



SUNY OLD WESTBURY

“IN THE NEWS”

NOVEMBER TO DECEMBER 2020

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The Office of Public and Media Relations
SUNY Old Westbury

Dr. Timothy E. Sams Named President of SUNY Old Westbury

November 9, 2020 | :
by [Sarah Wood](#)



Dr. Timothy E. Sams

With an almost 30-year higher education career, Dr. Timothy E. Sams was recently appointed president of The State University of New York (SUNY) College at Old Westbury, the Board of Trustees [announced](#).

Sams currently serves as the vice president of student affairs for Prairie View A&M University but has also held positions at Morehouse College, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and Swarthmore College.

Throughout his career, Sams was responsible for opening the Student Life Office at New York University-Abu Dhabi and the establishment of the first ROTC Center of Excellence in the United States. He also worked to create on-campus resources for LGBTQ+ students and established an experiential learning program in Ghana, West Africa, according to SUNY Old Westbury.

He will begin his new role on Jan. 11, 2021.

“SUNY Old Westbury benefits from an engaged faculty, a community who cares for its students and stakeholders who fully understand the educational gem that it is and can further become,” said Sams in a statement. “Together with them and with support from the SUNY Board of Trustees, the Chancellor and the College Council, we will continue to elevate the college and thereby transform even more students’ lives and impact the world. I cannot wait to get to work.”

SUNY Old Westbury picks new president from Prairie View A&M



Timothy Sams is currently vice president of student affairs for Prairie View A&M University in Houston. Credit: SUNY Old Westbury

By **Craig Schneider**

Updated November 5, 2020 12:33 AM

SUNY Old Westbury has hired a veteran administrator as its new president, who said his goal is to elevate the school's reputation as he navigates the liberal arts college through the challenges of the COVID-19 era.

Timothy Sams, 52, will bring his 29 years of administrative experience to the college around Jan. 11, and receive an annual salary of \$275,000, according to school officials. He succeeds Calvin O. Butts III, who retired at the end of August after leading the college for 21 years.

Sams' experience can advance the school's mission of championing diversity, social equality and helping the less fortunate achieve success, said Mili Makhijani, chair of the college council and head of the presidential search committee. The final decision was made by the State University of New York Board of Trustees.

"We mostly serve the underserved," Makhijani said. "He doesn't just talk about social justice, he lives it. It's about race, it's about gender, it's about veterans."

Sams is currently vice president of student affairs for Prairie View A&M University in Houston, where he worked on promoting the school's inclusivity and helped create the university's LGBTQ+ Resource Center and residential college. He also has served as senior vice president for student development at Morehouse College in Atlanta, and vice president for student life at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy.

He also led the Black Cultural Center at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, which is considered among the most diverse colleges in the country. SUNY Old Westbury is the most diverse of all of SUNY's 64 schools.

Sams said he aims to remove the roadblocks experienced by many students as they strive to succeed.

"SUNY Old Westbury benefits from an engaged faculty, a community who cares for its students, and stakeholders who fully understand the educational gem that it is and can further become," Sams said. "I cannot wait to get to work."

Sams said he understands that many of his first challenges will be linked to the coronavirus, such as expected budget cuts from the state and serving a student body of 5,000 students largely learning remotely.

He said he will look into safely reopening at least a portion of the campus' housing for students, since many are struggling to learn remotely from home.

As for the expected funding cuts, he said he understands that the role of college president makes him "chief fundraiser for the school," and he hopes that in heightening the school's reputation, he can attract donors. He said many private donors have been supporting those institutions dedicated to social justice.

"We are one of those schools," he said. "We want to elevate our brand and make it clear to everyone that we are investment-worthy, and we are the kind of school they want to partner with."



THE POWER LIST

POWER 25

IN EDUCATION



18. MILLER ASSUMES TOP LEADERSHIP ROLE AT SUNY OLD WESTBURY

Teresa Miller, JD, stepped onto the Long Island campus of SUNY Old Westbury September 2020 to provide leadership following the more than 20-year tenure of President Emeritus Calvin O. Butts III. During her short tenure thus far, she has led the college's efforts to instruct and support students in the face of the ongoing pandemic, including ramping up COVID-19 testing for the campus and tackling challenges faced by students facing housing insecurity. She has done all this while continuing in her leadership role at SUNY, where she provides leadership and direction of for system-wide strategic initiatives and sets the goals and expectations for diversity and inclusion across SUNY and its campuses. She also leads PRODiG (Promoting Recruitment, Opportunity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Growth), designed to increase diversity amongst faculty ranks and guide campus hiring. A respected legal scholar, Miller has spent decades working on prison reform initiatives in New York State.

TERESA A. MILLER

OFFICER-IN-CHARGE
SUNY OLD WESTBURY
SENIOR VICE CHANCELLOR FOR STRATEGIC
INITIATIVES AND CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

THE POWER LIST

POWER 25

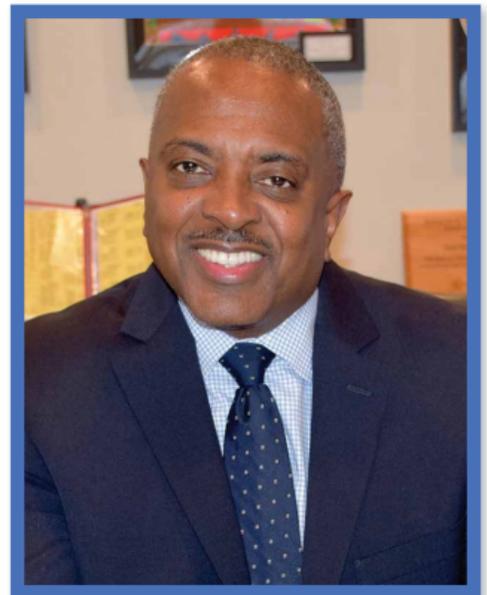
IN EDUCATION

21. AS ADJUNCT, SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT BRINGS REAL WORLD EXPERIENCE

In his instructional role in the School of Education at SUNY Old Westbury and as the superintendent of schools of the East Meadow Union Free School District, Kenneth Card, EdD “can do” attitude and ingenuity is motivated by a drive to ensure that students continue to receive a world-class education.

In the classroom, he brings a wealth of knowledge and experiences that he shares with his students to ensure that they are well prepared for their future as educators. As a college professor, Card educates future teachers and prepares them for teaching positions in Long Island school districts.

In his role as superintendent he shares the current issues in K-12 education with the college to assist in the preparation of outstanding teachers. Widely known as a thoughtful, innovative, and decisive leader, Card teaches and leads by example, providing his staff and students with the most up-to-date research and tools necessary for their success.



