Natural Langdon ’18 traveled the world, taking photographs and making films — then he came to SUNY Empire to finish his degree.

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Cover: Hamar children on stilts in Omo Valley, Ethiopia, encircle Natural Langdon ’18.

Correction: In the Spring 2019 issue of Connections, the name of Ellen Sue Spicer-Jacobson ’94 was misspelled as Spicer-Jacobsen on page 23. She is the author of “For the Love of Clotheslines.”
This is an exciting time to be at SUNY Empire State College. Nearly 50 years ago, we were founded to break open the door of higher education by providing a flexible learning experience for a diverse cross section of students — midcareer professionals seeking a promotion, working parents who never attended college, union workers advancing their skills, returning students whose education was interrupted for a few years or a few decades, and many, many others.

Our radical innovation is becoming the norm in higher education. More and more, students — not only adult students, but first-entry students, as well — want an education that responds to their needs and fits into their busy lives. SUNY Empire is as ready as ever to answer the call.

Over the coming weeks and months, you will begin to see changes in the way we work and the way we talk about ourselves. We're energizing our brand with a bold new look, developing a cutting-edge website, and launching a new awareness campaign to get people excited about SUNY Empire. You may have already seen the beginnings of these changes.

We'll also be using our strengths to contribute more to our communities. We have 30+ locations across New York state, most with computer labs — so let's open them up for the 2020 census to help ensure every resident is counted. We have expert health faculty — let's launch a degree in Addiction Studies to help address staffing gaps in the opioid epidemic. We have incredible artists — let's host galleries and open the doors for our neighbors to come and enjoy.

We are SUNY's only statewide college, with a presence in every region, world-class faculty and staff, students with more grit than most, and more than 87,000 extraordinary alumni. Altogether, we are a potent force for good.

I look forward to working with all of you in the coming years to find new and innovative ways to respond to the needs of our communities and, at the core of it all, provide a relevant, affordable education to students at any stage of life.

Sincerely,

Jim Malatras
President
President Jim Malatras, who took the reins at SUNY Empire State College on July 15, 2019, is the college’s fifth president. He came to the college from the Rockefeller Institute of Government, where he served as president of the State University of New York’s public policy research arm, which is now part of SUNY Empire. (See page 18.)

In the past, Malatras has been director of state operations for Gov. Andrew Cuomo, vice chancellor for policy and chief of staff at SUNY system administration, deputy secretary and deputy director for policy management for Cuomo, and executive director for state policy and legislative affairs for the New York state attorney general. He earned a Ph.D., an M.A., and a B.A. in Political Science from the University at Albany of the State University of New York and calls himself “a proud product of SUNY.” Malatras is currently a resident of Delmar, New York, where he lives with his family.

Recently, the college’s new president took the time to share his thoughts about SUNY Empire, including why he decided to accept the position, his philosophy of public education, his role as leader of the college, and what he sees as immediate and long-term priorities and the direction of the institution.

Q: What about SUNY Empire State College drew you to the job as president?
A: From the outset, SUNY Empire State College has been a visionary experiment, founded in 1971 to make education more relevant and responsive to the needs of society and individuals by creating a college that transcends barriers to learning, like location and time constraints. I see my role here as fulfilling a public mission. I think about this mission every waking moment, and how to let people know what we are doing to achieve it, reaching out, getting our message to New Yorkers, especially, and potential students everywhere. I’ve immersed myself, showing up at different locations, so I can meet people face to face, without fanfare. My biggest problem so far is actually turning out the lights and closing my door to go home at night. We all have a finite amount of time in life, and I want mine to be impactful and meaningful. I’m trying to do some good in this world, and I think SUNY Empire State College, as a public institution, fulfills a commitment to educate the community it was initially established for — New Yorkers — as well as learners across the country and around the world, by doing something dramatically different. SUNY is a giant system, and its economic impact on the state is about $28 billion. SUNY Empire can be the backbone of SUNY, and I’m not going to blow this chance to lead the college through a positive change.

Q: What “dramatic difference” are you referring to?
A: SUNY Empire State College is what we need as a public institution to get students ready to join the workforce. There are jobs that need filling and people who need jobs, but who don’t have the training to do the jobs available now and what will be available in the future, and may have to be retrained mid career. Jobs are changing, and colleges need to change with them. Where we used to have linemen climbing power poles to fix
equipment, now drones do that job — but workers have to be trained to run the drones. Increasingly, RNs need bachelor’s and master’s degrees to get hired, and SUNY Empire offers programs and pathways to facilitate that. There’s an opioid misuse problem in this country, and we have created a degree program to prepare students to enter the field as counselors. See page 7.

There’s a growing need for cybersecurity experts, and SUNY Empire just launched an online master’s degree to address that need. The bottom line is that there are still too many people, even with college degrees, in this state and in this country, who aren’t making it into the work pipeline; it’s a degree-employment mismatch problem.

Colleges need to create different degrees that meet evolving opportunities for work, and that’s what we’re doing here. SUNY Empire State College is the model for the future. In fact, we recently partnered with the New York State Department of Labor to establish the Empire State Career Connector, a program to connect individuals to growing job sectors and the education they’ll need to upskill, to take advantage of emerging opportunities. We also partnered with the New York Police Department to help officers and retirees achieve a college education more quickly and at lower cost by receiving academic credit for prior life experience and exams based on their professional training.

This is related to something else we’re going to focus on: building partnerships with, frankly, everyone — business, government, nonprofits, social service agencies, and other colleges and universities — by placing our students as interns and employees, connecting through forums and collaborating for trainings. The more we can connect, the better. Based on demographics, there’s going to be a tsunami of retirements coming up, and we’re going to help fill those jobs. This helps fulfill our educational mission and will position SUNY Empire students and alumni across New York, within every other state, and around the world, to create and be part of the workforce flow. People will know we’re a force.

Q: Are prospective students getting that message?

A: About 50 percent of people in this country recently polled express a lack of confidence in four-year degrees. We need to restore faith in higher education, to help people understand that it’s worth it to get that degree, and SUNY Empire State College is showing that it is. Our alumni will tell you that. We need a highly educated society and more people — not fewer — to enroll in college. By 2020, 65 percent of workers will need a post-secondary degree to get a job. Automation is a real challenge to the traditional workforce, but someone has to develop the artificial intelligence that powers it and then run the machines. That’s why we need to do something dramatically different. That’s what we bring — the flexibility, vision, and capacity to be responsive, so we can educate people to join the workforce as it is being redefined. The market demands constant continuing education, and the people who benefit from that are exactly who we serve: adults who are coming back to college to improve their chances of living more satisfying lives and finding more satisfying jobs among the opportunities out there. People aren’t married to one job anymore. They have multiple careers in their lifetime. College is the greatest way to lift people. A public education is the best determinant of social mobility. Creating the infrastructure for mass public education, originally through SUNY’s community college program, is one of society’s greatest achievements.

Q: Other colleges, including aggressively competing for-profits, are making similar claims. How will SUNY Empire State College pull away from the pack?

A: We don’t have a cookie-cutter approach, and by that I mean that we view each student as an individual, and each has a faculty mentor who supports them from admission to graduation, including our online students. I’ve never met a faculty more committed to the mission of a college. Our special sauce is that since the college’s inception, our students have had the opportunity for one-to-one learning, no matter how far away they are physically, or whether they are also working full time or parenting, whatever their time constraints.

Long before there was laptop learning, SUNY Empire State College offered distance learning, by telephone and mail, as well as face to face and in small-group meetings with mentors and peers. As our students started emailing, got online, and started using Skype, we adapted and then led the way to new ways to learn, including asynchronous classrooms. That’s what makes us radical, and it connects us to our mission: to remove barriers to learning. Faculty mentors still meet with students face to face at more than 30 locations across the state, but also are available to reach out and be reached in many other ways. That concept was once considered an aberration, but it should be the norm.

Our alumni are our best ambassadors, not Facebook ads; once people are part of the college — faculty, staff, students, alumni — they are converts. We rise and fall together.

The competition for student dollars is mind-bogglingly fierce out there and we’re going to overcome the profiteers. We’re going to rise to the challenge as a world-class educational opportunity. We’re going to connect with the community, and not just through social media, but through events like art media, because our locations across the state are connective tissue, not silos, and we’re reinvigorating them today. It doesn’t all have to be academic. We’re going...
to articulate clearly to the general public who we are and what we do so that concepts like “prior learning assessment” and “modes of learning” are not foreign, but represent a model people are familiar with, and this will foster growth.

Q: So, it’s not so much changing the educational model as having the model evolve?
A: Yes. The college has been constantly innovative. In the typical paradigm, students graduate from high school, attend a four-year college and get a degree for something they may or may not be able to apply. That’s the old paradigm. But we are not run of the mill and we’re never going to rest on our laurels. What people are realizing is that SUNY Empire State College still will be the new paradigm. We’re the better way, we’re here for disciplined, motivated students who are growing their skills and determined to achieve social mobility by taking advantage of something their parents never had: a public education. Frankly, between the old-paradigm student and our self-motivated student, who maybe has served in the military, works a job or two, doesn’t want to live in a dorm, and may be putting kids to bed at night, or is returning after 37 years away from school because “life got in the way,” my money is on our students every time. We believe in our students, who, in turn, believe that the learning process never stops and act on that belief.

Q: This brings up another issue: student debt. What is going to happen to those who simply can’t afford to attend college or don’t want to face lifelong debt to do so? Are you worried about the people getting left behind or left out?
A: We definitely need to promote the message that tuition for New York state public colleges and universities is among the lowest in the U.S., but there is a problem retaining students because of fear of debt and there are gaps in who current tuition assistance programs cover and for how long. Most of our learners are not full-time students who will graduate in four years, so they are often not eligible for certain kinds of traditional financial aid. One of the ways we are addressing this is with programs like our Black Male Initiative, which has a 96 percent retention rate. BMI offers alumni and peer counseling, intensive mentoring, and a strong sense of community to black males, and, increasingly, others who are most at risk for dropping out of college. We need to replicate that model. Also, SUNY Empire has numerous scholarships available for the unique learners we serve, some based on location or area of study. Last year we distributed about $765,000 in scholarships to our students. And we can share information with our students about grants and loans available from less-known sources, including the government. We need students to know that attending college opens doors. You don’t need a trust fund.

