



SUNY OLD WESTBURY

# *“IN THE NEWS”*

JULY TO AUGUST 2015

Prepared by  
The Office of Public and Media Relations  
SUNY College at Old Westbury

## LONG ISLAND

# Early college nurtures hope for turnaround

BY JOHN HILDEBRAND  
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Jada Dunn, 17, a June graduate of Roosevelt High School, starts classes this month at SUNY Old Westbury with 24 course credits already accumulated — the result of a collaboration known as “Smart Scholars” that helped boost her school’s academic status.

Three weeks ago, Roosevelt High emerged as one of a handful of struggling schools across the state that won their appeals not to be placed under state-imposed receivership. A total of 144 schools were put in that category, giving superintendents in those districts special powers to hire and fire principals and teachers and take other steps aimed at improving test scores and graduation rates.

State education officials said they granted Roosevelt High a reprieve because the school had raised its graduation rate. Roosevelt administrators, in turn, credited programs such as Smart Scholars for encouraging more teens to graduate and go on to college.

“The teachers work with you. They’re trying to train you to be more independent, but they help you,” said Dunn, who recently completed orientation at Old Westbury and plans to major in accounting there. “If more high schools had programs like this, I would definitely recommend it.”

Smart Scholars, offered at six schools on Long Island and about 25 statewide, was



Roosevelt “Smart Scholars” grads Jada Dunn, left, and Jacian Wright yesterday at SUNY Old Westbury.

launched in 2010 with initial funding from a foundation supported by software billionaire Bill Gates. New York has since taken over, and the program this year cost \$3.3 million. Similar efforts, known generically as “early college high schools,” are in more than 30 other states.

One idea behind Smart Scholars is letting students living in

low-income communities know they have a shot at college, even if they may be the first in their families to attend.

To that end, students selected for the program in the 11th and 12th grades meet regularly with counselors experienced in college admissions and travel to campuses for information tours. Simultaneously, the students attend college-level

courses taught both in their own high schools and on campuses such as SUNY Old Westbury and Farmingdale State College.

Old Westbury officials said that since 2010, a total of 190 Roosevelt students earned 3,268 college credits while still in high school.

Those numbers have captured national attention. The

July edition of “District Administration,” a trade magazine for school officials, named Roosevelt as one of 30 “Districts of Distinction” across the country, largely on the strength of its early college project.

The publication concluded that Roosevelt High and SUNY Old Westbury, working together, had created new opportunities for students in a school system that in the past had been “persistently marginalized.”

The New York State Council of School Superintendents, an Albany-based advocacy group, cited that article last month in urging the State Education Department to grant Roosevelt High its requested reprieve from receivership.

Robert Lowry, the council’s deputy director, told Newsday at the time that Roosevelt’s superintendent, Deborah Wortham, “has worked hard and has made progress.”

Wortham, in a phone interview last week, said Smart Scholars is just one part of a broader program aimed at making students college-conscious. College banners hang from walls even in elementary schools, she said.

“It permeates throughout the entire school district,” Wortham added.

Roosevelt Middle School, unlike the high school, was placed in receivership by the state. A school board trustee, Willa Scott, told a public forum Saturday that the district plans to send petitions to Albany challenging that decision.

BARRY SLOAN

## LI BUSINESS

# Old Westbury seeks Start-Up NY zone

BY JAMES T. MADORE  
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SUNY Old Westbury is seeking approval for a Start-Up NY tax-free zone in Bethpage for technology companies, officials confirmed this week.

Old Westbury has signed an agreement with the Long Island Forum for Technology that would pave the way for a tax-free zone at 510 Grumman Rd. West, which is owned by LIFT.

The space is equipped with work stations and furniture used by defense giant Northrop Grumman until it downsized its local operation. The state's top Start-Up NY official, Leslie F. Whatley, has called the facility "ideal" for a zone.

If Empire State Development, the state agency overseeing Start-Up NY, approves Old Westbury's proposal, it would become the first local college to have a zone off campus. The others are at Stony Brook University, Farmingdale State College and LIU Post.

Other local colleges that have applied for tax-free zones include Hofstra University, Nassau Community College and Suffolk County Community College.

