WASHINGTON (AP) — Global warming and evolution are clipping the tongues of some American bumblebees, a new study finds.

The tongues of two Rocky Mountains species of bumblebees are about one-quarter shorter than they were 40 years ago, evolving that way because climate change altered the buffet of wildflowers they normally feed from, according to a study published Thursday in the journal Science.

In one of these species, the tongue had been half the size of the bee’s body — the equivalent of a human tongue going down to the waist. But because the flowers where the long tongue is required have dwindled, the bees didn’t need that much tongue. Keeping long tongues requires bees to use more energy, so the bees evolved a shorter tongue that allows them to sample a wider variety of flowers, said study lead author Nicole Miller-Struttmann at the State University of New York, Old Westbury.

While biologists have tracked how global warming has altered the developmental, migration, timing and other behavior in plants and animals, what makes this study unusual is the physical changes in the bees, said study co-author Candace Galen at the University of Missouri.

“It speaks to the magnitude of the change of the climate that it’s affecting the evolution of the organisms,” Galen said. “It’s a beautiful demonstration of adaptive evolution.”

Sydney Cameron at the University of Illinois wasn’t part of the study, but praised it as well conducted and significant for the ecosystem of mountain flowers.

The team of biologists studied the bees on three isolated mountaintops in the Rockies, where they had been the most dominant species around. Not so much anymore, Miller-Struttmann said. The longer tongued of the two bees, the golden belted bumblebee, shrank from 50 percent of all the bees to 20 percent, she said.

Because these were so isolated and so high — more than 10,000 feet — pesticides and pathogens, often blamed for bee declines, weren’t a problem, the scientists said. Something else had to be an issue. They compared the bees to those of 40 years ago or more and found the tongues dramatically shorter.

They also found that the temperature in the area had warmed by about 3.6 degrees since the 1960s and the type and amount of flowers had changed.

At first, the scientists figured the flowers were evolving with the bees, as often happens over long time periods in nature, but Miller-Struttmann said that’s not the case.

“The silver lining is that (the bees) are evolving very quickly,” Miller-Struttmann said. “The story may not be as rosy for the flowers.”

Galen worries that without long-tongued bees, some flowers will falter. Also, she said shorter tongue bees often “cheat” and bite a hole in the flower’s side, which doesn’t help the plant spread its seeds.
Climate change is having a surprising effect on bumble bees: Their tongues are shrinking

By Chelsea Harvey

Climate change is making some pretty strange things happen in the world. It’s able to alter the behavior of tiny marine organisms, change the circulation of the oceans and even prompt walruses to huddle en masse on the Alaskan shore. But one of the weirder effects of global warming may be happening inside the mouths of one of our most beloved insects: the bumble bee.

In a new paper published Thursday in the journal Science, researchers suggest that the effects of climate change are causing some bumble bees’ tongues — yes, their tongues — to shrink. In fact, they found that tongues on two alpine species of bumble bees in the Rocky Mountains have shrunk by nearly 25 percent in approximately 40 years. And it might sound bizarre, but this tongue-shrinking could actually have big implications for both the bees and the flowers they pollinate.

Tongue size is important in bees because it controls which flowers they can visit for nectar. Bees with longer tongues are able to collect nectar from flowers with longer corollas (that’s the tube shape a flower’s petals form, protecting the tasty nectar inside).

Bees with more medium-length tongues tend to pollinate many different species of flowers. But bees with long tongues are often considered specialists, meaning they only pollinate flowers with deep corolla tubes — and this can be a beneficial arrangement for both the bee and the plant. The bee gets to collect nectar from flowers that insects with shorter tongues can’t access, meaning it has less competition for food. And the flower is pollinated by bees that are only visiting other flowers of the same type, meaning there’s a better chance its pollen is getting transferred to the correct species.

This tactic works best when food is abundant. But the researchers on this study found that rising temperatures are causing flowers (of all sizes) to decline in the mountains, putting more stress on the bees when it comes to finding food.

With fewer flowers to choose from overall, it makes less sense to be so specialized, says Nicole Miller-Struttmann, lead author of the new study and an assistant professor of biological sciences at SUNY College at Old Westbury. She and her colleagues believe the bees’ tongues are shrinking to allow them to be more generalized when it comes to the flowers they visit, giving them a wider range of food sources to choose from.

The study is “a beautiful piece of work that shows the first incidence of climate affecting an important functional trait in the bees,” said Sydney Cameron, a professor of entomology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, who was not involved with the study.

The researchers conducted their study by measuring bumble bee tongues from two different time periods: bee specimens collected between 1966 and 1980, taken from museum collections, and bees collected between 2012 and 2014. They focused on two different bumble bee species, Bombus balteatus and Bombus sylvicola, which are among the most common species at high elevations in the Rocky Mountains. They found that tongue length, between both species, has declined by 24.4 percent in all, or about 0.61 percent each year.

Cameron believes it would be a good idea to conduct the same study again in five years, just to be sure that the tongue-shrinking is a long-term trend and not just “short-term cycling.” But if the trend holds true, it represents an instance of surprisingly rapid evolution in the bees.

“It’s a very short period of time to have seen such a strong shift,” said Leif Richardson, a postdoctoral research fellow at the University of Vermont’s Gund Institute for Ecological Economics, who was not involved with the study. “It suggests that these bees may have an especially low effective population size and that they could have been through an evolutionary bottleneck, allowing very rapid change in these traits.”

The researchers had several ideas about what might be causing the tongues to shorten — the effects of climate change on floral density was one of their theories, but not the only one. They also investigated whether a reduction in the bees’ overall body size could have caused the tongues to shorten, as well as whether an increase in short-tubed flowers or an increase in food competition from other organisms might have caused the bees to evolve.

But the strongest evidence pointed to the effects of climate change on floral resources in the area. According to the researchers, minimum summer temperatures in the mountains they sampled have increased by about 2 degrees Celsius since 1960. That means it’s become more common for temperatures to get warm enough to cause flowers — of all sizes — to decline. And, in fact, the researchers found that total food resources for bumble bees in the region have fallen by about 60 percent since the 1970s.

So the tongue-shrinking seems to be an adaptation that allows the bees to better cope with dwindling food supplies. “When resources are low, it’s more advantageous to go to lots of different flowers because there’s more resources that way,” Miller-Struttmann said. “And it takes less energy to get to them because you don’t have to search them out as much.”

In this way, the tongue evolution could be a boon for bees, helping them adapt to their changing landscape. But the tongue-shrinking could have negative effects for the long-tubed flowers these bees used to pollinate. “It is possible that, at the same time, plant species that depend on these bees are receiving less effective pollination service,” Richardson said.

It’s possible that the plants could also adapt to the bees’ new behavior, perhaps by evolving shorter corollas, said Miller-Struttmann. But for now, it’s still unclear how the flowers will be affected. “It will be really interesting to use some models to see how sensitive some of these species we see are to changes in bumble bee behavior,” she said.

And Richardson added that similar studies should be conducted in other locations to see if the trend holds up. While the species sampled in this study, which live at high elevations and may be fairly isolated, showed a strong reaction to environmental pressure, “bumble bee species that live in lower mountainside habitats and have larger populations might be buffered from these very strong selective pressures,” he said.

So, while the researchers have uncovered an intriguing trend in one instance, work remains to be done. “We documented something that has happened, but we’re not exactly sure what’s going to happen going forward,” Miller Struttmann said. “That’s true from both the plants’ and the bees’ perspective.”
New study shows when it comes to bee tongues, size matters

Evolution is leaving alpine bumble bees a little short-changed.

Recent studies suggest that the population of long-tongued alpine bumble bees is in decline. To better understand why, a team of researchers studied two species of the bees in Colorado. They measured changes in the bees’ tongue length, and found that their tongues have been getting shorter over the past five decades.

Nicole Miller-Struttmann is a biology professor at SUNY College at Old Westbury in New York. She is the lead author on the study, which is published today in Science Magazine. As she tells As it Happens host Carol Off, the change is significant.

“We found, on average, about a 24 per cent decrease in tongue length, which is pretty substantial,” says Miller-Struttmann.

