



Letter from the Officer in Charge

Dear Friends,

SUNY Empire has forged ahead with exciting new developments this year while reflecting on our 50-year history.

In the spring, former presidents James Hall, Joseph Moore, Alan Davis, Merodie Hancock, and Jim Malatras gathered virtually to discuss their time in office and their signature achievements. In the fall, The Fund for SUNY Empire sponsored a 50th Anniversary Celebration, which included a day-long series of community events with students, alumni, employees, and friends of the college who shared their thoughts on and recollections of SUNY Empire's past, present, and future.

This summer, we opened our new 4 Park Ave. location in Manhattan. Located between 33rd and 34th streets, the new site sits in the heart of one of the most iconic streetscapes in the world, just blocks from the Empire State Building.

SUNY Empire also reinforced its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, with the announcement of our second PRODiG fellow, Bernadet DeJonge, who will teach at SUNY Empire from 2021-23. The SUNY PRODiG Fellowship is for post-doctoral and graduate students who are interested in teaching, helping to build the next generation of faculty.

In early fall, we launched the Empire Promise Program (EPP), which provides enhanced academic supports to students who show promise but may have experienced barriers to education in the past. The EPP is the third opportunity program the college has unveiled this year, along with the Empire State Opportunity Program and the SUNY Educational Opportunity Program.

Along those same lines, the college has secured a two-year \$154,256 grant from the Ichigo Foundation that will create a basic needs pilot program and provide emergency grants for students in financial crisis. This grant complements the Student Emergency Fund



Nathan Gonyea

established by the Empire State College Foundation earlier this year and will help us determine the best ways to assist these students.

SUNY Empire's Center for Autism Advocacy, formerly known as the Center for Autism Inclusivity, hosted its inaugural conference, "Partners in Applied Behavior Analysis: Creating Quality of Life through Professional, Global, and Advocacy Partnerships" with the Anderson Center for Autism. The virtual conference featured presenters with experience in lifespan services for those with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and people who support them.

We wrap up 2021 with our first in-person commencement since the COVID-19 pandemic began. It will be hosted at the Empire State Plaza in Albany, where we'll hand out the annual Alumni Awards. After three virtual commencements, we're excited to gather and celebrate in person.

In closing, I wish you all a happy and healthy holiday season. Thank you for all you do for the SUNY Empire community.

Sincerely,

Nathan Gonyea
Officer in Charge

Help Put a College Degree Within Reach — Refer a Student!

You may have learned about SUNY Empire State College from one of our alumni at work or in your personal life. Alumni are our best ambassadors; they understand the SUNY Empire experience and all the benefits of a SUNY Empire State College education. With that in mind, we've created an Alumni Refer-a-Student Program. Through this program, a friend, colleague, or family member you refer to SUNY Empire State College can receive a \$100 Better Together Scholarship toward one term of enrollment and a \$50 orientation fee waiver. In addition, they will have access to a recruitment professional from their area to answer questions they have during the application process.

Do you have a friend, family member, or colleague interested in starting or finishing their college degree? Visit www.alumni.esc.edu/get-involved/refer-a-student for more information or call **518-581-5380**. Help put a college degree within reach and refer a student today!

2021 Alumni Awards

The Alumni Student Federation Board of Governors established the Alumni Awards Program in 2016 to recognize the college's exemplary alumni who have made a lasting impact on society and SUNY Empire State College through outstanding professional, military, philanthropic, or volunteer accomplishments. All nominations go through an extensive review process by the awards committee, consisting of members of the SUNY Empire State College Alumni Federation Board of Governors and other alumni volunteer members. There are four award categories: Emerging Leader, Community Impact, Distinguished Leader, and Veteran Service.

We are excited to share that the 2021 Alumni Award awardees will be announced in our December alumni e-newsletter and the recipients will be honored at the SUNY Empire State College Winter Commencement Ceremony December 19, in Albany, New York. For more information on the alumni awards, please contact alumni@esc.edu.

