



MANY VOICES, ONE CALL – The Strategic Plan to 2026

President’s Report

April 15th, 2024

Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Office of Diversity and Inclusion

Catia Laird de Polanco, Chief Diversity Officer, developed the first annual Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Highlights Report for the 2022-2023 academic year. The report was submitted to the SUNY Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Karen Tanski, Executive Director of Marketing and Public Relations, consulted with Catia Laird de Polanco, Chief Diversity Officer, on diversity and inclusivity considerations pertaining to the planned update of welcome banners in the quad.

Eric Fluty, Associate Vice President of Campus Safety, consulted with Catia Laird de Polanco, Chief Diversity Officer, on the identification of times to conduct the lockdown drill in consideration of prayer times during the month of Ramadan.

Academic Affairs

This month, Maura Davis, TRIO Academic Specialist, and Stephanie Brown, TRIO, student intern, collaborated with the Early College in the High School (ECHS) program to provide a Disability Awareness Event at Center City. The event was interactive, and engaged students in games involving trivia and facts about disabilities to win a prize. (1.4)

This month, Dawn Jones, Director of Career Services, and Deviyani Singh, student intern, created a draft of a Resource Guide for Undocumented Students. (Gen P1)

Michelle Ragucci, Director of Academic Services, performed a review of ADA procedures and practices within the Testing Center using the DEI Review Tool, and based on the findings, plans to design and implement an online scheduling system for students. (1.5)

This month, Dr. Sine Rofofsky, part-time Reference Librarian, published a research paper entitled *A Menu for Menus: Organizing a Menu Collection* with the Society for American Archivists https://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/Rofofsky_AMenuforMenus.pdf . (Gen P1)

Dr. Sine Rofofsky, part-time Reference Librarian, was accepted as a new contributor to the New York Library Association (NYLA) Voice as a columnist writing about diversity, equity, inclusion, universal design for learning, and culture/community. He also presented "What's in a Name? Does a Name Make a Difference?" at the Empire State University Saratoga Springs Mini-Conference on March 22. (Gen P1)

David Wolf, Director of Instructional Design and Online Learning has redesigned Instructional Design and Inclusive Teaching training to work within Brightspace. Five new training modules are now available and recording faculty and staff interaction. He also produced a short training video and materials reviewing the Principle of Engagement - Guideline 3 - Criterion 3 in the Theory of Universal Design for Learning. (1.1, 1.3, 1.4)

Strategic Initiatives and Planning

Mary Silvestri, Director of TRIO/Interim Director of Admissions and Matriculated Enrollment, and Anna Sherman, Admissions Advisor, completed SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) training to help with the onboarding of international students. The training included best practices, policies and procedures, and resources to assist international students in the visa process (1.5, Gen. P1; 2.1; Gen. P2).

Student Affairs

Associate VP Fragale completed the Open Doors international student survey which establishes and publishes international student trends across the United States.

Three international students have completed the extensive application to be authorized by the Department of Homeland Security to work off campus full-time for up to 12 months.

Our Study Abroad program in Italy will send 17 students and 2 faculty chaperones overseas from May 21 through June 9, 2024.

Schenectady College and Career Outreach Center

The Schenectady College and Career Outreach Center (SCCOC) Testing Center opened and began welcoming GED test takers on March 20, 2024. The Testing Center offers GED and TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) testing to SCCOC participants and the community.

On March 7, 2024, SCCOC, in partnership with Schenectady County Connects and Department of Labor, hosted a community job fair at Center City. Over one hundred job seekers attended the fair

and had the opportunity to meet in person with forty-five employers to discuss employment opportunities.

Ms. Elizabeth Cowan joined the Schenectady College and Career Outreach Center; serving as the Participant Services Specialist.

Ms. Christine Goss, Associate Executive Director of SCCOC, attended the NYATEP Youth Conference in Saratoga Springs, NY.

On March 13, 2024, Ms. Jaimee King, Executive Director of SCCOC, attended Cohoes High School Career Fair to share the services and support provided by the SCCOC.