Tongue length is important for bees because they use their tongues to get food, which gives them the energy to fly and collect pollen. She cites changes in flower species as a reason for the decline in bee tongue length.

Bee researchers in Colorado

“We’ve seen declines in flowers on Pennsylvania Mountain at about 60 per cent. And with that, these bees have to now visit a whole bunch of different kinds of flowers because they need to visit any flower they can in order to get resources. Whereas in the past, they could specialize, and they could say ‘ok, you’re my favourite flower. I get everything I need from visiting you. You have the most nectar’, and then they’ll specialize on those flowers.”

The bees used to prefer deep flowers, such as clover, which require a longer tongue to extract all the nectar. But as clover has declined due to warming temperatures, the bees now feed on a diversity of flowers, including shallow flowers, which could be a reason for the shortening of their tongues.

But the change in tongue size does have some benefits.

“Long tongues are expensive. If you think about the length of these tongues, in one species they’re about 8 mm long, and a bee isn’t that big, so that’s a pretty large proportion of the body size. So that takes a lot of resources to grow a tongue that big. So if there isn’t any major benefit to having that long tongue, then it’d behoove the colony to have bees with shorter tongues that can visit the greater diversity of things that are out there.”

Miller-Struttmann says it is encouraging that the bees are changing to cope with the changes in their food supply, but says “what the future holds, remains to be seen.”
Bzz-arre warming trend: Bees’ tongues getting shorter

By MICHAEL CASEY, CBS NEWS

As climate change kills off some of their favorite flowers, several bumblebee species in the Rocky Mountains have responded to those losses by evolving shorter tongues.

There has long been evidence that two long-tongued alpine bumblebee species - which feed upon flowers with deep corolla tubes - were seeing their numbers drop. But with evidence lacking to explain the decline, Nicole Miller-Struthman, of SUNY College at Old Westbury, New York, and her colleagues decided to take a look at the tongues of the two species, Bombus balteatus and B. sylvicola.

Comparing specimens of the bumblebees from three mountain peaks in Colorado from 1966 through 1980 and from 2012 to 2014, the researchers found that “a significant shortening” had occurred in the bees’ tongues.

Armed with field data on the bees and their host plants as well as bee specimens, they went looking for the cause of this change. They ruled out decreasing body size, competition from invaders, or co-evolution with flowers in the area before concluding that climate change was to blame.

They found warmer summers reduced numbers of the deep flowers these species preferred, forcing them to become “generalists” that forage on what was left in the wild, including many shallower flowers.

“Our analyses suggest that reduced flower density at the landscape scale is driving this shift in tongue length,” the authors wrote in the study, published Thursday in the journal Science.

The impact of climate change is the latest setback for bees of all sorts, whose populations have suffered in the past decade due to habitat loss as well as increased pesticide use.

Starting in 2006, the rates of dead bees almost tripled due to a condition called colony collapse disorder or CCD. A nationwide survey in May found that beekeepers across the United States lost more than 40 percent of their honeybee colonies between April 2014 and April 2015.

Scientists have long struggled to identify the cause or causes of the bee die-off, which threatens the nation’s $2.75 million of managed colonies and could one day impact the nation’s food supply since bees are crucial to pollination. The economic value of bee pollination services ranges from $10 billion to $15 billion.

Some of the deaths have been blamed on the varroa mite, a lethal parasite that can easily spread between colonies. Others have singled out a class of pesticide called neonicotinoids, or “neonics,” that have been shown to disrupt a honeybee’s ability to seek out flowers. One study found that bumblebees in fields treated with the pesticide didn’t grow, while those in pesticide-free fields did grow.

Another study linking climate change to declines of bumblebees in Europe and North America warned a warmer world could drive some species to extinction.

But the latest study concluded that the changes weren’t necessarily all bad for the bumblebees.

While these shorter-tongue insects probably won’t be able to depend on the same half-dozen flowers as in the past, the researchers suggest they may be to feed on other varieties.

“Although populations of long-tongued bees are undergoing widespread decline, shifts in foraging strategies may allow alpine bumblebees to cope with environmental change,” the authors wrote. “We see broader bumblebee foraging niches, immigration by short-tongued bumblebees, and shorter tongue length within resident bee populations as floral resources have dwindled. In remote mountain habitats - largely isolated from habitat destruction, toxins, and pathogens - evolution is helping wild bees keep pace with climate change.”

More broadly, the authors said these bees could help shed light on how climate change disrupts the mutually beneficial relationship between insects - as well as long-tongued critters like bats and hummingbirds - and their hosts.

“Changes that disrupt such matching can alter plant species recruitment and the trajectory of co-evolution,” they wrote.
SUNY Old Westbury has been a college founded on the principles of challenge and diversity since its inception. Despite a rocky history characterized by academic and administrative reform under numerous presidents, the college stands today as a remarkable representation of willpower that defies the odds. Established in 1965, Old Westbury's ideals focus on forming a multicultural student body bound together by a common zest for knowledge. This young SUNY college stands today as one of the most successful stories of the state college system.

Founded upon the idea of social justice and individuality, Old Westbury suffered many obstacles in its formative stage. A student-led rebellion against academic requirements would threaten the fate of the institution in its first year of operations. Staff and students alike strove to bring the experimental institution to the next level in higher education while retaining the emphasis on innovation its founder, Samuel B. Gold, chartered the college in hopes of achieving. After more than 30 years of economically-triggered budget cuts, varying enrollment, and few degree offerings, fifth president Calvin O. Butts would ring in the new millennium with changes that would make Old Westbury one of the most desirable SUNY schools on Long Island. His policies would serve to lead all aspects of Old Westbury towards an astounding growth that the college continues to enjoy today.

The college currently employs more than 150 full-time faculty members, offers a vast array of undergraduate programs and enjoys a steadily growing student body. The School of Education has received particular notoriety, and received accreditation by the National Council on the Accreditation of Teacher Education for its effective courses. The campus has enjoyed many additions to its campus and facilities, one of the most recent being the 141,000 academic building in 2012, the first of its kind since 1985. Refining its value of innovation, Old Westbury consistently asks its students to excel in their curriculum while keeping ethical implications in mind. As the college celebrates its 50th anniversary, it continues to hold place as one of the nation's most diverse campuses. Old Westbury seeks to retain its reputation as a college for the passionate intellectual well in to the future.
Barbara Hillery, Ph.D. is dean of the School of Arts and Sciences at SUNY Old Westbury. Dr. Hillery works to promote the value of a liberal education and persuade students that a firm foundation in arts and sciences is the key to success, both financially and personally.

“A liberal education focuses on those skills needed to advance in ever-changing fields, whether it’s business, health care, technology or the arts,” Dr. Hillery said. “All curricula within arts and sciences develop crucial skills needed in the workplace – critical thinking, the ability to solve complex problems, and the ability to communicate solutions clearly, both orally and in writing. At Old Westbury, we endeavor to stimulate a passion for learning that leads to a lifetime of intellectual curiosity, intercultural understanding, and a commitment to engagement with the community, locally and globally.”

“While the values of a liberal education are not new, the delivery may be, and Old Westbury remains at the forefront of pedagogical innovation and technology, both on-campus and off,” Dr. Hillery explained. “The School of Arts and Sciences recently moved into a new academic building with state-of-the-art classroom and computer facilities. Our ‘Fab Lab’ provides 3D printing capability for media arts students and our computer-assisted Math Redesign Program endeavors to ensure all students achieve quantitative literacy.”

“Classes are often available online allowing students to connect from anywhere, and a focus on experiential learning and internships helps all students see connections between their academic program and their career,” Dr. Hillery said.

Dr. Hillery earned a bachelor’s degree in biology from the University of Virginia, a doctorate in analytical chemistry from the American University in Washington, D.C., and was a Postdoctoral Fellow in environmental chemistry at Indiana University’s School of Public and Environmental Affairs.

As a chemist, she is a member of the American Chemical Society (ACS), representing the New York Local Section as a counselor, and a member of the governing board of the Eastern Analytical Symposium (EAS). As a dean she is a member of the Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences (CCAS) and the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU).

