August Student Success Newsletter

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Happy Summer! I hope this message finds you well. Summer is a time of gatherings, vacations, cookouts, gardening, and enjoying the great outdoors. Additionally, these months provide a much-needed break from university coursework, or you may be currently enrolled and getting a head start on the new academic year. Whichever path you choose, I hope you can enjoy time with family and friends while also taking care of yourself.

As we look ahead to the fall, there are many indications that back-to-school is just around the corner. Take a walk around any store, and you will find that summer gear is moved to the sidelines often on clearance, and in its place are aisles of pencils, notebooks, folders, backpacks, and other items on overflowing shelves. These items represent the “stuff” of education, the tools used in classrooms to support one’s learning. While there is satisfaction in opening a brand-new box of crayons or sharpening those No. 2 pencils, how might we mentally prepare for the new academic year? A growth mindset can provide the internal motivation needed to stretch oneself to greater levels and depths and explore new areas along one’s educational journey. As stated by Carol Dweck, Professor at Stanford University and author of *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*, “In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work – brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and resilience essential for great accomplishment.”

As a biologist, I want to parallel the growth mindset with planting seeds. As a “budding” gardener, I decided to try sowing zinnia seeds in two beds lining my walkway in May. I prepared the ground, spread the seeds, diligently watered each day, and waited and watched and waited some more. The process seemed slow, but I believed I would someday see growth. As of this writing, I now have plants about a foot tall, and if I look closely, flower buds are starting to form (YAY!).

How might you cultivate your internal seeds so that they grow and blossom? How can you adapt a growth mindset that fosters a can-do attitude and belief in oneself? At Empire State University, we have faculty, mentors, professionals, administrators, and others who firmly believe in supporting students along their educational journey.

Think of your courses as providing the fertile ground for learning, and the faculty and academic services professionals as providing the much-needed hydration for growth. Add in your efforts and dedication, and without a doubt, you will experience internal growth along your educational journey. Commencement will be the time to celebrate the blossoms!

Have an enjoyable, restful, and healthy August and a wonderful start to the new academic year. I wish you all the best along your educational journey!

Warmest regards,

Mary V. Mawn, Ph.D., M.Ed.
Dean, School of Science, Mathematics and Technology
DATES TO REMEMBER!

Check here for important dates and upcoming events happening at the university. Links to these events and more can be found at SUNY Empire Connects.

Registration & Beyond Workshop
August 2 at 12 p.m.

The Mentor-Student Relationship Workshop
August 8 at 6 p.m.

Express Term 2 ends
August 11

Virtual iPLA Workshop *(registration required)*
August 11 at 12 p.m.

Registration & Beyond Workshop
August 17 at 6 p.m.

The Mentor-Student Relationship Workshop
August 24 at 12 p.m.

Summer 15-week term ends
August 25

Fall 2023 JumpStart Online
August 29-31

Fall 2023 15-week term & Express Term 1 (8 weeks) begin
September 5

"I realise that it is August: the summer's last stand"
– Sara Baume
SHOW ME THE MONEY
How to Get Your Financial Aid Ducks in a Row for the Fall Term

Visit MySUNYEmpire to complete your 2023-2024 Financial Aid applications including the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), New York State grant applications for residents, scholarships, and more!

Don’t forget to check Self-Service Banner for any notifications from the Office of Financial Aid and to complete any established requirements. If you wish to take out student loans, make sure to accept your student loans once you receive your award. Active acceptance is required.

If you’re interested in working in a Federal Work Study position, please contact the Financial Aid Office. There are several positions and opportunities available to make extra money!

We look forward to being your financial solution this coming year!

Important Financial Aid Information!

FAFSA Federal School Code: 010286
School Name: SUC Empire State College
NYS TAP Codes: Associate Degree: 0916 Bachelor’s Degree: 0913
Students who plan to enroll must submit the 2023-2024 FAFSA.
Questions? 800-847-3000 financialaid@sunyempire.edu

Need Help Understanding Military-Affiliated Funding Options?
By Anne Sweet, Military Student Services Manager

Many financial resources are available to current service members, veterans, and family members, but the application processes and eligibility requirements vary widely. If you know which benefit or program you are using, make sure to submit the MyMilitaryInfo form each term. Once you submit the form, you will get a confirmation email explaining what to do next and reminders of important deadlines and requirements for each funding source you selected.

If you are not sure about your eligibility for a program or have questions related to military funding, please contact the Office of Veteran and Military Education at MilitaryPrograms@sunyempire.edu or 800-847-3000 ext. 2779.