As envisioned by Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo, Start-Up NY seeks to attract new and expanding businesses to college campuses with the promise of not paying state and local taxes for up to 10 years. Their employees would not pay state income taxes for as long as 10 years. In return, the com-



The potential off-campus Start-Up NY site now houses the Long Island Forum for Technology.

panies must collaborate with professors and students on research and employment.

"Start-Up NY is a powerful program that will, over time, be a strong component of a growing, vibrant economy on Long Island," Old Westbury president Calvin O. Butts III said yesterday. "We are working through the details carefully to ensure we have the greatest chance for success as a college and community."

Old Westbury has submitted an "affiliation agreement" with the Applied Science Foundation for Homeland Security, a LIFT affiliate, to SUNY for approval. The agreement is needed for Old Westbury to apply for a Start-Up NY zone.

### INTERACTIVE CHART

Search Start-Up NY companies by name, region or host college.  
[newsday.com/data](http://newsday.com/data)

"Our campus has no vacant space in existing facilities, which led us to look for partners," said Old Westbury spokesman Michael Kinane.

LIFT officials said a Start-Up NY zone would further the group's mission to help manufacturers and other businesses to improve operations through the use of technology.

While the zone would initial-

ly be 5,870 square feet, LIFT executive director Bill Wahlig said he hopes it will eventually occupy about 30,000 square feet on the building's third floor.

He said the proposed zone would likely attract cybersecurity tenants because the building also is home to the Morrelly Homeland Security Center, established with a \$25 million state grant. He said he could see information technology firms moving to the zone as well.

"We're really excited about this . . . Old Westbury is the closest campus to us and they love the space," Wahlig said. "I think this will create jobs, this will be successful."

August 25, 2015

News 12 Coverage of Congressman Steve Israel Press Conference on the campus of SUNY Old Westbury.

The screenshot shows the News 12 Long Island website interface. At the top, there is a weather widget displaying 90° with few clouds and 0 traffic alerts. The main navigation bar includes links for News, Weather, Traffic, Numbers & Links, Sports, Features, News Team, Videos & Photos, and Travel. Below this, there are buttons for 'News 12 Live' and 'Traffic & Weather Live'. The main content area features a news article titled 'Rep. Israel: Student loan debt is next fiscal crisis' published on August 25, 2015, at 6:06 PM. The article includes a video player showing a woman speaking at a press conference. To the right of the article is an advertisement for 'HIGHER EDUCATION MARKETING' by Carnegie, with the tagline 'Just Got Real.' and a 'FIND OUT WHY' button. Below the advertisement is a 'Related Stories' section with links to 'Study: College debt is on the rise', 'Obama expands cap on student loan payments', and 'Cuomo proposes student debt forgiveness'. At the bottom right, there is a 'Social Media' section for News 12 Long Island, showing 265,283 likes and options to like the page or watch a video. A 'Related media' section at the bottom left of the article provides additional context about Rep. Steve Israel's press conference at SUNY Old Westbury.

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### Rep. Israel: Student loan debt is next fiscal crisis

August 25, 2015 6:06 PM

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#### Related media

OLD WESTBURY - Rep. Steve Israel (D-Dix Hills) was on the campus of SUNY Old Westbury Tuesday to tout legislation aimed to help college students pay off their loans at a lower rate.

The Student Loan Refinancing Act would allow undergraduate students to refinance their loans at an interest rate of 3.86 percent. Israel says those rates could currently be as high at 7 percent.

August 25, 2015

FiOS1 Coverage of Congressman Steve Israel Press Conference on the campus of SUNY Old Westbury.

The screenshot shows a news website interface. At the top left is the **FiOS1** logo with the tagline "NEWS. WEATHER. TRAFFIC." To its right is a "CHOOSE REGION LONG ISLAND" dropdown menu. Further right are social media icons for Facebook and Twitter, and a "TALK TO US SUBMIT NEWS TIP" button. Below this is a navigation bar with links for News, Weather, Traffic, Sports, Calendar, Programs, and TV Listings, along with a search box.