Marketing and Public Relations

On March 28, the college hosted an event to promote the new Liberal Arts: Arts Concentration (Fall 2024) and officially open the Center for the Arts and The Rise Gallery at 13 State Street. The Center houses a new classroom, conference room, office, and the gallery, which is comprised of over 50 works of art created from 24 local community artists, student and alumni artists, and college faculty and staff artists, was carefully curated by Stephen J. Tyson, fine arts faculty member and art gallery director/curator. Over 120 guests gathered for the evening gala to celebrate and enjoy sculpture, watercolor, pen and ink, fiber art, oil, acrylic, photography, and other medium. The Marketing team, including new Events Coordinator Wa’Kena Jackson, managed the event strategy and implementation, event look and feel, catering, signage and collateral, social media, and promotion. The School of Music provided additional ambiance with a six-piece Jazz Ensemble for the event. The gallery, and its opening event, drew interested media from the Gazette/Nippertown, WMHT, and Channel 13.

Delivering a Meaningful Student Experience

Academic Affairs

Dr. Sine Rofofsky, part-time Reference Librarian, successfully completed several Deque University curriculums including: *Fast Track to Accessibility*, *Document Accessibility*, *Accessibility Program Management*, *Customer Service for People with Disabilities*, and *Designers*. (Gen P2)

Mitzi Espinola, Director of Academic Advisement, met with Tricia Terleckey, the new Assistant Director of Workforce Development to introduce her to academic advisement and discuss collaboration between our offices specifically regarding the Direct Support Professional (DSP) 1 and DSP 2 Micro-credentials. (2.3)

This month, Academic Advisement held New Student Registration days on March 12, 25 and 27. On these special registration days, new students were greeted by Admissions, met with a college staff member to log into the Portal and completed the “Survey to Success”, then met with their Academic Advisor for their first career/advising/registration session. The New Student Checklist was reviewed to ensure completion of the onboarding process. This allows for individual attention and wrap around services. (2.1, 2.3, 2.5)

Mary Silvestri, Director of TRIO, and the TRIO staff have implemented an outreach campaign for graduating and transferring students participating in TRIO. Outreach includes emails, surveys, and personal phone calls targeted to help students plan their next steps after SUNY Schenectady and ensure a smooth transition. (2.5)

Mary Silvestri, Director of TRIO, and TRIO Academic Specialists Maura Davis & Doug MacDonald worked together with Kevin Dean, the new Executive Director of the ASAP (Accelerated Study in Associate Programs) grant to present an ASAP Orientation. Additionally, Dawn Jones, Director of Career and Transfer Services provided two additional ASAP Orientation sessions to connect ASAP students with Career Services connections. (2.2, 2.5)

The Career & Transfer Services Team hosted 3 individual recruitment tables on campus connecting students with opportunities and gained 6 new employer registrations in College Central. (2.3, 2.5)

Career Services hosted 2 speed networking events, 5 classroom room visits, and a Smart Transfer Networking Skills and Professional Dress Workshop. (2.2, 2.3, 2.5)

Carol Maimone began co-teaching the Foundations of Health Insurance course with MVP Healthcare in the evenings through Workforce Development. The students are very receptive, and MVP is contributing amazing content and staff instructors. (2.2, 2.3, 2.5)

Strategic Planning and Initiatives

Mary Silvestri, Director of TRIO/Interim Director of Admissions and Matriculated Enrollment, in collaboration with staff of the College in the High School Office, has been working with the team at the Schenectady City School District to plan the annual Schenectady Promise event at Schenectady High School (2.1; 2.4; 3.1).

ASAP staff outreached and connected with students in the program, holding two separate orientations. Additionally, the ASAP office collaborated with TRIO and Career Services on student programming to review and engage students with campus services (Gen. P2; 2.3).

Mary Silvestri, Director of TRIO/Interim Director of Admissions and Matriculated Enrollment, scheduled New Student Registration Days during high school Spring Break. These events allow new students to meet with a member of the SUNY Schenectady team to get their credentials, tour the campus and register for classes with an advisor (2.3; 2.4; 3.1).

ASAP staff participated in several New Student Registration Days, supporting recruitment of ASAP students and the College's comprehensive onboarding process for new students entering Fall 2024 (2.1; 2.3; 3.1).

The Admissions Office hosted LaSalle Institute and the Academy for Software Engineering for a campus visit. The event, which included about 90 prospective students, showed students around campus and presented them with information about the College including connections with Keion Clinton, Associate Professor of Computer Science, and Dr. Hope Sasway, Dean of Math, Science, Technology and Health (2.4).

Through outreach to students in the program, the ASAP team connected students to tutoring services to support academic success (2.3; Gen P2; 1.3; 1.4).