Alumni Return

Several members of the Alumni Federation Board of Governors, led by Alumni Board President Kelly DiCarmino '18, gathered on October 23 in Saratoga Springs for a hybrid Board of Governors meeting with other board members joining online. Officer in Charge Nathan Gonyea welcomed them back to campus.

We had a great time hosting some of our alumni and friends at Alumni House in Saratoga Springs before last month's Fall Twilight Tour (photos below). This was our first in-person alumni event since the pandemic started. It was a beautiful night in Saratoga and wonderful to welcome back our alumni. We enjoyed refreshments on our porch and then joined the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation for a spooky guided tour of Greenridge Cemetery, just in time for Halloween.



Officer in Charge Nathan Gonyea with members of the Alumni Federation Board at their fall meeting in Saratoga Springs.



The Alumni Fall Twilight Tour in Greenridge Cemetery, Saratoga Springs.



A stop on the Alumni Twilight Tour.

If you have an idea for an alumni event in your area, please contact alumni@esc.edu.

To view the alumni events schedule, visit www.esc.edu/alumni.

Keith Amparado '88: The Connection Between Belonging and Giving

After graduating from high school at the age of 16, New York City native Keith Amparado '88 enrolled at a number of colleges a handful of times. Between the political turmoil of the early 1970s and his own personal — and often negative — experiences with social issues such as school integration, the right fit seemed elusive.

So Keith took a break from education, finding work at a local bank. Eventually, he tried pairing his full-time job with another go at college, but it still didn't feel right.

"I was taking 16 credits and working full time. I left work at 5 p.m. to attend courses from 6 to 9:30 p.m.," Keith recalled. "I was exhausted."

He did, however, meet a professor who changed the trajectory of his life, convincing him to speak with SUNY Empire, a college established for working adults, where the professor also taught as an adjunct. The rest, he said, is history. Keith graduated in 1988 with his B.S. in business, management, and economics.

Over the years, Keith found professional success as a market researcher, technical writer, and assistant director of information technology services at New York University. More than 20 years ago, he also established a weekly Alzheimer's Caregivers' Program at NYU when his mother battled the disease. He facilitates it to this day.

Fate reconnected Keith to SUNY Empire when he received an unexpected phone call from the college's director of alumni and student relations in 2011. She asked if he would be interested in helping Professor David Fullard develop the college's Black Male Initiative.

"I met with David, and we connected instantly," Keith recalls. "SUNY Empire identified something for me that I love doing and would never have known about."

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Since then, Keith has donated to the Black Male Initiative Scholarship, and he has established two endowed funds at the college. The first, the Arcadeo and Sadie J. Browne Amparado "Force for Change" Scholarship, was created to honor his late parents, whose lifelong service to others served as a blueprint for Keith's own philanthropy. The scholarship is open to Black male students, with special consideration for self-identified LGBTQ individuals and students who live in metropolitan New York.

"I can't remember a time when my parents didn't extend themselves. If you needed a meal, they fed you. If you needed a couple of dollars, they gave it to you," Keith said. "We weren't rich. That's just how I grew up."

