

SCCC facility to open

by Danielle Sireci, now 25, of West Islip.

Sireci said that police never said anything to her about finding prescription drugs, and she denied she was on medication.

"That is not a fact. The police have never brought it up to me. And I totally agree there should be drug and alcohol testing because I was sober, and it would prove 100 percent I was," she said earlier this month.

The DMV conducted a hearing on the accident on April 4, 2013, and an administrative law judge, Todd Schall, ruled on July 18, 2013, there was nothing to indicate Sireci had contributed to the accident. He ruled that she could keep her license, but he noted that police had been notified of the hearing and had not sent a representative.

"There is no indication in this case record. . . that drugs or alcohol were discovered at the scene or in respondent's vehicle, nor that the consumption of drugs or alcohol was suspected on the part of either [Sireci or James Walker]," Schall wrote in a decision dated April 4, 2013.

Suffolk police issued a statement saying they missed the hearing because the police officer was on vacation, and the department has "taken steps to ensure that future miscommunications do not take place."

State Sen. John Flanagan (R-East Northport) sponsored a bill that passed the Senate last year that would remove the requirement that there be signs of impairment before police can order a test of the driver. A similar, but not identical, bill passed the Assembly.

"I would love to see legislation that mandates testing, but there are fundamental issues of due process," Flanagan said. "This is a very interim, positive step."

Nassau County District Attorney Kathleen Rice has criticized the current drug-testing law because illegal substances are defined only as those listed in the Public Health Law, which includes Adderall, but not such intoxicants as bath salts, some synthetic marijuana or the aerosol spray Dust-Off.

■ **\$29.9M life sciences building named for Lindsay**

■ **Says it would help keep up with industry, enrollment**

BY CANDICE FERRETTE

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Suffolk County Community College today will open the first new academic building on the school's Selden campus in 44 years, marking a major investment in its rapidly growing life sciences department.

The \$29.9 million building is being named for William J. Lindsay, the Suffolk County Legislature's presiding officer who died of lung cancer last year at age 67.

About 200 people, including elected officials, members of Lindsay's family and SCCC administrators and faculty, are expected to gather this morning on the Ammerman campus in Selden for the dedication.

"This building will enable our students to train on state-of-the-art equipment," said SCCC President Shawn McKay, who credited Lindsay with helping to secure the county-state funding for the project. "We are being innovative and responsive to the demands of the industry."

The 62,760-square-foot structure will help keep pace with the number of students flocking to life sciences disciplines such as biology, chemistry, environmental science and nursing, school officials said.

The college's enrollment in life science disciplines has risen exponentially in recent years, outgrowing the former building,



■ **Take video tour of the new building: newsday.com/selden**

said Rosa M. Gambier, chairwoman of the biology department.

The old life sciences building served some 4,700 students in the 2013-14 academic year, up from 2,700 in 2004-05.

"We are thrilled. It has been a long time coming and we have so many new ideas," Gambier said. "In the last three years, we could not meet demand because we didn't have the space."

Changes in science education — more hands-on learning and

group work than lectures and memorization — also called for better lab facilities, she said.

The building will serve students looking to pursue careers in high-demand, allied health care fields such as nursing and physical therapy. Liberal arts students required to take science classes also will be served.

The building was designed by BBS Architects of Patchogue. It will house laboratories, lecture halls, classrooms, computer sta-

tions, meeting rooms and faculty offices. Among the features is a three-story glass atrium with a digital video wall made up of 16 46-inch LED ultra-narrow bezel monitors set up in a grid.

The building is LEED-certified, as required by the state university system, and has several elements of environmentally sustainable design. A solar energy roof will provide more than 60 percent of the building's electricity, saving about \$48,000 per year, officials said.

Students can gather among gardens, a contained drainage system and storm water collection areas with native, drought-resistant vegetation. The architects say the building's design aims to encourage the study of nature.

The Ammerman campus is the oldest of SCCC's three locations and has by far the most students, with an enrollment of more than 14,000, according to the college. Other campuses are in Brentwood and Riverhead.

Nassau Community College in 2012 opened a \$40-million life sciences building constructed from recycled materials. The 74,000-square-foot structure houses its growing nursing and chemistry departments.

Denise Lindsay Sullivan, an assistant superintendent in the Hampton Bays school district and the newest SCCC trustee, said naming the building for her late father is a fitting honor.

"He spent his life dedicated to working families, so it has so much meaning. Suffolk County Community College is the college for working families and that's why he believed in it so strongly," she said. "I just wish he was here to see it."