KENNETH CARD

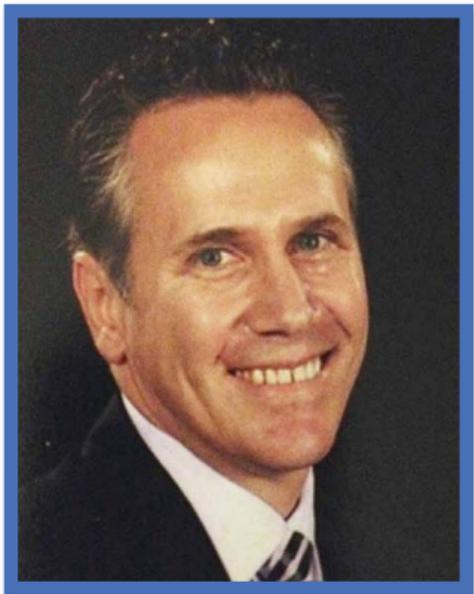
ADJUNCT ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF
EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION
SUNY OLD WESTBURY



THE POWER LIST

POWER 25

IN EDUCATION



20. GLODSTEIN FOCUSES ON REAL-WORLD LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

After serving as the driving force behind the 2018 launch of the SUNY Old Westbury's Master of Science in Forensic Accounting, the only graduate forensic accounting program on Long Island, David Glodstein, DBA, CPA turned his attention to developing real-world applied learning opportunity for students in the program he directs by leading the college's founding in fall 2019 of the Justice for Fraud Victims Project. The JFVP assists victims of suspected financial fraud in cases where forensic investigative services are limited or too costly. Developed with participation from the Long Island Chapter of the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, the program leverages higher education, law enforcement, and forensic accountants to form an effective fraud-fighting unit while giving students in the SUNY Old Westbury program the opportunity to develop hands on forensic accounting skills.

Along with his teaching and administrative efforts at the college, he continues his scholarly research in areas including fraud examination, forensic accounting, asset misappropriation, white-collar crime, employee theft, embezzlement, Ponzi schemes and business ethics.

DAVID GLODSTEIN

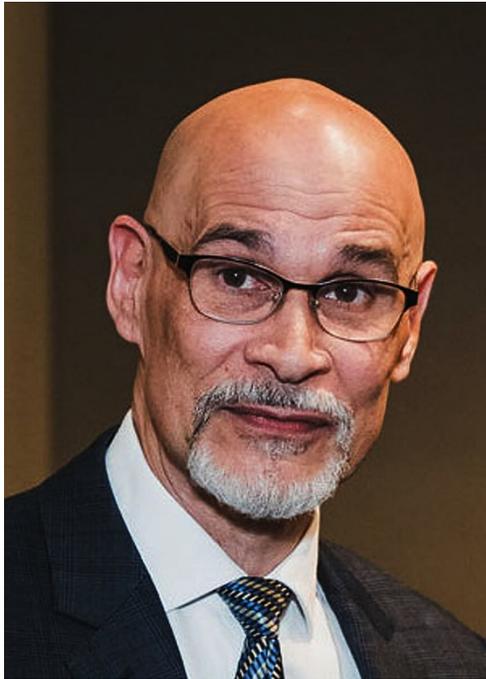
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF
ACCOUNTING,
SUNY OLD WESTBURY



Bayside psychology professor selected as SUNY Hispanic Leadership Institute Fellow

By Carlotta Mohamed

Posted on December 18, 2020



Dr. Fred Millán, a Bayside resident and psychology professor at the State University of New York (SUNY), has been named as a fellow for the SUNY Hispanic Leadership Institute by SUNY Chancellor Jim Malatras.

Millán is a director of the SUNY Old Westbury's Master's in Mental Health Counseling Program, and interim chair of the Psychology Department. He is one of only 11 faculty and staff members from across the SUNY system to be selected for the 2021 class.

The Hispanic Leadership Institute is charged with developing and supporting the next generation of Hispanic/Latinx leaders throughout SUNY.

"I am honored to be representing SUNY Old Westbury in this university system-wide social justice initiative that seeks to increase Latinx representation in leadership in SUNY," Millán said in a statement to QNS. "I look forward to learning about effective leadership from the distinguished Latinx faculty, alumni and fellow cohort members, particularly in light of the current challenges faced by students."

Dr. Teresa Miller, officer-in-charge and SUNY senior vice chancellor for strategic initiatives and chief diversity officer, said the Hispanic Leadership Institute showcases SUNY's efforts to make the university system the most inclusive in the nation by developing the leadership potential of faculty and staff members from groups historically underrepresented in higher education administration.

"It is a testament to Dr. Millán's intellect, dedication and talent to be selected for this program," Miller said.

Millán currently serves as a member of the New York State Board for Licensure/Discipline, and as a trustee for The Trust, an independent trust offering insurance, financial security and risk management programs for psychologists and related individuals nationwide.

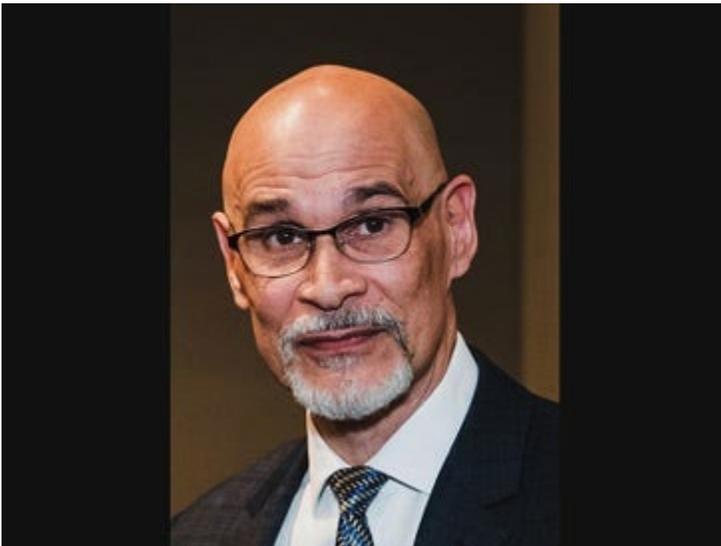
He is a former president of the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards and the National Latinx Psychological Association, former chair of the American Psychological Association Ethics Committee, former chair of the New York State Board for Psychology and former co-chair of the APA/ASPPB/Trust Joint Task Force on Telepsychology.

