



SUNY Oswego

On August 18, Aria and Chancellor King visited SUNY Oswego to formally announce SUNY's internship partnership with the New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC), which will expand experiential learning opportunities for SUNY students within county government and public service. Chancellor King, alongside SUNY Oswego President Peter Nwosu, facilitated a roundtable discussion with NYSAC Executive Director Steve Acquario, Senator Chris Ryan, Oswego County Administrator Phil Church, Oswego Mayor Robert Corradino, Trustee Bruce Simon, and SUNY Oswego student interns and staff, highlighting the value of paid public service internships for SUNY students.

[Read more](#)

Later in the afternoon, the group toured the campus' current and prospective plans for incorporating geothermal technology into its energy systems. SUNY Oswego is one of SUNY's leading institutions in advancing sustainable energy initiatives and has reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by more than 45% compared to 1990 levels. [Read more](#)



SUNY College of Optometry

On August 20, Maria and Sydney joined Chancellor King along with SUNY Optometry President David Troilo, Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal, Assemblymember Manny De Los Santos, and Assemblymember Keith Powers for a tour of SUNY Optometry's capital facilities.

Home to one of the largest outpatient vision care facilities in the United States and three research centers, SUNY Optometry serves over 60,000 patients annually in a historic 114-year-old building. Recent capital investments have helped the campus open a pediatric clinic, renovate the Clinical Vision Research Center, and make classroom renovations. With over \$50 million in critical maintenance needed in the next five years for projects like hot water system upgrades, fire pump replacement, and basement water infiltration migration.

The visit also showcased SUNY Optometry's mental health first aid training program, which is one of 27 campus programs supported by SUNY's Mental Health First Aid Grant Program. The initiative advances efforts to train students, faculty, and staff and offer essential support to anyone experiencing mental health challenges. [Read more](#)



Jefferson Community College

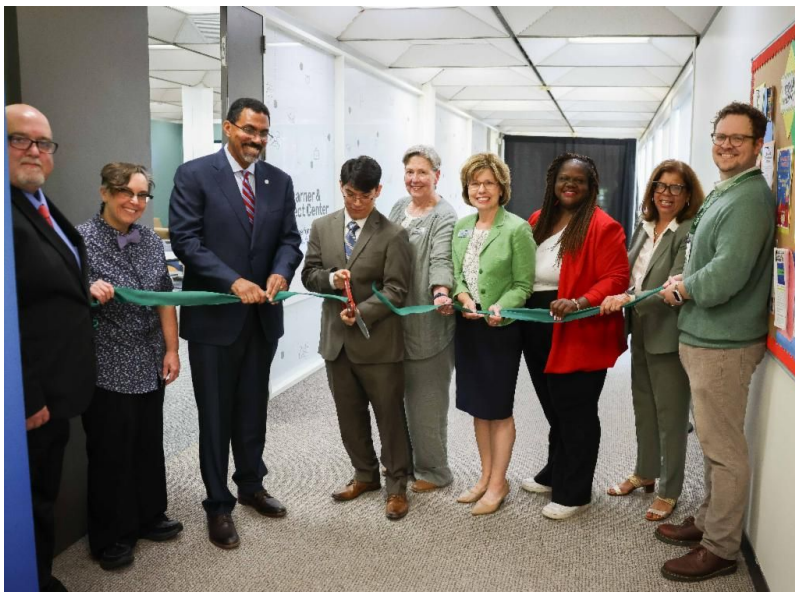
On August 26, Aria, Chancellor King, and SUNY Vice Chancellor for Community Colleges Valerie Dent joined SUNY Jefferson President Daniel Dupee, Assemblymember Scott Gray, Jefferson Community College Trustee David Males, Watertown City Council Member Dr. Robert Kimball, and Jefferson County Legislator Karen Freeman, for a tour of the recently renovated Dulles Building, which houses the college's hydraulics, automation, mechanics, and cybersecurity instructional spaces. Following the tour, the group met with adult learners and educators to discuss how support provided through SUNY Reconnect has helped students advance their long-term goals.

[Read more](#)



Tompkins Cortland Community College and SUNY Cortland

On August 27, Maria and Chancellor King joined Tompkins Cortland Community College President Amy Kremenek, SUNY Trustee Candice Vacin, Senator Lea Webb, Governor Hochul's Southern Tier Regional Representative Rose Olsen, and members of the City of Cortland's legislature at a ribbon cutting at Tompkins Cortland Community College to celebrate the opening of their Adult Learner and Reconnect Center. The office will provide proactive coaching, navigation, and case-managed support for adult learners. Chancellor King also participated in a roundtable with Reconnect students and staff to hear about their experiences with the program. [Read more](#)



Later in the day, Maria and Chancellor King joined Senator Lea Webb and President Erik Bitterbaum at SUNY Cortland. Chancellor King greeted freshman students and their families moving onto campus. Later, he participated in two roundtable discussions, one with students and staff providing basic needs supports for students and the other with students and staff from the EOP and ACE program. Thanks to funding provided in the 2026-27 enacted state budget, SUNY Cortland was able to welcome its inaugural ACE class.



🧠 Trivia Answer 🧠

SUNY Orange made history in 1952 by launching the nation's first associate degree nursing program, helping pave the way for nursing education across New York State. Today, SUNY Orange is one of 31 SUNY institutions where eligible New Yorkers can earn a free associate degree in nursing or allied health through the SUNY Reconnect program.

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