BROOKHAVEN CONSERVATIVES SUE COUNTY PARTY

BY DAVID M. SCHWARTZ

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The Brookhaven Town Conservative Committee has sued the Suffolk Conservative Party and its chairman Edward Walsh for taking away the town's power to endorse candidates.

The federal lawsuit, brought under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization law, said Walsh tried to "intimidate and coerce" the town

party, the largest in the county, as he tried to increase his "political clout."

Vincent Messina Jr., attorney for Walsh and the Conservative Party, called the lawsuit frivolous. "We deny any allegation of wrongdoing by either chairman Walsh or the committee," he said. He declined to address specific charges because the litigation is ongoing.

On Oct. 8, the executive committee of the county party

voted to pull Brookhaven's authorization to issue Wilson-Pakula designations allowing non-party members to receive the Conservative ballot line. That vote came after Brookhaven Conservative co-chair Kenneth Auerbach of Port Jefferson tried to rally votes to challenge Walsh as county chairman.

Messina said county Conservatives followed all bylaws and rules when they revoked the town party's authorization.

The lawsuit, filed Friday in

U.S. District Court in Brooklyn, said Walsh repeatedly had threatened to take away the town party's Wilson-Pakula authorization since 2010.

William Wexler, another attorney for Walsh, said the FBI began investigating the county chairman on charges he collected salary at his county job for time he did not work. Newsday has reported that the investigation has broadened into a look at possible political corruption in the county.

Also, Sheriff Vincent DeMarco has moved to terminate Walsh from his job as a corrections lieutenant.

HUNTINGTON

Call to expand test program for rape kits

Rep. Steve Israel (D-Huntington) said the FBI and National Institute of Justice should expand a program that tests rape kits to reduce the backlog of untested DNA samples nationwide.

The federal program launched in August allows law enforcement agencies to submit 30 untested kits, called sexual assault forensic evidence kits, at a time. Israel sent a letter to the FBI and institute directors yesterday asking that the number of kits accepted be expanded. He also asked that they launch a pilot program to analyze other types of forensic evidence beyond biological testing.

Israel said at a news conference at Suffolk's Second Precinct that there are an estimated 400,000 rape kits around the county that have not been tested. He said each kit costs \$1,000 to \$1,500 to test.

He said the existing program is a start. "Thirty is good, but how many years will it take us to eliminate the backlog?" he said.

Suffolk County had no backlog of untested rape kits as of August, Deputy County Executive Jon Schneider said yesterday. Nassau County police said the number of untested or backlogged DNA evidence was not available.

Natasha Alexenko, founder and spokeswoman of Natasha's Justice Project, spoke of her experiences after being raped at gunpoint in 1993 in New York City.

Alexenko, of Bay Shore, went through the rape kit exam, which she described as a "very invasive gynecological exam." The kit sat "collecting dust" for 9½ years, she said at the news conference. "I felt like I was being re-victimized," she said.

Her assailant was caught when he was picked up for jaywalking in Las Vegas and his DNA matched what was in her rape kit.

— DAVID M. SCHWARTZ

LINDENHURST

Hearing on planned senior housing units

The Village of Lindenhurst today is holding a public

hearing on a rezoning application for a planned senior housing complex.

Mitchell Giannini, who owns two senior complexes in the village, wants to build a senior rental complex called Gail Grace Manor North on property now zoned industrial and residential. His application calls for rezoning the land to a senior citizen multiple residence district. The rezoning is for 515 Jackson Ave. and 402, 484 and 488 41st St. The rezoning would include property east of Ocean Avenue, west of Jackson Avenue and south of 42nd Street.

According to village officials, Giannini uses part of the property for his business, Giannini Landscaping. Giannini owns Gail Grace Manor and Gail Grace Manor West, both on Montauk Highway.

Giannini has proposed building 29 units with 59 parking spaces on 1.42 acres for the new housing, village Deputy Clerk Doug Madlon said. If approved by the village board, the application would go back to the planning board for approval, Madlon said.

The hearing will be at 7:30 p.m. at Village Hall, 430 S. Wellwood Ave.

— DENISE M. BONILLA

UNIONDALE

Domestic violence workshop at Hofstra

Hofstra University will host a domestic violence workshop today from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Axinn Library.

The conference will focus on how communities, police and corporations respond to domestic violence.

A panel called "Survivors of Domestic Violence and their Memories" will include five women who will share their experiences as victims of domestic abuse.

Other panels will focus on domestic violence education, prevention, and state and community response.

The seminars will be held at the 246 East Library Wing, on the library's second floor on the South Campus, 123 Hofstra University.