Additionally, Millán has conducted numerous presentations, workshops and published articles on diversity issues in psychotherapy and clinical supervision; telepsychology; and ethics. He was the co-editor of "A Telepsychology Casebook: Using Technology Ethically and Effectively in Your Professional Practice."

Bayside Resident Invited to SUNY Hispanic Leadership Institute

SUNY Old Westbury Psychology Professor Selected as SUNY Hispanic Leadership Institute Fellow

Dec 16, 2020 12:01 pm ET



Dr. Fred Millán, director of SUNY Old Westbury's Master's in **Mental Health Counseling** Program, and interim **Psychology** Department chair, has been named as a fellow for the State University of New York Hispanic Leadership Institute by SUNY Chancellor Jim Malatras. He is one of only 11 faculty and staff members from across the SUNY system to be selected for the 2021 class. The Hispanic Leadership Institute is charged with developing and supporting the next generation of Hispanic/LatinX leaders throughout SUNY.

"The Hispanic Leadership Institute showcases SUNY's efforts to make the university system the most inclusive in the nation by developing the leadership potential of faculty and staff from groups historically underrepresented in higher education

administration," said Dr. Teresa Miller, officer-in-charge and SUNY Senior Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives and Chief Diversity Officer. "It is a testament to Dr. Millán's intellect, dedication and talent to be selected for this program."

In addition to his various roles at Old Westbury, Dr Millán's currently serves as a member of the New York State Board for Licensure/Discipline, and as a trustee for The Trust, an independent trust offering insurance, financial security, and risk management programs for psychologists and related individuals nationwide. He is a former president of the Association of State & Provincial Psychology Boards and the National Latinx Psychological Association, former chair of the American Psychological Association Ethics Committee, former chair of the New York State Board for Psychology and former co-chair of the APA/ASPPB/Trust Joint Task Force on Telepsychology.

Millán, a resident of Bayside, Queens, has conducted numerous presentations, workshops and published articles on diversity issues in psychotherapy and clinical supervision; telepsychology; and ethics. Dr. Millán was the co-editor of "A Telepsychology Casebook: Using Technology Ethically and Effectively in Your Professional Practice."

About SUNY Old Westbury

SUNY Old Westbury is a selective public liberal arts college with more than 5,000 students studying in more than 45 undergraduate degree opportunities in its liberal arts and professional programs and 19 graduate programs in business, data analytics, 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.

Mad in America

SCIENCE, PSYCHIATRY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Psychology Professor Discusses Her Own Experiences Facing Mental Health Stigma

African American psychology professor Lisa Whitten recounts the stigma and inaction she experienced during a mental health crisis

By **Ashley Bobak, MS**

November 10, 2020



In a new article published online in advance in *Psychological Services*, Lisa Whitten, Associate Professor of Psychology at [State University of New York/Old Westbury](#), describes her experiences as an African American psychology professor experiencing bipolar disorder. She highlights how her experiences as an African American and the stigma associated with 'mental illness' negatively affected her colleagues' ability to intervene when she was in crisis. She outlines steps that administrators,

staff, and faculty can take to better support their colleagues who are experiencing acute symptoms of mental health crises.

Describing a mental health crisis she experienced at a department meeting, Whitten writes:

“My highly atypical emotional outburst was the mental illness equivalent of a heart attack, a seizure, or a stroke. In any of those instances, everyone would have launched into action, calling 911 and the Student Health Center. That’s the type of response I urgently needed. Three experienced, licensed, practicing clinical psychologists were present in the room with whom I had worked for 10 to 15 years, yet none of them was moved to respond to my distress.”

Whitten narrates her lifelong struggle with mental health issues, highlighting the pain and self-consciousness she experienced as a child, which continued into her adolescent and adult years. She describes her experiences with psychiatric medication and how an experience with a mood stabilizer propelled her into a manic episode and mental health crisis.

Sadly, although in the midst of a psychiatric emergency, and despite being surrounded by colleagues who were licensed clinical psychologists, Whitten did not receive the interventions that she so desperately needed during this time. Fortunately, she received support from her psychiatrist and was removed from the problematic medication, and ultimately reached a place of healing and wellness.

Whitten highlights a number of insights that she has gained through her experiences and describes steps that can be taken to provide needed support to colleagues in the event of a mental health crisis. She highlights that considering how a medication may be impacting, an individual’s behavior is key to consider when encountering someone in crisis.

Whitten also describes how keeping a regular record of life events, mood, and medication changes can be beneficial in an emergency. She encourages individuals to have this information saved in multiple places, including online, so that it does not get misplaced.

Further, Whitten suggests that individuals with mental health issues have a list of trusted persons to call in the event of changes in their mental health status, including descriptions of what that change might look like. She emphasizes the need for intervention before a mental health crisis and how being able to intervene early, right as changes are noticed, is crucial to preventing a crisis. Along with this, it is recommended that the list be shared with colleagues and placed in one’s Human Resources file so that individuals can have access to it if the list is needed.

This is contrary to the standard protocol involving protected health information, and encourages individuals to include a signed and perhaps even notarized consent form along with the list so that no concerns of overstepping boundaries or breaking privacy laws prevent help from being sought.

Moreover, Whitten encourages individuals to share their crisis plans with friends and family, outlining steps they should take if they notice changes in behavior and/or problematic behavior. She promotes the resource Wellness Recovery Action Plan, which offers guidance on how to anticipate and manage mental health crises and work towards wellness.

[Self-disclosing](#) experiences of mental illness to colleagues working in mental health settings has been explored by others elsewhere, with such work highlighting how self-disclosure can help reduce mental health stigma. As Whitten explores through her own experiences, others have also examined how [mental health stigma can impede recovery](#), which further emphasizes the need for active steps to reduce stigma – with one such step being promoting [psychosocial explanations](#) of mental illness.

Whitten describes how her experience as an African American woman “means that I am often stigmatized and subjected to a different level and type of scrutiny and evaluation by students, colleagues, and the larger society. This reality always informs my behavior.”

She discusses how she has found strength in Kwanzaa’s second principle, Kujichagulia, Swahili for “self-determination,” which reflects a sense of “defining, creating, naming, and speaking for oneself.” Elsewhere, others have written about steps that can be taken to practice [anti-racist mental healthcare](#), which provides a path to alleviate the added stigma people of color face when struggling with mental health issues.

Whitten shares about how she has learned how to attend to and regulate her moods and behavior through the help of therapists and has found a supportive community in her family, friends, and colleagues. She emphasizes how, through their support, she avoided hospitalization, which may have led to further stigma and issues.

