
[FacultyStaff] Message from Stephen H. Kolison, Jr., April 3, 2025

President's Office <President.Office@fredonia.edu>
Reply-To: president.office@fredonia.edu
To: All Registered students <students@fredonia.edu>
Cc: Faculty/Staff group <facultystaff@fredonia.edu>

Thu, Apr 3, 2025 at 8:07 PM



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

April 3, 2025

Dear Students,

Happy Thursday evening! Please allow me a few moments of your time to share some updates with you.

The Academic Year

Can you believe that we have about six more weeks to go before the end of this academic year? First-time first-year students, I am wondering how you are feeling knowing that your first year of college is coming to a close. How has your experience been? Please drop me a note.

Graduating seniors! I can imagine the feeling. You have persevered and are almost to the finish line. You have done well. Let me borrow this phrase to say to you at this crucial juncture: "Keep the pedal to the metal." Congratulations, and I look forward to seeing you at graduation on May 17, 2025.

Commencement Speakers

I am very pleased to announce that we have two wonderful commencement speakers to inspire you at commencement. At the morning section of our commencement, our speaker will be Dr. Kim D. Harrington, Class of 1989. The Afternoon commencement speaker will be Ms. Gretchen Geitter, Class of 1991.

Dr. Harrington is the Associate Vice President for Arts, Belonging and Community, Student Engagement & Well-Being at Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) in Atlanta, GA. Her Bachelor of Arts degree from SUNY Fredonia is in Psychology. She holds a M.Ed. in Counseling/Educational Psychology from the State University of Buffalo and Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from Georgia State University. She is a member of the Fredonia College Foundation Board of Directors.

Ms. Gretchen Geitter served the Buffalo Bills organization for 30 years, and from 2008 to her retirement in 2024, she served as Vice President of Community Relations. Her Bachelor of Science degree from SUNY Fredonia is in Communication. Ms. Geitter was the very first recipient of the Robert E. Coon Recognition Award, established through the Fredonia College Foundation, which is awarded to a student who shows excellence in the classroom and contributes significantly to student life.

We will share more information on the backgrounds of our speakers later. I am very pleased that these two outstanding alumni will join us for our 198th commencement exercises.

Norman R. McConney Jr. Award for EOP Student Excellence

The Norman R. McConney Jr. Award for EOP Student Excellence is a SUNY-level award that recognizes outstanding EOP students for their academic excellence and strength in overcoming challenges.

It is named in memory of Norman R. McConney, Jr. (1946-2016), a graduate of the University at Albany and former Assistant Dean for Special Programs at SUNY. He and former Assembly Deputy Speaker Arthur O. Eve helped create the EOP as a statewide program.

This year's award recipient is Amy Li, a graduating senior in Communication-Public Relations. Please join me in congratulating Amy.



The Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence

I am very pleased to announce that Taylor R. Kelly and David M. Sudbrink are the recipients of the Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence (CASE). This is

one of the highest awards bestowed upon a student by SUNY and acknowledges the outstanding achievements that students have demonstrated in the integration of SUNY excellence such as academics, leadership, campus involvement, community service, and the arts.

Taylor is a graduating senior majoring in Music Education, and David is a graduating senior majoring in Public Accountancy and Finance. Please join me in congratulating Taylor and David. I want to thank all our faculty and staff who have worked with them since their arrival at SUNY Fredonia.



Sharing Some Fun Things and Shout Outs

March provided many opportunities for me to experience a number of things involving Fredonia students, faculty, and staff. I shared some of those with the faculty and staff in my update to them on March 17th.

Read Across America, Campus and Community Children's Center

One of the nationwide activities that I love is "Read Across America" and its National Reading Month - March. This year, First Lady Valeria Kolison (Val) and I were invited to read to children at the Campus and Community Children's Center (CCCC). Val read a book called "Tree, a Peek-through Board Book" by Britta Teckentrup, and I read "Thank You, Tree" illustrated by Fiona Lee. I was impressed by the attention span of the children. They sat through our reading of both books. It was fun, and we really enjoyed our time with the children.

I want to congratulate the CCCC on their 50th Anniversary. For the last 50 years the CCCC has been providing early educational start to children of families in our community. It is a tremendous resource to have in our community. So, shout out to all the staff and children at the CCCC. Happy

Students, if any of you had the opportunity to participate in any “Read Across America” activity, thank you.



La Traviata

I wrote about this collaborative performance between the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra and the SUNY Fredonia Hillman Opera in March to recognize the faculty members who were involved. I waited for this opportunity to recognize SUNY Fredonia students who were a part of the production. Students, you were impressive, and it was a pleasure meeting you and talking with you.

Internship Fair and Career Expo

Shout out to the planners of the Internship Fair and Career Expo. I understand that we had more than 80 exhibitors covering various professions, including the United States Secret Service. Students, I hope you found something that stimulated your interest or excited you to explore for internships or career opportunities. I want to thank all our staff and faculty members who planned and participated in this event.

Alicia’s Lens

Shout out to the Director, Nestor Bravo-Goldsmith and cast of Alicia's Lens! I understand that over 50 students, faculty, and staff from Theatre and Dance were involved in bringing this original production that was devised, written, staged, and will go on tour by the students of the Fredonia Young Company. I enjoyed the show thoroughly. It was an excellent show. I am pleased that the show will be taken on the road at other venues. Many thanks to everyone who made the show a success.



Counseling Center

I had the chance to visit the Counseling Center to meet with the staff and say thanks for the services that they provide to our students. As you may know, the Counseling Center is key in fostering a campus environment where every student feels supported, seen, and empowered to thrive. They offer free, confidential mental health services tailored to each student's individual needs. Each year, approximately 16% of our student body engages with the Counseling Center's dedicated clinical staff, who work in partnership with students to promote mental health, personal growth, and overall well-being. Through their compassionate and student-centered approach, the Counseling Center exemplifies our shared mission of building a strong, healthy, and caring community. Many thanks to all the staff at the Counseling Center for all they do for our students.



BSU Fashion Show

So, Val and I arrived at the event around 6 PM to enjoy some of the food as we waited for the show to start. When we left Landford House for the event, I indicated to Val that we would leave the show at around 8:30 PM to allow me to take care of some other matters. Was I mistaken in my calculation for the time that we would commit to the show? Yes! We did not leave the show until it was over, about 10 PM. Indeed, it was a captivating and remarkable performance! Great job, students! Thanks to everyone who helped in planning and producing the show. Thanks to all the participants in the show.



Twelfth Night

Last Sunday afternoon I went to the Marvel Theater to watch William Shakespeare's Twelfth Night directed by Distinguished Teaching Professor Paul W. Mockovak. What a show! Great acting! I enjoyed it thoroughly. I love the costumes, especially the one worn by Orsin.



If you take a closer look at the costumes, you will see a distinctive feature - a rubber chicken. So, let me also give a shout out to Jessica Lusting for her incredible work. Many thanks to everyone who made the show a success.



Registration for Next Semester

Registration for the next academic year is underway. We consider each of you

a vital part of our campus community, and we hope you'll return to continue your studies. If you're facing any challenges that are preventing you from registering, please reach out to us. Our staff is here to offer personal assistance. You can contact Academic Advising at 716-673-3188 or email advising@fredonia.edu. Additionally, you can schedule an appointment online using this link: [Schedule an Appointment with an Advisor](#).

Thank you for reading this update. I will connect with you again before the semester/school year wraps up. I wish you all the best as the school year comes to a close. Take good care.

Very truly yours,

Dr. K

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

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