



**STRATEGIC DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PLAN**  
**2017-2022**

**Deborah F. Stanley**  
**President**

## **AN INTRODUCTION BY PRESIDENT DEBORAH F. STANLEY**

I am pleased to present the State University of New York at Oswego's Strategic Diversity and Inclusion Plan. The ethos of SUNY Oswego is rooted in diversity of thought and people, equitable practices and policies and inclusive experiences. Not only does a diverse academic community contribute significantly to the broader goals of access and equity; such a community fosters a rich and inclusive learning environment for all students and employees. Oswego embraces the policy adopted by the SUNY Board of Trustees [2015] as defining diversity to include "race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, socioeconomic status, status as a veteran, status as an individual with a disability, students undergoing transition (such as transfer, stop-out, International student acclimation), and first-generation students." We embrace this policy because we believe that a truly inclusive and equitable college community engages its faculty and staff in an environment that welcomes, respects and values all members of the campus and embraces their indispensable contributions to student success and to the life of the college.

The objective of this plan is to provide a proactive, thoughtful and participatory approach to strengthening diversity, equity and inclusion throughout our college community. SUNY Oswego has a rich history and long record of celebrating and recognizing faculty, staff and students from diverse backgrounds. This past summer, we welcomed our 47th Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) class to campus and, a few weeks later, we held our 30th annual African, Latino, Asian, Native American (ALANA) week. However, despite our proud record of providing access and opportunity to thousands of talented and deserving students from all backgrounds over the years, we know we must do more together to continue to attract and retain our best faculty, staff and students. In doing so, we will live our college's vision statement, *Inspired by a shared commitment to excellence and the desire to transcend traditional higher-education boundaries, SUNY Oswego will be a premier institution that provides a transformative experience to a diverse body of students, empowering them to live ethical and meaningful lives and build a better world.*

SUNY Oswego has been driven forward by our mission, values and vision and we have made great strides toward achieving greater diversity, equity and inclusion. We have found significant value in advancing our long-term commitment to these anchors of our vision as diversity, equity and inclusion have been a major focus throughout our successive institutional plans and wide-ranging initiatives across the campus.

With this Diversity and Inclusion Plan, we will utilize the leadership and creativity we have established over the years and apply new resources and practices to continue to move SUNY Oswego forward. We will begin by coming together to share our perspectives and experiences, and we will work together to implement best practices using our and others' expertise. We will deepen and expand our curricular and extra-curricular programming based on the principles of inclusive excellence. We are our strongest, most innovative and lasting when we recognize and celebrate our individual uniqueness and unite in our collective diversity. Together, guided by this plan, we move forward toward a more equitable and inclusive tomorrow for all.

## **FAST FACTS**

SUNY Oswego enrolls more than 8,000 students, some 7,000 of them full-time undergraduates. Approximately 4,400 students live on campus among the college's 13 residence halls and communities. Overall, Oswego's lakeside campus stretches for almost 700 acres and includes 58 buildings.

More than 1,400 first-year students, with a mean high school grade point average of 90 and average SAT of 1090 (Critical Reading and Math), enrolled in Fall 2016. Among them were nearly 180 Presidential Scholars with a mean high school grade point average of 95 and SAT of 1230; an additional 485 first-year students received Co-op, Dean, Merit, or Destination Oswego scholarships. And 700 transfer students, with an average GPA of 3.0, chose Oswego to pursue their bachelor's degrees; over 200 of these students received Merit or Destination Oswego awards.

Overall, SUNY Oswego annually provides close to \$6 million in merit-based scholarships and more than \$80 million in need-based grants, loans and work-study awards to support undergraduate student success at Oswego.

Oswego is one of 13 university colleges in the 64-campus SUNY system. As a comprehensive college, Oswego offers more than 110 majors, minors, cooperative and graduate programs.

