



SUNY Office of Government Relations Newsletter

Dear Friend,

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

Chancellor King describes SUNY's progress and priorities

On June 3, Chancellor King and the SUNY Board of Trustees delivered a bold agenda at the annual State of the University address, unveiling a series of initiatives designed to provide affordable excellence and help New York's students and communities thrive. Chancellor King celebrated three consecutive years of enrollment growth and nearly half a billion dollars in new state funding over the past four years, highlighting the enduring strength of the nation's largest comprehensive public university system.

Building on the financial commitment secured in the 2026-27 Enacted State Budget through the leadership of Governor Hochul, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, and the State Legislature, SUNY is moving forward with expanded student success programs, workforce development opportunities, civic engagement initiatives, and new innovations — ensuring every New Yorker has access to a world-class education.

Spotlighting alumni shaping New York

This month, we are launching a brand new segment of our newsletter, the "Alumni in Public Service Spotlight." The Alumni Spotlight aims to highlight the enduring connection between our university system and the leaders shaping New York's future. This month, we are honored to highlight [Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie](#).

SUNY was (quite literally) on the move

This June, SUNY staff had the honor of marching in the Albany Pride Parade, the NYC Pride March, and the NYC Puerto Rican Day Parade — a proud reflection of the diversity and community spirit at the heart of the SUNY system. These celebrations are a reminder of what makes New York's public

university system truly unique: a deep commitment to welcoming and uplifting all of our students, faculty, and staff.

SUNY is proud to stand alongside these vibrant communities not just during parade season, but year-round — offering a wide array of campus resources, programs, and support services designed to ensure that every member of the SUNY community feels seen, valued, and empowered to succeed. From Pride to cultural heritage celebrations, SUNY's presence in these spaces reflects its ongoing dedication to fostering an inclusive environment where diversity is not just acknowledged, but celebrated.

Hope everyone is having a great summer. We love getting the chance to share the important work SUNY is doing!

Sincerely,

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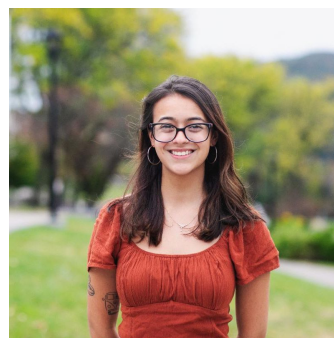
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Julia Rios
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Trivia

Who was the first openly gay SUNY Chancellor?

Samuel B. Gould

Harvey B. Milk

Kristina M. Johnson

John R. Ryan

LOOKING BACK: MONTHLY RECAP

SUNY News Highlights

- Chancellor King and SUNY Board of Trustees announce **state budget investment**:
 - \$10.6 million in the Western New York region. [Read more](#)
 - \$9.9 million in the Long Island region. [Read more](#)
 - \$6.8 million in the Capital region. [Read more](#)
 - \$6.3 million in the Southern Tier region. [Read more](#)
 - \$2.75 Million in the Central New York region. [Read more](#)
 - \$1.9 million in the Greater Rochester region. [Read more](#)
 - \$1.7 million in the Hudson Valley region. [Read more](#)
 - \$1.6 million in the Mohawk Valley region. [Read more](#)
 - \$1.5 million in the North Country region. [Read more](#)
 - \$400,000 in the New York City region. [Read more](#)
- SUNY Board of Trustees and Chancellor King announce the appointment of Dr. Jessica McArt as the next Dean of the New York State **College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University**. [Read more](#)

- SUNY Board of Trustees and Chancellor King announce the appointment of Ken Knelly as the next President of **Clinton Community College**. [Read more](#)
- SUNY Board of Trustees and Chancellor King announce the appointment of Dr. Dawn Meza Soufleris as the next President of **SUNY Brockport**. [Read more](#)
- SUNY Board of Trustees and Chancellor King announce the appointment of Dr. Caroline Attardo Genco as the 16th President of the **State University of New York at Buffalo**. [Read more](#)
- New SUNY program taps counselors to guide **college prep**. [Read more](#)
- Chancellor King to announce initiatives to strengthen academic advising across the SUNY system as part of 2026 **State of the University Agenda Commitment to Academic Excellence**. [Read more](#)
- SUNY celebrates historic \$10.7 million state investment in the **Arthur O. Eve Educational Opportunity Program**. [Read more](#)
- SUNY Chancellor King shares ideas on **college affordability** in *Hechinger Report* Op-Ed. [Read more](#)
- **SUNY Broome** and **Cornell** sign transfer agreement for online bachelor's program. [Read more](#)
- SUNY expands push for **paid internships**. [Read more](#)
- **SUNY Oswego's** Delta Kappa Kappa fraternity honored with U.S. Congressional Proclamation on 100th anniversary. [Read more](#)
- Chancellor King announces **expansion of nation-leading retention and completion program**, ASAP and ACE. [Read more](#)
- **SUNY Broome's** quantum education team wins competition. [Read more](#)
- Governor Hochul announces major expansion of **SUNY Reconnect** program. [Read more](#)
- **University at Albany** chamber singers perform at Carnegie Hall. [Read more](#)
- A new Bachelor of Arts in Deaf Studies, the first of its kind in SUNY, is coming to **SUNY New Paltz** in fall 2026. [Read more](#)
- Governor Hochul announces doubling the **Empire State Service Corps** to connect more SUNY students to civic and career preparation. [Read more](#)
- Chancellor King visits **SUNY Nassau Community College** as part of the SUNY Reconnect tour. [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 not only for New Yorkers, but for people across the world. Check out the [Research Connect Portal](#) to learn more about specific projects! Here are a few recent highlights:

- **State University of New York at Binghamton** researchers develop new ways to reduce troublesome fake AI info. [Read more](#)

- **SUNY Downstate** researcher's LIBRETTO-432 Data marks major win for precision medicine in early-stage lung cancer. [Read more](#)
- Researchers at the **State University of New York at Buffalo** explain how quantum sensor may be able to identify new type of magnetism. [Read more](#)
- **State University of New York at Albany** receives \$1.3M NSF award to establish advanced wireless testbed. [Read more](#)
- **SUNY Plattsburgh** research boat expands student research options. [Read more](#)
- **SUNY ESF** project seeks link between changing fish habitats and diets in state land brook trout ponds. [Read more](#)
- **SUNY Oswego** faculty member's groundbreaking research unearths details about migration and marriage in ancient Peru. [Read more](#)
- **SUNY Upstate Medical University** tracks lone star tick movements. [Read More](#)
- Researchers at the **State University of New York at Stony Brook** monitor how teen smartphone use at bedtime predicts overnight phone activity. [Read more](#)
- **FIT'S** Beauty Think Tank reveals global insights on the longevity of beauty. [Read more](#)
- **SUNY Poly** lands \$61.9 million Pentagon research contract. [Read more](#)

Alumni in Public Service Spotlight

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

For our very first spotlight, we are excited to highlight [New York State Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie](#), a proud State University of New York at Stony Brook alum (class of 1990) who embodies the very best of what a SUNY education can inspire. Born and raised in the Bronx and the first African American speaker of the Assembly, Speaker Heastie has spent his life working to improve the lives of all New Yorkers and has been a tireless advocate for public higher education, especially ensuring SUNY's affordable excellence through sustained state investment and expansion of the Arthur O. Eve Educational Opportunity Program (EOP).

Speaker Heastie, thank you for your unwavering support for SUNY. We are proud to count you among the alumni we have the privilege of working alongside.

Learn more about Speaker Heastie's time as a student at Stony Brook and how a SUNY education helped shape his career:

Major: Bachelor of Science in Applied Math and Statistics

Clubs/organizations: The Minority Planning Board, SAINTS, Black World, Student Activity Board

Favorite memory as a student: Black Women's Weekend was one of my most cherished memories from my time at the University. It was a weekend dedicated to celebrating the rich history of Black People, Black Women, and more. The atmosphere was always warm, reminding me of a family reunion, bringing people from all walks of life together.

How has your degree from SUNY helped you in your career? My undergraduate degree has been incredibly beneficial in my career as New York State Assembly Speaker. Being one of three individuals in the room negotiating a state budget of over \$250 billion, knowledge of budgeting, mathematical modeling, and analytical thinking are particularly valuable.

Advice for current or future students: My advice for both current and future students is to always be your own biggest supporter and strive to make your current or future environment better than it was when you arrived.

TBT...Stony Brook Minority Planning Board 1989



State of the University Address

Chancellor King delivered his fourth annual State of the University address on June 3 at The Egg in Albany, outlining a sweeping set of initiatives aimed at making higher education more accessible, affordable, and impactful for students across New York. The Chancellor highlighted three years of consecutive enrollment growth and nearly half a billion dollars in additional state funding over the past four years as proof that SUNY is indeed on the move.

The Chancellor announced a wide range of new programs touching nearly every corner of student life. **For the full speech and policy agenda, click [here](#).**

Highlights include:

- strengthening academic momentum;
- helping student meet basic needs like food, housing, and transportation;
- increasing student engagement and mental health support;
- instilling civics and service through a SUNY education;

- expanding SUNY's research leadership;
- recognizing and extending SUNY's faculty excellence;
- improving civil discourse across the SUNY system;
- strengthening students' sense of belonging;
- supporting students with disabilities;
- continuing to ensure the value of a college degree;
- improving support of adult learners; and
- leading the way on sustainability.



Climate Corps Summit

On June 12, the **SUNY Climate Corps** internship program held its kickoff summit at SUNY System Administration to welcome the third cohort of students and their internship supervisors. The program connects SUNY students with paid internships at over ten different State agencies, as well as New York City, to gain hands-on experience in careers in the climate field and sustainability. Thank you Senator Pat Fahy for joining us and providing remarks to our students!