Mary Silvestri, Director of TRIO/Interim Director of Admissions and Matriculated Enrollment, updated email the campaigns for new students through Slate. These campaigns include information on TRIO, ADA Services, EOP, Financial Aid, and Certificate of Residency. Each of these emails has been scheduled to be sent to new students in the following weeks after their acceptance (2.1; 2.4; 3.4).

Mary Silvestri, Director of TRIO/Interim Director of Admissions and Matriculated Enrollment, has worked with Campus Connect on training and updating our Admissions webpage. Campus Connect is a portal used by high schools and guidance counselors to share information about colleges, and promoting college awareness with partnering high schools through this valuable recruitment tool (2.3; 2.4; 3.3).

Student Affairs

Two students have been chosen as recipients of the prestigious SUNY Chancellor's Award in Student Excellence (CASE). Parmesh Thakoordial and Melody Roper will receive this honor at the annual ceremony in April in Albany.

Commencement plans are well under way with most major tasks completed. The committee has worked hard since December of 2023 and is excited to welcome Lt. Governor Antonio Delgado as the Commencement speaker.

Student Activities:

The SGA and the Student Activities Board will host several events in April for students. On April 2, the Annual Spring Bash is planned in the Elston Hall Quad. The Student Activities Board will host a Board Game Night on April 17 and the International Gala on April 18. SGA will host an Earth Day celebration on April 22 which will include a campus clean-up.

Work Force Development and Community Education

March 4, Kim Rodecker from The NYS Cancer Services Program of Fulton, Montgomery and Schenectady Counties spoke at the Healthcare team meeting. To educate on this program and how it offers free mammograms, cervical and colorectal cancer screening and diagnostic services to eligible uninsured individuals.

In partnership with Albany Medical Center, Workforce Development and Community Education now offers a Dining with Diabetes class. Each month a group of young chefs utilize the Culinary Arts Labs and learn how to cook nutritious and delicious meals while learning how to manage their Type 1 Diabetes. Thanks to Adjunct Faculty Member Alexis Schrom '23 and Assistant Professor Rain O'Donnell for leading the class.

Development Office

Vice President continued to serve on the search committee for Dean of Liberal Arts and Middle States Steering Committee. Stewardship Officer, Leanna Liuzzi, is serving on a Middle States working group.

Scholarship recipient, Grace Henderson, spoke at the Trailblazer's event, put on by our scholarship donors, Women's Fund of the Greater Capital Region. Sidra Riggins, an additional recipient, also attended and greeted guests.

Building Organizational Effectiveness

Office of Diversity and Inclusion

On March 7, 2024, Catia Laird de Polanco, Chief Diversity Officer, attended a webinar entitled "The Complexity of Leadership: Enhancing and Empowering Governing Boards and Presidents" hosted by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

On March 11, 2024, Catia Laird de Polanco, Chief Diversity Officer, attended a virtual presentation titled "Bystander Intervention to Stop Antisemitic Harassment" hosted by the NYS Division of Human Rights and delivered by Right To Be.

On March 14, 2024, Catia Laird de Polanco, Chief Diversity Officer, attended a virtual presentation titled "Bystander Intervention to Stop Islamophobic and Xenophobic Harassment" hosted by the NYS Division of Human Rights and delivered by Right To Be.

On March 20, 2024, Catia Laird de Polanco, Chief Diversity Officer, attended a virtual panel titled "Senior Women Leaders Panel" co-hosted by SUNY's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and the Office of Executive Recruitment and Leadership Development. The event was organized in honor of Women's History Month to allow a diverse group of senior women leaders across SUNY to share their professional journey so that others could learn how to support, empower, and mentor women through their professional journeys.

Academic Affairs

Michelle Ragucci, Director of Academic Services, attended an online webinar hosted by the New York College Learning Skills Association (NYCLSA) entitled *Designing and Redesigning Effective Tutor Training: Building and Expanding your Tutor Training Curriculum* in an effort to bring more robust training and professional development opportunities to the part-time staff of the Learning Center. (3.3)

To ensure a consistent approach to office and institutional objectives, Dawn Jones, Director of Career Services, met with Career Services staff twice to reinforce training principles and review protocol for employer communications, use of Outlook calendars and document accessibility. (3.3)

Throughout March, ECHS and Schenectady School district staff met weekly to review student grades and assess their progress according to grade level programmatic benchmarks. Staff collectively made decisions regarding course advisements and action steps related to individual students which were then communicated to School District and College representatives. (3.1)