Degrees awarded:

Bachelor of Arts  
Bachelor of Fine Arts  
Bachelor of Science  
Master of Arts  
Master of Arts in Teaching  
Master of Business Administration  
Master of Science  
Master of Science in Education  
Master of Science in Teaching  
Certificate of Advanced Study

Employees:

— 1,078 full-time faculty and staff  
— 400 part-time faculty and staff

Annual economic impact:

— \$179.4 million total economic impact for Oswego County  
— \$345 million total economic impact to the immediate seven-county region

## **OVERVIEW OF DIVERSITY AT OSWEGO**

SUNY Oswego is a public comprehensive college located in Central New York. It has been named one of "Top Up-and-Coming Schools" in U.S. News "America's Best Colleges" in 2010, a Kiplinger's "Best College Value" for 2015, and a "Best Northeastern College" by Princeton Review every year since the first edition in 2003. The College's success is built on providing students outstanding educational experiences. Oswego is committed to enhancing its diversity and actively engages in recruiting, supporting, and fostering a diverse community of outstanding faculty, staff and students.

Recognizing its geographical location (rural, predominately white community) Oswego has actively recruited students from across the New York state as well as neighboring states and urban areas like Baltimore, M.D. and Washington, D.C.

### **Students**

The College's new branch campus in downtown Syracuse, provides expanded regional access to undergraduate and graduate education at affordable tuition rates for individuals that are locally anchored or place-bound. The site primarily serves non-residential and non-traditional students that find it difficult or impossible to commute to the main campus in Oswego for classes. Located less than a block away from city transportation and offering courses at SUNY tuition rates, the site is attractive to a diverse population.

The Office of Admissions has created a rich database which enables the College to identify our best recruitment markets. The College has dedicated significant resources to the recruitment of a diverse student body. In 2014, the College hired a full time recruiter to work in New York City. Part of the recruitment process in New York City and Long Island is providing bus trips to campus for students from those areas who have been admitted to the college, in addition to hosting receptions for students and their families in New York City and Long Island.

Additionally, the College hosts open house and campus visit programs tailored to accommodate long distance students and their families and offers a variety of scholarship opportunities including Presidential, Dean, Merit, Destination and Possibility scholarships. We are also a member of NACME (National Action Council for Minorities in Education) and have a dedicated scholarship program for students from NACME-affiliated schools.

The College's efforts yielded the following results:

- In fall 2016, first-year new student enrollment was 51% female and 49% male. In terms of applications and offers of admission, 55% of applications and admits were female, 45% male.
- The fall 2016 first-year cohort is very geographically diverse. It includes nearly 300 freshmen from New York City, six from Washington, D.C., and scores of students from 14 other states and 18 countries.
- The fall class of 2016 was the most culturally diverse first-year class ever to enroll at SUNY Oswego. Of the first-year applications, 49.6% were from diverse backgrounds. Specifically, the breakdown included the following: 6% Asian, 17.8% Black/African-American, 22.4% Hispanic, 3.2% identifying as multi-racial and .2% Native American or Pacific Islander

combined. Among admitted first-year students, 36% identified themselves in one of these categories, and ultimately 33.7% of the enrolled first-year students were diverse. This constitutes a 153% increase compared to a decade ago and a 64% increase compared to just five years ago.

- Our application and enrollment figures of new diverse students show great progress: the latest U.S. Census data (2015) reports 46% of New York State as non-white. However, the growth of our enrollment of first-year students from diverse backgrounds in the time period 2010-2015 is more than double that of the state: New York State diversity increased four percentage points during that time period, while SUNY Oswego's new student diversity has increased nearly 11 percentage points.
- In fall 2016, 28% of total undergraduate students are from culturally diverse backgrounds which is an increase of nearly 12% since 2010.
- Additionally, the college has steadily increased the number and percentages of first generation students and students with various levels of socio-economic diversity. For example, between 2014 and 2016, the first generation student population total rose from 1,938 and 26.9% of the undergraduate population to 2,022 and 28.3%.

SUNY Oswego is also committed to providing an outstanding educational experience and support systems to foster student success. As a result of collective efforts during the past four years, SUNY Oswego has improved its underrepresented student first to second year retention rate from 75% (cohort of 2012) to nearly 80% (cohort of 2015) and closed the achievement gap between retention of minority and non-minority students from 79.8% minority retention as compared to 81.6% non-minority retention.