Retention is an issue for another reason: We need to widen the base of who we serve at SUNY Empire State College. You would be hard-pressed to find a place with more diversity, people who come from different socioeconomic groups and who have, or have had, a real variety of careers, lifestyles, and interests. It strengthens the college and our students to have exposure to more cultures and more ways of thinking, making us better-balanced people based on better-balanced experience. I grew up in Ulster County, New York, in a rural community with a broad cross section of ethnicities and economic conditions. It opens your eyes and builds empathy. SUNY Empire can be an agent for social change.

Q: We’ve talked a lot about college being the vehicle for entering and being upwardly mobile in the workforce. Do you still see a place for the liberal arts?
A: Definitely. Absolutely. We’re not autobots. We need good writers and critical thinkers in every field. We need the expressive arts to underpin ideas, so people can think through an issue and not react based on bias. The arts are extremely important. The world needs beauty and creativity and well-rounded individuals. Saying you want to study liberal arts versus, for example, a technical field is a false choice. Musicians need to take math and engineers need to study art. Talking about it as if it’s one or the other closes out ideas.

Q: Given the breadth of SUNY Empire’s academic offerings, its worldwide footprint, and your vision for growth, collaboration, depth of programming, responsiveness to the job market, and prominence in the academic marketplace, it would seem that the sky’s the limit for the college, from your point of view.
A: It’s not even the limit. Enough with the past. SUNY Empire State College provides an affordable, high-quality roadmap to the future. We are the future. There are so many questions about how to get people educated for what’s going to happen next in our society, how we, as a society, are going to thrive in the future. The good thing is SUNY Empire State College has the answers. ■
New Degrees and Certificates Expand Horizons for Learners

By Eric Strattman ’99

The 2018-2019 academic year was a period of growth for SUNY Empire State College, expanding academic offerings to students with New York State Education Department approval of five new degree programs and two advanced certificates.

SCHOOL FOR GRADUATE STUDIES
The School for Graduate Studies has a new Master of Science in Information Technology and advanced certificates in Public Administration and Leadership for Sustainable Development. These new advanced certificates, which will begin enrolling students for the Spring 2020 term, are entirely online programs, like the college’s other advanced certificates. The new M.S. in Information Technology is also an entirely online program, allowing students to choose between two tracks: Cyber Security or Web Technology.

"With the launch of these new academic programs, the School for Graduate Studies continues our tradition of offering programs that meet the needs of New York employers for professionals with skills in high-demand areas, like cyber security and sustainability, and expand access to high-quality academic programs in growing fields to students across New York and the world, regardless of their geography or schedules, through our flexible online delivery," said Dean of the School for Graduate Studies Nathan Gonyea.

SCHOOL FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES
The college’s School for Undergraduate Studies now offers four new Bachelor of Science degrees that work alongside the School for Undergraduate Studies’ more established areas of study. The Bachelor of Science degrees in Business Administration, Human Resource Management, and Management started enrolling students for the Fall 2019 term, while the Bachelor of Science in Addiction Studies will begin enrolling students for the Spring 2020 term.

UNDER DEVELOPMENT
The college has many more degree programs that are in various stages of development, such as a B.A. in Psychology, B.S. in Criminal Justice, and a B.S. in Security Studies, as well as an MAT in Agricultural Education, an M.A. in Leadership for Sustainable Development, an M.A. in Public History, an M.S. in Applied Data Science, and an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and Change, which would be the college’s first doctoral-level program.

Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs Meg Benke said, “While we are excited about these programs in development, it’s important for us to get feedback from our alumni on what emergent fields and credentials are important to our alumni, students, and potential students. That kind of feedback is vital for the college’s future.”

INSPIRE. EMPOWER. SUPPORT.

“Ever since I was a little girl, I dreamed of becoming a teacher, and Empire State College has made that possible. Most people suggest that I started adulthood ‘backwards,’ by starting a family first and then pursuing higher education, but I would not change a moment.”

— Samantha
The Fund for Empire State College scholarship recipient

Visit www.esc.edu/giving, or call 800-847-3000, ext. 2337, to make your gift today to The Fund for Empire State College and inspire, empower, and support students like Samantha.
More than a decade after leaving Empire State College, former President Joe Moore and his wife, Beth Chiquoine, still speak passionately about the college. Moore calls it “education on a human scale,” adding, “that’s what’s pretty special about it.”

Moore came to SUNY Empire as the college’s second president, serving from 2000 to 2007; Chiquoine was director of assessment services. Most of her career in higher education was devoted to adult learners, his on strengthening institutions’ capacity to support a diverse range of engaged learners. They came to value the college’s spirit, appreciate the dedication of faculty and staff, and admire the determination of students.

Hallmarks of Moore’s presidency were significant growth, including the college’s physical footprint, and intensified diversity efforts. He was deliberate in connecting with more than 30 regional locations across New York state, visiting every one during his first year and attending every commencement ceremony. “It was a great way to meet people and understand the mission,” he recalled.

Both professionally and personally, Moore and Chiquoine found interactions with students, alumni, faculty, and staff gratifying. He emphasized, “When you got out of Saratoga Springs, you were visiting people on their turf. Even in tough meetings on big issues, there was always a sense of common purpose.

Now, Moore and Chiquoine are building on their respect and admiration for faculty, staff, students, and alumni by establishing the Joe Moore and Beth Chiquoine Scholarship, annually funding the $2,000 scholarship during their lifetimes and then establishing a $100,000 endowed fund to sustain the scholarship in perpetuity.

“We feel strongly about the college,” Moore said. “Not just about the mission, but the people — students, alumni, and, especially, faculty, and staff and their commitment to students.”

The Joe Moore and Beth Chiquoine Scholarship is available to undergraduate students with an approved degree plan. Chiquoine said that their aim is to “make college a bit more affordable for a few adult learners, so they can earn their degrees and realize some of their often-deferred aspirations.”

Looking beyond the immediate impact of their scholarship, Moore and Chiquoine hope their efforts influence subsequent generations. “The Empire experience taught us that many adult learners are parents,” Moore said, “and when they succeed in higher education, their children grow up in an environment where college becomes a realistic plan, not just a fanciful dream. We have always felt that this is a powerful multi-generational impact of Empire State College.”

Their commitment to this idea was influenced by years of communication with SUNY Empire students. Chiquoine recalled, “We know what the balancing act is, and the importance of it. How many times we heard about students doing homework with their kids and grandkids!”

Since retiring, Moore and Chiquoine have been thinking about “the next stage of life,” including their estate plans. “The fact that both of our careers have been in education leads us to think about our own values and how those values are reflected in the daily work of Empire State College,” Chiquoine said. For that reason, it was important for them to make their financial commitment sustainable after their lifetimes.

“We wanted to do something practical for adult learners, people we’ve really come to admire,” Moore said, “and for an institution that is designed and dedicated to adult learners. Each of these students is different and important, and that’s why Empire State College’s mission must be supported and sustained.”

Joe Moore and Beth Chiquoine:
Leaving a LEGACY

By Stephanie Lamphere

“We wanted to do something practical for adult learners, people we’ve really come to admire.”
Finding Local Solutions in the Opioid Epidemic

Educators, researchers, and community leaders in the Capital Region explored local, evidence-based strategies for addressing the opioid epidemic at a packed-house forum hosted by SUNY Empire State College and the Rockefeller Institute of Government in September.

"It takes all of us working together on this issue," said SUNY Empire President Jim Malatras, who delivered opening remarks. "I'm glad to see so many SUNY Empire students and faculty members in the audience, along with members from local law enforcement, health care, and other areas of the community. They're all finding ways now to really target and combat this crisis."

Patricia Strach, interim executive director of the Rockefeller Institute and lead researcher on the Institute's long-term study of the opioid epidemic, presented a keynote address on the effects of the opioid epidemic in rural communities and how those communities are responding.

"Those working on the front lines say that, more than money, they need policy officials to better understand what they are going through," said Strach. "Despite the 'deaths of despair' headlines in the news, people living in communities affected by opioids are not giving up and neither should we."

Unique Degree in Addiction Studies Meets Urgent Need in New York State for Counseling Professionals

By David Henahan

SUNY Empire State College has launched a first-of-its-kind Bachelor of Science in Addiction Studies program to help address the urgent need for qualified substance-misuse-disorder treatment specialists in New York state and around the nation. Students will be able to complete the unique B.S. in Addiction Studies degree online, face to face, or through an individualized blend to fit the busy lives of working professionals. Enrollment opens in the Spring 2020 term.

Data from the 2016 National Survey on Drug Use and Health revealed a significant gap between the 21 million Americans in need of substance-misuse treatment and the 3.8 million who actually received it.

According to recent estimates by the U.S. Department of Labor, employment in the addictions field is expected to increase by 20 percent over the next 10 years, so the need for professionals with bachelor’s degrees and credentialed alcoholism substance abuse counselor certifications is on the rise.

"This new degree program responds to a dire need for more qualified addiction treatment specialists in our communities," said SUNY Empire State College President Jim Malatras. "In New York state and around the country, people suffering from substance-misuse disorders often struggle to get the resources they need to begin and continue a successful recovery. SUNY Empire’s unique Addiction Studies degree will enable graduates to meet the growing demand for professionals in the field and to study in a way that fits into their lives. I am exceedingly proud of our faculty and staff for rising to this challenge and delivering an educational program that is truly responsive to the needs of our communities."

Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services Commissioner Arlene González-Sánchez said, "As the need for dedicated professionals in the field of addiction grows, SUNY Empire State College’s new trail-blazing program will expand the availability of experts in the field and provide the people affected by addiction with the crucial services they need to succeed in their recovery. We look forward to the benefits that this program will bring to New York state."
Marcy McGinnis ‘09:
Lessons Learned From a Lifetime of News

By Stephanie Lamphere

Marcy McGinnis ‘09 never set out to be an Emmy Award-winning news producer and second in command at CBS News, but she was always in search of excitement.

McGinnis grew up in what she describes as a “perfect” setting: small-town New Jersey on the seashore, walking distance to the beach. One of seven children, her life was full of joy and love, but not much excitement. “It was an idyllic way to grow up,” she remarks. “It was, however, a small town.”

In the late 1960s, “Girls like me aspired to be a secretary, a teacher, or a nurse. That was the way it was,” she recalls. But she wanted more. She decided to attend Marymount College of Virginia, just outside Washington, D.C., where she earned her Associate in Applied Science, “a fancy way of saying ‘secretarial skills’.”

D.C. was a revelation. She thrived on being in the middle of current events from 1968-1970. “It was so exciting: Vietnam protests, the civil rights movement, and partisan politics.”

In March 1970, two months before graduation, she boarded a train to New York City with one plan: to find an interesting and exciting job at a company everyone recognized, in NYC. “Wearing my red, white, and blue mini-dress, resume in hand, with no appointments or contacts, I went looking for a job.” First stop was the United Nations, then ABC. She was offered jobs on the spot, but neither felt right. Then she walked to CBS.

In the lobby, “I saw photographs of famous people and world events and thought, ‘This is where I have to work!’ It met my criteria.”

McGinnis was interviewed by the head of the special events unit, the department that covered national politics and major news events, who was looking for a secretary. She told him, “I will be the best secretary you ever had, because I can type faster and take shorthand faster than anyone and you can rely on me to be here day or night.” She started in June 1970.

It was, she says, “the beginning of this fantastic career, where I learned everything I know about broadcast news by being with people who were doing that work and were kind enough to teach me.”

McGinnis soon realized she could do more. She traveled the world, learning to produce live news events, packaged news stories, and news broadcasts. Always on the lookout for new opportunities, she was promoted to assistant producer, associate producer, then producer. She says, “One of the first lessons I learned was to open my mouth and advocate for myself.” She tells others to “look for opportunities and make the pitch for ‘why you.’ Realize what you’re capable of doing, what skills you have, and make the case that you’re the best person for the job.”

“I’ve told so many people about SUNY Empire and encouraged them to get their degree. It’s so accommodating to your schedule and lifestyle; they just make it easy.”

She attributes much of her success at CBS to a risky move. After 15 years of living out of a suitcase, she learned of an opening in a department that provided video services to CBS affiliates around the country. The new head was looking to grow the department “into the backbone of the CBS news-gathering operation.” He needed a senior producer to help restructure the department. It wasn’t glamorous, didn’t include a raise, and wasn’t an obviously good move for her.

“I asked everybody if I should do it. Everyone told me no,” she laughs. But she accepted the challenge and never regretted it.

Within a few years, McGinnis helped reshape the department, grew the staff from 35 to 150, opened offices around the country, got another promotion, oversaw the creation of a new overnight broadcast, and helped institute satellite newsgathering — a new technology at the time — at CBS News. She credits the move to CBS Newspath as the impetus for her next career jump: deputy bureau chief.
in London to establish NewsPath Europe, a consortium of private broadcasters throughout Europe led by CBS, enabling members to share satellite time, facilities, and personnel. “I learned how to negotiate with high-powered executives in other countries,” she remembers. “It’s now a multi-million-dollar business.”

Three years after arriving in London, she was promoted to VP and London bureau chief, responsible for all newsgathering and news coverage in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. After winning three Emmys for her coverage of the death of Princess Diana, she was promoted to senior VP, news coverage, the No. 2 position in the news division. She held the job for eight years.

After 35 years, McGinnis was approached with a challenge: to create a new journalism school at Stony Brook University, the first and only such school within SUNY. Initially, she declined, not knowing anything about academia, but the founding dean insisted she had the ideal skills for the job of associate dean: experience with TV news and building a newsroom, and technical knowledge of broadcast journalism. She agreed to do it. “It was exciting. Once I was teaching those students and advising them, it just came naturally.”

Eventually, she felt that as an associate dean, she needed a bachelor’s. Her life until then had “just gotten in the way” of obtaining one. A colleague opened her eyes to SUNY Empire, where she enrolled in Historical Studies.

History was a logical choice, she says, “I spent my whole career in news and the more history you know, the better you can cover news. We used to tell people in the newsroom to study history, because it gives you a strong basis for understanding what is happening now. My career had everything to do with covering people and events making history.”

McGinnis thrived. SUNY Empire’s blended in-person and online learning, along with the credit she received for prior learning and life experience, was ideal for her. She encourages others to follow the same path. “I’ve told so many people about SUNY Empire and encouraged them to get their degree. It’s so accommodating to your schedule and lifestyle; they just make it easy.”

She appreciates the role SUNY Empire can play for students like her. She talks about what would have happened if companies “back then,” like many do now, had required a bachelor’s. “I would have been stopped in my tracks.”

After seven years at Stony Brook helping students complete their degrees and start their own careers, she shifted to being a professional career coach. She is eager to share lessons she has learned, especially with other women.

“Every job I got, I raised my hand for. You can’t just sit there and say, ‘I hope they’re going to pick me.’ There are no mind readers, so you have to advocate for yourself — not only when you see an opening, but when you see a problem that you know how to fix. Women often don’t apply for things unless they meet every one of the criteria. If you can’t do a couple of things on the list, it’s okay, you can still convince them you’re the best candidate.”

Now, McGinnis’ schedule is less dictated by the news of the day, but still full. “There’s no part of me that wishes I were going somewhere 9 to 5.” She works as a communications consultant, runs her own career counseling business, and helps mentor students at multiple institutions, including SUNY Empire Associate Professor Sue Epstein’s Women in Management course.

A force of boundless enthusiasm and insight, she shares her talents willingly, never straying far from the mantra that originally brought her to NYC more than 40 years ago seeking work that was “challenging, interesting, and exciting.”

Marcy McGinnis ’09 has had the opportunity to interact with some of the most influential journalists in history, including luminaries like Walter Cronkite (at left) and Dan Rather (above).
Twelve undergraduate SUNY Empire State College science students pitched tents and spent three days last May on beautiful Lake Otsego, near Cooperstown, conducting experiments as part of "Ecology and Earth Systems Field Research," a course for which they earned four advanced-standing credits toward their degree.

Associate Professors Audeliz Matias and Kevin Woo, and Associate Director for Educational Technologies Nathan Whitley-Grassi co-taught the course.

The students, who came from Buffalo, Staten Island, and many towns and cities in between, learned online with faculty, and each other, before and after their onsite research. The course is one example of the many learning opportunities at SUNY Empire that combine online and face-to-face learning.

"I had one of my best collegiate experiences participating in this weekend," said Douglas Scheck, a veteran of the U.S. Air Force. The 52-year-old resident of Henrietta began college in 1989 after separating from the Air Force. Scheck sells cars for a living, and the married father of two said he attended two colleges, but stopped out to focus on his career and family.

"I researched the effectiveness of unmanned aerial vehicles, drones, in the monitoring of ecosystem change," said Scheck. "I learned that a diverse group of people with different interests can come together and accomplish not only their individual goals, but contribute to the goals of the entire group."

He added, "To be able to accomplish a majority of my studies independently, and then spend a long weekend and gain a great amount of experience, was immeasurably important to me and my learning experience."
Scheck has completed nearly all of his requirements to complete his Bachelor of Science in Science, Mathematics, and Technology, with a concentration in civil environmental project management. He said he signed up for the course primarily to gain some more hands-on experience with field methods.

“My research project was a survey of local drinking water within a 20-mile radius of Buffalo,” said Buffalo resident Jennifer Torres. “I collected several samples of water from the area, including tap and open bodies of water, to compare the runoff, and measured heavy-metal toxicity, such as lead and chromium-6.”

Torres, 31, a certified pharmacy technician for the past 10 years and a social worker in community habilitation, said she enrolled out of curiosity, as she is interested in going into the field of forensic anthropology, and to fulfill a science requirement.

Torres added, “SUNY Empire provided a flexible learning environment, where I could study between working hours at home, and even have hands-on lab experiences with the eScience kits most classes provide.”

The ability to complete a Bachelor of Science also was a critical factor for Torres, who said, “Most online schools offer a Bachelor of Arts in Biology. SUNY Empire awards a Bachelor of Science with the vital learning experiences I will need in the future.”

For more information about residencies, visit www.esc.edu/residencies.

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College Reaches Across New York State to Help Public Complete 2020 Census Questionnaires Online

To help ensure an accurate and complete count in the national 2020 census, SUNY Empire State College will open computer labs at the college’s more than 30 locations across New York state to the public.

For the first time, the 2020 census will be conducted online. This change may present significant obstacles for residents with limited internet access or limited experience with digital interfaces.

One of the pillars of American democracy, a complete and accurate count of every resident in New York state, the census will help ensure fair representation in federal government and equitable funding from federal programs, particularly for communities most in need.

“We have the ability and, more importantly, the responsibility, to help ensure our neighbors are counted in this vital constitutional process,” said President Jim Malatras. “Since, for the first time, the census will largely be completed online, we’ll be opening computer labs in all our locations throughout the state to help our neighbors fill out the census. With locations across New York, faculty and staff with strong community connections, and a great deal of digital know-how, SUNY Empire State College is uniquely positioned to help make this census as successful as possible.”

New York Secretary of State Rossana Rosado said, “The New York State Complete Count Commission has toured New York state to hear directly from hard-to-count populations on the challenges they face in participating in the 2020 census. A common refrain has been access to broadband internet and technology. SUNY Empire State College’s commitment to making computer labs available to the public across New York is a critical step in getting to a full count of all New Yorkers in the 2020 census.

