



SUNY Office of Government Relations Newsletter

Dear Friend,

Welcome to the March edition of the SUNY Office of Government Relations newsletter!

March is Women's History Month, and SUNY recognizes the incredible women of the SUNY OGR team. Maria, Whitney, Sydney, Julie, Aria, Chelsea, and Julia work tirelessly to support the work of this office and SUNY System, and SUNY truly could not do it without them!

With the release of the Assembly and Senate one-house budget resolutions and the budget-deadline quickly approaching, our team has worked diligently to continue to advocate for SUNY's priorities. SUNY is grateful to our champions in the State Legislature for continuing to build upon Governor Hochul's historic investment in SUNY.

Beyond the budget, March offered meaningful moments to recognize our students, faculty, and staff. From celebrating the accomplishments of our Educational Opportunity Program students, to hosting the Friends of SUNY Reception, and spotlighting the amazing research happening across our campuses, the month was filled with opportunities to celebrate the power of SUNY. With this in mind, we will continue to focus on sustaining SUNY's impact and advancing the mission at the heart of our work.

Sincerely,

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Vice Chancellor for Government Relations



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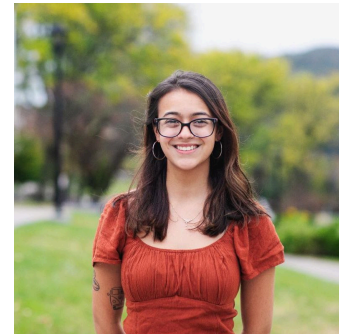
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Julia Rios
 OGR Graduate Fellow



Which institution is home to the only Irish dance club within the SUNY system?

Purchase College

SUNY Fredonia

SUNY Delhi

Suffolk County Community College

LOOKING BACK ON MARCH

SUNY News Highlights

- A new study by the **Rockefeller Institute of Government** finds SUNY's economic impact in NYS is more than \$35 billion. [Read more](#)
- Governor Hochul announces the expansion of childcare services at 11 **SUNY community colleges**. [Read more](#)
- SUNY's annual **Mascot Madness** tournament encourages students, alumni, and all New Yorkers to vote on their favorite campus mascots. [Read more](#)
- SUNY expands the **EOP's Career Development Internship Program** to effectively ensure all EOP students participate in an internship experience before graduation. [Read more](#)
- **Columbia-Greene Community College** establishes a new Prison Education Program at Hudson Correctional Facility. [Read more](#)
- Chancellor King announces partnership with **NYS Association of Counties** to connect SUNY students with paid internships at county governments. [Read more](#)
- The Buffalo News editorial board praised the **State University of New York at Buffalo's Clean Energy Master Plan**, a major investment to decarbonize its North Campus. [Read more](#)
- The **Binghamton University-led Energy Storage Engine in Upstate New York** will receive \$45 million from the National Science Foundation to propel its ambition to transform upstate into America's battery tech capital. [Read more](#)
- A SUNY Onondaga Community College student shares her experience in the tuition-free Architectural Design degree program offered through **SUNY Reconnect**. [Read more](#)
- An EOP student at the **State University of New York at Albany** shares how the program guided her academic journey and motivated her pursuit towards a pre-med track. [Read more](#)
- Chancellor King joins students for a roundtable on **SUNY's emergency aid grants**. [Read more](#)
- Chancellor King, SUNY Maritime leaders, and students inaugurate "**SUNY Maritime Day**" at the New York State Capitol. [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 globe. Here are a few recent highlights:

- **SUNY Research Connect**, a new public-facing portal designed to spotlight SUNY research and advance research collaboration, launched. [Read more](#)
- Researchers at the **State University of New York at Stony Brook** are working with the company HERE on a U.S. Army-funded project that will improve how military command-and-control systems share and interpret data across platforms. [Read more](#)
- The **State University of New York at Albany** hosted the 2026 International Congress on Biophotonics, marking the first time in more than a decade that the event was held in the United States. [Read more](#)
- Researchers at the **State University of New York at Binghamton** are testing the impact of protein degradation on ovarian and pancreatic cancer. [Read more](#)
- Researchers at the **State University of New York at Buffalo** help develop a new class of powerful antibodies to treat HIV using AI. [Read more](#)
- The **State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry** (SUNY ESF) has adopted sustainable search engine, *Ecosia*, to turn web searches into funding for planting trees. [Read more](#)
- Researchers at the **University at Albany** and Rutgers University have developed an early-warning framework that can predict harmful social media interactions before they erupt, paving the way for interventions that can minimize harm and make platforms safer for users. [Read more](#)
- A study from the **College of Agriculture & Life Sciences at Cornell** suggests that workplaces should encourage outdoor engagement as a low-cost strategy to reduce employee stress. [Read more](#)

Congrats to Maria!

Join us in congratulating our very own, Maria Volpe-McDermott, for being recognized in this year's City & State 40 under 40 list! Maria has been a great asset for our team after years at the New York State Assembly and we are so fortunate to have her at SUNY. Congrats to Maria on a truly well deserved honor!