The main article is titled "Talking the new school year, and student debt at SUNY Old Westbury" and is attributed to Amanda VanAllen, posted on August 25, 2015, at 6:28 pm, and updated at 7:05 pm. The sub-headline reads: "Rep. Steve Israel appeared on campus as part of his push for student loan refinancing legislation".

Below the article is a video player showing a scene with a sign that says "HALL 5 IS WHERE THE IS". The video title is "DEALING WITH STUDENT DEBT" from OLD WESTBURY, NY. Below the video are tags: Long Island, News, Education, Old Westbury, FiOS1 News Now, Amanda VanAllen, Steve Israel, Student Debt.

On the right side of the page, there is a "SHARE" section with options for Share, E-mail, and Print. Below that is a "TRAFFIC" section with three items:

- NY-27**: BELT PKWY - WELLWOOD AVE. West button. 46 min (Avg 27 MPH).
- Meadowbrook State Pkwy**: NORTHERN STATE PKWY - SOUTHERN STATE PKWY. North button. 5 min (Avg 59 MPH).
- SOUTHERN STATE PKWY**: CROSS ISLAND PKWY - WANTAGH STATE PKWY. East button. 17 min (Avg 41 MPH).
- Northern State Pkwy**: GRAND CENTRAL PKWY - SUNNYSIDE BLVD. West button. 15 min (Avg 63 MPH).
- I-495**: NY-110 - EXIT 71. West button. 36 min (Avg 62 MPH).
- I-495**: CROSS ISLAND PKWY - NY-135. East button.

At the bottom right, there is a "TOP NEWS" section with two items:

- New lakeside patio, landscape design** coming to VIDEO.
- Pilot alive after small plane crashes into Great** VIDEO.

# Roslyn Times

## *Israel seeks interest cut for student loans*

BY JOE KINIC

Congressman Steve Israel (D-Huntington) has urged congress to pass the Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act, allowing borrowers with high interest rates on their existing student loans to refinance at lower levels.

Student loan borrowers currently pay interest rates as high as 7 percent on existing loans.

“High interest rates and student loan debt are crushing hard-working New Yorkers. Instead of saving to buy a home, starting a business, or putting money away for a safe and secure retirement, college grads are being saddled by high interest student loan payments,” said Israel said. “We shouldn’t wait any longer to pass this commonsense legislation, which not only allows millions of hard-working Americans to refinance their student loans at today’s low interest rates, but makes it possible for the next generation of New Yorkers to achieve the American dream.”

Israel’s comments come in support of SUNY Old Westbury President Dr. Calvin

O. Butts, III, who said he believes that new legislation would benefit everybody.

“Today’s student debt crisis is making the American Dream of higher education harder and harder to realize for this generation of students,” Butts said. “By allowing students and their families to refinance their loans at lower rates, the ‘Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act’ takes an important step in enabling them and their families to gain stronger footholds, which makes them stronger participants in our economy overall. We all benefit from that.”

Under new legislation, borrowers could refinance undergraduate loans at an interest rate of 3.86 percent.

In a news release from the congressman’s office, Israel cited that New York State has an estimated 2,825,000 federal student loan borrowers, and nationwide federal student loan debt totals \$1.3 trillion.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, an estimated 25 million Americans could take advantage of the student refinancing legislation and refinance their existing loans with lower interest rates.

# Roslyn Times

## SCHOOL NEWS

### Old Westbury web station Makes cover of Radio mag

Old Westbury Web Radio, the student-run radio station of SUNY Old Westbury, has been featured on the cover of the July 2015 edition of Radio magazine, the leading technology publication for the radio industry.

OWWR and its studios are covered in the publication as the featured "Facility Showcase."

"Education is about more than simply the acquisition of knowledge," said College President Calvin O. Butts, III. "Critical in every discipline is the linkage between knowledge and practice. We are very proud that OWWR and its facilities have earned this national attention, as it clearly illustrates the high quality of the learning environment we provide for our students."