### **Employees**

- 11% of 1,478 employees of the college are from culturally diverse backgrounds.
- 26% of faculty are from culturally diverse backgrounds.

## **INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMMING (1986-Present)**

- Instituted an **Annual ALANA (African, Latino, Asian and Native American) Student Leadership Conference** (1986), which is a staple for promoting unity in a multicultural environment while celebrating the contributions of many cultures at SUNY Oswego.
- Established an annual **Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration** (1989). In January 2016, the 30<sup>th</sup> annual celebration featured Dr. Bernice King, the youngest daughter of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Additionally, Grammy Award winning gospel artist Pastor Smokie Norful performed.
- Participated in the **National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI)** (1990). The campus funded travel, registration and multi-day participation for a team of faculty and professional staff to participate in NCBI's nationally recognized diversity leadership workshops, which covered topics such as prejudice reduction, coalition building and conflict resolution; the team was trained in assessing individual and group skills in order to lead diverse communities and organizations, as well as bridging differences in order to successfully achieve common goals.
- Linked recruitment of culturally diverse students to enrollment management planning, added a **Student Diversity Recruitment and Retention sub-committee** (1992) (formerly the Minority Recruitment and Retention sub-committee) to the institution's Enrollment Management Council.
- Established an **Alumni of Color Reunion** (1996). This event is an affirmation of the institution's commitment to make inroads with alumni of color, the majority of whom had not participated in any significant numbers in traditional alumni events, including reunions. This major event is held every five years and is open to the entire campus community. It created a mechanism for alumni of color to reestablish ties with their alma mater and to connect and network with currently enrolled students.
- Established a **Mentoring Core Group for Faculty and Staff of Color** (1997). This group was formed through a collaboration that grew out of a UUP Labor/Management subcommittee. More than 25 faculty, staff and administrators have served as informal mentors to new hired faculty and staff of color, helping to introduce them to the campus community and checking in on their transition and progress during the first academic year.
- Established the **School of Education Diversity Committee** (1999) to promote the School of Education's diversity goals with respect to faculty, curriculum/program, field placement and the community.
  - The SUNY Oswego Teacher Recruitment for Urban Schools Today (TRUST) Initiative offers support to prospective teachers. The ultimate goal is to increase the number of teachers from underrepresented groups in high-need urban schools.
  - SUNY Oswego's School of Education also promotes diversity policies through its work with various Native American communities by offering multiple sections of EDU 380, "Culturally Relevant Teaching," a course required for teacher training experience for approximately 150 undergraduate and 15 graduate students each semester.
- Hired an **Associate Provost for Multicultural Opportunities and Programs** (2007) responsible for implementing policies and procedures related to multiculturalism and diversity that serve the academic mission of the university.
- Hosted the **Sixth Annual Symposium on Learning and Teaching** (2010), "Communicating Diversity and Diversifying Communication."

