



MANY VOICES, ONE CALL – The Strategic Plan to 2026

President's Report

December 18, 2023

Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Office of Diversity and Inclusion

On November 2, 2023, Catia Laird de Polanco, HR Recruitment Specialist and Chief Diversity Officer, attended a National Center for Institutional Diversity and National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education webinar training entitled “Envisioning Institutional Responses to Supporting Scholar Safety.”

On November 9, 2023, Catia Laird de Polanco attended a SUNY Council on Assessment webinar training entitled “Navigating Assessment in the Digital Era: Confronting Equity, Inclusion, System Thinking and AI.”

Catia Laird de Polanco consulted with Dr. Babette Faehmel, Professor in the Division of Liberal Arts, on the development of a *Many Voices, One Call* podcast episode titled “‘The Mission is to Unify’: Young Guyanese Americans on Immigration, Integration, and Racism” that was published on November 14, 2023.

Strategic Initiatives and Planning

The TRIO Office, in coordination with EOP, Success Center, and Early College in the High School, celebrated 1st Gen Day, in the Begley Learning Commons. The day, which recognizes the Higher Education Act of 1965 which created new opportunities for underserved populations. This event highlighted the experiences of first-generation students – giving them an opportunity to voice their challenges, their accomplishments, and their ideas for moving forward. In addition to celebratory activities (photo booth, snacks, giveaways), the program featured support opportunities available on campus and the opportunity to register with TRIO.

LPP in collaboration with ECHS hosted a two-part workshop series, “Preparing for and Paying for College”, presented by You Inc. Wealth Education Exchange. There were 31 attendees including students and parents. The workshop covered topics including Financial Aid, Application Deadlines, Work-Study, Grants, Scholarships, Student-Athletes, Athletic

Scholarships, AOP/HEOP/EOP Programs, Excelsior Scholarship, FAFSA, CSS Profile, Standardized Testing, Test-Optional, Fee Waivers, Essays, Recommendation Letters, Common Data Set, the Common Application, How to Help Your Child Succeed in College (mental health resources, connecting with faculty/staff/peers), and more.

Schenectady College and Career Outreach Center

Ms. Jaimee King, Executive Director of SCCOC, and Ms. Christine Goss, met with staff from CDYMCA 845 Commons to discuss referral pathways for their clients and collaboration.

Academic Affairs

This month, Renee Adamany, Professor (Human Services) attended several conferences including the 2023 Child Welfare Summit at SUNY Central sponsored by the Schuyler Center for Advocacy and Analysis and the SUNY DEISJ conference held at the University at Albany. Active in the National Association of Social Workers, she also attended a workshop entitled *Toward a Transformational Field Experience: Disrupting Whiteness in Field Instruction*.

This month, Dr. Babette Faehmel, Professor (History) concluded season 3 of her podcast, *Many Voices, One Call*. She recorded, edited, and published episode 4 entitled “The Mission is to Unify”: Young Guyanese on Immigration, Integration, and Racism” available on the College website.

Delivering a Meaningful Student Experience

Information Technology

Additional Banner Self Service modules in the works. Some testing has begun for faculty module sections. We’ve received feedback for sample faculty data and are adjusting accordingly. Student module has been configured with the basics and have not begun testing yet.

Strategic Planning and Initiatives

The Career Services Team promoted #NetworkInNovember as part of Fall Programming (2.2; 2.3; 2.5) and hosted the Fall Career Fair on November 1, 2023. The career fair was attended by 22 business (38 total reps) and over 50 students.

LPP after-school programming took place Mondays through Thursdays at Schenectady High School and Mont Pleasant Middle School. After school programs include tutoring and homework help by certified teachers and LPP staff, Environment Club in partnership with NYSDEC, Entrepreneur Club, Social Hour, and Peer Mentoring. LPP staff logged 42,995 service minutes in afterschool group activities (2.3; 2.4; 4.5).

LPP in collaboration with CSTEP brought 20 LPP high school students and 8 CSTEP students to Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences for a day of exploration and information sessions (2.3; 2.4; 3.1).