I applaud President Malatras and the entire SUNY Empire State College team for opening their doors to help all New Yorkers participate in this vitally important process for our state and our nation.”

“Participation in the 2020 census is one of our most important civic responsibilities,” said Associate Professor Anastasia Pratt, chair of the Empire State College Senate. “By opening our computer labs and offering help to our neighbors, we will make a real difference in our world. Community service is a cornerstone of the college’s mission, and I look forward to volunteering in my own region to help my neighbors step forward and be counted in the 2020 census.”

The census fulfills a constitutional requirement to count every resident in the United States every 10 years. It forms the basis for reapportioning congressional seats, redistricting, and the distribution of federal funds to support housing, education, transportation, employment, health care, and other vital services.
Natural Langdon ’18 wanted to tell a story, but he wasn’t sure how. The epiphany hit him in a speech class in the early ’90s, when a professor put a camera in his hands and urged him to make a documentary. Roused by the prospect, Langdon tackled a tough subject: campus drinking at Benedict College in South Carolina, where he was a student. Audience response was positive and the creative experience was exhilarating, so Langdon dropped out of school to become a filmmaker, co-founded a production company — Openmindz — and spent the following two decades immersed in the business and pleasure of photographing and filming around the world before enrolling at SUNY Empire State College, where he earned a degree in film production.

Today, Langdon’s portfolio includes images and video from Cuba, Haiti, Brazil, Morocco, and Ghana, among other places. Most portray indigenous people in brightly hued native dress or otherwise adorned with tattoos, jewelry, paint, and other artifacts. Some are clearly posed for the camera, others are candids, but all convey some level of intimacy with the...
observer on the other end of the lens who brings the perspective of a visitor: just enough distance to capture the differences, just enough closeness to convey the connection.

"We can see on the surface what seems foreign to us," Langdon says. "But if you look closely and pay attention, you will begin to see how we are the same. We all face daily struggles, we all experience happiness. You can share, and that's how we learn about other cultures, about each other, and about ourselves."

Morocco was Langdon's first destination as an artist abroad. "I was in shock at the despair and poverty I saw," he recalls. "People had nothing, no electricity, yet they were connecting with each other and they connected with me. I was invited into people's homes. I was a traveler, but I was welcome."

He was not deterred from his quest to document conditions around the globe by the distress he witnessed, but inspired to further explore. "It started me on the lifelong process of becoming a filmmaker," he says. "I came from Brownsville, Brooklyn. Filmmakers didn't look like me, there weren't too many who were black, especially in the mainstream media 20 years ago. But I had blind ambition and I spent a lot of time in the library, as well as with the cameras. Finding funding for my projects was another issue entirely. I began to teach youngsters in many countries about filmmaking and photography and working with kids with issues here in the U.S. — drug addiction, homelessness, and more. I love showing the kids how to use cameras of all kinds. It's very satisfying to watch them learn and become excited and to help them realize their talent. We all find it therapeutic. I believe in the adage 'each one, teach one'."

He's also campaigned for resources via GoFundMe. For example, he wanted to bring cameras to young people in Ethiopia and, he says, "I wracked my brain about how to pay for it, and people came through. I've also taken out loans, sold t-shirts, whatever it takes, but I keep going. I get creative and I make sacrifices."

One project was shooting a short film about a female martial artist in Brazil with actors who spoke only Portuguese; he later hired an interpreter to translate it into English. "It would have been too expensive to make in the United States and too hard to find a person right for the role, which I knew was possible in Brazil," he explains. "I know it was crazy, but I'm glad I made the choice to do it. I challenge myself. Where there's a will there's a way and, somehow, things come together. I really believe that." He also produced a book based on his experiences in Brazil. His next project will be to document aspects of life in India.

Langdon explains that his international travels have enlightened him about everything from religious rituals to food customs, as well as both global suffering and joys that drive disposition and behavior, deepening his understanding of two subjects that fascinate him: history and philosophy. "What amazes me is that people in dire circumstances still find a way to feel gratitude for what they do have and realize that the more you share, the more that comes back to fill you." He has learned to recognize his own blessings from people he has encountered around the world, he says.

As seductive and compelling as Langdon found his work, something was missing: a college degree. "I wanted to complete it for many reasons, not the least of which is that..."
Selected Awards and Honors

• 2019: Langdon’s film “Nikita” was named Best International Short at the Newark Film Festival and selected to be screened at the prestigious Silicon Valley African Film Festival. Produced in Brazil with no budget when, Langdon says, “the odds were against us,” he managed to achieve filming and production of this award-winning documentary.

• 2016: Langdon published “Exploring the African Diaspora vol. 1 Salvador, Bahia, Brazil,” a book exploring Afro-Brazilian history and culture.

• 2015: Langdon published “Black Like Me,” a collection of photographs depicting the reflections of black people from all walks of life, crossing social and economic boundaries.

• 2014: Through a partnership with the Africa Channel, Langdon produced “From Brooklyn to Ghana,” a documentary chronicling the cultural differences and similarities of urban areas in New York and Ghana.

• 2012: Langdon received a Movie, Video and Screen Award for “Bullets Over Brownsville,” an urban drama focused on the lives of four individuals from Brownsville, Brooklyn — one of New York’s most notoriously dangerous neighborhoods.

I had started it and didn’t like that I hadn’t gone to the end. But, also, I did it for my family. My mother had sacrificed so much to send me to college and I wanted her to see me cross the stage, and I did it for my children, so they would see me as a role model and respect it and want the same thing.” Langdon would become the first in his family to graduate from college.

He heard about SUNY Empire from a professor at the college he knew in another context and realized it was the perfect learning environment for him, especially the small groups and face-to-face mentoring available at the Manhattan location. “I didn’t think I actually needed college to be a filmmaker, but what I did need is the community support and mentoring,” he says. “It took courage and self-confidence to go back to school. Courage isn’t lack of fear — I was plenty nervous — it’s getting something done despite the fear.”

A pillar of his success at SUNY Empire was his involvement with the Black Male Initiative, a group of students within a population at risk for stopping out or dropping out of college. Members, including peers and alumni, counsel each other, providing support, resources, and information about everything from study skills and juggling coursework with work responsibilities, to how to find child care or housing. The results have been extraordinary, with a reduction in attrition and a higher rate of graduation among African-American males than ever before. He also benefited from guidance from Professor David Fullard, who helped establish and is the faculty advisor to BMI, and Chief Diversity Officer for Institutional Equity and Inclusion Elliott Dawes, both of whom he still turns to for advice and feedback.

Now, Langdon volunteers to counsel BMI participants currently enrolled at SUNY Empire State College, hoping to encourage and inspire them to continue their studies. He notes, “I am trying to give people the same kind of information that made a difference to me, helping to mentor and still being mentored myself.”

His further involvement with the college has been wide-ranging — including screening his music videos about the African diaspora — at BMI-hosted events for members of the college community, as well as sharing his experiences as a photographer and filmmaker and attending other events, where he can listen and learn as a guest. Additionally, since graduating from SUNY Empire, Langdon has earned a master’s in Film Production at the School of the Visual Arts in Manhattan. Ultimately, he would like to continue being an entrepreneur, create his art, and teach at the college level, working with young people.

He says, “Networking is very important. You invest in other people and you invest in yourself. You take personal responsibility for making something happen by believing in each other. It takes work, time, and prayer.”

He even considers criticism part of the blessing. “It’s good to get other people’s perspectives on your art, as long as you understand that you can’t please everybody. You can get insights from an honest critique. In fact, I hope I am teaching my students who feel misunderstood to break away from their ego and let other people have their opinions and move forward. Taking criticism is the price you pay for being an artist.”

His message as an artist, a traveler, and a student: “Go outside your comfort zone. Sometimes there are victories and sometimes there are setbacks. You learn more from the setbacks than from the victories. You move on. Don’t be afraid. You have to get involved, you have to thank people. Sometimes it feels lonely and the journey is difficult, but with community support, you can get the mission done. When you find people who connect with your vision, it’s a blessing.”
**The Rainbow Syndrome**  
*by Frank S. Farello ’00*

Frank Farello has published four books. His first began with his master’s thesis for his M.A. at the college. The third book, “The Rainbow Syndrome,” is a sci-fi thriller. The age of rockets is ending, and NASA is desperately pinning all its hopes for the future of space exploration on the space elevator. However, the production process begins with an experiment that results not only in consequences for the planet, but also for a small group of people linked by a common catastrophic event. Their search for answers uncovers an elaborate scheme that threatens to shut down NASA for good and powerfully impact the human race for generations to come.

**Not Just Words: How a Good Apology Makes You Braver, Bolder, and Better at Life**  
*by Donna Moriarty ’96*

This book shows readers how to improve their relationships by learning how to deliver a good apology and why it’s important. With case studies and anecdotes, the book demonstrates how sincere and thoughtful apologies can transform stuck or damaged relationships, restore confidence, and solve a host of problems that can arise out of human interactions, whether at work, in families, in intimate relationships, with friends and roommates, or with strangers. Drawing from spiritual, sociological, and psychological principles, the author illustrates how communicating regret and remorse has played an important role in cultures all over the world and throughout history.

**Love Is Better**  
*by Lucas Garrett ’18*

Garrett released his second CD, “Love Is Better,” this past year. A Times Union article says, “He sings songs of life and its imponderables. Guitar in hand and bandmates at his side, he churns out smart, catchy rock tunes that growl in some places, jangle in others.” Garrett was diagnosed at the age of five months with Pompe disease, which requires biweekly infusions of glycogen. Though his muscles are weak, he does not want to be defined by this disease, rather he wants his music to consume him. He plays often in the Glens Falls/Queensbury area. Information about his shows is at www.lucasgarettmusician.com.

**The Sons of the Fathers**  
*by Michael Coyle ’95*

Coyle has published his second book, “The Sons of the Fathers,” about murder and mystery. Amid political strife between England and the Irish people, Blathers and Duff, private investigators, introduce their sons in three related tales. These second-generation detectives each has his own story, but eventually end up working together to try to keep peace in Ireland. This follows the first book, “Tales of the Black Lion,” where Blathers and Duff first appeared.