Important Information!

Veteran and Military Education Website

To request a review of previous college credits and military training with your Evaluated Education Plan option contact the Office of Veteran and Military Education at military.programs@sunyempire.edu or 800-587-2100 ext. 2779.
Do Not Be Late for a Very Important Date!
Understanding Registration Terms and Deadlines

By Amanda Lagoe, Assistant Registrar

You may have noticed that your car’s side mirrors display a warning that “objects in the mirror are closer than they appear.” The same is true for Fall 2023 registration deadlines. The Fall 2023 term begins on September 5, 2023, so getting your registration and payment method in place before the deadline is important.

WHERE CAN I FIND THE REGISTRATION DEADLINES?
You can find all registration-related deadlines on the academic calendar. Visit the Office of the Registrar’s webpage to view important 2023-2024 academic year dates. Be sure to keep this link handy so you can reference it throughout the year!

WHEN CAN I REGISTER?
You can register from the date registration opens through the day before the term (or specific express term) starts without a late fee. These dates are available on the academic calendar. You can also register during the Add/Drop period. All registration additions or adjustments will occur via MySUNYEmpire during these timeframes.

WHAT IS THE ADD/DROP PERIOD?
The Add/Drop period is the first week of the term (or express term session). You can adjust your registration (add a new course or drop a current course) during this time. If your first registration for the term occurs during the Add/Drop period, you will be assessed a late-registration fee. Courses dropped during this period do not count as a withdrawal and will not show on your transcript.

WHAT IF MY COURSE IS DROPPED FOR NON-PAYMENT?
If your course is dropped for non-payment, you must submit a late registration request form for each course that you wish to enroll in. As these requests are subject to multiple approvals, registration will take some time to process and is not guaranteed. Once processed, your late registration request will be subject to a late registration fee and payment will be due immediately.

WHEN IS PAYMENT DUE?
You can view payment due dates on the Student Accounts webpage. Be sure to pay your bill or set up payment arrangements before the due date to avoid cancellation of your registration. Student Accounts will cancel registrations for non-payment the day after the Add/Drop period ends.
ABLEISM AWARENESS

By Andrea Piazza, Accessibility Specialist

What is Ableism?

• Ableism is discrimination and social prejudice in favor of nondisabled people. An ableist may think they are better than a person with a disability and that disabled people are defined solely by their disability.

• Similar to racism and sexism, ableism classifies entire groups of people as “less than”, including harmful stereotypes, biases, and generalizations about individuals with disabilities.

• Ableism can be subtle or direct. It is systemic and fuels misconceptions and stereotypes about individuals with disabilities as shown in the examples below.

Here are some examples of Ableism. Take a moment to reflect on these situations.

1. Thinking a person parking in an accessible parking spot does not “look” disabled.
   Many invisible disabilities do not require a person to use a wheelchair, cane, or walker, but having an accessible parking spot supports the person when entering public spaces.

2. Assuming a person with a disability will have difficulty doing a task, and assisting with it or completing it for them without asking if assistance is needed.
   Always ask what their preference is. “Is there anything I can help you with,” instead of automatically performing or completing the task.

3. Assuming a person with a disability wants or needs to be “fixed” or non-disabled.
   A social model response would suggest modifying the environment to be accessible for all rather than “fixing” an individual.

4. Commenting to someone, “You lost a lot of weight; I wish I could be chronically ill so I can shed these last 10 pounds.”
   This is something better not said. Those with chronic illnesses have health struggles; therefore, it is belittling to comment on how nice it would be to lose ten pounds.

Ableism is more common than you think. We must become aware and work to reframe our language and thoughts regarding individuals with disabilities to foster and create inclusive environments for all.
Financial aid may be used to cover the residency fee or students may apply for one of two residency fee scholarships. For additional information on any of the Empire State University residencies, please visit our Residency Information webpage.

**ADIRONDACK ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES RESIDENCY**  
Students can choose from environmentally-related courses that use a blended model, that combines an online or independent study component with a two-day onsite meeting at Camp Huntington in the beautiful Adirondacks from October 9-11, 2023.

**AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY WAR ERA RESIDENCY**  
Students will be introduced to the major historical issues of the era. This unique opportunity combines independent study with a two-day onsite meeting in Saratoga Springs from October 20-21, 2023. It includes a one-day field trip to the Saratoga National Historical Park.

**VIRTUAL WHOLE HEALTH LIVING RESIDENCY**  
This residency offers students the opportunity to take courses related to health, wellness, and equitable access to health and wellness resources. Students will be able to delve deeply into practice models and/or research projects with peers, professional staff, and faculty. This online residency consists of four virtual class meetings and four virtual community cafés.
ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT HELPING OTHERS?