The seminars are free and open to the public. For information, call the Hofstra Cultural Center at 516-463-5669.

— JOHN ASBURY

GLEN COVE

Budget hearing stays open until Oct. 28

Glen Cove City officials have kept the public hearing on next year's proposed budget open until their Oct. 28 meeting.

About a half-dozen people spoke at the City Council budget hearing Oct. 14.

Mayor Reginald Spinello's proposed budget for next year would raise residential real estate taxes 1.17 percent — a \$38 increase for a home with an assessed value of \$500,000.

Commercial taxes would decrease 0.84 percent — an \$80 reduction in taxes per \$500,000 of assessed value.

Spinello has proposed a \$72,441,567 budget for 2015, which represents about a 3.6 percent hike from this year's budget of \$69,923,027.

The proposed budget includes a 1.64 percent tax levy increase, below the state's tax levy cap of 2.46 percent, Spinello said.

The public can comment on the proposed budget again at the Oct. 28 meeting. A final vote is scheduled for that night.

— MACKENZIE RIGG

GARDEN CITY

Mental health talk at LI Ethical Humanist

The National Alliance on Mental Illness Queens/Nassau and the Dave Nee Foundation are hosting a discussion on mental health at the Long Island Ethical Humanist Society, 38 Old Country Rd., Garden City, tomorrow from 7 to 9:30 p.m.

Young professionals and mental health experts will be on hand while those attending share their stories to help end the stigma surrounding mental illness in the nation, the organizations said in a news release.

The alliance is a grassroots organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness, according to the release. For information, go to namiqn.org.

The Dave Nee Foundation, based at Fordham University in the Bronx, works to eliminate the social stigma associated with depression and

suicidal thoughts so that vulnerable young adults will seek treatment, according to the release. It works within the legal sector with law students, bar associations and law firms to promote treatment. To learn more, go to daveneefoundation.org or lawlifeline.org.

— SID CASSESE

SMITHTOWN

Disabilities institute now offers mini golf

The Developmental Disabilities Institute yesterday unveiled a nine-hole mini golf course at its Meadow Glen campus in Smithtown.

The course will offer adults served by the institute the opportunity to develop social skills and improve self-esteem, officials said in a news release.

"Playing miniature golf provides many health benefits such as stress relief, light cardio exercise, fresh air, and the increased use of gross motor skills," Steve Gagag, the institute's recreation manager, said in the release.

The course was donated by the family of Ryan Finn, who attends the Meadow Glen day program.

Day programs assist adults served by DDI with education, personal skills development, recreation and job training services, officials said.

"With the generosity of the Finn family, we are able to provide this amazing course to the individuals we serve," said Brian Cabezas, the organization's director of Adult Day Services.

The institute is a nonprofit with more than 30 locations on Long Island. It is the largest provider of services for individuals with autism on Long Island and provides special educational, vocational, day and residential programs, as well as health care services for more than 5,000 children and adults with autism or other developmental disabilities.

— SID CASSESE

SUFFOLK COUNTY

Community college student open house

The Suffolk County Community College system plans to hold an open house Nov. 2 for prospective or recently accepted students. The open house will be held at all three campus-

ISLIP REPORTER



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What I cover

I cover the Town of Islip, along with my colleague Sophia Chang. I can usually be seen roaming around the hamlets I write about — Bay Shore, Brentwood and Central Islip — talking to residents, taking pictures and live-tweeting events. I will be covering everything from local politics and education to economic development. If you've got a story to tell, please don't hesitate to tweet, email or call me.

Coming up

I plan to attend a town budget hearing on Nov. 6.

Find community stories at newsday.com/towns

es from 1 to 3 p.m.

Interested students and their families can tour the facilities and meet with faculty, administrators and current students to discuss the college's more than 70 degree programs and 30 certificate programs. They can also learn about financial aid and scholarships. Veterans are encouraged to attend and learn more about special programs and services.

"Prospective Suffolk County Community College students and those accepted will discover that making a personal visit to a campus is critical to the college decision making process," Joanne Braxton, dean of enrollment management, said in a news release. "We look forward to having students and their families join us to learn about our academic programs and student support services."

The open house is free, but participants should confirm their attendance. To visit the Ammerman Campus in Selden, contact the Babylon Student Center at 631-451-4022. For the Michael J. Grant Campus in Brentwood, contact the Sagtikos Arts & Sciences Building at 631-851-6719. To tour the Eastern Campus in Riverhead, contact the Peconic Building at 631-548-2512.

— SOPHIA CHANG