Whitten concludes:

“I believe that sometime soon, living with a mental illness will be seen as different—maybe even unusual—but not as a deficiency or as worthy of stigma. Shame, the efforts to mask one’s symptoms, and self-stigma drain valuable energy that could be better devoted to self-improvement and to building strong families, careers, and communities. One of the principles of Ntu psychotherapy, an African-centered model developed by a late past president of ABPsi, Dr. Fred Phillips, is authenticity. I hope that by reducing and ultimately eliminating stigma, we can provide space for more people with mental health issues to be their authentic selves.”

Some Long Island schools cancel spring break, intent on keeping students safe

By Joie Tyrrell

Updated November 2, 2020 5:10 PM

Local colleges and universities are well into planning the spring semester, and for some, it's "so long spring break" — at least for 2021.

Adelphi University, Hofstra University, Long Island University, St. Joseph's College, Molloy College and SUNY Stony Brook have canceled the traditional week off that's typically scheduled for March. Other schools are going ahead with the recess, with at least one — SUNY Farmingdale — planning a COVID-19 testing regimen for students as they return to campus.

Nationally, some of the largest colleges and universities, such as Boston University and Florida State, have canceled the break, too. This past March, spring-breakers were criticized after scores of young people flocked to beaches and resorts, especially in Florida, while coronavirus cases were raging across the country.

Some college administrators want to avoid a repeat.

"I think it's the right thing to do — that's the bottom line," said Herman Berliner, Hofstra University's provost and senior vice president for Academic Affairs. "If it wasn't for COVID-19 ... we would certainly want to break, but I think they [the students] also understand that we are doing really well in the midst of a pandemic."

Most Long Island schools are offering hybrid schedules, a mix of remote and in-person learning, because of the pandemic. Some schools have a residential population, while others serve mostly commuters. About 2,000 students are living on campus this fall at Hofstra, officials there said.

Hofstra's spring semester will run from Feb. 1 to May 21, with five days sprinkled throughout the calendar for students and staff to have off, Berliner said. He said school officials reached out to student leaders, and decided that — instead of ending or starting the semester early — they would spread the five days out, and use them during the middle of the week, rather than offer three-day weekends.

"The university wants to discourage travel — especially from the quarantine states," Berliner said. There are [41 states and territories](#) on New York State's quarantine list.

Among plans at other schools:

- Stony Brook said in a statement that the start of the spring semester will be delayed a week, with the term beginning Feb. 1. The university is eliminating spring break to make up for the lost time. The last day of classes is scheduled for May 8.
- Adelphi University officials sent an email to students and staff saying spring break was canceled at the Garden City school to discourage travel. They are sprinkling in days off throughout the spring calendar.
- Donald Boomgaarden, president of St. Joseph's College in Patchogue, said the school has modified its spring schedule with classes starting one week earlier, on Jan. 28. The March 15-19 break has been canceled.
- Long Island University chief administrative officer Joseph L. Schaefer sent a note to the campus community Oct. 27 saying that classes will resume Feb. 1 for the spring semester and "will proceed without holidays or breaks, including Presidents Day and Spring Break." LIU Post is in Brookville.

Farmingdale State College is taking a different approach: It will go ahead with spring break, March 14-20, said Patrick Calabria, vice president for Institutional Advancement and Enrollment Management. The college has capacity for more than 600 students to live on campus, but limited that number to 100. The spring semester begins Jan. 22.

"If we proceed with our spring break as we are planning to do right now, we would have a testing regimen when students return to campus," Calabria said. "They would have to provide a test or we would test them as we are doing now."

Farmingdale freshman Ariana Morace, 18, believes that is a good compromise.

"We work really hard during the semester and we deserve that break," said Morace, of Queens. "Last year, when I was a senior in high school, they canceled our spring break and I felt that wasn't fair because they were giving us a lot of work and we were working extra hard because we had to teach ourselves everything — because online learning is difficult."

Suffolk County Community College, with campuses in Brentwood, Riverhead and Selden, also is keeping spring break. Nassau Community College in Garden City is finalizing its plans and has not yet made an announcement.

New York Institute of Technology's recess is set for March 27-April 4, officials at the school in Old Westbury said.

Teresa A. Miller, officer-in-charge of SUNY Old Westbury, said officials there are considering a weeklong break from classes starting March 27. She anticipates that most of the instruction at the school will continue to be delivered remotely.

"It is not so much we would eliminate spring break," she said, adding that the school is considering offering "co-curricular programming that will help our students to be successful in completing the spring semester." There could be offerings on time management and completing writing projects, as well as academic advisement opportunities, she said.

Koffa Akakpo, 18, a freshman at Farmingdale from Queens, said it is unfair for schools to cancel the break. But he's not surprised.

"It's not what I expected," he said of his first year as a college student. "I expected it to be a little bit more lively than what it is right now, but we really can't complain because there is COVID and we have to make do with what we have."

LONG ISLAND / EDUCATION

SUNY's COVID-19 changes for next semester include elimination of spring break

By John Valenti and Carol Polsky

Updated November 9, 2020 8:32 PM

Spring break 2021 at Stony Brook University and all SUNY campuses is the latest casualty of the coronavirus. A plan announced Monday pushes the system's in-person start date for the spring semester to Feb. 1, requires mandatory testing for returning students and cancels the annual college respite.

SUNY Chancellor Jim Malatras announced the changes Monday as part of "a sweeping, systemwide plan that will allow campuses to safely return to in-person instruction for the spring semester."

The new protocols were developed "in consultation with public health experts within the university system, as well as campus, faculty, student and union leadership," and includes "proven strategies already being employed" throughout the SUNY system, Malatras said in a statement.

The plan is subject to state or federal mandates and guidance.

About 140,000 students attend SUNY schools. Previously the system announced required testing for all before their departures from campus for Thanksgiving break. SUNY's Farmingdale State College will test the roughly 450 students currently taking in-person classes before they leave for Thanksgiving and after their return Nov. 30, college officials said. About 10,000 students are enrolled at the college.

Most SUNY students will complete the remainder of their fall classwork remotely, officials said, with only students facing "special circumstances" or "unique challenges" allowed to remain on campus for the rest of the semester. Those students will be "routinely tested" for COVID-19, SUNY officials said. Mental health as well as wellness and meal services are being provided for students in those special circumstances, officials said.

Separately, Syracuse University officials said Monday that all in-person instruction and other student activities at the private upstate school have been canceled due to a surge in coronavirus cases. Starting Nov. 16, all classes will be taught online through the end of the semester, Syracuse officials said in a letter to students, according to the university's news website.