SUNY Old Westbury is a selective public liberal arts college with more than 4,500 students studying in more than 40 undergraduate degree opportunities in its liberal arts and professional programs and 16 graduate programs in business, education liberal studies and mental health counseling. On the college’s 604-acre campus in Old Westbury, students are challenged to take ownership of their futures through an environment that demands academic excellence, fosters intercultural understanding, and endeavors to stimulate a passion for learning and a commitment to building a more just and sustainable world.
5 TIPS FOR SUCCESS AT SUNY OLD WESTBURY

There are many reasons students decide which school to attend. At SUNY Old Westbury, students answer our call to "Own Your Future." An Old Westbury education is not just about being ready for a career — although students get that preparation. It's about putting each student in a position to think critically about the world around them and their role in it, so that or she can chart their own course to the successful life they want to lead.

Below are five tips offered by the team at SUNY Old Westbury on how best to succeed on campus next fall:

1. Start Early
   If you haven't started preparing for the admissions process, act quickly. Your chance to secure your spot in the Class of 2023 is right around the corner. Continue to hone those essays and ensure your SAT score reports are ready for submission.

2. Keep Your Finances in Mind
   As a SUNY campus, Old Westbury offers students a small college environment while paying tuition and fees of about $7,200 a year. Even with that affordability available, you should be ready to file the 2016 Free Application for Federal Student Aid as soon as it becomes available. Be sure to let SUNY Old Westbury know that aid for which you are eligible can be appropriately applied.

3. Find Your Niche
   SUNY Old Westbury offers nearly 50 undergraduate degree programs. Interested in STEM? Old Westbury offers programs in Biology, Biochemistry, Chemistry and Computer Information Sciences. Looking for a career-igniting foundation in Accounting, Marketing and more? The School of Business faculty is ready for you.

Interested in health and human services? Our programs in Psychology, Sociology and Public Health are among our most successful. How about a career in the arts or in the media? Be sure to ask about our Bachelor of Fine Arts and Visual Arts: Electronic Media degrees or the journalism and broadcasting instruction in the Media and Communications program.

4. Challenge Yourself
   Use your experience to mold the future you want for yourself. Consider applying for the Old Westbury Honors College, conducting research alongside your professors, or exploring your career path through internships and more.

5. Get Involved
   Make a promise to yourself to do more than attend your classes. Join one of the 50 clubs and organizations active on campus. Become a Panther student-athlete, or support them at games. Take advantage of campus lectures, concerts, bus trips, career fairs, and more.

When you dream big, anything can happen.
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Rosalyn Baxandall, Historian, Dies at 76; Was on Feminist Movement’s Front Lines

By WILLIAM GRIMES

Rosalyn Baxandall, a feminist historian who was among the first to bring scholarly attention to the historical role of women in the workplace and to expand the meaning of “women’s work,” died on Tuesday night at her home in Manhattan. She was 76.

The cause was kidney cancer, her son, Phineas Baxandall, said.

Ms. Baxandall served on the front lines of the feminist movement in New York in the late 1960s. She helped create Liberation Nursery, the first feminist day care center in New York. As an early member of New York Radical Women and Redstockings, she picketed the 1968 Miss America pageant in Atlantic City, one of the most visible of the feminist protests of the ’60s, forever associated with a symbolic burning of restrictive women’s clothes that mainstream publications referred to as a “bra burning.”

She played a prominent role in the abortion “speakout” in the West Village in 1969, a forum at which women described in public their experiences in obtaining illegal abortions.

While teaching American studies at the State University of New York at Old Westbury, she, Linda Gordon and Susan Reverby assembled primary documents, including letters and diaries, that offered a sweeping history of women and labor. Their book, “America’s Working Women: A Documentary History, 1600 to the Present” (1976), was acquired for Random House by Toni Morrison, then a young editor there.

It remains a foundational text for students of American labor history and gender studies.

“Nothing was and continues to be the text that defines the contour of women’s labor history,” said Eileen Boris, a professor of feminist studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. “It recovered the voices and the actions of many kinds of women and many kinds of occupations from the early colonial period to the late 20th century.”

Rosalyn Fraad, known as Ros, was born on June 12, 1939, in Manhattan into a radical household. Her father, Lewis M. Fraad, was a Communist who worked for the Communist International, or Comintern, in Vienna in the 1930s and later became the chief of pediatrics at Albert Einstein College of Medicine in the Bronx. Her mother, the former Irma London, was a Communist lawyer and the niece of Meyer London, who was elected to Congress on the Socialist Party ticket in 1914.

We threw Tampon at the F.B.I. agents who parked outside of our home for two days after my father refused to speak with them,” Ms. Baxandall and her sister Harriet wrote in an essay for “Red Diapers: Growing Up in the Communist Left” (1988), edited by Judy Kaplan and Liora Shapiro. “We giggled about dirty words into the phone when told that it was tapped.”

Her mother’s deep unhappiness at suspending her career to raise children made a profound impression on her.

Ms. Baxandall attended Riverdale Country School in the Bronx and Hunter High School in Manhattan. As a teenager, she picketed the nuclear submarine base in Groton, Conn., with the Committee for Nonviolent Action, took part in peace campaigns by the American Friends Service Committee and worked for the Mobilization for Youth, a social service organization on the Lower East Side, and then plunged into radical politics and the women’s movement, the subject of her book “Dear Sisters: Dispatches From the Women’s Liberation Movement” (2009), edited with Ms. Gordon.

Recalling those days in an interview with the feminist activist Jacqueline Ceballos in 1991, Ms. Baxandall said, “The one thing that I do have against the books that are written is that they talk about all the politics and the splits, etc., but they don’t talk about the joy and the fun we had.” She added, “We knew we were changing history, and it was terrific.”

In 1971 she began teaching in the American studies department at the State University of New York at Old Westbury. She later served as head of the department for many years.

“By 1975, the guts had been taken out of the women’s liberation movement, and it was no longer innovative or exciting for me,” she wrote in the essay “Catching the Fire,” included in “The Feminist Memoir Project: Voices From Women’s Liberation” (1998), edited by Rachel Blau DuPlessis and Ann Snitow.

After retiring from SUNY in 2012, she taught in the labor studies program of the City University of New York and, through the Bard Prison Initiative, at the Bayview Correctional Facility, then a medium-security women’s prison in Manhattan.


A new edition of “America’s Working Women,” extensively revised and updated, was published in 1995.
Immigrants inspired

BY VICTOR MANUEL RAMOS
victor.ramos@newsday.com

Immigrant activist Erika Andiola told a hushed audience at a conference yesterday of the times she and her family literally sat “in the shadows,” all lights turned off in their Phoenix home, because they feared federal agents were coming to get them.

She recalled the despair she felt when the knock on the door came on an unexpected day in 2011, and the authorities took her mother and brother to deport them back to Mexico.

Andiola, 28, exempted from deportation under an order for minors issued by President Barack Obama, stayed in Arizona. By then an activist, she mounted a social media campaign, took her message to the media and was able to stop the deportations.

“I can tell you that that didn’t happen out of the blue,” Andiola told more than 800 people gathered at The College at Old Westbury — many of them Long Island high school students without full legal status.

“It was unity, it was organizing, it was people coming together to support me.”

Her story and those of other speakers were intended to encourage high school students to speak up and work for change. For years, advocates have sought passage of federal legislation granting legal status to young immigrants who came illegally to the United States as minors or stayed here without proper documentation. They also want a broader legalization program that would benefit their parents and other relatives.

In New York, the fight has centered on building support for a state law allowing these young unauthorized immigrants, who call themselves “Dreamers,” to get state-funded tuition assistance for college.

All those measures have been considered but have stalled or been defeated in Congress or the State Legislature.

Osman Canales, community organizer with Long Island Immigrant Student Advocates, the group that planned the conference, said the gathering aimed to help students facing an uncertain future “to feel empowered” and “to not be afraid and not to be ashamed” for seeking a better future here.

Francis Madi, 26, of Hempstead, said she has acted on her convictions.

Madi, originally from Venezuela, said she has been undocumented since 2004, unafraid since around 2008, and unapologetic since birth. She became an activist around 2007. “The way to bring change is to think as a community,” she said.

Some of the students said the presentations inspired them to seek immigration reforms.

