
[FacultyStaff] Message from Stephen H. Kolison, Jr., May 9, 2024

President's Office <President.Office@fredonia.edu>

Thu, May 9, 2024 at 4:26 PM

Reply-To: president.office@fredonia.edu

To: Faculty/Staff group <facultystaff@fredonia.edu>, All Registered students <students@fredonia.edu>



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

May 9, 2024

Dear Students,

Happy Thursday evening! We made it to the end of the year and I hope you are feeling good about all you have accomplished this academic year. I would like to take this opportunity to offer one last update to you before your summer begins. A lot has happened since my last update to you. So, please give me a few more minutes of your time than usual as I share some items with you that I hope that you will find interesting.

NYS Budget Updates

I updated the campus on April 25, 2024, that the budget processes were ending, and I promised that I would update you with information relevant to our campus. SUNY, as a whole, came out of the budget process very well - \$114 million in incremental funds plus continuation of last year's direct operating support of \$163 million. Hence the total of \$277 million in direct aid to the SUNY System represents the largest investment by the state in almost 50 years. The portion of this total that was subjected to new distribution was the \$114 million, and has been devoted mostly towards covering salary increases at state operated institutions.

Based on the formula utilized in allocating the \$114 million, Fredonia will receive approximately \$1.25 million to support faculty and salaries and an additional \$100,000 to continue to support paid internships for students. You should also know that multi-year funding that was committed by SUNY in previous years will continue. These include initiatives that support students with disabilities, food insecurity, mental health needs, and graduate program fees.

I am aware that many in our community had hoped for more funding than what we received, and they have expressed their disappointments to me. I understand that fully. At the same time, I need to acknowledge that it is encouraging that New York State has taken these steps to cover some of the negotiated salary increases, as well as continuing to provide funds to support internships for students. I am committed to continuing to advocate, in ways that I believe to be helpful, for arriving at a funding formula that could be more favorable to SUNY Fredonia and other comprehensive institutions. I am sure you can appreciate the difficulty involved in achieving these kinds of changes.

New York State's Contributions to Improvements on Our Campus

During the five-year period beginning in 2022 and concluding in 2028, an investment of nearly \$227 million will be made in SUNY Fredonia by New York State for the maintenance and improvement of our buildings and infrastructure. These funds are the State University Construction Funds and are a separate allocation from operational support we receive from the state. It is very important to note that these funds cannot be utilized to address our structural deficit or used for operations. Nevertheless, this long-term investment in our campus is another demonstration of New York State's and SUNY's commitment to SUNY Fredonia's future and our success.

A couple of weeks ago, I indicated in a report to the SUNY Fredonia University Senate that there was a possibility that the Jewett Hall renovation project would be postponed. I am very pleased to update you that after the Chancellor's visit on April 22, 2024, we received assurances that the project has been reactivated. This was a direct result of the advocacy work of the many people who came together to make a compelling proposal to him during his visit. The investment in Jewett will cost close to \$50 million and bidding on the project will start in December 2024.

For those of you who are not aware, when the Jewett project is completed, it will centralize key student service areas including the Office of the Registrar,

Academic Advising Services, ACE Program, Career Development Office, International Education Office, International Student Services, ESL Pathway Program, Financial Aid Office, Student Accounts Office, Honors Program, and Equal Opportunity Program. It will also include a Planetarium and some classroom spaces.

With the construction projects in mind, I want you to be aware that you may see a new face on campus tomorrow as we welcome Beth Berlin to our campus. Ms. Berlin is the Senior Vice Chancellor for Operations and Management and Chief Operating Officer for SUNY. She will be taking a tour of some of our more recent construction projects and learning how they have helped advance our university.

Celebrating Faculty and Staff Achievements

Students, there are many faculty and staff who you interact with daily, or who may be working hard behind the scenes to support your success. I want to take a few minutes to recognize some of those individuals who have received some of the highest distinctions from SUNY and New York State organizations.



Chancellor's Award for Excellence Recipients, 2024, from left to right, Lynn Bowers, Roslin Smith, Heather McEntarfer, Stephen H. Kolison, Jr., Rachel Kerr, Tiffany Nicely, Tom Hegna, and Elizabeth Goblirsch

- Ms. Lynn Bowers, Director of Student Accounts, recipient of the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Professional Service
- Dr. Timothy Frerichs, promotion to Distinguished Professor, Department of Visual Arts and New Media
- Ms. Elizabeth Goblirsch, Custodian, recipient of the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Classified Service
- Dr. Thomas Hegna, Associate Professor, Department of Geology and Environmental Sciences, recipient of the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activities
- Ms. Rachel Kerr, Adjunct Lecturer in the Department of Communication, recipient of the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Adjunct Teaching
- Mr. Markus Kessler, Director of Facilities Planning, recipient of the Daniel Patrick Moynihan Award by the American Institute of Architects (AIA) New York State Excelsior Award Professional Service Awards jury
- Dr. Heather McEntarfer, Associate Professor, Department of English, recipient of the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching
- Dr. Tiffany Nicely, Adjunct Lecturer in the School of Music, recipient of the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Adjunct Teaching
- Associate Professor, Roslin Smith, Department of Communication, recipient of the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching
- Dr. Susan Spangler, recipient of the FACT2 Excellence Award for Excellence in Instruction at a State Operated or Statutory Campus