SUNY's coronavirus plan for the spring also includes a precautionary seven-day quarantine for students before their return, and mandatory mask-wearing "at all times," even with social distancing guidelines and protocols in place.

The 64-campus system has a "What Students Should Know" guideline package available on its website for students and their families to help prepare for the spring semester changes. That information includes how many courses will be online, hybrid or in-person, SUNY said.

A copy of the new SUNY guidelines can be found at www.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/healthaffairs/Spring-2021-Reopening-Guidance-Final.pdf.

"This aggressive strategy gives us the best chance to return our students once again to classrooms in early 2021," Malatras said. "But as we know, this is a fluid situation so we will continue to adapt and be flexible as issues emerge."

Hofstra University in Uniondale and Molloy College in Rockville Centre have also canceled spring break, according to spokesmen for both the schools.

SUNY Old Westbury is considering whether to seek an exemption from the system's spring break rule "to schedule a week of enrichment activities like tutoring, advisement and career planning services," said spokesman Michael Kinane in an email Monday.

Adelphi University in Garden City is swapping out the traditional spring vacation period with five scattered days with no classes. The breaks, on March 10, April 1 and 16, and May 3 and 11, will allow students and faculty "to refresh and recharge, as well as catch up on academic projects," according to Adelphi's website.

At New York Institute of Technology's New York campuses, the schedule shifts spring break from March 20-28 to March 27-April 4. All spring semester classes will be remote from Jan. 25 to March 1, except for the medical school and some health professions programs which operate on a normal schedule.

With Antonio Planas

LONG ISLAND / EDUCATION

Have a COVID-19 schools complaint? Here's a place to air it

By Newsday Staff

November 11, 2020 7:42 PM

4. For SUNY students, no spring break in '21, among other changes

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Read the [full story](#).

Colleges' Thanksgiving breaks stir fears of COVID-19 spread

By Carol Polsky

Updated November 15, 2020 3:55 PM

Universities and colleges on Long Island are mandating COVID-19 tests for some students, and encouraging tests for the rest, as tens of thousands of them prepare to travel home for Thanksgiving just as infection rates are rising nationwide.

Long Islanders studying in COVID-19 hot-spot states such as Michigan and Wisconsin also will be returning home for the holiday and long winter breaks.

"I am not optimistic about the next six weeks," said Dr. Bruce Farber, chief of the infectious diseases divisions at North Shore University Hospital and Long Island Jewish Medical Center.

Farber, who is also a professor at Hofstra University's Zucker School of Medicine, agreed that returning students are potential sources of COVID-19 spread and said a COVID-19 test before joining family members is "a very good idea."

"Unfortunately, I am not sure that it is possible for many students," he said. "They are going to have a hard time finding them in many areas. In places where students can't get it done, I suggest they dramatically limit their interactions for two weeks prior to leaving."

Stony Brook University announced recently that under a directive from the state's higher education system, it would require negative COVID-19 test results of all residential and commuter students before their departure for home for Thanksgiving break.

At Stony Brook, all 4,500 residential students were being tested on a weekly basis, Lawrence Zacaese, who oversees the university's COVID-19 response, told Newsday last month.

The fall semester will finish remotely, with students returning for the January winter session, and for spring semester beginning Feb. 1. Those testing positive would determine where best to isolate or quarantine, according to university officials.

At Farmingdale State College, where most students are commuters and taking classes remotely, only those living or attending classes on campus would be tested before Thanksgiving and upon their return on Nov. 30 to finish the semester, said Patrick Calabria, a university administrator.

"The number of resident students and students taking in-person classes is approximately 450 out of our total enrollment of over 10,000," Calabria said.

At SUNY Old Westbury, where residential halls are closed and most instruction is remote, "We are testing students who attend during the last 10 days of on-campus instruction" before Thanksgiving, spokesman Michael Kinane said. "For us, that equates to two classes with an expected attendance of 23 students."

Hofstra University in Hempstead conducts a routine surveillance testing program of the university community and has reported 126 positive COVID-19 cases since the start of the semester. It is offering free COVID-19 testing to all students leaving campus before Thanksgiving, according to university spokeswoman Karla Schuster, adding, "In accordance with Governor Cuomo's recommendation, Hofstra has advised all students who are leaving the area at the end of the semester that they should get a COVID-19 test up to nine days prior to their departure."

Last year, about half of Hofstra's more than 10,000 undergraduates and graduate students were from Long Island, with the rest coming from all over the country and 88 countries.

The decision to test all departing SUNY students who use any campus facility — in a dorm, classroom, gym, library, dining hall or in a job — between Nov. 9 and Nov. 25 was announced by SUNY Chancellor Jim Malatras last month. Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo advised students to get tested before Thanksgiving break and recently announced updated guidelines for testing and quarantining upon return from travel advisory states.

The fall semester at Hofstra will switch to remote instruction after Thanksgiving, and students returning for the Feb. 1 start of the spring semester will be required to submit a negative COVID-19 test result.

Adelphi University spokesman Todd Wilson said that in addition to the regular surveillance testing, about 700 residential students will be tested again before the Thanksgiving break when dorms close as the semester concludes with remote instruction. Residential students must provide a negative test result when classes resume at the Garden City campus in January. All others must complete a health screening and participate in the university's random testing program.

Only Molloy College's 150 residential students on the Rockville Centre campus will be tested before departing for Thanksgiving break and retested upon their return in January, said spokesman Ken Young, adding the college would focus on safety measures such as its new air purification system in its three residential dorms, temperature kiosks, masks, hand-washing and social distancing.

New York Institute of Technology in Old Westbury is not requiring students to get tested, although the 74 living in dorms must be tested before returning from the holiday to finish the semester, spokesman Kimberly Tucker Campo said. Spring semester plans are not finalized, but "we expect that students will be retested at the beginning of next semester." NYIT is primarily a commuter school with most students residing off-campus.

LIU Post in Brookville issued a statement that it would continue its new campus surveillance testing and cover all costs not covered by an individual's insurance.

"The university is reviewing with local and state health experts the best practices for testing students before they leave campus for the holidays," the statement said, without elaborating on whether students would be required or encouraged to get tested.

Long Island Covid-19 Hospitalizations More Than Triple in Three Weeks

[BRIANA BONFIGLIO](#)

DECEMBER 2, 2020

There are 538 people hospitalized for Covid-19 on Long Island, more than triple from three weeks ago, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said at a press briefing today.

