promises to shape the efforts of nearly 1,200 institutions serving over 13 million students – almost half of all U.S. undergraduates. Our work will provide the framework for developing policies for education in the United States.

SUNY Day took place March 12th and 13th in Washington, D.C. Of the approximately 50 participants, Suffolk County Community College was one of a handful of SUNY community colleges represented. Participants were addressed by United States Senator Charles Schumer and Congressman Tim Bishop. Both took the opportunity to speak about the budget and the political challenges facing higher education in Congress. They were not optimistic about additional funding or that sequestration would be resolved anytime soon. SUNY four-year institutions have been hit harder by sequestration because of the potential loss of research funding. They warned that while Pell Grants are safe for now, the program's future is uncertain.

Locally, a key component of our advocacy efforts remains our direct conversations and presentations before the Suffolk County Legislature and its Education and Information Technology Committee. This past year, along with members of my Cabinet, we delivered presentations on the College's operating and capital budgets, the Middle States warning and the College's planning and assessment activities. Trustees Hazlitt and Mangual spoke on the record regarding the value of the College and thanked the Legislators for their ongoing support for the institution. In addition, Chairwoman Irizarry and Trustee Hazlitt met with the Chair of the Legislature's Education Committee.

In June, I was invited to join Governor Andrew Cuomo and members of the Joint Higher Education-Regional Economic Development Council to unveil details of the Governor's Tax-Free New York proposal. Tax-Free New York has been launched in order to encourage companies to invest in New York by offering businesses the opportunity to operate completely tax-free, including no income tax for employees, no sales, property, or business tax, for a decade. This was an exciting event, with SUNY and its institutions playing a central role in the announcement. Most of the SUNY Presidents were in attendance. At the request of SUNY Communications, Stony Brook took the lead on developing an OpEd on behalf of the Long Island-based SUNY campuses in support of the Governor's plan. The final piece was co-authored by the Presidents of Stony Brook, Farmingdale, Old Westbury and Suffolk.

Community Leadership. I remain actively involved with the Long Island Regional Advisory Council on Higher Education (LIRACHE). The College was selected to host LIRACHE's annual fall dinner at our Culinary Arts and Hospitality Center in Riverhead, where college presidents from across Long Island gathered to celebrate the group's 2012 accomplishments. The retirement of Mona Goldstein, LIRACHE's Executive Director, was acknowledged as part of the program and a special video tribute was produced by the College's Office of Institutional Advancement to mark that occasion. In January, the LIRACHE Superintendent-College President Partnership, which I co-chair along with Tom Rogers from the superintendents, hosted New York State Education Department Commissioner John King, who spoke to our group and responded to questions.

In October, the College hosted the Long Island Latino Teachers Association's (LILTA) Fourth Annual Women's Conference: *Women Leaders Paving Paths for Young Women*. I delivered welcoming remarks to over 500 high school students, encouraging them to pursue a college degree. The following March, we hosted LILTA's Men's Conference. We congratulate and applaud the staff and officers at the Long Island Latino Teachers Association, as well as the volunteers including the members of each panel that took part in this activity.





Welcoming remarks were delivered to more than 500 high school students at the Long Island Latino Teachers Association's (LILTA) Fourth Annual Women's Conference.