

Update

Alumni Newsletter *from*
Mitchell S. Nesler, Ph.D.



Spring 2019
www.esc.edu/alumni

Searching for a new president of SUNY Empire State College was a unique opportunity for us to look inward, as well as outward. As we sought the right person to take the helm of this extraordinary institution, to guide and build SUNY Empire throughout our next phase, we also had to consider how to define and describe ourselves for a prospective leader, how to tell our story. Always in mind was the importance of our past to our future. Always in mind was you, because you are our story of the past and, because of your generosity, you also are the story of our future. As the officer in charge during this past year, I have never been more aware of the crucial role our alumni play in shaping and sustaining our trajectory. Our alumni show their confidence in our future by giving back the way you do, and you will be proud to know that over the 24 years that Empire State College has participated in the SUNY-wide Student Opinion Survey, SUNY Empire has always ranked #1 in student satisfaction across all the four-year institutions.

Now, our new president has been named. I want to personally welcome Dr. James Malatras, about whom you will read in these pages. We are looking forward to continuing our progress in the fulfillment of SUNY Empire's mission fueled by Jim's new perspectives and new energy. At the same time, he has the exciting opportunity to take the reins of an evolving institution of higher education at a time when the meaning and role of higher education also are evolving – the perfect moment to make an impact. As a long-time member of the community here, I am eager to see what these changes will bring and how I can support them. I join you in being hopeful and open to our new president's vision.

As I look back at the year I have held the post of officer in charge, I am gratified by the growth and strengthening of the college on many fronts. We have taken steps forward

in achieving the goals of our strategic plan, implementing technologies that make our infrastructure more efficient and effective; launched 1 Stop Student Services in a beautifully renovated building in Saratoga Springs to improve the student experience, from inquiry through graduation; been recognized publicly by SUNY Chancellor Kristina Johnson for our leadership as an online innovator; invested in our physical footprint, which expands opportunities for students, making the college more accessible and fortifying our connections with the communities we serve; and secured more agreements with community colleges that ensure pathways for their students to transition smoothly into SUNY Empire to advance their study.



*Mitchell S. Nesler, Ph.D.
Officer in Charge*

On a more personal note, I have to confess I became addicted to graduations and last year attended commencement ceremonies across New York and in Prague. Nothing has ever moved me like the joy I witnessed reflected in the faces of our graduates and their families as they received their diplomas. For many, it had been a long road to that day and they were elated to have achieved their goal to be a college graduate, a milestone I was humbled to share.

Today, I want to thank you for your feedback throughout this last year and to, again, extend my high hopes and best wishes to Jim Malatras.

Onward!

Upcoming Events and Presidential Tour

It's hard to believe, but this year marks the 25th annual Empire State College Day at the Races, set for Friday, Aug. 2, in Saratoga Springs. To celebrate this milestone, we've added a few special features, like giveaways and a young alumni happy hour at the end of the day.

Our annual summer event at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center will be on Thursday, Aug. 15. This very special performance will pair The Philadelphia Orchestra with the Wynton Marsalis Swing Symphony. A guest speaker, Don McCormack, founder of the Jazz Institute at Skidmore

College and a member of the SPAC Board of Directors, will join us that evening to say a few words about the show.

And, on Sept. 18 in New York City, we will be proud to participate in creating comfort kits and backpacks for victims and survivors of domestic violence. This is a partnership between the college and SUNY's Got Your Back Campaign.

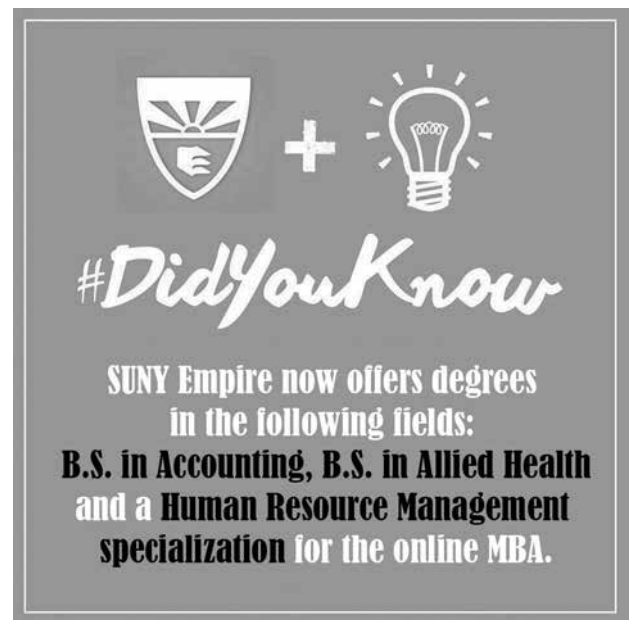
President Malatras will be on an extended tour at these and many more events to meet alumni and students throughout New York state and beyond. For information on all events hosted by the Office of Alumni and Student Relations, please visit www.esc.edu/alumni.

Young Alumni Answer the Call

Did you know that SUNY Empire has 14,000 alumni under the age of 40? With a younger demographic seeing the value of an ESC education and our unique mission, we recently conducted a short survey. We are proud to report that we received an overwhelming response from alumni who are excited to get involved. As a result, a Young Alumni Committee has been formed.

We learned that our alumni look forward to casual networking opportunities, professional networking activities and events with a cultural theme. The Office of Alumni and Student Relations is hard at work planning events along those lines — and others — for 2019 and beyond.