The campus has been configured to allow for the new Open Educational Resources (OER) platform called Lumen One to be integrated into classes in Brightspace. This will expand the number of OER courseware and tools available for faculty, and can result in a drastic reduction in the cost of attending a course. (3.4)

Strategic Planning and Initiatives

Dale Miller, Director of Institutional Research, completed and submitted three IPEDS reports and a SUNY Systems report. Additionally, Mr. Miller provided data to the following offices: ASAP eligibility data; developmental English data to Liberal Arts; DEI data to the Chief Diversity Officer for a SUNY report; veterans data to Anna Westerman, Academic Advisor/Veterans Certifying Official; Mathematics assessment data to the Dean of Math, Science, Technology, and Health; 8-week term data for to the Vice President for Strategic Planning & Initiatives; Entrepreneurship data to for the Academic Program Review; and Schenectady High School data on the Promise program to The Foundation (3.3).

Mary Silvestri, Director of TRIO/Interim Director of Admissions and Matriculated Enrollment, and Allyson Weiser, Admissions Advisor, helped onboard new Admissions Advisor, Anna Sherman. Training included policies and procedures, meeting with campus offices and supports, and meeting with Deans/Faculty to understand academic programs. In her short time here, Anna has already made multiple recruiting visits, taken part in training on working with international students, and is frequently seen touring prospective students around campus (3.3).

Student Affairs

The Student Government Association has contracted with Mammoth Consulting to complete an Athletic Feasibility study. Members of the firm will be interviewing staff in mid-April.

Wellness and Support Services:

Robyn King presented "Stronger Together: A Collaborative Approach to Addressing Student Hunger" at the NASPA National Conference in Seattle. She shared how the SUNY Schenectady Food Pantry was planned and developed and offered guidance and information to colleagues from all over the country how to start a pantry on their campuses.

Workforce Development and Community Education

On March 14, Sarah Wilson-Sparrow, attended the CEANY Board Meeting.

On March 15, Lauren Lankau and Sarah Wilson-Sparrow attended the Workforce Development Board Coalition Meeting with partner organizations across the region.

March 20, Tricia Terleckey attended the Direct Support Professional Micro Credential Completion Ceremony at Dutchess County Community College.

March 22, Matthew Maloy, Lauren Lankau, and Sarah Wilson-Sparrow attended Plug Power to tour the facilities and discuss the partnership with the Mobile Lab Units.

On March 29, Matthew Maloy, Tiziana Rota and Sarah Wilson-Sparrow met with GE to tour the Mobile Lab Units and explore training opportunities.

Marketing and Public Relations

March marks the first month of *promotional* text messaging to prospective students. Promotional text messaging varies in process and regulatory compliance from transactional text messaging. The college has been doing transactional messaging to current students for some time but lacked the infrastructure to manage compliance required for promotional campaigns. Utilizing experts at Slate, the company that provides the CRM data warehouse for all of the college's prospect leads, the Marketing and Admissions teams met with representatives from Slate to learn how to set up and maintain compliant campaigns. Those initiatives led to a new automated process for text messaging outreach to invite qualified prospect recipients to tour the campus, make an appointment with an admissions advisor, learn about financial aid, and encourage completion of the application process. This opens a new communications channel to engage prospects. In the future, Slate will be used to send event-driven promotional texts for open house, information sessions, and other admissions communications to encourage enrollment. SUNY Enrollment Funds supported the initiative.

Development Office

The Foundation continues to work to refine the scholarship program to maximize funding available to support the student experience. The first formal proposal for *the Rising Together Campaign* has been submitted to Pioneer Bank for their support of scholarships for Schenectady High School students. Scholarship "owners" will be solicited to increase their funding in support of this campaign. Vice President had lunch with David Wallingford, former Foundation Board member and Scholarship supported, to solicit additional donations for the scholarship and gauge interest in supporting a Veteran's Center.

Human Resources

Human Resources (HR) is currently working on releasing a monthly newsletter for employee communications. The newsletter is designed to share relevant information. Categories will include a monthly message, new hires, promotions and transfers, job opportunities, and upcoming events or reminders. Our goal is to increase internal communication and employee engagement within our organization. The first newsletter will be released on April 2, 2024.

HR is now certified for Civil Service Payroll for 2024. This salary certification process involves providing the County a list of all civil service employees/titles on the College's salary. The County reviews the information to ensure the County's records match the College. Once the information matches, the salary certification is granted. This process takes place twice a year.