- Developed “**Voices of Diversity**” (2011). Oswego students asked organizers of the college’s annual Media Summit to initiate programming focused primarily on diversity issues in media. “Voices of Diversity” promotes awareness of the lack of representation and misrepresentation of minorities in the media industry and encourages diversity in all aspects of the media.
- Hosted an annual **Career Opportunities in the Accounting Profession (COAP)** (2010) program by the school of Business. COAP is a residential summer program sponsored by the New York State Society of Certified Public Accountants/Foundation for Accounting Education (NYSSCPA/FAE). This program gives culturally diverse high school juniors and seniors the opportunity to experience on-campus living while learning about careers available in accounting and developing professional skills such as resume building and interviewing techniques.
  - In order to enhance recruiting of underrepresented minority faculty, the School of Business is a member of the Ph.D. Project (2015). The Ph.D. Project is a non-profit organization that encourages and supports underrepresented minority candidates to pursue a doctorate in business.
  - As part of the Business Symposium, SUNY Oswego hosted a panel discussion on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Business (2016).
- Recognized as a leader in **veteran, reserve and active duty military education** in many publications; SUNY Oswego was named a Best for Vets College by Military Times for 2016; a Military Friendly School by Military Advanced Education for 2016, 2015, 2014 and 2013; and a Military Friendly School by G. I. Jobs for 2016, 2015 and 2014. SUNY Oswego has been a leader in the SUNY-wide effort to serve Fort Drum for over 20 years as part of the SUNY Colleges in the North Country Consortium. SUNY Oswego awards up to 30 college credit for military experience through the Joint Services Transcript System. The Lt. Col. Mike Waters, USAF (Ret.) '70 Scholarship is awarded annually to assist students needing financial assistance with preference given to veterans, particularly combat veterans. In fall 2016, SUNY Oswego received the NYS Industries for the Disabled grant to dedicate and enhance the Veteran Student Lounge as a Battle Buddy Center.
- Established a **Diversity and Inclusion Committee** (2014) under the leadership of Oswego’s Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management.
- Created **I AM OZ Campaign** (2014) which observes all federal heritage months. Faculty, staff and students belonging to the various ethnic groups recognized in the federal heritage months are featured on posters across the campus to bring increased awareness to the diversity on our campus.
- Added **Diversity and Inclusion Programming** (2014) to New Student Orientation. As part of their transition to Oswego, new and incoming students participate in small group discussions, led by Laker Leaders, around topics related to diversity and inclusion. Discussions are structured around a skit series called "Life on Campus" that helps frame issues related to race, gender identity, etc.
- Appointed Interim **Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer** (2015).
- Created the **Diversity Speakers Series** (2015). This program is a collaboration between the Divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs and Enrollment Management and was funded by a \$10,000 grant from the State University of New York.
  - Fall 2015 speakers included Dr. Derald Wing Sue, an expert on microaggressions and a professor of Counseling Psychology at Columbia University; Bobby Gonzales, a

nationally known multicultural motivational speaker, storyteller and poet; Robin Kimmerer, Professor of Environmental and Forest Biology at the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry; and Arlene Kanter, Professor of Environmental and Forest Biology at the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

- Spring 2016 speakers included Dr. Bernice A. King, social justice leader and daughter of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; Marc Lamont Hill, BET TV news anchor and author; Anand Giridharadas, New York Times columnist and author; and Marilyn Chin, Chinese-American poet.
- Launched the **Shine the Light on Oz Diversity Campaign** (2015). This campaign encouraged conversations regarding all aspects of diversity by “Shining a Light” on the subject and bringing it out of the darkness.
- Created the **Diversity Webpage and Email Address** (2015) to highlight diversity activities on campus and to create a space for faculty, students and staff to share concerns at [diversity@oswego.edu](mailto:diversity@oswego.edu).
- Hosted SUNY Oswego’s **11th annual Lewis B. O’Donnell Media Summit** (2015) engaged panelists on how to fairly cover diversity in an era rampant with news of intolerance of many kinds.
- Began offering three undergraduate completion **degrees in Human Development, Business and Public Justice at the Metro Center** (2016) in Syracuse to expand education options to non-traditional students. Courses are offered in a blended format of both in-person and online, and students are able to access student services from the site. Graduate programs are also available onsite or online: MBA, Mental Health Counseling, Childhood Education, Educational Leadership, Health Information Technology and Integrated Health Systems.
  - Adult and non-traditional students (25 and older) comprise 6.48% of the SUNY Oswego student population. Oswego's sizable community of non-traditional students is an important part of our fabric. To provide access to these students, SUNY Oswego offers options to earn degrees part time, online and at the Syracuse Metro Center. In fall 2016, the Adult and Non-Traditional Student Lounge was established to provide these students a place to gather, study and network with other students, considered a best practice for retention.
- Provided **Diversity Training for Auxiliary Services** employees (2016). Phyllis Braxton, President and Founder of PINK Consulting, LLC, spoke about questioning systems and their commitment to inclusivity.
- Brought **Dr. Genny Beemyn** (2016) to campus to speak with students. Dr. Beemyn is the Director of the Stonewall Center, a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual Resource Center, at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Dr. Beemyn has published and spoken extensively on the experiences and needs of the trans community.
- Received \$1,000 **Corporate Grant from Target Corporation** (2016). This grant was awarded to fund a workshop in spring 2016 on “Microaggressions in the Workplace”.
- Established new support groups in the Counseling Services Center including **LGBTQIA+ and Women of Color** support groups (2016).
- Earned a national honor for its inclusive study-abroad initiative. The Institute for International Education chose Oswego’s “**I, Too, Am Study Abroad**” campaign (2016) for honorable mention in its Andrew Heiskell Awards for Innovation in International Education program. The honor was one of only three awarded in the study-abroad category.