On Saturday, November 18, 2023, LPP students, parents, and staff participated in the Schenectady Holiday Parade. In the weeks prior, students helped to design and create the float. A fun time was had by all as we awaited the start of the parade in the warmth of Elston Hall, and celebrated in the staging area, the SUNY Schenectady parking lot, with other parade participants. Students and parents enjoyed waving at the crowds and interacting with the parade officials (2.3; 2.4).

Marketing and Public Relations

On November 21, the College hosted a ribbon cutting media event to introduce the community to the two new Workforce Development and Community Education Mobile Training Labs. Through an incredibly collaborative effort with Workforce Development, the President's Office, Facilities, IT, Human Resources, and HCAT (who provided hot beverages and pastries for the event from the Mobile Food Truck), the Marketing and Public Relations team was able to successfully position and promote the event to media outlets. Congressman Paul Tonko was the keynote speaker, and he was also joined at the podium by Brian Sano, Regional Executive for National Grid; David Dussault, CEO of P1 Ventures; Dr. Steady Moono; and emcee for the event Sarah Wilson-Sparrow, Vice President for Workforce Development and Community Education. Spectrum News was on campus collecting footage and interviews and we received coverage throughout the day and next day on their news channel. WAMC Radio conducted interviews on-site, resulting in a 5:26 segment on the 11/29/23 edition of their *Midday Magazine* show (read/listen at: <https://www.wamc.org/news/2023-11-29/suny-schenectadys-mobile-classrooms-are-seen-as-key-to-workforce-development>). Coverage was also provided by the Schenectady Daily Gazette (https://www.dailygazette.com/towns/schenectady/suny-schenectady-learning/article_dce3caf6-8a30-11ee-98e9-23a914ccc13e.html), SUNY, and News Channel 13. Spectrum News has asked for an exclusive to cover the day the first mobile training lab travels to a business to provide on-site training.

Academic Affairs

On November 3, The School of Music hosted nationally-renowned jazz saxophonist Ken Peplowski in a partnership with "A Place for Jazz" to present a masterclass where two Jazz Combos performed and received feedback; followed by an evening concert (Gen P2).

On November 6 & 7, as part of the 10-year accreditation process, visiting evaluators from the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) attended recitals, classes and lessons, and met with students, faculty, and administration. SUNY Schenectady has been accredited by the (NASM) since 1984 and is among an elite group of fewer than 40 community colleges nationwide that have received this honor (Gen P2). On November 8, Dr. Joseph Han, Assistant

Professor (Voice) brought Bradley Gregg, Shenendehowa Choir Director for a masterclass to work with School of Music voice students (Gen P2).

On November 8, Dr. Christopher Brellochs, Dean of the School of Music, and Sten Isachsen, Associate Professor (guitar) welcomed a music technology class and its teacher from Mohonasen high school for a tour of SUNY Schenectady and to observe classes (2.4).

On November 9, Dr. Lorena Harris, CSTEP Director and Dr. Hope Sasway, Dean MSTH accompanied CSTEP students to the Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences for a tour of their facilities and a talk about career possibilities. Melenie Ubele, Director of Liberty Partnership Program joined them accompanied by LPP students (2.4, 4.5).

On November 9, Cayla Gaworecki, Assistant Professor (Math) hosted a Math Contest open to all students. She bought and supplied her own prizes for the top-scorers (2.4, 2.5).

On the 13th & 14th, Prof. Ingrid O'Connor accompanied two MPI club students to the MPI Fall Focus Conference at Cornell University, in Ithaca, NY. They attended full sessions on sustainability, ADA accessibility for hospitality destinations, and current marketing trends in hospitality. A tour of the (still under construction) Ithaca Conference Center was highlight of the conference. Additionally, students had the opportunity to network with over 120 hospitality professionals. Afterwards, they enjoyed a tour of the Statler Hotel and the hotel school (Gen P2).





HCAT represented SUNY Schenectady at the NYSSCA (NYS School Guidance Counselor Association) Conference in Albany on November 16-18. This annual event attracts over 350 counselors from all over the state. She partnered with NYSTIA (NYS Tourism Industry Association) to educate guidance counselors on careers in hospitality. Over the three days, hundreds of counselors stopped by the two booths to learn about careers in hospitality and network. Professor O’Connell attended this event, because she is a member of NYSTIA’s Education Advisory Board (Gen P2).