**The Struggle is Eternal**  
*by Joseph R. Fitzgerald ’02*

Joseph Fitzgerald’s “The Struggle Is Eternal” is the first book to fully examine the Cambridge movement and its leader, Gloria Richardson. He makes his literary debut with this thoroughly researched biography, admiring and celebrating one woman’s important contribution to an ongoing struggle. Richardson evolved into a civil rights leader who authorities considered almost as dangerous as Martin Luther King Jr. She remains engaged in the struggle for social justice to this day. Fitzgerald is an assistant professor of history and political science at Cabrini University. His areas of focus include critical race feminism and the civil rights and black power waves of the modern black liberation movement.

**Taking Baghdad: Victory in Iraq with the U.S. Marines**  
*by Aaron M. Grant ’12*

This is the only history of Operation Iraqi Freedom written by a Marine who served in the war. The 22-day push to Baghdad in 2003 was one of the most efficient conflicts in the annals of warfare. “Taking Baghdad” is a dynamic account of the real struggles of war, a historical memoir with context to help readers understand tactics. Grant illuminates success in Iraq for those who see Iraq for what it became afterward: a war in which America lost heart. “Taking Baghdad” will help veterans and anyone who fights PTSD. The book reaches out so “that a life might be saved.”

**FAST FACT:**

More than 1,300 MILITARY STUDENTS ARE ENROLLED at SUNY Empire, including active-duty, veteran, Reserve, Guard, spouses, and dependents.
Mary Austin is the new director of the broadcast on radio station 106.3 WNBZ.

Plattsburgh Mentor Kate Dermody’s Upward Bound “History of Queen” class was broadcast on radio station 106.3 WBZ.

Mary Austin is the new director of the Student Information Center. She had served as interim director since December 2018. Austin was staff supervisor in admissions from 2015-2018.


Director of Educational and Emerging Technologies Joshua Gaul published an editorial in CIO Applications titled “Advancing eLearning by Leveraging mLearning.”

Nathan Gonyea was named dean of the School for Graduate Studies after serving as interim dean and, prior to that, associate dean. He has responsibility for administration of the college’s graduate programs, working closely with academic administration, deans, associate deans, staff, and faculty to develop and implement a shared vision for the School for Graduate Studies. Gonyea received the Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2013 as an associate professor at SUNY College at Oneonta.

McKenzie Dunphy joined the Office of Student Life as coordinator of the Health and Wellness Initiative. She oversees events, resources, and services available to students.

Kyle Adams is the new assistant vice president for communications and marketing, in charge of all messaging at the college. In the past, he oversaw communications at the SUNY Rockefeller Institute of Government and previously worked in communications at SUNY Cobleskill and SUNY Delhi. He is a former Peace Corps volunteer.

Aaron Gladd is the college’s new chief of staff. In the past, he was New York state director of the Northeast Charter Schools Network, deputy director of policy in the office of Gov. Andrew Cuomo, legislative director in the office of the state Senate’s deputy majority leader, and a congressional assistant for Capital District-area Congressman Michael McNulty. Gladd served four years as a platoon leader in the U.S. Army, including a combat tour to Eastern Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

PhD candidate Joanne Levine’s “Third-Age Students,” appeared in the research, “How Colleges Can Meet the Needs of Third-Age Students,” appeared in the college journal All About Mentoring.

College Professor of Adult Learning and Mentoring Alan Mandell delivered remarks titled “And Then We Were There and Now Where? Some Reflections on Changes in the Academy” at the Rochester Area Colleges Continuing Education meeting.

Mary Mawn was named associate dean, Division of Science, Mathematics, and Technology. She has been at the college since 2007 and was an associate professor and an online curriculum coordinator in the Division of Science, Mathematics, and Technology. Prior to that, she was assistant professor and academic area coordinator in the former Center for Distance Learning.

Tanweer Ali, a mentor with International Education, co-edited a new book, “Discourse Analysis and Austerity,” which explores the language behind austerity. He says that in the immediate aftermath of the global financial crisis of 2008, governments around the developed world coordinated policy moves to stimulate economic activity and avert a depression. In subsequent years, however, cuts to public expenditure, or austerity, have become the dominant narrative in public debate on economic policy.

Joanne Levine’s “Third-Age Students,” appeared in the research, “How Colleges Can Meet the Needs of Third-Age Students,” appeared in the college journal All About Mentoring.

Gal, who received $30,000 for her proposal
“The Open Home Project,” and Instructional Designer Allison Moreland, who received $9,500 for her proposal “Changing Attitudes for Online Learning: A Gamified Approach to Preparing Students to Learn Online.”

Lynne Dodson is the new associate dean at The Harry Van Arsdale Jr. School of Labor Studies. She is a long-time labor leader and activist, educator, and advocate for worker rights and social, racial, and economic justice. From 2012-2019, she served as secretary-treasurer of the Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, as the first woman elected to one of two executive officer positions. She spent 10 years as the faculty union president for the American Federation of Teachers, Seattle Community Colleges, Local 1789.

Heather Reynolds, associate professor of Teacher Education, published a commentary in Teachers College Record titled “Reflections of a Board of Education Member in a Time of Politicization and Intolerance” on her personal experience on the Saratoga Springs School Board.


Mentor Jennifer Spitz earned a DSW in Clinical Social Work from the NYU Silver School of Social Work. Her capstone project was on “Missing persons: Social work education in the digital age.”


Members of the Center for Mentoring, Learning and Innovation staff, including Shanthi Clemans, Alan Mandell, Karen LaBarge, Linda Lawrence, and Renata Kochut, attended the SUNY Faculty Development Conference themed “Answering the Chancellor’s Call for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Individualized Education, Sustainability, and Partnerships.”

Associate Professor of Health Care Management Barry Eisenberg authored an article for The New York Times about caring in his home for his Aunt Doris, who died at 106.

Professor A. Thomas Grunfeld commented in a Voice of America discussion on the possibility of two Dalai Lamas.

Shaun Richman, program director at The Harry Van Arsdale Jr. School of Labor Studies, co-authored an article in The American Prospect titled “This May Day, It’s Time to Cut Work Down to Size.”

Associate Professor and Mentor Sandra Winn was named faculty associate for outcomes assessment. Winn is working on the college’s ongoing efforts for continuous academic improvement.

Kim Stote, associate dean for health professions at SUNY Empire State College’s School of Nursing and Allied Health, joined Harvard University Medical School’s one-year Global Clinical Scholars Research Training Program in its 2020 cohort of clinicians and scientists.

Tracy Galuski and Arlene Rider ‘99, faculty in Educational Studies, attended the NYS Association for the Education of Young Children annual conference, where they co-presented a workshop titled “School Age Care: Challenges and Solutions,” based on their co-authored book.

Associate Professor of Management Sewon Kim was reappointed as an associate editor for the Human Resource Development Quarterly journal.

Associate Professor Jason Russell ’02, author of “Making Managers in Canada, 1945-1995: Companies, Community Colleges, and Universities,” was cited in Checkered History, commenting on remarks by New York State Sen. Chuck Schumer. Checkered History is published to give historical context to and start conversations about politics.

David Starr-Glass, a mentor with International Education (Prague), contributed a chapter to “Management Science: Foundations and Innovations.”

Assistant Professor Jenny Mincin spoke in a webinar on “Working with Asylum-Seekers and Refugees: A journey through the intersection of social and legal services.”

Richard Savior, assistant professor of Business, Management, and Economics, presented at the Innovation Arabia Conference in Dubai on a panel that discussed the future of higher education in the Middle East/North Africa region.

Long Island Mentor Donna Gaines was honored by Artists in Partnership Inc. at the third annual Women in the Arts award ceremony for creative contributions to her community, Nassau County.

Master of Arts in Adult Learning Mentor Dianne Ramdeholl spoke on a panel on anti-racist teaching in adult education at Teachers College, Columbia University. She focused on navigating higher education as a woman of color and strategies to unpack issues of race with students, which came from her chapter in the book “Teaching Race.”

Executive Vice President for Administration Joseph Garcia published his fourth book, “When the Cap Falls: Ten principles for a college graduate to launch a career.”

Mentor Michele Forte was accepted into the New York State Student Success Center Coaching Academy led by SUNY. She will work to enhance student success and completion.

Associate Professor in Accounting, Finance, Economics, and Management Information Systems Victoria Vernon was accepted as a SUNY teaching partner for the SUNY-Venezuela Higher Education Engagement Initiative.

Gertrude B. Hutchinson, in the School of Nursing and Allied Health, was recognized by the Professional Organization of Woman of Excellence for outstanding achievements in nursing and education.

Susan McConnaughy ’77, a mentor in Community and Human Services, was a Fulbright Scholar during fall 2019 at Dalat University in the central highlands of Vietnam, where she taught “Social Work in School Settings,” a new area of practice in Vietnam.

Mentors Deborah Amory and Nadine Fernandez both received SUNY OER grant funding for the 2019-2020 OER Creation Project. Amory’s funded project is “Introduction to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) OER textbook.” Fernandez’s funded project is “Global Genders and Sexuality OER textbook.”

Associate Professor Sue Epstein was named faculty associate/director of corporate and community partnerships to expand partnership development in academic and corporate environments.

The Office of Alumni and Student Relations received two awards for Excellence in Event Planning and was recognized at the annual conference of the SUNY Council for University Advancement.
New Archivist Anastasia Pratt Invites SUNY Empire Community to Contribute to Archives as College Approaches 50th Anniversary

To the College Community:

That SUNY Empire has a long history of serving adult and distance learners is no surprise. Our mission and commitments emphasize our desire, as individuals and as an institution, to reach students where they are and to offer unique learning experiences that serve our students well. That we maintain an archive dedicated to preserving that history is less well known.