Maria Volpe-McDermott



Director of Government Relations, SUNY



Maria Volpe-McDermott / Valerie Caviness

SUNY Presidents Meeting

On March 3, New York State Budget Director Blake Washington and New York State Director of State Operations Jackie Bray joined the SUNY presidents at their March meeting to provide an overview of the Executive Budget proposal and the state's fiscal outlook.



New York State Budget Director Blake Washington



New York State Director of State Operations Jackie Bray

Meetings in Washington D.C.

On March 4, Chancellor King and State University of New York at Buffalo President Tripathi joined Whitney in Washington for meetings with New York's congressional appropriators. The group met with Rep. Nick LaLota, Rep.

Grace Meng, Rep. Joe Morelle, and Rep. Adriano Espaillat to advocate for SUNY's FY27 federal appropriations priorities. These priorities include increased investment in lifesaving, federally funded research conducted across SUNY campuses, as well as strong support for the Pell Grant program, which expands access to high-quality postsecondary education for millions of students nationwide.



President Tripathi, Rep. Grace Meng, and Chancellor King



Chancellor King, Rep. Joe Morelle, and President Tripathi



Chancellor King and Rep. Nick LaLota



Chancellor King, President Tripathi, and Rep. Adriano Espaillat

Norman R. McConney Jr. Award for EOP Student Excellence Ceremony

On March 9, Chancellor King honored 49 outstanding students from SUNY's Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) with the Norman R. McConney Jr. Award for Student Excellence. The award recognizes outstanding EOP students for their academic merit and perseverance. This year's Honorary Awardee, Assemblymember Latrice Walker, delivered an inspiring keynote address, in which she reflected on her own journey as an EOP student at

SUNY Purchase and the values that have shaped her work in public service. Thank you Assemblymember Scott Gray and Assemblymember Latrice Walker for joining us! Learn more [here](#).



Assemblymember Latrice Walker



Assemblymember Scott Gray and President Zvi Szafran



Legislative Meetings

As we approach an enacted budget, SUNY is grateful for the continued partnership of our colleagues in the New York State Legislature. We are working hard to ensure a robust budget for our campuses that increases operating aid, capital funding, and student support initiatives. Learn more about our priorities [here](#).



Chancellor King and Assemblymember Paula Kay



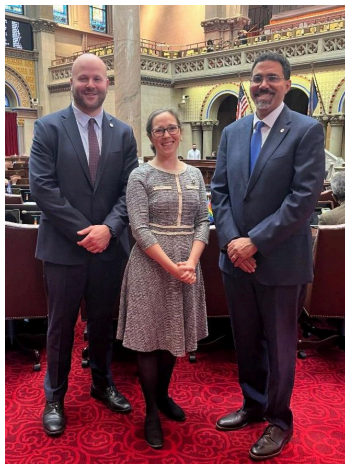
Chancellor King and Senator Siela Bynoe



Chancellor King and Senator Jeremy Zellner



Chancellor King, Will, and Assemblymember Kwani O'Pharrow



Chancellor King, Will, and Assemblymember Rebecca Kassay



Chancellor King, Will, and Senators Pat Fahy, Monica Martinez, Rachel May, Shelley Mayer, and Lea Webb

Women's History Month Reception

On March 10, Chancellor King and Melissa Steel King welcomed campus presidents and women leaders from across New York State for a celebration of Women's History Month. The night featured powerful reflections on our shared history and inspiring calls to continue advancing women's empowerment and opportunity. Thank you to Trustee Courtney Burke, Director of the Harriet Tubman Center at Binghamton University and Dr. Virginia Radley SUNY Fellow Dr. Anne Bailey, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, and Assembly Majority Leader Crystal Peoples-Stokes for each offering thoughtful remarks that grounded the evening in purpose and possibility.



Trustee Burke, Chancellor King, Melissa Steel King, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Senator Pat Fahy, Senator Toby Ann Stavisky, and Assemblymembers Mary Jane Shimsky, Alicia Hyndman, Dana Levenberg, Deborah Glick



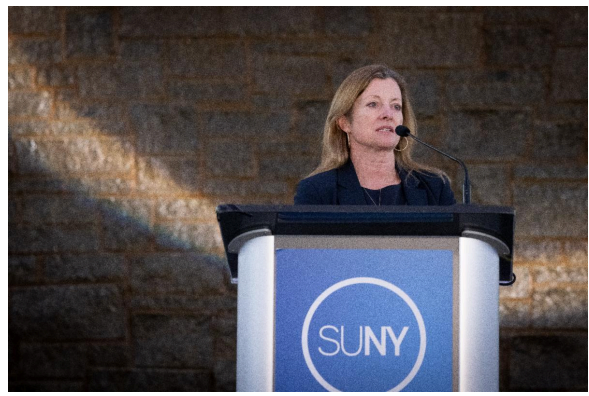
Assemblymember Donna Lupardo, President Anne D'Alleva, Senator Toby Stavisky, and Dr. Anne Bailey

Friends of SUNY Reception

After a change due to the January snowstorm, we were finally able to come together on March 11 for the Friends of SUNY Reception. We had an outstanding turnout, with more than 200 elected officials, their staff, state leaders, campus representatives, and other stakeholders in attendance. Trustee Marcos Crespo kicked off the evening by welcoming our distinguished guests. A big thank you to Business Council of New York State President and CEO Heather Mulligan for being our keynote speaker. It was a wonderful opportunity to reconnect, celebrate SUNY's achievements, and thank our SUNY champions for supporting our students, faculty, and staff. Thank you to all who joined us!