On November 14, Dr. Renato Tameta, Adjunct Instructor and Dr. Hope Sasway, Dean MSTH accompanied 6 Microbiology students to Ellis Hospital Microbiology Laboratory so they could understand what working in a real-life clinical laboratory setting would be like, as part of their career exploration and understanding of the seriousness of infections and pathogens (2.4, 2.5).

Louis Aioassa, Assistant Professor, and his students who have participated in the New York State Forensic Investigation course (which was partially hosted on our campus) have been invited to apply for the opportunity to tour the New York State Police Forensic Lab Tour in Albany on November 29th (2.2, 2.5).

Jacque Keleher, Director of Library Services and (devoted) member of the Long Night Against Procrastination (LNAP) planning team, hosted LANP on Thursday, November 30th from 5pm – 11pm. Several emotional support animals attended. Everyone loved the therapy pigs! (Gen P2).

Student Affairs

Director Robyn King coordinated the Red Cross Blood Drive on campus where 24 units were collected. Additionally, she led efforts to assemble coordinated Thanksgiving Meal Kit assembly with the SUNY Schenectady Foundation Board; 115 bags were put together.

Workforce Development and Community Education

On November 21 the Workforce Development and Community Education Division along with many departments across campus celebrated the new Mobile Labs with a ribbon cutting.

Building Organizational Effectiveness

Strategic Planning and Initiatives

Dale Miller, Director of Institutional Research, completed and submitted three SUNY Systems reports. Mr. Miller provided data to the following offices: EOP data to the EOP Director; FTE data and adjunct data to the Vice President of Finance; program data to the Vice President for Academic Affairs; student success data for Achieving the Dream; FTE data for the Middle States response document; and student and employee data to Marketing and Public Relations for an effort the office was completing (3.3).

Academic Affairs

On November 27, Dr. Amy Osborne, Instructor (Chemistry) and Dr. Hope Sasway, Dean MSTH attended a virtual meeting with the New York State Police Crime Lab as part of their participation in the Forensic Investigative Curriculum (FIC) Program, which enables undergraduate and graduate students to meet and learn directly from forensic professionals. The FIC hopes to facilitate multi-disciplinary work and develop academic partnerships (3.1, 3.3, 4.5).

Student Affairs

Director of Wellness Robyn King has been chosen to present "Stronger Together: A Collaborative Approach to Addressing College Student Hunger" at NASPA's (Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education) annual conference held in Seattle, Washington in March 2024.

The revised Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy (FASAP) was approved presented to academic senate in October and approved by the SUNY Schenectady Board of Trustees in November. The policy revisions will ensure equitable access to the financial aid programs at SUNY Schenectady. Mark Bessette, Assistant Dean of Financial Aid, attended the SUNY Financial Aid Directors annual meeting in November. Valuable information was received from New York State Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC) on the 2024-25 FAFSA and TAP application changes in light of FAFSA Simplification. SICAS provided valuable processing tips for submitting Federal Work Study earnings to the Department of Education which will be done for the first time this December. In addition, valuable knowledge

was received from presentations made by SUNY EOP, SUNY Transfer Task Force, and Chancellor King.

Administration

Construction on the Student Services Center in the Stockade Building continued. In late November, demolition of the former Admissions Office and adjacent classroom was completed. In early December, our contractors started installation of the new steel wall studs and sheetrock. The project is on schedule for completion in March/April 2024.

The college retained an architect to assist with planning and construction documents needed for the Cafeteria kitchen project. In addition to architect services, a commercial kitchen supply company was retained to identify stoves, ovens and other equipment needed for the project. We are exploring a potential change to the layout of the existing cafeteria serving space with an eye towards fluctuating enrollment.

The architect retained for the Cafeteria, Elston lobby and community room (Mohawk & Van Curler rooms) presented proposed architectural drawings on this important and visible renovation project. Members of the college community attended a half day session where the plans were revealed. Good conversation about the culinary program student needs and college uses of the spaces occurred. Ideas were shared and our architects will update their plans based on needs expressed. We are planning to wrap up the project design phase in January and go to bid for construction in January/February.