“You have to bring your passion to it. It’s not something you do just for yourself, but for other people,” said Edinson Martinez, 17, a Brentwood High School senior who came here two years ago from El Salvador. “We have to think about the future, and these people did it and you see it’s possible.”

Robin Carreto, 19, a Southampton High School senior who came from Guatemala two years ago, said he worries how his lack of documentation will affect getting into college or access to tuition aid, but felt motivated by the talks. He wants to be a physician.

“One of the speakers today said we are more powerful than we think, and I agree with that,” Carreto said. “We need to work hard, but we can do it.”

The Rev. Calvin O. Butts III, the college’s president, quoted from and paraphrased the famous Langston Hughes poem “Harlem” in giving his support to the young immigrants.

“We know the poem that says what happens to a dream deferred. ‘Does it dry out like a raisin in the sun?’ ” he said. “Does it sag like a heavy load? Or does it explode? We’ve got to be careful that we help our sisters and brothers realize their dreams.”
Focusing on immigrant student advocacy

BY VICTOR MANUEL RAMOS
victor.ramos@newsday.com

Hundreds of young immigrants who attend Long Island high schools and colleges are expected to attend a conference today at the College at Old Westbury to discuss issues that affect them and further an advocacy agenda.

They call themselves “Dreamers,” after various “Dream Act” bills that seek to grant full legal status at the federal level to those who were brought illegally to the United States as minors. Young immigrants who fall into this category also have pressed in New York and other states barriers to be removed that prevent them from pursuing a college education.

Their proposals have fallen short of support year after year, with broad immigration reform stalled at the national level and the defeat of state measures to provide tuition assistance.

“We are waiting for Congress, and the New York State Legislature is not in session right now, but we have time to organize our students and to gain support, so we are ready to fight,” said Osman Canales, community organizer with Long Island Immigrant Student Advocates. “The mission is to educate leaders in our community to have them be advocates.”

The First Conference for Immigrant Students, co-sponsored by Old Westbury’s Hispanic/Latino Center, also seeks to present the difficulties many young immigrants face as they run into a dead end after a free high school education.

Though many are exempt from deportation under executive orders by President Barack Obama, they struggle to get a college education because their lack of legal status keeps them from receiving scholarships and tuition aid.

“We want to bring awareness to the rest of Long Island on the needs and the perils of this community,” said Zenaida Madurka, an Old Westbury associate professor of modern languages who directs the Hispanic/Latino Center. “We are hoping that if people are more aware and there’s a human face to identify these problems, we hope there would be a change.”

The conference will be held in the student union’s multipurpose room. Morning sessions, starting at 8:30 a.m., will be largely devoted to nearly 400 students from 12 area high schools who are expected to attend. Sessions after 1 p.m. will be aimed at the public, invited to attend panels and presentations from area advocates and experts. The conference ends at 7 p.m.

“Dreamer” advocates Erika Andiola and Cesar Vargas, of the national Dream Action Coalition, will speak to students, organizers said. Andiola, of Phoenix, is known for mounting a successful social media campaign to have her mother and brother freed before being deported, following a 2013 home raid. Vargas, a Staten Island activist, in June became the first immigrant without legal status to be deemed eligible to be admitted to the New York bar. His application to become a lawyer is pending further review.
Hundreds of immigrant students gathered for a seminar Tuesday to help them gain the skills they’ll need to reach and succeed in college.

Erika Andriola is part of the Dream Action Coalition and was a keynote speaker at the conference held at SUNY Old Westbury. She says she is trying to educate other students who may be struggling with college plans amid their lack of a legal status.

“You can’t really ask for a loan. I want to go to law school, but even that, I can’t get a loan,” Andriola says. “If I want to get in debt, they won’t let me. It’s still a struggle for a lot of students.”

Many students at the conference say that they’re concerned about getting a college education because their lack of legal status might keep them from receiving financial aid or scholarships.

The New York Dream Act is a bill that would change that.

The New York Senate rejected the New York Dream Act last year. Advocates say that support is crucial from Long Island lawmakers, and that they’re hoping the state Senate revisits the bill when the session starts in January.

There are five states that currently allow state financial aid for undocumented students at city or state colleges.

In New York, undocumented immigrants do not have access to state financial aid.

During his State of the State Address, Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced that he would seek $27 million in funding to support the Dream Act.
Immigrant students, activists to push New York State lawmakers to OK Dream Act

For four years in a row, the Republican-led Senate has rejected the Dream Act. But immigrant students and activists haven't given up.

Dreamers, those undocumented young people hell-bent on getting an education, are not only militantly active, but they are also thinking about a future when, notwithstanding the Trumps, Rubios and Carsons of this world, they finally become full-fledged members of U.S. society.

Until that time arrives, Dreamers and their supporters are planning ahead, and on Tuesday the First Long Island Dreamers Conference will take place at SUNY Old Westbury College.

“We are expecting at least 12 local high schools and over 400 students,” said Osman Canales, founder of the Long Island Immigrant Students Advocates, the main group organizing the event.

“Our mission with this event is to inspire and empower immigrant students in Long Island, encourage them to stay in school and show them they are not alone, that it is possible to achieve the dream,” Canales said. “This event will also highlight the need for equity in education for undocumented students in New York State.”

Born in El Salvador, Canales, 26, has legal status. Yet, his passion and dedication have made him a prominent leader in the Dreamers movement.

“I do it because it's the right thing to do, and because I can be an advocate for those who are not documented and are afraid to come out,” he said.

The organizers say the daylong conference will provide Dreamers with the skills needed to succeed in college.

Cesar Vargas, a co-director of the Dream Action Coalition, is among the activists seeking approval of the Dream Act. According to their website, liisaedu.org, “Dreamers will have the opportunity to interact with college professors, current college students, expert speakers, and nationally well-known Dreamers who have achieved their college goals and are now national leaders advocating for immigrant rights. Dreamers leave the conference armed with the tools needed to be personally successful and eager to share these skills with their peers.”

Two of those leaders, Erika Andiola and César Vargas, co-directors of the Dream Action Coalition and national advocates for immigration reform, will participate. Dr. Luis Valenzuela, executive director of the Long Island Immigrant Alliance, and a longtime activist for immigrant rights in Long Island, will be the keynote speaker.

The conference also seeks to move state legislators to finally pass the New York Dream Act, which would grant access to the state’s Tuition Assistance Program to the 3,500-plus undocumented students who graduate from public high schools each year in New York.

The act, although passed by the Assembly, has shamefully failed to be approved by the Republican-controlled Senate four years in a row.

“We hope this conference will help raise awareness in elected officials about the urgent need to do the right thing and pass the New York Dream Act,” Canales said.
Cientos de estudiantes de varios distritos escolares de Long Island, la mayoría inmigrantes hispanos, participaron de la conferencia “Sueños y Retos, Asuntos Críticos de Inmigración que Impactan a Long Island,” un foro en que los asistentes recibieron valiosa información sobre temas que afectan a las familias inmigrantes, pero sobretodo a los jóvenes ‘Soñadores.’

La conferencia, la primera en su tipo en Long Island, fue llevada a cabo por la organización Long Island Immigrants Student Advocates, LIISA, en conjunto con el Centro Cultural Latino/Hispano de la Universidad SUNY Old Westbury College, el martes 27, en el campus universitario.

Más de 400 jóvenes de 10 escuelas de Nassau y Suffolk, asistieron a esta conferencia, que de acuerdo a Osman Canales, Director y Fundador de LIISA, tuvo como objetivo convocar a los escolares para que escuchen historias motivadores de jóvenes indocumentados que han logrado salir adelante, y brindarles información y recursos para que puedan continuar con su educación.

“Lo más fundamental es que ellos sepan que sí pueden ir al colegio, que sí pueden obtener un título universitario,” dijo Canales en entrevista con Noticia. “Estamos bien emocionados de ver la respuesta de los estudiantes. Al principio pensábamos que no íbamos a obtener el apoyo de los maestros y las escuelas, pero es increíble ver como la sala está llena y la mayoría de ellos son estudiantes inmigrantes,” añadió.