Trustee Marcos Crespo, Assemblymember Karines Reyes, Assemblymember Catalina Cruz, and Chancellor King



BCNYS President and CEO Heather Mulligan



Chancellor King and Assemblymember Chris Eachus



Senator Rachel May, Senator John Liu, and Chancellor King



Senator Robert Jackson, Senator Siela Bynoe, Chancellor King, Assemblymember Yudelka Tapia, and Assemblymember Chris Burdick



Albany Mayor Dorcey Applrys and Chancellor King



Chancellor King, Assemblymember Thomas Schiavoni, and Assemblymember Michaelle



Chancellor King and Senator Dean Murray



Chancellor King and Assemblymember
Michael Cashman



Chancellor King and Assemblymember Manny
De Los Santos



Assemblymember Al Taylor and Appointments
Secretary to the Governor Cathleen
McCadden-Benjamin

SUNY Research Expo

On March 17, we hosted our second annual SUNY Research Expo at the Legislative Office Building in Albany to showcase the groundbreaking and innovative research taking place across our campuses. SUNY is helping to do its part to drive research and innovation statewide, pushing the boundaries in AI, quantum technology, next-generation semiconductor, medical research and development, and energy and climate solutions. This is all made possible through State investment in research facilities, which helps SUNY attract world-class faculty and develop the next generation of researchers.

We are appreciative of the researchers from the State University of New York at Albany, the State University of New York at Binghamton, the State University of New York at Buffalo, SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, SUNY Optometry, SUNY Polytechnic Institute, SUNY Upstate Medical University, the State University of New York at Stony Brook, and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell for making the trip to present their impressive work. Thank you to everyone who stopped by and participated in the fun! Learn more [here](#).



Senator Rachel May



Senator James Sanders and Chancellor King



Assemblymember Marianne Buttenschon



Assemblymember Alicia Hyndman



Assemblymember Kwani O'Pharrow



Senator Lea Webb



Senator Cordell Cleare, Chancellor King, Assemblymember Alicia Hyndman, and



President Havidán Rodríguez and Assemblymember John McDonald

SUNY University Center Advocacy Day

Following the SUNY Research Expo, Chancellor King joined State University of New York at Stony Brook President Andrea Goldsmith, State University of New York at Albany President Havidán Rodríguez, State University of New York at Buffalo President Satish K. Tripathi, and State University of New York at Binghamton President Anne D'Alleva and our campus government relations colleagues to talk about the importance of research capital, critical maintenance funding, EOP, ACE, and student supports.



Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, Chancellor King, and SUNY university center presidents



Senate and Assembly Higher Education Committees, Chancellor King, and SUNY university center presidents



Assemblymembers Grace Lee, Karines Reyes, and Michaelle Solages, Chancellor King, and SUNY university center presidents



Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Chancellor King, and SUNY university center presidents



American Association of State Colleges & Universities

On March 24 and 25, Whitney and Julia joined SUNY Delhi President Mary Bonderoff, SUNY Oneonta President Alberto Cardelle, SUNY Oswego President Peter Nwosu, and SUNY Purchase President Michael Steiper at the AASCU On the Hill Conference in Washington D.C. The group enjoyed informative panels and group discussions on federal funding changes impacting higher education with leaders from regional public universities across the nation. The group also met with Rep. Josh Riley, and staff from the offices of Sen. Chuck Schumer, Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, and Rep. Andrew Garbarino to advocate for funding proposals on various campus initiatives, as well as preserving the Pell Grant program and other SUNY FY27 federal appropriation priorities.



SUNY Oneonta Director of Community Affairs and Government Relations Caroline Williams, President Bonderoff, Julia, and President Cardelle



President Cardelle, President Bonderoff, Rep. Josh Riley, SUNY Oneonta Director of Community Affairs and Government Relations Caroline Williams, and Julia

SUNY Fredonia is home to the only SUNY school with a registered Irish dance club, and one of only three schools in New York State to offer one. Read more [here](#).

LOOKING AHEAD

- Applications for the 2026-27-year Empire State Service Corps program are open for eligible SUNY undergraduate and graduate students! [Apply](#) by **April 17**.

Keep up with SUNY and the Office of Government Relations

- Interested in SUNY research and innovation? Check out our website [here](#).

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