Long Island had 172 Covid-19 hospitalizations three weeks ago. The upward trend in hospitalizations is occurring statewide as cases have been rising in all regions since last month.

“First time around, we had a New York City, downstate, Long Island, Westchester problem,” Cuomo said. “That was actually beneficial in a way because we could bring resources from upstate to help downstate. We don’t have that option here.”

Today, County Executive Laura Curran said there are 274 Covid-19 patients in the county’s 11 hospitals — 36 in ICU and 25 on ventilators. Yesterday, Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone said there were 238 Covid-19 patients in its hospitals, with 46 in ICU.

Earlier this week, Curran and Bellone joined Cuomo’s press briefing via Zoom as he spoke about a statewide plan for managing hospital loads. The state’s cluster zone system, which determines the yellow, orange, and red areas, will now be based on hospitalization rate, death rate, case rate, available hospital beds, available ICU beds, available staff, PPE, and equipment availability.

All hospitals must identify retired nurses and doctors who they could call back should they need to combat staff shortages, Cuomo said. Emergency field hospitals, including the ones at **SUNY Old Westbury** and Stony Brook, must secure staffing and prepare for Covid-19 patients in the event of a surge, and all hospitals must plan to add 50 percent capacity.

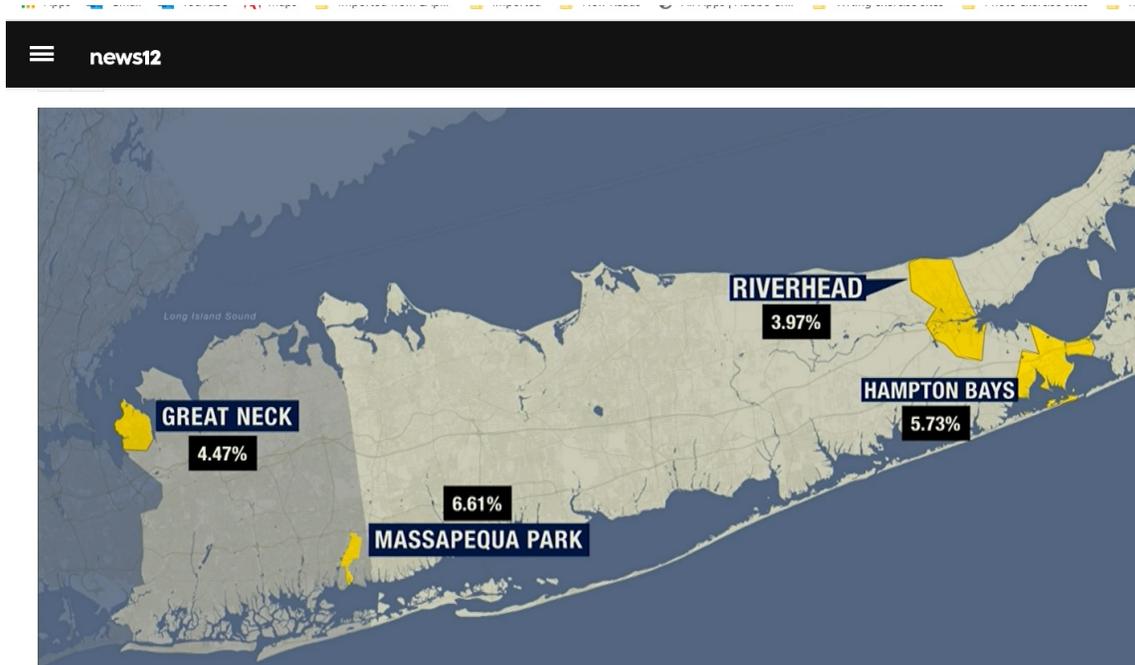
Individual hospital systems, such as Northwell Health, must balance patients among its hospitals. In addition, all hospitals should be prepared to implement statewide “surge and flex,” which distributes the load of patients among all hospitals.

“We lived this nightmare, we learned from this nightmare,” Cuomo said, “and we’re going to correct for the lessons we learned during this nightmare.”

Long Island sees NY's biggest jump in new COVID-19 hospitalizations

News 12 Staff

Updated on: Dec 04, 2020, 11:18am EST



As new coronavirus cases soar, hospitalizations are on the rise across the state with the biggest jump happening on Long Island.

On Wednesday the U.S. set new records for COVID-19 hospitalizations and patients in ICU. However, over the last three days, Long Island saw 64 hospital admissions – the highest in the state.

In Suffolk County, an uptick in new cases of the coronavirus has brought the county to a 6% positivity rate.

The county also tracked 310 patients with COVID-related ailments in hospitals, an increase of 23 in just 24 hours.

Officials worry people gathering for the holidays will also cause cases to go up.

“If we continue at this pace, by Christmas we’d have over 1,000 people in the hospital with COVID-19,” says Bellone.

Local hospitals are urging people to remain vigilant about masking, social distancing and hand-washing to keep infections and hospitalizations down.

If there is another surge of COVID-19 cases facilities at Stony Brook University and **SUNY Old Westbury** would open as field hospitals. Officials say they would be able to accommodate more than 2,000 patients.



General / 11/9/2020 3:30:00 PM

CUNYAC Meet the Staff: Sharia Marcus-Carter, Brooklyn



Throughout the fall semester, the City University of New York Athletic Conference will spotlight campus administrators, who go above and beyond for our student-athletes to ensure they have a positive and successful collegiate experience.

The phrase "wear many hats" is commonly used among NCAA Division III athletic administrators, and that statement is applicable to Sharia Marcus-Carter, Senior Woman Administrator/Compliance and Student-Athlete Program Coordinator and Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) Advisor at Brooklyn College.

Marcus-Carter arrived at Brooklyn in December of 2019, and through her abundance of college athletics experience, she quickly watched her responsibilities grow. As Senior Woman Administrator, the highest-ranking female in each NCAA athletics department, Marcus-Carter is tasked with promoting meaningful representation of women in the leadership and management of college sports.

As Compliance and Student-Athlete Program Coordinator, Marcus-Carter is responsible for ensuring that student-athletes are eligible for competition. This includes having students fill out the necessary paperwork for the NCAA and working with Athletic Trainers for medical clearance among other necessary tasks.

As Brooklyn's SAAC Advisor, Marcus-Carter meets with student-athletes on a weekly basis, assisting in implementing student-athlete based initiatives, encouraging community outreach, all while enhancing student-athlete involvement and understanding of Division III in general.

As her title suggests, Marcus-Carter indeed wears many hats, which changes her schedule daily, depending on what's needed for the student-athletes.