HR identified a lack of formal process for the onboarding of student interns. A draft of the newfound policies is under development.

On March 6, 2024, our representative from Corebridge Financial was onsite and able to meet with our employees. Additional financial advisors are planned to visit again in April.

Administration

On March 24-27, 2024 Patrick Ryan, Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration participated in a Middle States Commission on Higher Education accreditation team visit to Immaculata University in Philadelphia, PA.

Construction on the college's new Student Service Center in the Stockade Building continued during March. The Center's furniture, ceilings, walls and glass panels were installed. IT infrastructure in the space was procured and is being prepared for installation. During April, the new glass entry to the space is to be installed. As part of the project, HVAC to the Stockade Building will be replaced during late Spring/early Summer. As a result, employee occupation of the new space will occur in late July.

During the last week of March, our contractors began work on replacement of the Elston Hall shingled roof. Scaffolding was constructed on the exterior of the building for existing roof removal and new material transportation to the worksite. This work will occur during April, weather dependent. The project includes replacement of the underlayment and shingles to correct frequent wind damage to the roof.

Bid documents for the following capital projects are being finalized for release in April of 2024. Repair to the Elston Hall Basement wall, ceilings and pipe openings; the Elston Hall Biology Greenhouse above the Welcome Center entrance; and renovation of the Elston Hall Mohawk Room and Hotel Lobby area. Renovations to the Van Curler Room will occur at a later date due to needed HVAC work as part of that project.

Information Technology

As for Cyber Security, we are in the process of installing CrowdStrike, our endpoint protection and security for computers and servers, rolled out to over 1000. Servers now loaded and extended protection being configured. This will provide a more proactive review and alerting for potential threats. The Cyber Security Incident Response Procedure encompasses the needed steps when the college encounters a cyber security incident. This will provide standardized steps for the IT team to take. This document should accompany the CIMP and other forms of disaster recovery materials

Ensuring Financial Sustainability and Self-Sufficiency

Academic Affairs

This month, Mary Silvestri, Director of TRIO, attended an online seminar to research how the SUNY Schenectady TRIO office could apply for a TRIO Training grant. Funding would allow SUNY Schenectady to become a virtual and in-person training facility for TRIO Grant Priorities. (4.3, 4.5)

Dawn Jones, Director of Career & Transfer Services, has negotiated a three-year contract through June 2027 with College Central Network to lock in the current rate of \$1628.91 per year and avoid yearly increases. (Gen P4)

The ECHS received confirmation that the proposal for Smart Scholars Cohort 6 was approved. This \$825,000 grant will support ECHS students at Center City for the next five years. (4.5)

Giovannine Matheron, Collection Development & Electronic Resources Librarian, attended “Know the Path, Avoid the Pitfalls: Arranging Contracts for e-Resources”. The webinar addressed concerns ranging from artificial intelligence, non-disclosure agreements (NDA), mergers of academic institutions to contracts for e-resources which are some of the most complex agreements that libraries must negotiate. (Gen P4)

On March 7 & 8, Associate Professor Mark Evans (piano) hosted the NYSSMA Zone 7 Piano Festival which brought close to 500 students from over 30 school districts (and their parents) to campus, and 14 SUNY Schenectady Music Education students assisted with preparations and logistics. (Gen P4)

Strategic Initiatives and Planning

Dr. David Clickner, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and Planning, presented enrollment assumption data to the President and members of the Senior Team. The projections accounted for multiple factors to support the budget and enrollment assumptions and planning (Gen. P4).

Workforce Development and Community Education

On March 6, Lou Aiossa, Michelle Kraines, Lauren Lankau & Sarah Wilson-Sparrow met with the NYS Department of Labor to discuss Police Officer Apprenticeship trade outline.

On March 19, Michelle Kraines and Lauren Lankau attended the Phase 1 Roll Out sessions of new apprenticeship funding through the SUNY Apprenticeship program.

March 20, Catholic Charities signed Provider Agreement to partner with WFD&CE in the OPWDD DSP Micro credential Program to offer to their current DSPs.

On March 20, At Dutchess County Community College SUNY and OPWDD announced the \$32 million investment to expand the DSP micro credential program from Governor Hochul's office through 2030.

Administration

Review of the 2024-25 Budget requests continued during March. As needed, divisional and department heads were asked for clarification on resources and positions requested. During March, the one-house bills from the State Assembly and Senate were passed. As of the end of March, all three bills contained the State funding floor as was proposed in the Executive budget; which means State support for Community Colleges would be flat from 2023-24 to 2024-25. We anticipate knowing our State support figure upon passage of the 2024-25 NYS budget in April.