Thanks for the Invitations

During the last two weeks, I have had the special pleasure of being able to attend several functions or activities across campus. I have enjoyed every single one of them and I appreciate everyone who worked to make those events a success. Here are a few (not in any specific order):

- Health Fair
- Garden Gala
- Fredonia Literary Festival
- Student exhibits in the Marion Art Gallery
- Valerie Coleman on Stage
- Dr. Ali Haider's Class on Data Communications and Networking
- Ice Cream social with Students For Fredonia
- International Business Analytics Conference
- Theatre and Dance Awards Ceremony
- Faculty Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities Reception

- OSCAR Opening Ceremony and Expo
- Athletic reception for Seniors
- Exhibit in Reed Library: "Stories from the Archives, Paul Klopfer, the Bauhaus, and the Nazis," curated by students in HIST 410, Mentored Research, taught by Dr. John Staples, Professor, Department of History
- "The Crucible" performance
- "Abigail/1702: A Twice-told Tale" performance
- CIS Projects Expo, "Roadmap to Better Advising"



Let me provide just a few highlights from some of these activities.

At the Health Fair, I met two students, Hayley Stang and Hailey Butler, who provided me with a wonderful tour of the activities planned for the health fair. They shared their experiences as students at Fredonia and in the Exercise Science program. Thank you Hayley and Hailey.

At the Garden Gala, I met two students who provided me with a tour of the greenhouse - Claire Patanella, Senior in English (shown in the photo), and Katie Carnevale, a Senior in Visual Arts and New Media: Graphic Design. As someone with an undergraduate minor in agriculture, I had pleasant flashbacks of my years as an undergraduate student. When Claire shared with me that she had done some pollination work in the greenhouse involving zucchini, I was reminded of a summer job I had that included pollinating pumpkins at the USDA plant introduction farm in Ames, Iowa when I was a graduate student at Iowa State University.



Claire and Katie, thank you for the tour. If you hadn't told me about your majors, I may have thought that you were going to pursue degrees in horticulture. See you when you come across the stage at commencement.

To the casts of "The Crucible" and "Abigail/1702: A Twice-told Tale", your performance was impressive! You are impressive. It was wonderful watching you and it was a pleasure meeting you backstage. Thank you. Bravo, and encore!



At the CIS Projects Expo, I enjoyed listening to Ian Cioppa, Jared Russell, and Camorn Walsh roll out their App (Advising Roadmap) intended to help students navigate academic advising with their advisors. Impressive! I saw a

very high potential for their work to impact time-to-degree for college students. As part of their next steps, they will be conducting additional testing of their product. I would like to recommend that our Advising Office be included in the stress testing of the product. Cioppa, Jared, and Camorn, if there is anything that I can do to assist you in achieving the goals of your project, please do not hesitate to let me know. Congratulations to you! Great work!

To all the students who were recognized at the award ceremonies, I want to congratulate you for your achievement. I want to give special shoutouts to students who receive presidential awards. Everyone, thank you for the kind honor of your invitations to your events and classes. I am always happy to attend when I can, and feel regret when I have a conflict and am unable to attend.

Congratulations Graduates

As we conclude another academic year, I am proud of all the students who will be receiving their degrees on May 18th. If you recall, most of these students arrived at our university at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of them did not have the opportunity to participate in their high school graduation ceremonies. They have persevered through all the challenges that were presented by COVID and are reaching this significant milestone. Congratulations to all our graduates!

Many thanks to our faculty and staff who assisted our graduates during their journey here at SUNY Fredonia. I also want to recognize all Cabinet members for the many heavy lifts during this academic year and their continued commitment to this university. I am grateful to everyone here at SUNY Fredonia for their work and efforts on behalf of our university. Special thanks to the Fredonia College Foundation, the Alumni Association, SUNY Administration and Trustees, the New York State government, the Legislature, and Governor Hochul for their support of SUNY Fredonia. Many thanks to College Council members for the work you do to advance SUNY Fredonia.

Everyone, our graduates deserve the best celebration of their accomplishments and resilience. Let's make this a wonderful commencement for them.

Have an enjoyable and safe Summer!

Very truly yours,

Dr. K
Stephen H. Kolison Jr., Ph.D.
President and Professor

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