Progress on replacement of the Elston Hall skylights and windows continued in November. Bids for the Elston Hall roof replacement and Culinary Air Intake project were received. These projects will occur in the spring, weather permitting.

The college's proposed 2024 Capital Projects that were recently approved by the County legislature were forwarded to SUNY for inclusion with the 2024-2025 State budget. Over \$5 million in capital projects that were approved by the Board last summer are being proposed. We anticipate approval in early April of 2024.

Progress on the updated Facilities Master Plan continued. A meeting with our contractor was held to discuss classroom utilization, course section offerings, population trends and future academic needs. Work on this project will continue into January.

The college's emergency generator is scheduled for delivery on December 12th. This new generator will power the college's buildings at 78 Washington Avenue in case of power outage, natural disaster or other calamity. We look forward to its installation and testing during late December.

Human Resources

HR has successfully completed the open enrollment period for 2024. We also recently received the 2024 rates for medical and dental insurance from the County, and are in the process of

preparing updated rate sheets for our current employees, as well as sending letters to our retirees to notify them of the updated rates for 2024.

Foundation

Workforce Development and Community Education

November 8-10, 2023 the Workforce Development and Community Education Division attended the CEANY (Continuing Education Association of New York) Annual Conference. On November 16, Sarah Wilson-Sparrow attended the Schenectady ARC's board meeting.

Ensuring Financial Sustainability and Self-Sufficiency

Administration

The Office of Administration issued the call to all departments/divisions for the 2024-2025 Operating Budget request. Due to enrollment and uncertain State support, departments were asked to keep their request flat or similar to the approved 2023-2024 budget amount. Budget requests are due back in early January. During the Winter, we will combine the requests into one large budget and begin conversations. We anticipate a draft budget will be ready for presentation to the Board in April of 2024.

Our auditors from Lumsden and McCormick were on-site in late November performing financial and transaction testing. New for this year's audit, our financials will show the value of extended leases and IT contractual agreement values. We are on track for a presentation to the Board of Trustees on the 2022-23 audit for the February meeting.

Foundation

The Foundation continuously builds and draws upon the strength of the Foundation Board members as advocates for the College:

Foundation Board members volunteered to stuff 115 food bags for our SUNY Schenectady Thanksgiving dinner giveaway. Vice President and Stewardship Officer met with Keven Mathes, Foundation Board Member, on November 21 to discuss campaign committee staffing. Vice President had lunch with board member, Paula Marshman, to talk about scholarship funding options and invite her to sit on the Campaign Steering Committee.

The Foundation is creating a bold, new, positive case for growing flexible funding to support our students:

FreeWill Launch #1 and #2 sent via Constant Contact to 16,709 individuals with a 36% open rate, resulting in four bequest intentions worth \$22,000. FreeWill Launch #3 sent via ViewSpark on Giving Tuesday to 12,358 individuals with a 25% open rate. Year-end solicitations will be mailed and emailed to 7,000+ constituents to capture end of tax year donations.

The Foundation is working to increase fundraising effectiveness to grow 5% annually by engaging alumni, businesses, and the community:

November LinkedIn activity had 185 unique views, and 100 new followers. There were 80 reactions, four reposts, and four comments. Vice President sent 32 Thanksgiving E Cards to major donors. Happy Thanksgiving ViewSpark to with 12.315 emails with a 32% open rate.

Engaging our alumni:

Stewardship Officer worked with alumna owned business Whisky Business Bakery to package 33 dozen macaroons for our business supporters. Stewardship Officer obtained the service of alumna owned business, Vashti's Kitchen Delights Catering Services, for the Stakeholders Forum breakfast. Stewardship Officer attended lunch with sustaining donor Audrey Osterlitz '79. Heather Peterson '99 has been working with Vice President to arrange a meeting regarding internships for our students.

President's Outreach

The President's Annual Holiday Social on Nov. 28 was a time for the College community to gather together and celebrate the season. Thank you to the School of Hotel, Culinary Arts and Tourism, the School of Music, and the Facilities Team for making it such a festive and fun evening!