El foro se realizó a través de paneles en los que expertos de varias organizaciones hablaron sobre los retos que enfrentan los jóvenes ‘Soñadores’ o ‘Dreamers’ al querer continuar con sus estudios universitarios, los beneficios que otorga el programa DACA, y los derechos de los jóvenes recién llegados de Centro América al inscribirse en las escuelas secundarias. Asimismo, se brindó información sobre leyes, derechos civiles y derechos laborales.

Damaris Sandoval, de 19 años, estudiante de la escuela secundaria de Hempstead, que llegó de El Salvador hace tres años, opinó que este evento es importante para “informarse de lo que está pasando y estar mejor informados.”

“Estos son puntos que nos interesan a nosotros que somos inmigrantes, que queremos estudiar, que queremos una beca, que queremos tener un futuro,” dijo Sandoval. “Deberían hacerlo todos los años porque cada vez son más inmigrantes los que vienen a este país y deberían dar la información para no quedarnos atrás.”

Por su parte, Jaqueline Reyes, de 43 años de edad, profesora de Inglés como Segundo Idioma, ESL, que trabaja por 10 años en la escuela intermedia de Westbury, dijo que trajo a sus alumnos a la conferencia para que se den cuenta que no están solos y que tienen un futuro.

“La conferencia es muy necesaria para los estudiantes. Usualmente [los jóvenes] vienen de países de Centro América y traen tanto por dentro que no miran un futuro, entonces esta fue la manera decirles que no son los únicos que están en este país, que todos hemos pasado por lo mismo, pero poco a poquito podemos salir adelante y hacer algo con nuestras vidas,” dijo Reyes. “Me gustaron mucho los panelistas pero me hubiese gustado si hubiese sido dirigido a los jóvenes de una manera más simple.”

El evento tuvo como principal oradora a Erika Andiola, conocida activista a nivel nacional por su incansable lucha en conseguir la acción diferida para estudiantes indocumentados en el 2012.

Andiola, que se ha llegado a ser una inspiración para jóvenes activistas de nuestra área, motivó los asistentes a involucrarse en la defensa de los derechos de los inmigrantes.

“Aún tenemos mucho por hacer,” dijo Andiola durante su intervención. “Ellos [algunos políticos] quieren contar nuestra historia por nosotros y eso tiene que parar. ¡Tú tienes que contar tu historia!”

Por otro lado, Canales afirmó que el propósito es hacer la conferencia cada año y motivar a los jóvenes a que se involúcrden con la defensa de los inmigrantes.

“Entiendan que tienen que alzar la voz, que tienen derechos,” fue el mensaje de Pat Young, uno de los panelistas. “Vivimos en una democracia, y la democracia es la mejor forma de luchar contra el odio.”
Cold Spring, SUNY Old Westbury Land Prostate Cancer Funding

OCTOBER 4, 2015

Two awards for Long Island-based research organizations are part of a new prostate cancer research funding initiative announced by Gov. Andrew Cuomo.

All told, 20 research institutions will share a total of $3 million in funding to explore innovative concepts in prostate cancer detection, diagnosis and treatment. Among them are Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, which is slated to receive $300,000 over the next two years, and the Research Foundation for SUNY Old Westbury, set to receive $75,000 over a 15-month period.

Leading last week’s announcement were two-year, $450,000 awards for Health Research Inc., part of the Buffalo-based Roswell Park Cancer Institute, and the Sloan Kettering Institute for Cancer Research and Columbia University, both in New York City.

Two other NYC institutions – Yeshiva University and the New York University School of Medicine – also received $300,000 awards.

Cuomo said the idea behind the funding is to “ultimately eradicate” the second-most common cancer among New York State men, a disease that strikes one in six men nationwide, largely those 65 and older.

“This form of cancer affects thousands of New Yorkers each year and ongoing research remains our best avenue to fight it,” the governor said in a statement.

State officials also hope the awards will help the winning institutions establish a “foundation of research” that will attract future funding from the National Institutes of Health and other federal sources, according to the governor’s office.

During the application process, institutions were required to demonstrate their commitment to prostate cancer research, their ability to implement research and a description of their process for selecting which research projects would be funded, if the institution was chosen to receive state funds. The awardees will actually determine which individual research projects will be funded by the state stipends.

“Empowering New York’s premier research facilities to select their own innovative avenues for research has great potential,” Cuomo noted.

While not every applicant received a state award, the number of applications and the quality of their research efforts were very encouraging, according to State Health Commissioner Howard Zucker.

“We are pleased to see so many institutions in New York are committed to research into prostate cancer, which continues to be a leading killer of men,” Zucker said. “Anything we can do to advance our understanding of this complex disease will help ease that burden.”

TOPICS:  Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory  News  Prostate Cancer  SUNY Old Westbury
OLD WESTBURY, NY – The New York Times best-selling graphic novelist Nate Powell visit SUNY Old Westbury on Tuesday, October 6, 2015 to discuss his work on the memoirs of John Lewis, a Congressman and renowned civil rights activist. “March,” written by Lewis, Andrew Aydin and illustrated by Powell, was selected as the First-Year Experience common reading for more than 380 students. Powell was joined by Calvin Reid, the senior news editor for Publishers Weekly magazine and 25-year veteran of the literature industry, for the presentation and Q&A with students, faculty, and staff.

The assigned two-part graphic memoir chronicles Lewis' lifelong contributions to the civil rights movement, and provides a vivid first-hand account of his participation in nonviolent demonstrations including the 1963 March on Washington with Martin Luther King Jr., and the eradication of educational segregation.

Powell’s work, which has received a Robert F. Kennedy Book Award, an Eisner Award, and a Coretta Scott King Author Award, has been placed on school curriculums in more than 40 states, and colleges nationwide. Prior to his presentation, Powell met with a select group of first-year students who were chosen for the quality of their reflective essays on the topic.

“We’re excited that our annual common reading selection coincides well with the theme of our College’s 50th Anniversary celebration,” said Laura Anker, First-Year Experience director. “The book’s subject, John Lewis, is as strong and memorable a voice in the empowerment movement as this country has ever produced.”
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“My African American History class used Narrable to create narrated images from the Black Pictorial Press as an assignment after instruction and assistance from the Collaborative Media Center,” said Dr. Jermaine Archer, assistant professor at Old Westbury. “I thought it was a valuable tool for the students to learn, and my students agreed, stating that it made them look at the course material from a different perspective.”
This Feminist Activist Wants You to Amplify Your Voice  
By Janine Eduljee in News

Jamie Wilson is basically a feminist rockstar. She's a media activist, writer, speaker and the executive director of Women, Action, & the Media (a non-profit organization fighting for gender justice in the media). She's also a reader of Her Campus!

Her articles have been featured in the New York Times and the Huffington Post, among other publications. She has spoken at TED Talks, universities around the country and world, and various other engagements. Wilson found time to speak with us right before a speaking event at SUNY Old Westbury. We talked about what feminism truly means, what more can be done to further the cause and why people are so averse to improvements for women's rights.

HC: What do you think the state of the feminist movement is today? What more do you think needs to be done in terms of women’s rights?

I think at this point, a really exciting opportunity that we have right now is that there’s a big pop cultural conversation that has emerged around feminism. Thanks to proclamations of feminism from celebrities like Beyoncé, J. Lo, Emma Watson, Katy Perry, even Miley Cyrus, those feminist proclamations have helped make this conversation on feminism more mainstream. That is a good thing in terms of getting people in the public conversation talking about gender, justice and equality. I’m also thinking there’s a lot of work we have to do: You know, we still don’t have an equal rights amendment. We have a situation where there’s a pay gap, and for women of color specifically that pay gap is even deeper. There still needs to be a lot of work done to protect reproductive rights and health access for women and girls. We do have a lot of work to do, but I do believe that there is a lot of energy that is happening right now, and social media and blogging has allowed for more democratization of voices and for feminists to be able to amplify their voices in more accessible ways.

What do you think can be done right now, in the short term time frame, about this issue?