Do you have ideas for young alumni engagement? Want to get involved as a member of the Young Alumni Committee? Reach out to us at alumni@esc.edu. We would love to hear from you.



Alumni Benefits Update

I want to take this opportunity to remind alumni about our benefits page. We are excited to introduce FreeWill to the benefits package. More details are on page 4 of this newsletter.

Here is a sample of what you'll find as part of your alumni benefits:

- FreeWill, which creates a legal will online, free of charge.
- Online library access.

- Travel discounts.
- Career services.
- SUNY Perks membership for online shopping discounts.
- Links to class rings, diploma framing and college merchandise.

Visit our website at www.esc.edu/alumni and click the Benefits tab for more information.



James Malatras, Ph.D.

James Malatras, Ph.D., the current president of the Rockefeller Institute of Government, has been named the fifth president of Empire State College by the SUNY Board of Trustees.

“Dr. Malatras has dedicated his career to serving the state of New York, and he has a keen focus on public education as a path to ensure social mobility for our citizens,” said retiring SUNY Chairman H. Carl McCall. “My congratulations to him as he prepares to meet the challenge of leading Empire State College to new levels of success.”

“Empire State College offers a highly individualized education and in doing so it provides a unique opportunity for a campus president,” said SUNY Chancellor Kristina Johnson. “We are confident in Dr. Malatras’ abilities to move the campus forward in its mission to provide a high-quality academic experience.”

“My congratulations to Jim Malatras,” said James W. Lytle, chairman of the Empire State College Council. “Jim will be an outstanding president and the members of the college council and I look forward to working with him and the entire SUNY Empire community, as we advance the mission of the college.”

“I am most grateful for all the outstanding efforts of my colleagues on the Council and the members of the presidential search committee, who invested a great deal of time and effort

James Malatras, Ph.D., Named 5th President of Empire State College

and worked in a most professional and collegial fashion, as we considered an extraordinarily qualified and diverse field of candidates.

“Thanks to the dedication of the committee and the Council, the work of Chancellor Johnson and her staff and Chairman McCall and the board of trustees, SUNY Empire State College now has an outstanding new president in Jim Malatras.”

“I am extremely grateful for the support and confidence of Chairman Carl McCall, Vice Chair Merryl Tisch and the members of the board of trustees and of SUNY Chancellor Kristina Johnson and her team, for providing me the opportunity to serve as president of SUNY Empire State College,” Malatras said. “I want to express my deep appreciation to the Empire State College Council and the presidential search committee for their hard work and support, as well as the college’s faculty, staff and alumni for their extensive participation in the process.”

“I am eager to roll up my sleeves and confront the complex challenges before us. The sustainable careers of today and tomorrow require higher education and Empire State College is the model to meet our jobs challenge. The value of a college degree is being questioned by the public as never before. Now, more than ever, New York needs the flexibility, quality and support offered by SUNY Empire State College.

“Together we can solve the problems facing us and provide students with even greater flexibility and higher quality as they seek to improve their lives, the lives of their families and the communities where they live and work.”

As president of the Rockefeller Institute, Malatras led the institute’s modernization effort to offer policymakers evidence-based policy analysis and recommendations on timely topics. He previously served as SUNY system administration’s vice chancellor for policy and chief of staff. In the past, he has held several high-ranking positions in New York state government, including director of state operations. He also served as Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s deputy secretary for policy management. In addition, Malatras served as the executive director of the New NY Education Reform Commission from 2012-2014.

Malatras holds a doctorate in political science from the Nelson A. Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy at the State University of New York at Albany, where he received the Presidential Distinguished Doctoral Dissertation Award. He also holds a master’s and a bachelor’s of arts in political science from the University at Albany.

His appointment is effective July 15, 2019.

Your Gifts at Work

Sarah Gates

The Fund for Empire State College Scholarship
B.A., Historical Studies
Jordan, N.Y.

“Thank you for this scholarship. I feel honored and motivated to work my hardest. This is my fourth semester at SUNY Empire and I am so grateful for the opportunity to obtain my degree. The staff have been so helpful, my advisor especially, and my professors have been wonderful and always willing to help. I’m earning my B.A. in History, and looking forward to being a high school social studies teacher. I know from personal experience that trying your best and persevering matters so much. That’s what I’ve done at SUNY Empire. I can sleep happily tonight, knowing I made my dad proud and that I am being a good role model for my three children. It’s never too late to start a new, amazing path!”

Your support of The Fund for Empire State College empowers the success of students like Sarah. One of the easiest ways to make your gift is through our annual Summer Phonathon, beginning in June. Our callers are looking



Sarah Gates and her three children.

forward to hearing about your SUNY Empire State College experience and letting you know about the impact you’re making in the lives of thousands of students. Want to make your gift to The Fund for Empire State College before calling begins? Use the enclosed envelope or visit www.esc.edu/giving.

New Benefit — Now, Alumni Can Create a Legal Will Online for Free

Incredibly, more than half of U.S. adults do not have a will or other estate plan in place. Creating a will can be a daunting task, but it is one of the most impactful ways to support the people and causes you love beyond your lifetime. We are excited to announce that SUNY Empire State College is launching a free online resource to help you prepare for the future. We’ve partnered with FreeWill to give you an easy way to create your legally valid will online, at no charge.

Many people choose to include a gift to Empire State College in support of our commitment to a diverse and innovative academic community, but, this service is provided free whether or not you choose to leave a gift to the college. You also can use the tools to document your wishes before visiting an attorney. Learn more and get started today at www.freewill.com/ESC.