- Developed **OzSpeaks** (2016), a series of moderated “Speak Outs” where members of the SUNY Oswego community can come and share their thoughts and feelings on issues, challenges and events occurring in our society. By way of their attendance, all those present agree to abide by the principles of participation for the event, and moderators are on hand to reiterate these principles as needed. All forms of expression, from simple anecdotes, personal stories, to song, poetry or spoken word are welcome at these events so long as they relate to the topic and abide by the principles of participation. The event begins with an introduction from a moderator, who covers the purpose of the event and the principles guiding participants. After this point, the floor is open to all in attendance. The event ends when all who are willing to share their expressions have done so. Topics included: Orlando Pulse, Black Lives Matter, Blue Lives Matter, and Unpacking Political Correctness.
- Established **Students Helping Oz Peers (S.H.O.P.)** (2016), a food and clothing pantry for students at Oswego. Its mission is the support students struggling with food insecurities as well as those in need of toiletries and clothing. It a collaborative effort between the Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management and Student Association, a grant from Auxiliary Services and generous donations from faculty, staff, alumni and retirees.

## **STRATEGIC DIVERSITY PLAN**

### **Mission**

Recognizing the impact of diversity, our mission is to foster an environment which respects, embraces and promotes cultural competence, civil discourse and active engagement in developing an inclusive and vibrant community of scholars who act as transformational agents of change and who will become responsible citizens of the world.

### **Vision**

To become an institution that serves as a model for inclusive excellence.

### **Values**

- Social justice
- Equality and equity
- Cultural competence
- Civil discourse
- Active engagement

### **Institutional Diversity Goals**

**Goal 1** - Ensure the campus commitment to diversity and inclusion is clear, transparent and evident at the highest levels of the institution and throughout every office and department.

**Goal 2** - Increase diversity in the SUNY Oswego student body that is representative of the diversity present in SUNY and within the State of New York.

**Goal 3** - Increase the retention and completion rates of all students while paying close attention to students from underrepresented populations.

**Goal 4** - Create an inclusive environment that promotes the recruitment and retention of diverse campus administrators, faculty and staff.

**Goal 5** - Improve the campus climate for all students, faculty and staff.

**Goal 6** - Create community partnerships that will serve as resources and support the needs of culturally diverse students and employees.

**Goal 7** - Develop an evaluation component to ensure that the campus is meeting its diversity and inclusion commitments and that activities designed within the overall plan are achieving their intended outcomes.

## **Diversity Action Plan**

**Goal 1** - Ensure the campus commitment to diversity and inclusion is clear, transparent, and evident at the highest levels of the institution and throughout every office and department in each division.

### **Actions**

- Recruit and hire a Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer who reports directly to the President.
- Establish a Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council made up of students, staff and faculty representatives.
- Include diversity and inclusion presentations and discussions in new faculty, staff, and student orientation sessions in the beginning of the semester colloquia for returning faculty, department chairs and program directors sponsored by Academic Affairs.
- Establish a transition program for transfer students; international students; and students who are classified as “stop outs.”
- Create an active marketing and communication plan to support campus and community-wide recognition of diversity and inclusion achievements.
- Increase collaboration and communication across various diversity and inclusion efforts.

**Goal 2** - Increase diversity in the SUNY Oswego student body that is representative of the diversity of SUNY and the State of New York.

### **Actions**

- Develop a marketing and recruitment plan that is effective in meeting diversity goals.
- Develop a communication plan that informs prospective students and their families of campus resources and programs that support a diverse and inclusive climate.

**Goal 3** - Increase the retention and completion rates of all students while paying close attention to students from underrepresented populations.