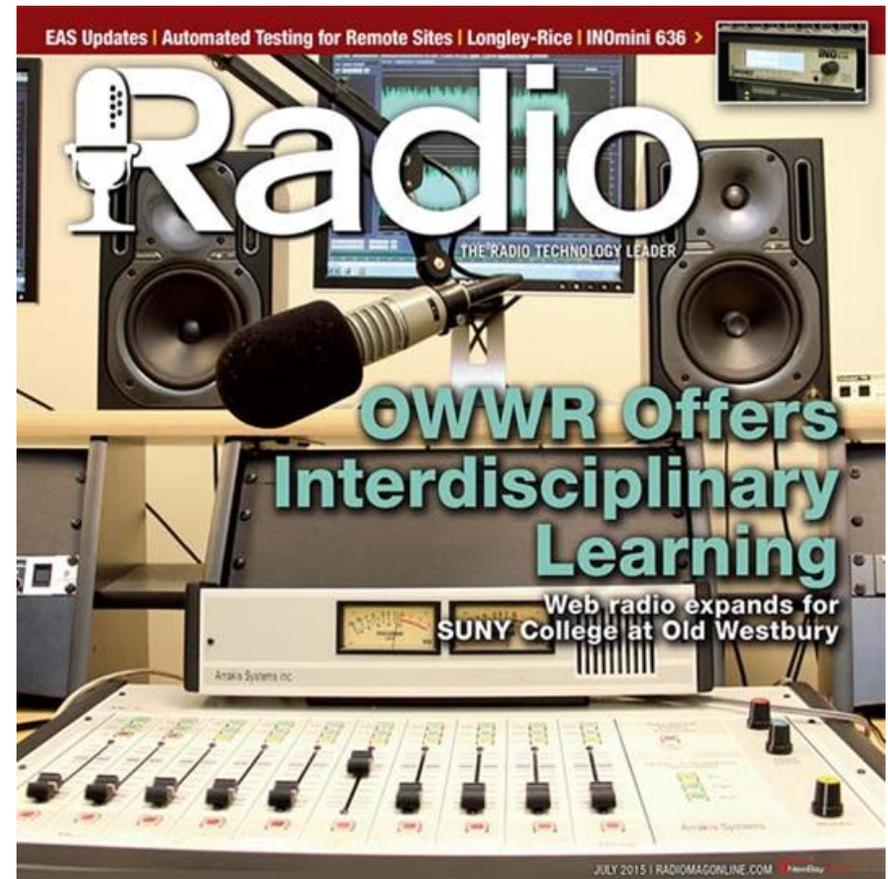
While OWWR is an interdisciplinary setting open to all students of the College, the station has developed over its nearly ten year history into a key component of the College's Media and Communications degree

program.

Old Westbury's major in Media and Communications provides students with a grounding in the economic, political, social, and intellectual history of the U.S. combined with theoretical and practical courses in journalism and production for radio, television, newspapers and interactive media.

"Radio can play a major role in the development of a student at any stage of his or her academic career," said OWWR Station Manager Joseph Manfredi. "OWWR provides an environment that encourages students to find their own voice, their thought processes, and their self-perception while they assume ownership of their education and future."

Published monthly for more than 20 years, Radio magazine reaches radio engineers and station management offering the latest information on cutting-edge technology in the radio industry and current happenings in the radio/broadcast marketplace.



The July 2015 Cover of Radio Magazine featuring OWWR.

# Levittown's Wolfe Wins SUNY Old Westbury President's Medal

***Local resident completed college experience with highest honor available to a student of Long Island's only public, comprehensive college***

Updated July 27, 2015

Arianna E. Wolfe, a recent graduate of SUNY Old Westbury and a resident of Levittown, New York, ended her college career by earning the College's highest student honor - the Old Westbury President's Medal for Scholarship.

"This is an honor won as a graduating senior, but it can only be earned through stellar efforts throughout a collegiate career at Old Westbury," said College President Calvin O. Butts, III. "Ms. Wolfe has shown the determination and drive to go far."

Wolfe recently graduated alongside more than 1,000 other graduates with a Bachelor of Science degree in Public Health after having earned a 4.0 grade point average at SUNY Old Westbury

Along with plans to pursue a graduate degree in social work, Wolfe is a writer of fiction who is the Nassau representative for the National Novel Writing Month project. She also volunteers with the Long Island Crisis Center, which provides 24/7, free, high quality, confidential and non-judgmental programs and services to support and empower Long Islanders at critical times in their lives. Volunteers undergo a nine months of intensive training and respond to more than 11,000 calls on telephone hotlines, on-line chat site, mobile phone texting and walk-in counseling.