I think that we need to continue to keep this increased energy sustained. We should definitely be using our collective energy to continue to keep these issues surfaced in the daily conversation, so that when people are thinking about the issues of the day, they reflect a feminist lens. When they reflect a feminist lens, then that means everyone is counted because feminism is a belief in the cultural, social and political equality of all genders and all sexes. So my belief is that when we are talking about any issue, be it economics or any other issue of public import, that people are thinking about the intersections of race, intersections of class, intersections of gender in that conversation, and making sure that we are surfacing the needs of our marginalized people.

You mentioned the gender pay gap, which has existed ever since women began entering the workforce and has persisted until today. Why do you think it still exists and why isn’t anybody doing anything about it on the legislative level where it matters?

I think that there needs to be a larger conversation about what is really at stake, and how much of a disparity there is. I think there needs to be more awareness about that. Over a lifetime it really adds up, and when you think about the fact that the gender pay gap is worse for mothers for example—it continues to grow with age which is impacting families. When you think about the pay gap being present in almost every single occupation that exists, that is very disturbing. So it’s really important for us to think about what that means for this economy as well as what that means for fairness and our values. And also how it means around our lifetimes, because we women tend to live longer statistically as well, so that means that when women are living longer and they are getting paid less over a lifetime, they are lacking in retirement benefits and also the money that they didn’t get paid over time. That is a dire situation. When you think of all the other expenses that we also have to face, when you think about the fact that it’s just plain unfair, when you think about the fact that there are people who have to pay for a tampon tax, you know these are things that people just shouldn’t have to do.

Sorry — what’s this about a tampon tax?

So there are people in some communities around the world being taxed on tampons. And when you think about women who are homeless or low income for example, and the cost of getting basic needs that women need—Women who are identified in their bodies or trans people who bleed, they have additional expenses that they have to pay. The fact that there are some contexts where there’s a sales tax that’s applied to this basic service, and the fact that we’re paid differently, is just another way to illuminate how women have these extra added costs to the basic experience of womanhood. There are actual countries here the tax does exist; you know here in the U.S. it’s sales tax that in the states applies to tampons, but there are other countries where there’s an actual tampon tax.

We are seeing more and more often that feminism is receiving almost a backlash from people who believe that certain feminists are too overzealous, or that feminism is unnecessary in today’s modern society. What would you say to the skeptics and naysayers?

I actually think that a lot of times the backlash comes from the fact that we are making progress, and I think that sometimes there’s a fear of actual change because there’s a fear of people stepping outside their comfort zone or losing privileges that they’ve had. I think that people should recognize that feminism means equality for everyone. With the liberation of women will come the liberation of men. Men are also harmed by patriarchy, and it creates social problems that affect us all—that’s the paradigm shift that we need. Women’s issues are issues that impact the entire community. We are a majority of the population and when women are liberated, then that trickles to others in the community. I also believe that when you’re talking about racial justice as well, and gender justice. The day that black transgender women are free will be the day that I will be free. If all of our systems and our culture were set up in a way that they were free from oppression, then that means I would be free too, and that means that any man or woman of any race would be free because of the level of marginalization that currently exists in our society.

Jennifer Lawrence recently published an essay in Lenny newsletter commenting on the systematic sexism that prevailed in Hollywood, from a ridiculous pay gap to a double standard in the treatment of actresses and actors when they voice opinions. Have you seen workplace sexism in your professional experience?

I’ve definitely seen it in my personal experience, and I’ve also seen it most often as small microaggressions and covert coded language and harassment. Oftentimes these are more insidious, because it can sometimes be harder to name or to fit into existing policies, in terms of reporting and that sort of thing. I do see it and I do think it’s really important for us to combat that sort of culture, because that sort of culture can create the sort of hostile environment that can lead to even greater impact and more harm.

Do you have any advice for our readers who are hoping to work in media?

My advice would be to write and write every day, and write anywhere that you get the chance! Amplify your voice, create media. We need to own media without allowing it to own us. Create the media that you want to see, pitch the places that you like to read. Put yourself out there and tell your story because your story is important and your story matters, and it’s a very revolutionary act when women amplify their voices and take their rightful place and make themselves heard in a culture where we’re often rendered invisible and silent.
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: SEPTEMBER 24, 2015

SUNY OLD WESTBURY TO PARTICIPATE IN
WORLD COLLEGE RADIO DAY

(Long Island, NY) OWWR Old Westbury Web Radio, SUNY Old Westbury’s campus radio station, will celebrate World College Radio Day on Friday, October 2, 2015 with an exciting line-up of programming. This year, OWWR has been named “New York’s Headquarters College Radio Station” among more than 50 participating stations.

OWWR invites listeners from across campus and around the world to participate, as it will feature special music and talk programs from 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. to commemorate College Radio Day and promote sister-stations worldwide. The annual event – now in its fifth year – seeks to raise a greater international awareness of the many college and high school radio stations that operate around the world by encouraging listenership.

To participate in OWWR’s celebration of World College Radio Day, listen in at www.OWWRny.org or through the Tunein radio app with keyword “OWWR.” The 24/7 station provides student, faculty, alumni and community-volunteer programming and features news, sports, talk and a variety of music styles.

For more information on World College Radio Day and OWWR, visit http://www.oldwestbury.edu/departments/amstudies/student-media.

SUNY Old Westbury is a selective public liberal arts college with more than 4,500 students studying in more than 40 undergraduate degree opportunities in its liberal arts and professional programs and 16 graduate programs in business, education liberal studies and mental health counseling. On the College’s 604-acre campus, students are challenged to take ownership of their futures through an environment that demands academic excellence, fosters intercultural understanding, and endeavors to stimulate a passion for learning and a commitment to building a more just and sustainable world. For more information on SUNY Old Westbury, visit www.oldwestbury.edu.
Old Westbury, NY - October 1, 2015 - Eight members of the Visual Arts Department faculty at SUNY Old Westbury are being featured in an international exhibition of their work at Gallery R3, located at the University of Quebec Trois Rivières.

The exhibit, “NYC, Inc.,” presents the work of Mac Adams, Fred Fleisher, Robert Gero, Helidon Gjergji, Chris Griffin, Patty Harris, Tricia McLaughlin, and Jennifer Sullivan. Each artist lives or works in the New York City area and each was invited to participate because of his or her strong history and connection with the city’s cultural and historical landscape.

Professor Catherine Bernard, who served as curator of the exhibit, along with Fleisher, Gjergji, and McLaughlin were welcomed as guests to the University of Quebec Trois Rivières earlier this month to mark the opening of the exhibit.

In its program for the event, Gallery R3 noted: “Each of these artists draw from New York artistic and cultural brew a sense of cutting edge, an acuity of the contemporary artistic context and include these, as well as information and materials the city provides them with, in works that are as diverse as New York cultural landscape.” The mediums and materials used in the exhibit range from graphite on paper, to photography and 3D digital work, painting, installation and video. Themes also are varied but one may be able to discern a reflective --at times dark-- undercurrent common to the different works, linked to an awareness of the current sociopolitical and historical contexts for which New York may appear to be a microcosm.

The Visual Arts Department at SUNY Old Westbury offers undergraduate degrees in Visual Arts and Visual Arts: Electronic Media, including a program leading to a Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.).
The Nation’s Colleges and Universities With the Most Diverse Student Bodies

The magazine *U.S. News and World Report* recently issued its annual rankings of the best colleges and universities in the United States. In addition to its rankings of the best national universities and liberal arts colleges, the rankings also calculate which universities have the most diverse student bodies. Schools that are identified as diverse are ones where a student is most likely to encounter undergraduates from other racial and ethnic groups.

This year, the Rutgers University campus in Newark, New Jersey, was deemed to have the most diverse student body in the country. According to the U.S. Department of Education figures for the 2014-15 academic year, Blacks were 18 percent of the enrollments at the Newark campus. Whites were 25 percent of the undergraduates and Hispanics were 24 percent. Some 21 percent of undergraduates were of Asian descent. Other universities rated as the most diverse were Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan (19 percent Black), St. John’s University in Queens, New York (14 percent Black), the University of Houston (11 percent Black), and the University of Nevada Las Vegas (8 percent Black).