### **Actions**

- Assess identification methods of underrepresented student populations for accuracy and effectiveness and adjust accordingly.
- Increase promotion of academic support services to at-risk underrepresented students.
- Identify at-risk students from underrepresented populations.
- Develop and implement best practice programs and activities that will help close any achievement gaps that exist for minority and low-income students.

**Goal 4** - Create an inclusive environment that promotes the recruitment and retention of diverse campus administrators, faculty and staff.

### **Actions**

- Identify search firms that have demonstrated success partnering with colleges and universities to develop diverse candidate pools if it is decided that a search firm is to be used.
- Review job descriptions to ensure that they are free from bias.
- Review and analyze faculty demographic data to determine which employee groups are underrepresented by schools and departments.

- Develop recruitment strategies for academic departments that focus on increasing the number of faculty from underrepresented groups.
- Develop retention strategies that include mentoring and resources to aid in new employees, faculty and staff transition and acclimation to the greater campus community.
- Create an inventory of current best practices and resources for faculty and staff including support services that particularly engender employee success among historically underserved and underrepresented employees, including those who identify as LGBTQIA+ staff and faculty of color, women and other diverse faculty and staff groups.
- Expand to scale the structure of the college's Mentoring Core Group and employ other strategies including data collection and revision of a mentoring tool kit, a new junior faculty and staff mentoring program.
- Solicit candidates through appropriate professional networks.
- Establish partnerships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges, and Hispanic Serving institutions of higher education.
- Align planning with data from Oswego's Affirmative Action plans submitted annually to SUNY System Administration.
- Review all campus communications to be certain they are not biased.
- Review the current emergency response plan to ensure that it contains information on responding to crises that are related to diversity and inclusion issues.
- Administration, faculty and staff will work with new recruitment strategies established by the Affirmative Action Officer and Human Resource Director to increase diversity.
- Provide cultural competency programming as a central aspect of new employee orientation and regular ongoing professional development for all continuing employees.

**Goal 5** - Improve the campus climate for all students, faculty and staff.

#### **Actions**

- Conduct campus climate studies to identify challenges facing all campus populations and address those challenges appropriately.
- Expand and enhance programming to ensure there is diversity in our offerings that appeal to all sectors of the campus.
- Provide diversity training opportunities for all sectors of the campus.
- Provide incentives for faculty and staff who develop diverse and inclusive curricula and/or living and learning communities.
- Provide incentives for faculty and staff who conduct research on diversity.
- Incorporate campus-wide programs and initiatives that promote the ideals of diversity and inclusion such as Oswego Reading Initiative (ORI) and ARTSWEGO events into the curriculum.
- Evaluate the language used by the institution to ensure that it is both inclusive and accepted by the underrepresented student population it defines.
- Engage diverse alumni in current activities, recruitment and fundraising initiatives to help support an inclusive campus climate.

**Goal 6** - Create community partnerships that will serve as resources and support the needs of culturally diverse students and employees.

**Actions**

- Establish partnerships with organizations in the local and regional community that support the needs of diverse students and employees.
- Provide opportunities for the community partners to be active participants in our diversity and inclusion efforts.
- Educate the campus community on these partnerships and establish a standard procedure for students and employees in need of assistance.

**Goal 7** - Develop an evaluation component to ensure that the campus is meeting its diversity and inclusion commitments and that activities designed within the overall plan are achieving their intended outcomes.

**Actions**

- Conduct regularly scheduled campus climate surveys.
- Continue to monitor the increasing diversity among students, faculty and staff.
- Monitor the retention and graduation rates of the underrepresented student population.
- Monitor the retention rates of underrepresented faculty and staff.
- Develop a public dashboard to track progress in achieving goals.

**CONCLUSION**

The Strategic Diversity and Inclusion Plan for the State University of New York Oswego is a living, breathing document that solidifies the college's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. Our plan is centered around seven core goals and our expectation is that all units of the campus will play an active role in ensuring that our goals are met and exceeded. Through this plan, SUNY Oswego will continue its work to create a more vibrant academic community, rich in all aspects of diversity. The college looks forward to the future and is excited as we help to shape the higher education landscape in the great state of New York.

**DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

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