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](http://www.oldwestbury.edu).



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: JULY 17, 2015**  
**TWO SUNY OLD WESTBURY STUDENTS EARN HIGHEST HONOR IN STATEWIDE SYSTEM**

(Long Island, NY) Yuvraj Singh and Melody Tomlinson capped their senior years at SUNY Old Westbury by earning the highest honor available to students within the State University system. They were among the 256 students state-wide, out of more than 450,000 total SUNY students, to receive the 2015 Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence.



"It is my highest honor to recognize the achievements of SUNY students who have excelled not



Yuvraj Singh. Photo Credit: SUNY Old Westbury.

only academically but as leaders on their campuses and in their communities," said Nancy L. Zimpher. "Students receiving this award are to be commended for their excellence as role models, artists, scholar athletes, and civic volunteers. Their leadership can serve as an inspiration to all SUNY students and a tremendous point of pride for the entire SUNY family."

The Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence was created to recognize students who have best demonstrated, and been recognized for, the integration of academic excellence with accomplishments in the areas of leadership, athletics, community service, creative and performing arts or career achievement.

Both Singh and Tomlinson graduated just a few weeks ago

as members of the SUNY Old Westbury class of 2015.

Singh, from Valley Stream, New York, majored in [Biological Sciences](#). While at Old Westbury, he was Vice President

and Public Relations Officer for the Science Club; served as a mentor in the Honors College Program, and was Vice President and Co-Founder for the Volunteers Around The World chapter at SUNY Old Westbury. Singh and sixteen other students assisted a medical clinic in the Dominican Republic, helping the doctors treat over 700 patients over 6 days. During his academic career at the College, Singh has made the Dean's List and was a research assistant in the Biological sciences department, working on markers for prostate cancer.

Tomlinson, from Manhasset, New York, majored in [English](#). During her academic career at Old Westbury,

she has made the Dean's List, served as Writing Consultant at the Writing Center, Vice President of the Alpha Kappa Beta Chapter of Sigma Tau Delta was published in both the Harmonia: the Creative Writing Journal of SUNY Old Westbury and Discordia: the Scholarly Journal of SUNY Old Westbury. In addition, Tomlinson was the sole student organizer when noted poet and Pulitzer Prize winner Vijay Seshadri spoke and signed books at the college. She organized, publicized and worked with a TV crew to film the event.

*The State University of New York is the largest comprehensive university system in the United States, educating nearly 460,000 students in more than 7,500 degree and certificate programs on 64 college and university campuses, and online through Open SUNY. SUNY students and faculty across the state make significant contributions to research and discovery, resulting in nearly \$1 billion of externally-sponsored activity each year. There are 3 million SUNY alumni worldwide.*



Melody Tomlinson. Photo Credit: SUNY Old Westbury

SPORTS FINAL

# Newsday

THE LONG ISLAND NEWSPAPER



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Aug. 28, 2015

## LI People ON THE MOVE

### EDUCATION

SUNY Old Westbury has announced three new hires.



**Omar Estrada Torres** of Rego Park has been hired as dean of students. He was associate dean of

students at Catholic University in Washington, D.C.



**Stacey DeFelice** of Oakdale has been hired as director of services for students with disabilities.

She was director of the MORE program at Five Towns College in Dix Hills.



**Gareth Shumack** of Commack has been hired as director of residential life. He was assistant director

for residential life at Adelphi University in Garden City.

# Long Island Business NEWS

September 4, 2015



## Education

SUNY College at Old Westbury has announced three appointments within its division of student affairs.

**Omar Estrada Torres** was named dean of students, after serving as the associate dean of students at Catholic University in Washington, D.C.

**Stacey DeFelice** is the new director of services for students with disabilities; she previously served as the director of the MORE Program at Five Towns College in Dix Hill. **Gareth Shumack**, the new director of residential life, joined Old Westbury after serving as the assistant director of residential life at Adelphi University in Garden City, New York.



**OMAR ESTRADA TORRES**



**STACEY DEFELICE**