Among the smaller liberal arts institutions, the University of Hawaii at Hilo was rated as having the most diverse student body. Blacks are only 1 percent of the students but there are large groups of Asians, Hispanics, Native Hawaiians, and White students. Other small colleges rated as being the most diverse were Pacific Union College in Angwin, California (8 percent Black), SUNY College at Old Westbury (30 percent Black), and Pine Manor College in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts (28 percent Black).
ICCR’s 2015 Event - On Leadership: Another Decade of Corporate Responsibility and Accomplishment

Leadership transitions are the ideal time to think about what it means to lead. What is the role of leadership in building the "just and sustainable corporate world" the ICCR community envisions in its mission statement? During an interactive panel on Oct. 1, 2015, five dynamic leaders explored the role of corporate responsibility and the capital markets through the lens of their own experiences as leaders in today's marketplace.

Our moderator was Laurent Belsie, Business Editor of the Christian Science Monitor. Panelists included Nigel Pearce, Senior Pastor, Grace Congregational Church of Harlem; Liam O’Neil, Managing Director, Global Wealth & Investment Management, Merrill Lynch; Ann Yerger, Leader, EY Center for Board Matters and former Executive Director of the Council of Institutional Investors; Rev. Dr. Calvin O. Butts III, President of the State University of New York (SUNY) College at Old Westbury and Pastor of Abyssinian Baptist Church and; and ICCR’s retiring executive director, Laura Berry, who shared their reflections on what authentic leadership looks like in addressing today’s challenges.

After the panel discussion we held a reception at Riverside Church where we gathered with our members, corporate partners and allies in responsible investing and corporate responsibility. We are grateful to all our friends and supporters who were able to join us at this year’s event and want to especially thank our sponsors and donors: Your continued support renews our commitment to action and fuels our mission.

You can view the video of the panel discussion here.
Women have made some progress in achieving elective office on Long Island—but far, far from enough. The underrepresentation of women in governments on Long Island and in representing the island on the state and federal levels is documented in a just-issued report by the Women’s Center at the State University of New York/College at Old Westbury (where I teach).

It’s entitled Envisioning Women on Long Island: Women in Governance and it addresses a situation which must be changed—as a matter of fairness and, yes, democracy.

“Women’s representation in governance is a critical hallmark of democracy,” write Dr. Cristina Notaro, assistant dean of the college’s School of Arts and Sciences, and Dr. Carol Quirke, associate professor of American Studies and director of the Women’s Center.

They put a focus in the report’s summary on how in the Suffolk County Legislature and on governmental councils in Suffolk “women are underrepresented.” They write: “Only in the Nassau County Legislature are men and women near parity.” They add: “The gender divergence is stark in executive positions. Women lead less than fifteen percent of Long Island towns, cities or villages.”

“Similarly, at the state and national level women are poorly represented,” they note. “Statewide only eleven percent of women hold positions in the Senate. The Assembly is better, as over twenty percent of Assembly members from Long Island and statewide are women—this is still thirty percent from parity however.”

Further on the state level, “Few women have ever held a statewide executive position. Since the state’s founding in 1777, no woman has served as New York State’s Governor, Attorney General, or Comptroller, and there have been only four women Lieutenant Governors.”

“By bringing attention to women’s persistent underrepresentation in governance, the Women’s Center at SUNY Old Westbury hopes that Envisioning Women on Long Island: Women in Governance will inspire more women to run for office and enhance support for qualified women candidates,” they say.

The data, compiled by student interns at the Women’s Center, tell the story.

Consider:

- Only two of the 10 town supervisors in Suffolk County are women. (And one of the two, Southampton Town Supervisor Anna Throne-Holst, is not running for re-election as she prepares to run for the U.S. House of Representatives.)
- On the 18-member Suffolk Legislature, five are women.
- The top governmental position in Suffolk County, county executive, began in 1960 and of those who have held it, there have been eight men “and 0 women.” In neighboring Nassau County, the county executive post was created in 1938 and has also been held by eight men “and 0 women.”
- Of members of the State Assembly representing Long Island, four are women. (Of the 11 from Suffolk, only one is female.)
- Of the nine people representing Long Island in the New York State Senate, there are no women. Indeed, there has never been a female state senator from Suffolk County.
- Of the five members of the House of Representatives with districts on Long Island, one is a woman (Kathleen Rice). There has never been a female member of the House of Representatives from Suffolk.

I've written for many years about the under-representation of women in elective office on Long Island. In my time, I have seen Judith Hope, in 1973, win the town supervisor’s job in East Hampton, becoming the first female town supervisor on Long Island and doing a spectacular job. She would later found the Eleanor Roosevelt Legacy Committee devoted to helping women to run for public office. She also became the (first woman) chair of the New York State Democratic Party and in that role was the key to encouraging Hillary Clinton to run for the U.S. Senate. What a contrast it would be if Ms. Clinton wins the U.S. presidency next year, and for the dismal situation of women in governance on Long Island — especially in Suffolk — to continue.

I have seen the formation on Long Island of The Partnership to Advance Women Leaders. Especially striking in its activities was an event a few years ago that drew 500 people— “Ready, Set, Lead!—Empowering Women in the Political Process”— at which the (all-male) chairs of Suffolk’s Democratic, Republican, Independence and Conservative Parties were put on the spot in terms of explaining their stance toward women candidates. They said they would welcome them.

The first female United States Supreme Court Justice, Sandra Day O’Connor, addressed that event saying that only with women being fully represented can the U.S. be a “fully representative democracy.”

Karl Grossman is a veteran investigative reporter and columnist, the winner of numerous awards for his work and a member of the L.I. Journalism Hall of Fame. He is a professor of journalism at SUNY/College at Old Westbury and the author of six books. Grossman and his wife Janet live in Sag Harbor.

Suffolk Closeup is a syndicated opinion column on issues of concern to Suffolk County residents.
While many people who work in the schools were enjoying their final days of summer vacation, Daniel Hartnett, a bilingual social worker at the East Hampton Middle School, spent the first days of September helping immigrant women and children detained at the United States-Mexico border. Volunteering with the CARA Family Detention Pro Bono Project, Mr. Hartnett conducted 13 social emotional evaluations of long-term detainees at the South Texas Family Residential Center in Dilley, Texas, during the week he was there. “I wrote reports for attorneys to either use immediately or put in a file to use down the line,” Mr. Hartnett said. He had hoped to return, but received notice yesterday that Immigration and Customs Enforcement had revoked his visiting privileges.

The center, run for I.C.E. by a private prison contractor, was opened in December in response to a massive increase last year of illegal crossings at the southern border, particularly women with children. The Dilley facility is the largest family detention center in the country. Part of President Obama’s package of 2014 executive actions on immigration, it now houses about 2,000 detainees, some who have been there almost since its opening and some who are processed and released or deported in a matter of weeks. It was designed to send the message to other families considering the difficult journey from Central America that illegal entry into the United States did not guarantee freedom — those detained are first in line for “expedited removal.”

The CARA project was set up by four nonprofits — the Catholic Legal Immigration Network, the American Immigration Council, the Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services, and the American Immigration Lawyers Association. CARA works to ensure that the detainees at Dilley receive competent legal representation and also pushes to end family detentions “by leading aggressive advocacy and litigation efforts to challenge unlawful asylum, detention, and deportation policies,” according to the American Immigration Lawyers Association website.

The nonprofits fund three full-time staff members in Dilley. One of them is Isabel Saavedra, an East Hampton High School graduate and lawyer who was admitted to the New York bar in August. Mr. Hartnett has known her since she was a new immigrant herself as a child in East Hampton.

Her own experiences inspired her to become an immigration lawyer. “I entered as an unaccompanied minor,” she said. Her parents came here first, then sent for Ms. Saavedra and her younger sister when they had saved enough money. The children came on visitors’ visas, but overstayed. “I was undocumented from March of 1999 until November of 2008, when I finally got my green card,” Ms. Saavedra said.

Mr. Hartnett said she and her sister were standouts in school. “Isabel was a superlative.” Her parents did not speak English, and when it came time to apply for college, he helped her with her applications. She went to the State University at Old Westbury and graduated from law school at the University of Massachusetts. She arrived in Dilley three months ago, right after passing the bar.