"Generally, I start my day checking emails from the close of business the day before and leading up to the time I log onto the computer," said Marcus-Carter. "There are days where I meet with student-athletes to discuss academic concerns and progress, while on other days, I'm in a department meeting discussing issues that we've had or can improve upon to better serve our student athletes."

Like most, Marcus-Carter had her day-to-day adjusted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, causing moments of difficulty navigating working from home while balancing family life and helping student-athletes. However, she remains focused on the bigger picture.

"Though there are no sports, it is important that our student athletes are performing to the highest of standards of Brooklyn College in their virtual classrooms. My goal is to be present and available for all of our student athletes so that they will be at ease to focus academically," said Marcus-Carter.

Marcus-Carter is no stranger to a large workload. Prior to her time with the Bulldogs, she served as the Assistant to the Director of Athletics and Compliance at Sarah Lawrence College through the NCAA Division III Ethnic Minorities and Women's Internship Grant, an initiative created to enhance ethnic minority and gender representation in athletics administration and assistant coaching positions.

"It is essential for diversity in all aspects of the job market. However, within athletics, there has been a huge lack of diversity within the coaching ranks as well as athletic administration," explained Marcus-Carter. "I believe that an athletics department should have representation from all ethnicities whether the student body represents diversity or not. Most student-athletes relate to someone within their ethnic background, and I think it's essential to have a diverse athletic administration department."

During her stint with the Gryphons, Sharia was responsible for implementing and enforcing NCAA and institutional rules and regulations for all athletic programs, monitoring all recruiting and countable athletic activities, and serving as an educational resource for the college community on NCAA rules and regulations. In addition, she oversaw all operations of the fitness campus, including the supervision of 10-15

student workers and payroll, while assisting in game day operations for the department's 15 intercollegiate programs. Sharia also represented the athletic department at a number of compliance-related seminars and the annual NCAA Convention, providing her an opportunity to network.

The role was Sharia's first taste of college athletics in an administrative capacity after spending over a decade as a basketball coach. She served as the top assistant at **SUNY Old Westbury** (NY), where she assumed recruiting and scouting duties, as well as academic advising and playing an integral role in the all-around direction of the program. Marcus-Carter also had a stint as the lead assistant coach and study hall coordinator at Clinton Junior College (Rock Hill, SC), including an additional stop as a top assistant at Cosumnes River Community College (Sacramento, CA).

Along with her experience as a college coach, Sharia has worked extensively on the grassroots level of basketball, coaching for the AAU program and the Long Island Silver Bullets Basketball Club. She has also coached at numerous basketball camps, including the C. Vivian Stringer Basketball Camp at Rutgers University. Marcus-Carter's experience as a coach played a major role in her current role today in administration. "My experience as a coach definitely influenced me in my current role because I approach it the same way that I did then, which is to be present and support student-athletes through guidance, providing useful resources and honest conversation that fosters trust and continued growth for our student-athletes." Marcus-Carter has always been around the game of basketball. A graduate of Baldwin High School in Long Island, Sharia was a three-time team captain, team MVP and All-County selection. She also garnered a spot on the Newsday's All-Long Island team, a recognition as one of the top players on Long Island. Marcus-Carter's proudest accomplishment as a player occurred during her senior year of high school when she led Baldwin High School to its first league title in 30 years. Marcus-Carter played collegiate basketball at Division II Dowling College and ending her career at Nyack College.

"My experience as a student-athlete was the reason that I wanted to stay in college athletics," said Marcus-Carter. "Unfortunately, my playing career had not turned out the way that I envisioned, and overall I was not happy with my experience with the college administration. I felt like there was little to no help with academic issues, advice and overall guidance. In my current role at Brooklyn College, I always make sure that I am available for all of our student-athletes, no matter what the situation is, big or small."

With her experience as a student-athlete, Marcus-Carter can put herself in the shoes of current student-athletes and advise them to embrace being uncomfortable. "Adaptability is essential to personal growth both in and out of the classroom," said Marcus-Carter. "The more flexible you are and willingness to adapt to change, the more prepared you will be to not let things change your approach."

With her wealth of experience in college athletics, Sharia cites self-awareness as an attribute for success. "I've always prided myself on understanding where I stood as both a player and coach. Self-awareness means understanding the type of person and player that you are. Once you understand that, everything else is pretty simple because it will allow you to not take things personal, and objectively evaluate your own strengths and weaknesses," said Marcus-Carter.

"It's the progression that a student-athlete makes from their first year to graduation," this is Marcus-Carter's biggest joy of working in college athletics.

"Watching student-athletes problem solve, ask questions, take an interest in helping their communities and working hard to achieve the success always brings a smile to my face. When I have student-athletes call or email me from years ago and talk about how I played a role in the type of person that they are now is an incredible feeling. I got into college athletics to serve a community of student-athletes and in return, I've received happiness through watching student-athletes become teachers, coaches, and administrators and bringing the same joy and attentiveness to the position as I have."

Jaime Teich loves her neighbors like no other

Jaime Teich is the Sea Cliff/Glen Head Herald Gazette's 2020 Person of the Year

Posted December 31, 2020

Jaime Teich, of Sea Cliff, embodies the mantra, "Love thy neighbor."

Through the Love Your Neighbor Project, a nonprofit that she started in May in response to the coronavirus pandemic, Teich, 40, has provided masks and hand sanitizer to Long Island residents in need. She has also partnered with local businesses and other nonprofits to provide many services to people across the North Shore, for nothing else other than her love of the community and the people who live there.

For Teich's tireless work in supporting her community, while asking for nothing in return, the Herald Gazette is proud to name her its 2020 Person of the Year.

Connected to community

When the pandemic hit, Teich said, she was desperate to connect with the community on a personal level. Her initial mission, she said, was to create masks for Long Island's homeless population, which she distributed by partnering with several other local nonprofits. She wanted to ensure that everyone, regardless of income, had access to personal protective equipment.

"[I wanted to] create this environment where those who can provide do," Teich said. "It's not charity."

One of LYNP's most consistent nonprofit partners has been the Sea Cliff Mutual Concerns Committee, which serves village residents in need, mostly older adults. Mutual Concerns Director Peggie Como said her relationship with Teich started in May, when LYNP began providing masks and hand sanitizer. Teich provided so many masks, Como said, that Mutual Concerns only just finished handing them out in December.

"There are so many different organizations, and I think that the most important thing is that we're not in competition with each other — we all work together," Como said. "That's what's been so important through all of this."

