

Advocacy. A key component of our advocacy efforts remains our direct one on one conversations as well as presentations before key constituent groups. Along with members of my Cabinet, we appeared numerous times before the Education and Information Technology Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature to present updates on College activities and to continue discussions related to our capital and operating budgets. We also appeared in joint meetings with the County Executive's staff to discuss progress and new initiatives being advanced at the College. One-on-one meetings were held with our Long Island delegation in Albany and we will continue to hold these meetings with members of the Long Island delegation elected to the State Senate and Assembly.

Recently, I was asked to co-chair the Legislative Committee for the African American President's Roundtable. This body is an affiliate of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC). Serving as co-chair is a significant national position, as my committee will be required to advance national issues/policies for Presidents from community colleges around the country.

I am also one of six SUNY community college presidents selected to serve on the New York Community College Association of Presidents (NYCCAP) Futures Task Force. As there has been a prolonged history of many Local Sponsors not meeting their fiscal obligations in support of community colleges across the State, and since the State has seldom delivered the 40% funding as required by law, the New York Community College Association of Presidents (NYCCAP) determined that it will examine the current funding formula, delivering its findings to NYCCAP in time for its June 2013 meeting.

In February the College hosted New York State's Secretary of State Cesar A. Perales, who presented highlights from Governor Andrew M. Cuomo's proposed budget during an informational session held at the Culinary Arts and Hospitality Center in Riverhead. This session was open to business, industry, educational institutions, and residents across Long Island.

It was an honor to join SUNY Chancellor Nancy Zimpher, Chairman of the SUNY Board of Trustees Carl McCall and presidents from five other SUNY institutions in Albany, as we met with elected officials during SUNY Day to speak about the successes of the 64 campuses during the most recent operating year. Included in these appointments were meetings with State Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos, Senator Kenneth LaValle, Speaker of the Assembly Sheldon Silver, and Assemblymen Michael Fitzpatrick and Philip Ramos.

In March, at the invitation of the New York State Assembly Republican Members from Suffolk and Nassau counties, I was invited to present testimony on how Governor Andrew Cuomo's 2012-2013 Executive Budget proposal would impact Long Island residents. The following month, I attended an organizational meeting that brought together the six CUNY Presidents and the four SUNY Presidents invited to represent the system's 30 community colleges. The discussion centered upon the numerous opportunities that exist for collaboration between the combined SUNY/CUNY community colleges. Follow-up meetings will occur, where mutual goals can be determined and appropriate action steps pursued.

Chairwoman of the College's Board of Trustees Dafny J. Irizarry and I were special guests and in attendance when President Barack Obama announced that his Fiscal Year 2013 budget included a proposed $8 Billion to fund job training partnerships involving community colleges. The Community College to Career fund is intended to train 2 million workers, leading directly to employment. This proposal would have