My April 1 appointment as archivist for the college has allowed us to begin to make our archival materials more accessible and more visible to SUNY Empire’s students, alumni, faculty, and staff, as well as more visible to the external world. Building on the work of Dr. Richard Bonnabeau, who was appointed college historian and archivist in 1989, I plan to digitize the college’s archives, publishing the materials on a college-approved platform to make them searchable.

I do not plan to do the work alone. I will work with Dr. Bonnabeau and with Professor of Adult Learning and Mentoring Alan Mandell, as well as with students in the Advanced Certificate in Public History and Heritage Preservation programs. Together, we will digitally preserve the thousands of documents related to SUNY Empire’s first 40-plus years and set the stage for ongoing preservation and digitization work.

Directly tied to our mission, this preservation and access is essential as we move forward toward our 50th anniversary. Not only will we be able to use the documents maintained in our physical archive to explain who we are to external audiences, but we will provide digital access to source materials that will prove invaluable to our students, especially those pursuing degrees in Adult Education and Public History.

I am grateful for this chance to serve SUNY Empire and even more grateful for the work Richard Bonnabeau did to create and maintain our physical archive for the last 30 years. Richard’s history of SUNY Empire, “The Promise Continues, Empire State College, the First Twenty-Five Years,” (Donning, 1996), is the go-to source for institutional history, and the archives he created are a treasure trove of photographs, interview transcripts, letters, essays, and reports. We are fortunate for the work he has done in creating the archives. I hope that my work will continue in the same vein.

As work proceeds, I would love to hear from alumni. If you have thoughts on what should be saved, would like to help with digitization, or would like to donate materials, please contact me directly at Anastasia.Pratt@esc.edu.

Sincerely,

Anastasia Pratt, assistant professor and mentor, Historical Studies

“There were initial feasibility forays conducted by the Genesee Valley Regional Learning Center, established in early 1972, in Buffalo, Syracuse, and elsewhere, a pattern that we see throughout the state. The college benefited from the excitement initially created by Rockefeller Foundation and Carnegie Corporation funding. Other institutions, supporting innovative grant proposals, followed in their wake. These early explorations supported the creation of centers and satellites. Essentially, determinations were made about potential beneficial institutional connections, public and private, and the long-term viability of establishing funding. Other institutions, supporting innovative grant proposals, followed in their wake. These early explorations supported the creation of centers and satellites. Essentially, determinations were made about potential beneficial institutional connections, public and private, and the long-term viability of establishing a productive presence of value to students and the communities — however defined — which we served. This institutional ethos continues today.”

— Dr. Richard Bonnabeau, former archivist and author of “The Promise Continues.”

GREAT MINDS COME TOGETHER

SUNY Empire Welcomes the Rockefeller Institute of Government

SUNY Empire State College has assumed oversight of the Rockefeller Institute of Government. SUNY’s public policy research arm that conducts cutting-edge, nonpartisan research and analysis on pressing issues to inform better policymaking.

The Institute, located in Albany, has most recently been producing influential research on education policy, the opioid epidemic, the fiscal balance between states and the federal government, higher education reform, artificial intelligence and the future of work in New York, gun-related violence, the upcoming 2020 census, and other emerging public policy topics.

Under SUNY Empire, the Institute will be able to work closely with the college’s faculty, staff, and students to draw on the skills and knowledge of the college community, introduce new real-world learning opportunities, and provide a powerful platform for new research.

Together, SUNY Empire and the Rockefeller Institute hosted a forum in September to focus on identifying solutions to the opioid epidemic. The forum built on the announcement of the college’s first-of-its-kind B.S. in Addiction Studies and the Institute’s long-term, ongoing study of the opioid crisis in rural New York communities, bringing experts together with community stakeholders to advance the conversation. (See page 5.)

Explore all of the Institute’s research at rockinst.org.
GOVERNOR APPOINTS NEW MEMBERS TO COLLEGE COUNCIL

Gov. Andrew Cuomo has appointed six new members to the SUNY Empire State College Council.

Newly appointed to the council are:

- **Arlene González-Sánchez**
  Commissioner of the New York State Department of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services

- **John Maggiore**
  Senior advisor to Gov. Andrew Cuomo

- **Sheila Poole**
  Acting commissioner of the New York State Office of Children and Family Services

- **Roberta Reardon**
  Commissioner of the New York State Department of Labor

- **Molly Reilly**
  Assistant secretary for Upstate Intergovernmental Affairs in the office of Gov. Andrew Cuomo

- **Mark Schroeder ’82**
  Commissioner of the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles

Maggiore, Poole, and González-Sánchez will fill long-standing vacancies on the council. Reilly will fill the position that Linda Weiss has served in since 2006, which expired in 2013. Schroeder will move into Daniel Wall’s seat on the council, in which he has served since 2004, and which expired in 2011, and Reardon will fill the term Anthony Esposito has served in since 2000, which also expired in 2011.

Council terms are dictated by state Education Law as lasting for seven years.

“I’d like to thank Linda Weiss, Daniel Wall, and Anthony Esposito for their many years of dedicated service to SUNY Empire State College,” said Jim Malatras, president of SUNY Empire. “They saw the college through many transitions with a steady eye on the core mission of providing a responsive, high-quality education for every student. I have every confidence that our new council members will bring the same level of commitment and passion for higher education and the unique mission of SUNY Empire.”

“We are very pleased that Governor Cuomo has filled the vacancies on our College Council with such outstanding appointments, and we look forward to working with them to continue to advance SUNY Empire State College’s extraordinary mission,” said College Council Chairman James Lytle. “We owe to our departing members — Tony Esposito, Dan Wall, and Linda Weiss — our heartfelt thanks for their exceptional service to the College Council. Each of these committed champions for the college continued to serve well beyond the expiration of their terms, and each devoted far more of their time and talent to the council than any of us could have reasonably anticipated.”

Continuing as members of the College Council are Chairman James Lytle, managing partner of Manatt, Phelps and Phillips of Albany; Patricia Salkin, provost of Touro College’s graduate and professional divisions; Donna Luh, owner of a consulting business in Western New York; and Colleen W. Hay, Livonia town clerk and student representative to the council.
“I was surrounded by other 2019 graduates who were mothers, fathers, sisters, and brothers of all ages, filled with incredible stories that boiled down to perseverance and commitment, regardless of age or what life threw at them. I was so fortunate to be one of them. I felt as if that exact moment I was crossing the stage as they announced, ‘Jessica Peck, United States Air National Guard,’ I was exactly where I was meant to be all along.”

— Jessica Peck ’19, U.S. Air National Guard, at commencement

**CORTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE.**

**CENTRAL NEW YORK REGION**

Mark Bordeau ’18, senior food service director at Broome Tioga BOCES, has been selected as the 2019 recipient of the Leadership and Support Award by the School Administrators Association of New York State. The award recognizes outstanding leadership efforts.

Diana Cassulis ’18 is the new events coordinator at the Hamilton Public Library in Utica.

Robert Cree ’95 has been named chief financial officer at Clarkson University. He also will take on the role of treasurer for the board of trustees.

Gabrielle DiDomenico ’19, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Farmers Market Promotion Program coordinator for Seven Valleys, is creating and distributing a guide to local food and farms in the Cortland County area.

**DEHYTH WORKERS DEVELOPMENT AT TOMPKNSS**

Carrie Coates Whitmore ’10 has been named instructor at Onondaga Community College. was named the Syracuse area’s 2019 Chef of the Year by the Syracuse chapter of the American Culinary Foundation.

Deedy Williams ’10 is the new director of media sales for WCNY, Central New York’s public broadcaster.

**GENESEE VALLEY REGION**

Geena Cruz ’18 has been selected as a United States of Women ambassador representing Rochester.

Current student Nicole Helmer, who works for Child Protective Services and is coordinator of the domestic violence response team, was presented an award by Allegany County for her help in preserving rights for victims. Helmer is studying Community and Human Services. She lives in Wellsville and is a fire department volunteer.

Willie Lightfoot ’06 is the new vice president of the Rochester City Council. He previously served three terms in the Monroe County Legislature.

Emma McIlwaine, a current student of Business, Management, and Economics, is now an administrative assistant for operations and human resources at EFPR Group.

Jeanette Metzger ’18 was hired as a project manager at SMP Corp. She worked as a lead system engineer at the University of Rochester.

Kelley Monson ’14 was promoted to senior vice president and chief information officer at Finger Lakes Federal Credit Union.

Kate Shanks-Booth ’15, ’16 was confirmed as Tompkins County’s director of youth services.

Dean Smith ’13 was named 2019 Fire Safety Educator of the Year by the Fireman’s Association of the State of New York.

Tim VanDerLike ’18 was promoted to assistant vice president of risk management at Finger Lakes Federal Credit Union.

**HUDSON VALLEY REGION**

Paola Aguilar, a current student of Business, Management, and Economics, was named mortgage loan officer at Hudson Valley Federal Credit Union.

Beverly Braxton ’83, a retired teacher from Warwick, was featured locally for starting Family Central, a parenting support network.

Lori Fellmer ’14, vice president of logistics and carrier management with Bass Tech International, was featured in Inbound Logistics magazine.

Obed Figueroa ’97 is the director of recruitment and admissions at the Martin Luther School. He also is a widely published educational columnist.

Jerome John ’12 was appointed Ulster County’s superintendent of corrections. He is a retired state police investigator.

Rebecca Preussner ’12, of Stuyvesant, was appointed assistant director of workforce development at Columbia-Greene Community College.

Vera Longtoee Sheehan ’16, ’17, a member of the Abenaki Tribe of Vermont, was the keynote speaker at the SUNY Empire State College virtual residency. Her topic was “Tribal Traditional Governance and Sovereignty.”

Marge Tobiassen ’17 was promoted to the position of assistant vice president, IT application support officer, at the Bank of Greene County.

**LONG ISLAND REGION**

Karen Knight ’06 retired last spring after nearly 25 years of service with SUNY Stony Brook Medicine.