“When down here in Texas is like being in the emergency room for doctors,” she said. Volunteering attorneys, social workers, psychiatrists, and the like from around the country are trained on Sundays, then work Monday through Friday “dealing with the most pertinent cases on the docket,” Mr. Hartnett said. The information they collect goes into a database for the next crop of pro bono attorneys to use.

Ms. Saavedra works 15-hour days, six days a week, managing the pro bono attorneys. “This is the best experience I’ve ever had in my life.”

During his time in Texas, Mr. Hartnett met women and children fleeing gang violence, domestic abuse, and economic hardship, most from El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala, where gang activity is epidemic. Despite the center’s proximity to Mexico, “I didn’t meet a Mexican while I was there,” he said. The majority of those detained are Central Americans who crossed Mexico to seek asylum in the U.S.

Many of the children he met were anxious and depressed and preoccupied. They and their mothers had been separated from husbands, fathers, and older sons or brothers with whom they had traveled. “There were high levels of trauma, and signs of post-traumatic stress.”

One woman he interviewed had been threatened by her boyfriend, a gang member, before deciding to flee to the U.S. Another had failed her first “credible fear” interview. The interview, a chance to make her case for being a legitimate asylum-seeker with a real fear of returning to her home country, could have secured her conditional release on a bond or with an ankle monitor. “She kept saying ‘May 30, May 30,’” Mr. Hartnett said, but she was otherwise difficult to understand, even for someone like himself who is fluent in Spanish.

He came to realize that May 30 was the date that gang members — who had previously killed her brother for refusing to sell drugs for them — had broken into her house, told her she had to take her brother’s place, and taken her picture. “She had a speech and language disability,” said Mr. Hartnett, a clinical social worker, and had failed her first interview because of it. His conclusion after evaluating her: “She was significantly impeded in her ability to expressively utilize language in an interview.” After his evaluation, and perhaps because of it, she and her child were released to a family member.

A federal judge in California ruled in July that the Obama administration’s detention of women and children in secure facilities violated a 1997 settlement on the treatment of immigrant children caught crossing the borders illegally. Hearings for detainees are being ramped up in response, with an effort to process them within 20 days, but there are still more than 2,000 at the Dilley center. “There are 1,800 women with children detained — nursing mothers, children as young as 18 months,” Ms. Saavedra said.

“The reality is that people are being incarcerated,” Mr. Hartnett said. “This is a prison for young mothers and little children. There are guards; their movements are monitored. It’s pretty extraordinary. This is how we are responding to this refugee crisis at our border.” Mr. Hartnett is not the first mental health professional to have his visiting privileges revoked, and he believes such actions are violating the detainees’ rights to adequate representation.

The CARA project has lodged a series of complaints about the “inhumane conditions” at the Dilley center, including inadequate medical care.

“Everybody I met had at least one child 12 or under,” he said, and every child he met was sick, mostly with coughs. While the center has playgrounds, schools, and a medical clinic, mothers told him they would wait five hours at the clinic without being seen, or, when they were seen, would be told to “just drink water.” While the people detained at the southern border are not fleeing outright war, there are “geopolitical forces at play that have created an economic, social, and political situation that is forcing people to flee,” Mr. Hartnett said, pointing to gangs, corrupt governments, rampant violence, and social upheaval. “If they claim they have a fear of returning, they’re asylum-seekers and refugees,” Ms. Saavedra said. But the U.S. government, she said, “refuses to refer to them as refugees.” Instead, “we’re treating them like criminals.”
National Association of Professional Women Inducts Paula Matthews-Hoffman, Manager at Cy-Fair Oral Surgery, Into Its VIP Woman of the Year Circle

Garden City, NY (PRWEB) September 08, 2015 -- The National Association of Professional Women (NAPW) honors Paula Matthews-Hoffman as a 2015-2016 inductee into its VIP Woman of the Year Circle. She is recognized with this prestigious distinction for leadership in business NAPW is the nation’s leading networking organization exclusively for professional women, boasting more than 700,000 members and over 200 operating Local Chapters.

“I’m pleased to recognize Paula with this important honor,” says NAPW President Star Jones. “Her perseverance, work ethic and leadership qualities are an inspiration to all women.”

Paula Matthews-Hoffman oversees and manages Cy-Fair Oral Surgery, a thriving practice that specializes in complex oral procedures involving dental implants, bone grafting, impacted canines, oral pathology and facial trauma.

Ms. Matthews-Hoffman excels in administration, office operations, insurance verification and claims processing while providing exemplary customer and client relations service. Under her exceptional supervision, patients experience prompt and courteous service from initial appointments to completion of procedures. She received a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology from SUNY-College at Old Westbury and is currently involved with Kiwanis International.

In her secondary role as a Mary Kay Independent Beauty Consultant, Ms. Matthews-Hoffman teaches, coaches and mentors women into leadership positions while inspiring beauty from the inside out through her Mary Kay business.

Awards & Accomplishments: B.S., SUNY-College at Old Westbury, Psychology; Kiwanis International; Mary Kay Independent Beauty Consultant

About NAPW

NAPW’s mission is to provide an exclusive, highly advanced networking forum to successful women executives, professionals and entrepreneurs where they can aspire, connect and achieve. Through innovative resources, unique tools and progressive benefits, professional women interact, exchange ideas, advance their knowledge and empower each other.

Contact Information
Lisa Mancuso
NAPW
+1 (516) 453-6111

Paula A. Matthews-Hoffman
281-469-2873
Old Westbury, NY - October 20, 2015 - SUNY Old Westbury men's golf sophomore Andrew Pohalski was named the 2015 Skyline Conference Rookie of the Year and earned a spot as a second-team all-conference member as voted on by the league's seven coaches following Monday's Skyline Conference Championship final round.

Pohalski, the program's first-ever rookie of the year and all-conference selection, represented Old Westbury at the 2015 Skyline Conference Championships (Oct. 18-19) at Brynwood Golf & Country Club in Armonk, New York. He finished tied for ninth place in the 26-player field with a two-round score of 165 (+25) from the 6,238 yard, par-70 course. Pohalski set a program record with Monday's round of 78 (+8) as Old Westbury's best individual round en route to securing its highest individual conference championship finish (T-9th).

St. Joseph's (L.I.) won the team title with a two-round score of 631 (+71) to dethrone seven-time defending champion Farmingdale State (637, +77). Farmingdale State's Scott Sessions carded a 146 (+6) to claim the individual title.

Player of the Year: Scott Sessions (Farmingdale State)
Rookie of the Year: Andrew Pohalski (Old Westbury)
Coach of the Year: Tom Azzara (Farmingdale State)

First Team All-Conference
Scott Sessions (Farmingdale State)
Christian Bleck (St. Joseph's-Long Island)
Rory Mazur (Purchase)
John Melandro (St. Joseph's-Long Island)
Zac Campanelli (St. Joseph's-Long Island)

Second Team All-Conference
Dillon Flynn (Farmingdale State)
Owen Heath (Mount Saint Mary)
Robbie Bray (St. Joseph's-Long Island)
Matt Burnett (Farmingdale State)
Alex Harcher (Mount Saint Mary)
Andrew Pohalski (Old Westbury)

For the latest news on the Panthers, visit the official site of Old Westbury athletics. Also, become a follower of the Panthers on Instagram and Twitter, and 'LIKE' Us on Facebook.
Kings Park's Peter Sicardi Saves The Game

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2015 AT 8:08AM

SUNY Old Westbury men’s soccer senior goalkeeper Peter Sicardi, a native of Kings Park, New York, was named the Skyline Conference Men’s Soccer Co-Player of the Week for games played October 5-11.

Sicardi made two saves to hold St. Joseph’s (Brooklyn) off the scoreboard in Old Westbury’s 6-0 conference win on October 5. On October 10, Sicardi posted a six-save performance in a 1-0 overtime conference win at Purchase. Sicardi stopped Purchase’s lone shot in the extra frame to record his 200th career save.

Entering the week, Sicardi ranked among the conference leaders in shutouts (T-2nd, 3), shutouts per game (T-2nd, 0.27), saves (3rd, 65), saves per game (4th, 5.91), save percentage (8th, .677) and goals against average (10th, 2.80).