Puerto Rican Day Parade

On June 14, thousands of New Yorkers lined 5th Avenue to celebrate the 69th Annual Puerto Rican Day Parade, the largest cultural celebration in the United States. This year's theme, *Somos Mas Que 100x35*, celebrated the extraordinary contributions of Puerto Ricans that reach well beyond the size of the island. Chancellor King was joined by Sydney, along with SUNY EOP staff and ambassadors, SUNY Hispanic Leadership Institute fellows, SUNY System Administration staff, and SUNY Purchase President Michael Steiper.



Office of Higher Education in Prison (OHEP) Symposium

On June 24, Will attended the inaugural **SUNY OHEP** Student Symposium and participated in the "Advocacy in Action: Strategies for Systemic Change" panel to discuss how advocacy organizations, community leaders, and government relations experts work to shape policies that impact communities. Thanks to Governor Hochul and the State Legislature, \$250,000 was provided for OHEP in the enacted state budget, the first time in the program's history.



NYC Pride March and Albany Pride Parade



SUNY Pride was on full display at the iconic NYC Pride March and Albany Pride Parade. On June 28, Julia joined Chancellor King, SUNY Trustee Candice Vacin, SUNY Purchase President Michael Steiper, SUNY Niagara President Lloyd Holmes, FIT President Jason Schupbach, the SUNY marching band, students, faculty, and other SUNY System Administration staff at the NYC Pride March to celebrate.



Empire State Service Corps Summer Corps Reception

On June 30, Sydney joined Chancellor King, Chairman Merryl Tisch, SUNY Trustee Joseph Belluck, and SUNY Trustee James Katz at the Empire State Service Corps Summer Corps reception at SUNY Global Center. This reception was a chance to pause and reflect on the meaningful work the 319 Summer Corps members are doing across New York State, especially as we mark the nation's 250th anniversary. SUNY students who participate in the **Empire State Service Corps** dedicate at least 300 hours a year in paid public service work in their communities. We are grateful to Governor Hochul and the State Legislature for doubling funding for the program, which will help expand the program to 1,000 students in additional program areas. Thank you Assemblymember Jo Anne Simon for attending and speaking to the members! Learn more [here](#)



Campus Visits

Alfred State College and Corning Community College

On June 10, Aria joined Chancellor King and Assemblymember Joe Sempolinski at Alfred State College's restaurant, The Collegiate, to talk with EOP staff and students about the importance of EOP on their college experience. They then toured the new National Casting Center Foundry at New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University and met with fine arts students and engineering students to discuss summer internship and research opportunities, respectively. Learn more [here](#)



Later that day, Aria and Chancellor King continued to Corning Community College for the 26th stop on his SUNY Reconnect tour. The Chancellor joined

Corning Community College President Terence Finley, Senator Tom O'Mara, and the Governor's Southern Tier Regional Representative Rose Olsen for a tour of the Makerspace and Mechatronics lab, a SUNY Reconnect eligible program that Corning Community College collaborated with Corning Incorporated and USW Local 100 to launch. They also had a roundtable discussion with students and faculty on SUNY Reconnect, EOP, and the Empire State Service Corps. Learn more [here](#)



Onondaga Community College and Mohawk Valley Community College

On June 24, Chancellor King joined Onondaga Community College President Warren Hilton, Senator Rachel May, Assemblymember Al Stirpe, Assemblymember Pamela Hunter, Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer's Central New York Regional Director Joshua Pearlman, and Senator Chris Ryan's Director for Community Outreach Shannon Koss for a visit to Onondaga Community College as he finishes his SUNY Reconnect tour. During their visit, Aria and Chancellor King toured the college's new healthcare simulation and education training center, as well as the Micron Cleanroom Simulation Lab. The group also spoke with SUNY Reconnect and EOP students and faculty about how the supports they have received contributed to their college success. Learn more [here](#)



Then Chancellor King and Aria stopped at Mohawk Valley Community College. Chancellor King, Mohawk Valley Community College President Randy VanWagoner, Governor's Mohawk Valley Regional Representative Carli Rightmier, industry partners from Indium Corporation, students, and faculty toured recently renovated campus facilities including their nursing lab, the FABLab (an MIT-networked workshop comprised of industrial-grade fabrication equipment and electronic tools), and their swimming pool, which is be used to teach swimming lessons under a NY SWIMS grant. They also participated in a roundtable discussion about SUNY Reconnect's impact on the area's workforce. Thank you to Senator Joe Griffo for stopping by! Learn more [here](#)



🧠 Trivia Answer 🧠

Dr. Kristina Johnson was appointed SUNY Chancellor in 2017 and was the first openly gay SUNY Chancellor. For more information on SUNY Pride, click [here](#)! Happy Pride Month!

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