CONSIDER JOINING SUNY EMPIRE’S PEER MEDIATION PROGRAM

The goal of SUNY Empire’s Peer Mediation Program is to train student leaders to support their peers in resolving disputes. Student mediators strive to provide a self-empowered, balanced environment free of judgment while supporting individuals in working through conflicts, whether that means mediation or one-on-one consultation. Join us as we break new ground making a difference for the university and the greater society.

WHAT YOU WILL GAIN:

- Free Mediation training
- Practical skills that will support you in the workplace
- Leadership experience
- Self-awareness & relationship building through reflective practices
- Mutually supportive experiences
- Community building

If you are interested in making a difference for your peers and the university, please

Fill out this form!

Thank You!

Advisor
David Caso
david.caso@sunyempire.edu

Peer Leaders
Jo Young & Em Vaianella
As we enter the month of August, many of us at the university have the fall term on the brain. New students anxiously await their first term, continuing students move one step closer to graduation, and the faculty and staff are preparing to help make it possible.

One of the ways Student Support & Outreach provides support is by offering several workshops each term. Many of our workshops include information and resources that will benefit you as a SUNY Empire student, and some, like the ones offered in August, provide you with the next steps that you can take to set yourself up for success during your first term and throughout your time with us.

Registration & Beyond and The Mentor-Student Relationship are two workshops we offer throughout August. Both are offered weekly and are a great supplement between orientation and attending JumpStart.

### Registration & Beyond

This workshop covers the various modes of study, how to search for classes using the term guide, and how to officially register for the upcoming term. Additionally, we will review where to locate your Learning Contracts and how to purchase books from the SUNY Empire bookstore.

- **Wednesday, August 2 at 12 p.m.** [Click here to join the meeting](#)
- **Wednesday, August 9 at 6:30 p.m.** [Click here to join the meeting](#)
- **Thursday, August 17 at 6 p.m.** [Click here to join the meeting](#)
- **Tuesday, August 22 at 12 p.m.** [Click here to join the meeting](#)
- **Monday, August 28 at 6 p.m.** [Click here to join the meeting](#)

### The Mentor-Student Relationship

What is a mentor and what is their role in helping you plan your degree? What part do you play in this relationship? Learn about the importance of working with your mentor and how Student Support & Outreach can provide additional support throughout your journey at SUNY Empire. Bring your questions and hear from mentors throughout the university.

- **Tuesday, August 8 at 6 p.m.** [Click here to join the meeting](#)
- **Wednesday, August 16 at 6 p.m.** [Click here to join the meeting](#)
- **Thursday, August 24 at 12 p.m.** [Click here to join the meeting](#)

If you would like to see more of the workshops we offer, you can visit the [Student Support & Outreach](#) page, and if you have any questions, email us at [studentsuccess@sunyempire.edu](mailto:studentsuccess@sunyempire.edu).
Meet Your Student Support & Outreach Team!

The Office of Student Support & Outreach is here for you from the moment you register for your first class until you receive your diploma. Upon acceptance, you are paired with a student success coordinator who can assist you with overcoming personal barriers or just to answer your questions. We also offer workshops throughout the year. Visit our website to learn more.

Each month we will introduce you to a member of our team. We encourage you to email us at studentsuccess@sunyempire.edu or call us at 800-847-3000 ext. 1110.

MEET ERIC BRIDGES

STUDENT SUCCESS COORDINATOR

My name is Eric Bridges, and I graduated from Buffalo State College, earning a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice and a Master of Science in Multidisciplinary Studies. My unplanned career in higher education began with a college internship with the University at Buffalo’s Science Technology Enrichment Program (STEP). For 13 years, I helped underrepresented and/or economically disadvantaged students from grades 7-12 prepare for college, earn scholarships, obtain internships, and pursue careers in licensed professions. After progressing from Intern to Junior Counselor, to Senior Counselor, and on to Assistant Director, I was looking for a new challenge, and that was working with non-traditional students at SUNY Empire.

I have worn many hats at SUNY Empire, such as Multicultural Advisor, Recruiter, Academic Services Coordinator, and Student Success Coordinator. What all my roles have in common is student services. I feel blessed to have a rewarding career that allows me to help people overcome adversity and reach their goals.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED AT EMPIRE STATE UNIVERSITY?
I have been working with this great institution for almost 22 years. Time really flies!