Robyn McGee ’15, ’17 was inducted into the SUNY Stony Brook Phi Theta Chapter of the Phi Alpha Honor Society, a national organization recognizing social work students with a 4.0 GPA. She received the SUNY Chancellor’s Award in 2017.
Donna McNaughton ’90 was appointed to the Glen Cove City Council. McNaughton has a private law practice in Locust Valley.

Jeri Milan ’13, a J.D. candidate at the City University of New York School of Law, received the 2019 Law Student LARK Scholarship for her article “A Constitutional Argument for an Independent Immigration Court.”

Jo-Anne Taormina ’00 was appointed personnel officer for the Suffolk County Department of Social Services.

**METROPOLITAN REGION**

Christopher Bowman ’18 was accepted into Columbia University’s Master in Social Work program. Bowman was a 2018 recipient of the SUNY Chancellor’s Award for Student Excellence.

Charlie Dazzo ’02 coached his Staten Island Green Technology Club to a second-place finish in a nationwide competition featuring a solar car.

Sofia Dimitrova ’06 released her first solo album, “Return,” with original music and lyrics. It was recorded in her hometown of Varna, Bulgaria.

Lindsay Glover ’99 is a member of the National Society of Leadership and Success, the nation’s largest leadership honor society.

Ebony Miranda ’13 was appointed assistant vice president and branch manager at Apple Bank’s branch office in Harlem.

Miki Orihara ’12 danced Martha Graham’s “Lamentation” in a solo concert.

Zazel-Chavah O’Garra ’02 founded and directs ZCO/DANCEPROJECT, a dance company comprised of “dancers beyond disability.” She taught a workshop for the spinal injury rehabilitation program at Mount Sinai Hospital.

Current student Suzanne Perez, who is pursuing a B.S. in Business, Management, and Economics, received an award at the 62nd Annual New York Emmy Awards in May 2019 for her work in the Craft Specialty Makeup category.

Niomi Plotkin ’94 is the new principal at Dimitrios and Georgia Kaloidis Parochial School.

Harry Powell, a current student, had six of his paintings on display at the Western Union Building in New York City.

Ennis Smith ’04 published a piece called “Becoming an Actor Taught Me to Write” in Electric Literature.

Matthew Tratner ’07 is the Gemological Institute of America’s new global director of business development. He brings with him 15 years of experience in sales.

**NIAGARA FRONTIER REGION**

Rosanne Braxton ’13 was included in “Who’s Who in Banking and Finance” for Buffalo Business First. She is president of Level Financial Advisors.

Christa Caldwell ’74 received the Distinguished Service Award from The Boy Scouts of America, Iroquois Trail Council.

Rev. Tara Lamont Eastman ’04, ’08 received the Zonta Club of Jamestown Women in Leadership Award for 2019.

Tianna Marks ’16 became the youngest and first African-American female clerk for the city of Buffalo. She is an M.A. student.

Current student Emily Perryman was named associate vice president of marketing and communications at Daemen College. She will complete a Master of Social and Public Policy this year.

David Rogers ’79 retired a few years ago after a 30-plus-year career as an engineer.

Current student Rob Sciarrino Jr. has been named DFT Communications’ new vice president of network.

Jeffrey Stevens ’19, of Wellsville, is the new dean of the School of Applied Technology at Alfred State College.

**NORTHEAST REGION**

Guy Apicella ’92 received the 2019 Positive Image Award from Columbia County Sons and Daughters of Italy. The award recognizes Italian-Americans who make a positive contribution to society.

Justin Bourgeois ’12 completed a dual graduate degree program at Albany Medical College, earning a Ph.D. in Neuroscience and a Master of Science in Biomedical Ethics.

Maurice Catel IV ’13, a Wynantskill resident and veteran of the Iraq war, was promoted to captain in the New York Army National Guard.

Jamie Chupka ’06 is a primary therapist at 7 Summit Pathways.

Dawn Judkins ’17 and Lynne Jones ’14 showcased their work at the college in an exhibit in Saratoga Springs called "A Study of Color: Old Masters to Contemporary Art."

Brenda Leitt ’12 was appointed 4th Ward councilwoman for the Town of Gloversville.

John Locke ’04 successfully defended his doctoral dissertation at Union Institute and University in Cincinnati. He created a 400-page illustrated historical novel.

Jennifer Stickles ’06 is the new manager at the Salamanca Public Library. Previously, she worked at the Olean Public Library.

Dawn Wells-Clyburn ’10 was promoted to deputy director of administration for People United for Sustainable Housing (PUSH) Buffalo.

Mark Schroeder ’82 is the new commissioner of the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles. Prior to this, he was Buffalo city comptroller and previously served in the New York State Assembly and Erie County Legislature.
Sara Luck ’02, Fulton County drug court coordinator, received the Liberty Bell Award from the Fulton County Bar Association. Between 1998 and 2000, she worked for Catholic Charities, while attending SUNY Empire.

Pat Myers ’89 has been named assistant dean for external academic affairs at Hudson Valley Community College.

Jennifer Pettis ’12, ’17, who received a B.S. in Community and Human Services and an M.S. in Nursing, has been named an Alzheimer’s Ambassador to Sen. Chuck Schumer. Pettis, an expert on aging and health care, is associate director of the long-term care program at Nurses Improving Care for Healthsystem Elders at NYU Rory Meyers College of Nursing.

Brianna Phillips ’17 joined Shelters of Saratoga as community outreach coordinator. Phillips has a B.S. in Human Services from SUNY Empire.

Jacqueline Waite ’15 was appointed director of the Citizen’s Committee for Greenwich Youth Center after 15 years with the Washington County Department of Social Services.

Sheila Wood ’00 is the new executive director of SAFE Inc. in Schenectady, an emergency shelter for homeless youth.

**INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION**

SUNY Empire students competed successfully at the CFA Research Challenge in Prague. Team members included Monika Vidičková, Elena Ragozina, Kiko Sugita and Filiberto Cotrér. They took part in writing an investment report on a publicly listed company and presented their findings. The competition is run by the Virginia-based CFA Institute, whose mission is “to lead the investment profession globally by promoting the highest standards of ethics, education, and professional excellence for the ultimate benefit of society.”

**NATIONAL LABOR COLLEGE**

Kelley Allen ’15, union president for the Office and Professional Employees International Union Local 251, received her Master’s in Professional Studies in Human Resource Management at Pennsylvania State University.

Michelle McCord ’03 retired from Services Employees International Union Local 68 public employees division after 22 years. She continues to be actively involved with social justice.

Vicki O’Leary ’08 earned Engineering News-Record’s prestigious 2019 Award of Excellence for developing a program focused on workplace safety and respect for women called Be That One Guy.

**SCHOOL FOR GRADUATE STUDIES**

Thanks to an anonymous alumnus ’09, ’13, SUNY Empire State College has a brick on the Allstar Walkway in Warwick. This donation supported an adaptive baseball field/league for youth with disabilities.

Gwen Eichorn ’18 is chief financial officer at CBD Companies. Eichorn will oversee all financial/accounting matters for CBD’s brokerage, construction, and management divisions. In addition to her MBA, she received a Certificate in Healthcare Management.

Danielle Johnson ’17 is the new business development manager at The Development Corporation. She will assist in the planning, initiation, implementation, and administration of programs to attract industries to locate or expand within Clinton County.

**BEYOND NEW YORK STATE**

Alison Bentley ’10, ’13 completed her Master of Science from Arizona State University. She received her degree in Global Technology and Development.

Richard Gatta ’15, a director, choreographer, and five-time Tony Award winner, is working with Susan Stroman on a musical called “Marie Dancing Still.”

Raul Manzano ’05, assistant professor at the college, had his painting “Grasping for Freedom, Grasping for Hope” win second place at STRIVE: A National Exhibition Highlighting the American Immigration and the American Dream at D’Art Center in Norfolk, Virginia. He also exhibited at the Maggy Peyton Gallery in the office of Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer in celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month.

Kathleen McLean ’13, president of the McLean Group, delivered a lecture on “Bridging the Divide” at the Agudat Achim Synagogue.

Mark Rider ’14, ’18 is chief client officer at Modern Marketing and Commerce, a company focused on multi-channel marketing, inside sales, and omnichannel services.

Kristen Skobla ’19 was promoted to executive director of the Center for Leadership Excellence at Mohawk Valley Community College.

John Vellenga ’17, ’18 has a consulting business and recently rejoined the AMETEK corporation, running the SCP defense business in Rhode Island. In addition, he is an adjunct instructor for American International College. His son, Evan, is a current student at SUNY Empire.

Janet Verneuille ’11 brought her 30-plus years of banking experience to The First National Bank of Long Island as executive vice president and chief risk officer.

Katelyn Walley-Stoll ’18 joined Cornell Cooperative Extension as the business management specialist within the newly formed Southwest New York Dairy, Livestock, and Field Corps Program.

**LAUREATE**:

**COTRER**:

**LOUIE**
Lourdes Hunter ‘12, a Detroit native, is co-founder and executive director of the Trans Women of Color Collective based in Washington, D.C., a grassroots initiative that uplifts the stories and experiences of trans- and gender-nonconforming people of color. Hunter earned a bachelor’s in Social Theory, Social Structure, and Change.

Angela Lee ‘03 is vice president for talent development at Hill-Rom Holdings Inc., a medical technology company in Chicago.

Barbara Marangon ‘11 was awarded an MFA in Dance from the University of Oklahoma.

Suzette Miller-Blackmon ‘03 is the new family engagement coordinator for Duluth, Minnesota-based Rainbow Village, an organization that helps families trying to get away from domestic violence situations.

Anita Pereda ‘93, writing as Amelia Banis, published “The Last Year,” a memoir about finding her birth parents after almost 30 years.

Andrew Popovics IV ‘13 started with SRG Global, an automotive supplier, as environmental, health, and safety manager.

Donovan Pyle ‘08 is CEO and registered employee benefits consultant at his firm, Health Compass Consulting in Orlando, Florida. The firm is dedicated to solving the country’s health care challenges.