Foundation

The Foundation continuously builds and draws upon the strength of the Foundation Board members as advocates for the College. Foundation Board members finished the second in a series of four scheduled trainings from Joe April at Convergent Nonprofit Solutions. All members were asked to contribute to the Campaign Prospect list with suggestions of folks who might be interested in getting involved at SUNY Schenectady.

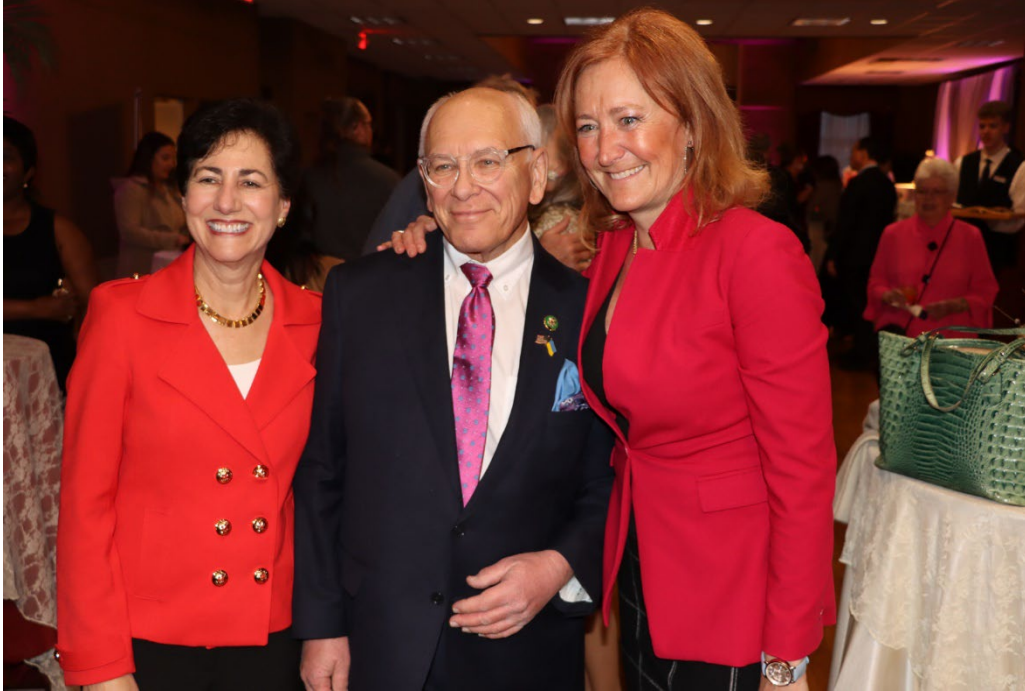
The Foundation is creating a bold, new, positive case for growing flexible funding to support our students. Food for Thought and All That Jazz is our primary source of flexible funding. As of March 28, *expected* event revenues will top \$100,000, which will be an event record!

The Foundation is working to increase fundraising effectiveness to grow 5% annually by engaging alumni, businesses, and the community: March LinkedIn activity had 195 unique views, 128 new followers, 52 reactions, 9 comments and six posts. Stewardship Officer Sarah Boink applied for a safety grant from Broadview Federal Credit Union to fund the Software supporting a Visitor Management System (VMS).

President's Outreach



Festivities began with a champagne toast and 50-minute performance by the Jazz Ensemble, comprised of students in the School of Music, followed by delicious hors d'oeuvres prepared and served by students in the School of Hotel, Culinary Arts and Tourism. A silent auction consisted of a wide selection of offerings, including a stay at Mirror Lake Inn in Lake Placid and family fun packages filled with local treats for the whole family.



Honorary Chair Ellen Sax, Vice President Community Engagement at MVP Health Care, Congressman Paul Tonko, and Laura Petrovic, Director of Sales and Marketing at the Renaissance Albany Hotel



Dr. Steady Moono, College President; Assemblyman Angelo Santabarbara; Dr. Stella Syacika Banda, President of the Philadelphia Association of Zambia; Mayor Annie Kapandula Kalamatila, Lufwanyama District, Zambia; Congressman Paul Tonko; and Hon. Vincent Versaci, Schenectady County Surrogate's Court Judge/Acting Supreme Court Justice, Saratoga/Schenectady Counties