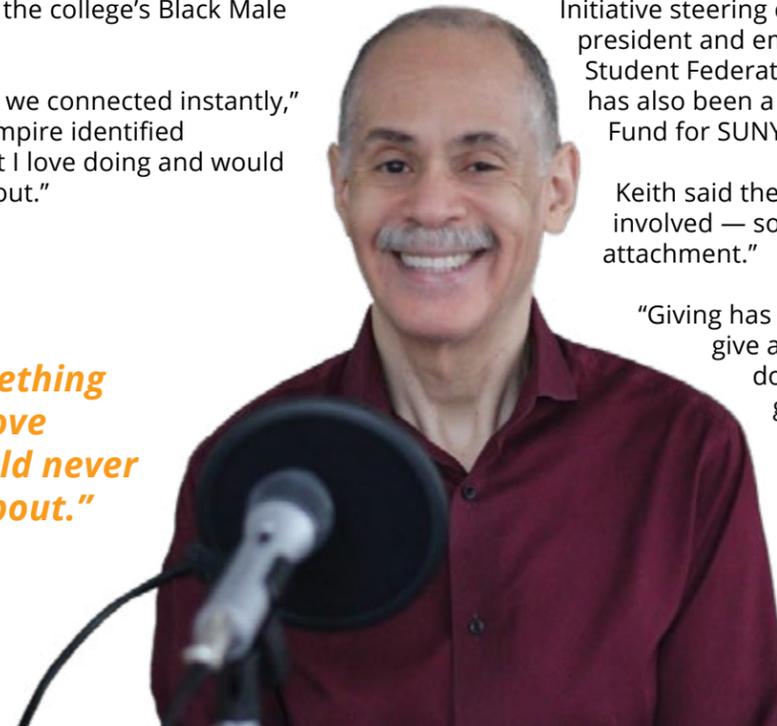
The second SUNY Empire scholarship Keith established, the Shirley A. Chisholm Memorial Scholarship, originated, in part, from his special relationship with this international figure. The scholarship is available to underrepresented female students, with a preference for African American students.

"Shirley Chisholm moved into the apartment beneath us when I was 10. Most mornings, we'd end up on the elevator together," Keith said. "When she saw me, she'd say 'Come here boy and give me some sugar!' She was one of my favorite people in the world. She was a stick of dynamite."

Keith gives of his time at SUNY Empire, as well. He's a member of the Shirley A. Chisholm Center for Equity Studies advisory board, chairs the Black Male Initiative steering committee, and is past president and emeritus member of the Alumni Student Federation Board of Governors. He has also been a monthly contributor to the Fund for SUNY Empire since 2001.

Keith said the first step to giving is to get involved — something he calls "giving by attachment."

"Giving has multiple definitions. You can give a dollar every month, or ten dollars every month, or you can give your talents," Keith said. "The most important thing is to find the place you belong. It took me until I was 50 to find where I belonged and could do some good. I'm happiest when I've helped someone succeed. I will be forever grateful for being part of this SUNY Empire family."



Your Gifts at Work — Rashida Latney Receives the Inaugural Shirley A. Chisholm Memorial Scholarship

Chisholm Scholar reflects former congresswoman's vision, along with scholarship founder's goals



Rashida Latney, first recipient of Shirley A. Chisholm Memorial Scholarship.

Rashida Latney

The inaugural Chisholm Scholarship was awarded this fall to Rashida Latney, a student who shares the late Shirley Chisholm's ideals of equity and access. Rashida lives on Long Island and is pursuing a degree in community and human services with a concentration in public affairs. She currently works for the Suffolk County Department of Social Services and says her long-term goal is to become an immigration attorney. "I didn't realize being a student, single parent, and being employed full time was possible, but SUNY Empire has made this possibility into a reality," she said. "I was born to help others, and SUNY Empire will help me to fulfill my dreams."

Rashida plans to graduate this spring and immediately apply to law school. "Thanks to this scholarship, I am one step closer to that goal."

Supporting the Fund for SUNY Empire



Students like Rashida are pursuing their goals every day, thanks in part to the generosity of alumni, friends, and employees who support the college through gifts to the Fund for SUNY Empire. The Chisholm Scholarship is a perfect example. Keith Amparado '88

established the Chisholm Scholarship to promote the life and legacy of Chisholm, a childhood family friend and neighbor, who became the first Black woman to win a seat in Congress in 1968. She went on to become the first Black candidate and first Democratic woman to run for president.

The Shirley A. Chisholm Center for Equity Studies at SUNY Empire State College, located in New York City, is dedicated to examining and uncovering the roots, workings, and impacts of structural racism and systemic inequities in our communities today.

Gifts to the Fund help support efforts to continually improve our programming, retain exceptional faculty, and offer scholarship opportunities that enable students to experience a life-changing education.

Please join us in changing lives by making your gift today using the enclosed envelope or by going to www.esc.edu/SupportESC.