Paul Serrato ‘95, pianist and composer, released his new jazz compact disc “Gotham Nights.”

Christopher Sedore ‘05 was named vice president and chief information officer at Tufts University.

Mark Smith ’09 published “Alaska: The Beauty and Wildness.” The volume features 300 photographic prints, as well as poetry and reflective prose.

Ann Turner ’86 is a senior consultant at Pivotal Advisors, LLC. She is the former chair of the SUNY Empire State College Foundation board of directors.

Share your news with us at www.esc.edu/alumni.

SUNY Chancellor’s

AWARD for Student Excellence

Four SUNY Empire State College students received the Chancellor’s Award for Student Excellence. The award honors students who have achieved recognition for integrating academic excellence with accomplishments in leadership, athletics, community service, creative and performing arts, campus involvement, and their career.

Wales A. Brown ’15, ‘18, a lifelong Schenectady resident, completed his M.A. in Adult Learning in 2018, and his B.S. in Community and Human Services in 2015. He died in March 2019, while enrolled in the college’s M.A.in Emerging Technology program. In 2018, he received the college’s Student Service Award and completed the Student Leadership Institute in 2016.

Brown was vice president of the Graduate Student Collaborative, represented the college at the E-Learn World Conference on E-Learning in Corporate, Government, Healthcare and Higher Education and was a nationally recognized expert on children, parenting, and families.

Lynn Ann Hinds McCoy ‘16 accumulated credits from several colleges and universities. She came to SUNY Empire in 2015 with transfer credits and earned credit for college-level learning acquired through work and life experiences. In less than one year, she completed her B.S. in Business, Management, and Economics, ultimately becoming director of human resources for Everis Inc., in Frankfort.

Hinds McCoy served on the executive board of the Graduate Student Collaborative, is the student representative for Central New York on the Student Affairs Committee and for the School for Graduate Studies on the college Senate. She also volunteers with Alumni and Student Relations at events and activities.

Tatiana C. Parker ’19, a resident of North Syracuse, completed her M.A. in Social and Public Policy at SUNY Empire. She has a B.A. in Political Science and an A.S. in Human Services from other SUNY campuses.

Parker completed her master’s while working, managing a household, and performing community service. She was named to the Central New York Business Journal’s “2018 40 Under 40” list. The same year, SUNY Empire recognized her with its Student Service Award. In 2017, she completed Nourishing Tomorrow’s Leaders, an initiative to increase the diversity of nonprofit boards and organizations in Central New York.

She is director of constituent services for New York Sen. Rachel May and serves the Onondaga Citizen League board of directors.

Julian Wyllie ’14, ’18, a Manhattan resident who emigrated from Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, works in senior management at Target’s Harlem store. He completed his MBA at SUNY Empire in 2018. His thesis, presented to Target Corporation leadership, focused on ways to increase foot traffic in Target stores.

Wyllie is active as a student leader and was a founding member of the Black Male Initiative, Graduate Student Collaborative, and Society for Entrepreneurship. He completed the college’s Student Leadership Institute in 2017 and served as the graduate student representative on the Student Affairs Committee, 2017 Provost Selection Committee, Academic Master Plan Committee, and Graduate Student Policy Committee.
IN MEMORIAM

FACULTY AND STAFF

Ellen Hawkes passed away earlier this year. She taught at the Rochester location from 1975 to 2002. Hawkes attended Connecticut College for Women and graduated from Barnard College. She had a long career in teaching and pursued her interest in alternative education through numerous night-school classes, eventually earning her doctorate in education at Columbia.

Margie Kraus '86, '96 passed away at her home in Florida on June 7. She retired as purchasing coordinator from the college in 2001 after 24 years of service. She was active in the life of the college, attending college and alumni events.

Emil Moxey was a long-time mentor in Community and Human Services and Social Science at the college's Brooklyn location. In 2013, Moxey was presented with the Heritage Award for his contributions to the college and society, particularly for the impact he had in documenting, chronicling, and giving voice to black history, as well as for teaching, mentoring, and service to the community. He also was a recipient of the Altes Prize for Exemplary Community Service.

Eric Zencey passed away on July 1. He came to SUNY Empire State College in 2002 and spent the next 11 years working with students at the former Center for Distance Learning, the School for Graduate Studies, and International Education. In addition to his time at the college, he taught at the University of Vermont and Goddard College. In Vermont, he initiated and compiled the state’s economic indicator, the Genuine Progress Index, that linked economic development to environmental impact.

ALUMNI AND STUDENTS

Jeffrey B. Armstrong ’14 earned his B.S. in Accounting, which led him to accept a position at Kall and D’Argenio CPA LLP, where he was an associate senior accountant.

Wales A. Brown ’15, ’18, a student, was a lifelong Schenectady resident who completed his Master of Arts in Adult Learning in 2018 and his Bachelor of Science in Community and Human Services in 2015. He passed away in early March after a brief illness. (Complete information about Wales Brown is on page 22.)

Benjamin Carsten, a student, passed away on May 10 at the age of 24. He graduated from Onondaga Community College with an associate degree in Engineering Science and was three courses away from receiving a bachelor’s in Applied Mathematics from SUNY Empire.

Marilyn Checkla '82 worked in the pre-kindergarten at the East Ramapo Central School District in Spring Valley. She graduated from SUNY Empire State College with a bachelor's in Elementary Education at the age of 51.

Morton Bahr ’83, H’95, Communications Workers of America president emeritus, passed away on July 30 at the age of 93. Bahr, who began his career as a telegraph operator, was president of Communications Workers of America from 1985 to 2005, running a union that today represents about 700,000 public- and private-sector employees in technology, media, airlines, and law enforcement. A titan among America’s organized labor leaders, he had a clear vision of the worth of working people and his tenacity in championing their cause and success in getting them a better deal was unsurpassed.

Respected by all for his expertise in technology- and information-based industries, Bahr founded one of the college’s largest endowed scholarships, the Morton Bahr Distance Learning Scholarship, which is available for working people across the country, regardless of union affiliation.

He served with distinction on the Empire State College Foundation board of directors for nearly a decade and was a strong supporter of students, faculty, and staff. He always looked ahead and truly saw education as a way to develop emerging union leadership.

Florence Dunn ’78 was one of the college’s longest consecutive donors, giving every year since she graduated in 1978. She was unable to complete college early on and went to work for Suffolk County, which offered a program to attend SUNY Empire State College, where she studied accounting. In a recent interview, she remarked, “Empire State College was good for me and I hope by being a good donor now, I am doing some good for someone else.”

Scott Healy ’90, ’05, according to all who knew him, was “a great professor and great friend.” He taught media studies at SUNY Sullivan and was awarded the prestigious SUNY Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2013.

Joyce Flitcroft ’77 graduated from Brasher Falls High School in 1946 as valedictorian of her class; the Mercy School of Nursing in 1948; and received her bachelor’s from Empire State College in 1977. She began her career as an RN at Mercy Hospital and later was a caseworker for Jefferson County Social Services.

Theresa Ann Kemp ’01, ’02 worked at Verizon Wireless as a senior executive assistant for 36 years before retiring in 2014.

Brian Langtry ’11 served in the Army Corps of Engineers through ROTC and the Reserves, where he reached the rank of captain. He served in the New York State Police for 20 years, where he was promoted to the rank of sergeant, and worked for nearly a decade as a BCI investigator. He was a 9/11 first responder.

Bernard J. Marsh ’99 was an actor, director, and author. He started the Living History Theater Group at the African American Museum of Nassau County, which will now be renamed the Bernard J. Marsh Theatrical Workshop, specializing in plays dealing with civil rights and African culture.

Barbara O’Connell ’76 passed away in the spring. She was a long-time member of the Empire State College Foundation board of directors, donor, and scholarship benefactor, with an accomplished career in finance in New York City. A true believer in Empire State College, O’Connell was an early employee who worked at the Long Island location while she was a student.

Ada Pawlowski ’89 was a multi-talented artist who became a social worker for the Erie County Department of Social Services.

Judith M. Ramirez ‘95 worked in the banking industry and Montgomery County Office for Aging in Amsterdam, with her most rewarding and dedicated service being with the New York State Thruway Authority. She was employed for more than 30 years as a toll collector, predominately at the Amsterdam interchange.

Susanna Kitts Sherwood ’80 exemplified public service, over the years volunteering as a nurse’s aide for the Red Cross in World War II, a Girl Scout troop leader, as well as for the Schenectady Garden Club, Stockade Association, St. George’s Church Altar Guild, and as co-chair of the Schenectady County AIDS Task Force. She retired as director of volunteer services at Ellis Hospital.

Ida Wyman ’82 was a photographer who, in the 1940s and ’50s, roamed New York City and other cities to capture compelling images of everyday people working, playing, idling, dancing, or selling newspapers. She died at the age of 93. Wyman was chief photographer at the Department of Pathology at Columbia University’s College of Physicians and Surgeons and photographed for a number of national magazines, including Look and Life.
“Give to what you believe in.”

“When I went back to school at SUNY Empire State College, the ability to work and earn my degree in a flexible, part-time manner was critical. But it was the experience, the approach, and the education that I fell in love with. It is important to be involved and give back to things that you feel strongly about, and to know that you are giving for the right reasons. To help someone else build their future? That’s the reason to give. I truly believe that I’ve gotten back more than I’ve given. It’s all worth it.”

-Dave Mazzetti ’10

To learn more about the various ways you can join Dave in creating a lasting impact, please visit www.esc.edu/PlanGifts, or contact Toby Tobrocke at 800-847-3000, ext. 2372, or Toby.Tobrocke@esc.edu.
President Jim Malatras (center) with alumni award winners (from left to right) Christopher Feeley ‘86, Danielle Asher ‘18, Raul Rodriguez ‘17 and Pamela Say ‘17.

Nominations are open now through March 2, 2020, for alumni awards for Emerging Leader, Community Impact, Veteran Service, and Distinguished Leader. Visit www.esc.edu/alumni for more information.