WHERE ARE YOU LOCATED?
I work from our Buffalo location, in the AppleTree Business Park.

WHAT’S YOUR FAVORITE PART OF YOUR JOB?
I originally planned to work with SUNY Empire for five years and then go back to a traditional college/university. What has kept me here this long is the people. I work with great students who are determined to reach their goals and dedicated faculty/staff. I enjoy meeting/supporting students and connecting them to academic and/or community resources that are beneficial to their journeys. I am surrounded by colleagues who are committed to supporting student success.

IF YOU WERE A POTATO, HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE COOKED?
My favorite potato is the sweet potato, especially at Thanksgiving. Peel off the skin and make me into a sweet potato pie! Sweet potato fries air fried with a dash of salt are also tasty.

WHAT IS A FUN FACT YOU’D LIKE TO SHARE?
Some family and friends call me King of the GIFs. Instead of always communicating with words, I enjoy bringing joy or making a statement through GIFs. In my spare time, I like to go biking, take long walks, and listen to music. I am a family guy and love my sports, especially basketball and football. Go Bills!

WHAT IS A PIECE OF ADVICE THAT YOU WOULD SHARE WITH STUDENTS?
Life doesn’t stop when you return to school. In fact, it tends to become more complicated. Go at a pace that will allow you to balance school, work, and/or family. For some this may mean taking one course per term, and for others it may be two or more. In addition to learning, college is meant to be fun so enjoy the experience. Attend events and/or workshops at locations near you or virtually. This will allow you to connect with fellow students, faculty, and staff, making the experience more rewarding.
NYC Parks is investing in the future, and we need your help. Our volunteers help with forest and wetland restoration, planting and pruning street trees, harvesting and propagating native seed, and monitoring local wildlife. By becoming a steward of NYC’s green spaces, you can help ensure that our city’s natural resources are kept safe for future generations.

*Here’s a list of volunteer opportunities with [NYC Parks Stewardship program](#).*

### BROOKLYN
*(select event titles to link to more information)*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 11</td>
<td>Paerdegat Basin Park Forest Restoration</td>
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<td>August 14</td>
<td>Kaiser Park Coastal Cleanup</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 18</td>
<td>East New York Street Tree Care</td>
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<td>August 27</td>
<td>Ecology Park Restoration</td>
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### BRONX
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<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 19</td>
<td>Morrisania Street Care</td>
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<td>August 25</td>
<td>Riverdale Park Forest Restoration</td>
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### MANHATTAN
*(select event titles to link to more information)*

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 5</td>
<td>Harlem Street Tree Care</td>
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### QUEENS
*(select event titles to link to more information)*

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 4</td>
<td>Forest Park Forest Restoration</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 13</td>
<td>Rockaway Beach Coastal Cleanup</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 21</td>
<td>Rockaway Beach Coastal Cleanup</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 26</td>
<td>Bayswater Park Trail Work</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 28</td>
<td>Rockaway Beach Coastal Cleanup</td>
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### STATEN ISLAND
*(select event titles to link to more information)*

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 20</td>
<td>Wolfe’s Pond Wetland Restoration</td>
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*For the rest of NY – we did not forget you!*

For opportunities across the state, please check out volunteer events on the [New York State Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation](#) site (*link here*).
SUNY Empire provides free mental health counseling services to our students through our partner LifeWorks My Student Support Program (MySSP). As of July 31, 2023, our partner has changed its name from LifeWorks to TELUS Health Student Support. Your health and wellness funds pay for this service.

Only the name of the service is changing, we will still offer all the great services, including:

- **Telephone support 24/7**: Speak to an experienced counselor with a simple phone call.
- **Real-time chat support 24/7**: Chat with an experienced counselor on the web or the app at your convenience.
- **Short-term appointments**: Schedule appointment-based support to connect with the same counselor over multiple sessions via telephone or video appointments (limited to five sessions total).
- **Health assessment**: Complete an anonymous assessment to get feedback on your mental health.
- **Browse health and wellbeing content**: Access articles, podcasts, infographics, and videos on the app, addressing a wide variety of wellbeing topics.
- **Access virtual fitness sessions**: Free virtual fitness sessions available through LIFT.
- **Resource Referral**: Free resource referrals to community specialists.

Download the APP!

Questions about the service? Email healthandwellness@sunyempire.edu

1 (866) 743-7732

www.myssp.app

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STOCK UP ON YOUR EMPIRE STATE UNIVERSITY GEAR!

For the month of August, you can receive 20% off everyday essentials at the SUNY Empire gear store.

[Click here to shop!](#)