LYNP provided more than 1,700 masks and 1,500 bottles of hand sanitizer in less than three months, Teich said, but she wanted to do more. LYNP set up an activity donation box near the Sea Cliff Elementary School garden and partnered with local businesses to provide products and services to residents, with LYNP paying half of the price. Today, the project has 21 local business partners, which Teich said helps the local economy just as much as LYNP's beneficiaries.

"She just has this desire to connect so deeply with people, and that's what makes Jaime and Love Your Neighbor Project such a unique thing," said Aimee Renaud, president of LYNP's board of directors. "It's so hyper-focused on our neighbors in this area."

One of LYNP's most ambitious fundraisers took place in August, after Teich contacted Dan Roth, co-owner of the beloved Sea Cliff bar and restaurant Still Partners, to see if the two could work together in promoting LYNP. Roth said he would do what he could, although he couldn't say how much help he could give because his business was struggling amid the pandemic.

Teich moved forward, despite not knowing Roth personally. "Whether I knew him or not, Still Partners is an integral part of Sea Cliff," she said. "How do I build out this community organization and not help an entity that brings the community together?"

Teich co-organized the fundraiser with fellow Sea Cliff resident Jennifer DeSane, a close friend of Roth's. She said she had been trying to find a way to help Still Partners, and Teich's idea presented the perfect way to do it. The three came up with plans for the fundraiser, she said, and Jaime's marketing expertise played a crucial role in catching the public's attention to make the fundraiser a success.

They brought together five musical acts to perform in Roth's living room, all of which were live-streamed on Facebook. They also put together a GoFundMe page, which raised more than \$56,000 in less than a week.

"Jaime is a marketing maverick," DeSane said. "...She's a total go-getter. Her tone is conversational and fun, and she is one of those people who does what she says she is going to do and delivers in a very big way."



Because of her dedication to her community through the Love Your Neighbor Project, Jaime Teich was named the Herald Gazette's Person of the Year.

COURTESY MARY KATE GILROY PHOTOGRAPHY

Over seven months after its creation, LYNP is still going strong. Through its recent Give Some Reason to the Season project, Teich connected with local businesses to provide free gifts and services to Mutual Concerns' beneficiaries, with LYNP and the businesses covering the costs.

Teich said she does not see her work stopping anytime soon, even if the pandemic were to lighten, as there will always be people in the community who need more than they have.

"This doesn't stop for me when that vaccine is widely received," Teich said. "This, for me, stops when we don't have to do it anymore."

North Shore to the core

Born on May 6, 1980, Teich spent most of her childhood in Manhasset Hills, raised by two lesbian mothers. Teich said growing up with two same-sex parents in the 1980s and '90s was different than it is today, as she was normally unable to talk about it. However, she said she had a major wakeup call when she was 18, when she questioned herself about why she should be ashamed because of how society viewed same-sex partnerships then. She no longer felt apologetic, which is why, she said, she is passionate today about making sure others around her feel accepted for who they are.

Teich graduated from Herricks High School in 1998, after which she attended Hofstra University before transferring to the Fashion Institute of Technology in Manhattan a year later. College, however, was not for her at first, she said, because she wanted to spend her 20s discovering who she truly was. At 19, she moved to Queens to work for the Times Ledger and the Queens Tribune newspapers before returning to Long Island a few years later to work at the Manhasset-based marketing firm Marden Kane.

There, she came to realize her passion for storytelling, prompting her to return to school at SUNY Old Westbury when she was 25. She graduated with a bachelor's in communications in 2008.

As her career took off, Teich said, so did her personal life. She said she met Lee Krinsky, a high school math teacher, online in 2010, and the two were married two years later, although they legally separated in 2019. Their son, Cal, was born in 2014.

Teich moved with her husband and son to Sea Cliff in 2017. She had fallen in love with the village after driving through it with friends when she was a teenager. She came to love the area more after her parents moved to Glen Head in 1998, after which she recognized how accepting the people in the village were. This, she said, showed her that her child could be anything he wanted to be and would have the community's support.

"It's the only place on Long Island that I truly feel that way about," Teich said, "and so I was only willing to raise him here."

Baychester resident Kevin Riley is ready to serve District 12

By [Jason Cohen](#)

Posted on [December 11, 2020](#)



Seeing his father get arrested and eventually deported, lifelong Baychester resident Kevin Riley knows about struggle and adversity.

For a long time, Riley thought he would follow in the path of his father. But today, the 33-year-old is running for City Council in the 12th District, hoping to fill the vacated seat in a special election after [Andy King was expelled](#).

After spending the past decade working for the Speaker of the Assembly Carl Heastie, first as a constituent liaison and now the community relations director, Riley, who is the 83rd Assembly District Leader, is ready to take the next step.

“I believe I’m the best candidate to represent this area,” Riley said to the Bronx Times. “After all these years it’s time for me to support this community.”

At 7-years-old, Riley witnessed his dad, Balfour Riley, get locked up. Although he would visit him in jail, nothing could replace having his father at home. According to Riley, he often envisioned himself being in jail like his dad.

His mom, Lavern McLeod-Riley, worked multiple jobs and filled in for both parental roles. However, it was not easy growing up without a male figure in a rough community, Riley recalled.

“As a young Black boy you kind of feel this [jail] is what will happen to you,” he explained.

While he played basketball at Mount Saint Michael Academy, high school was a challenge. Riley got into many fights and those moments were when he missed his dad the most.

“There were times I was literally afraid of walking both ways,” he explained.

Things began to improve when he attended the Butler United Methodist Church. There he found mentors, became focused, participated in programs and even met future Senator Jamaal Bailey.

After graduating high school, he attended [SUNY College at Old Westbury](#) where he obtained a B.A. in politics, economics and law, hoping to one day become a lawyer and help people of color like his father from ending up in jail.

While pursuing his degree, Riley became involved with several student activities, such as the student council, Residential Life Association and the Divine Nine Greek Council. He was the president of the Mu Omicron chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc.

In 2008, he got an internship with Heastie and the rest is history. He joked that he didn’t know much about politics as a kid but now it is his life.

“I wasn’t even cognizant of the different offices in my community,” he said.

After obtaining his masters degree, he founded a nonprofit organization Music Over Violence, which has hosted peace summits and rallies to address violence and social injustice within his community.

Riley’s daughters encouraged him and his other fraternity brothers to create [The Dad Gang](#), nationwide organization that eliminates the stereotypes that black dads are not a part of their children’s lives.

As he looks ahead to the election on Dec. 22, Riley stressed there must be investments made to the education system and mental health programs, more opportunities for youths and an expansion of the the ULURP (Uniform Land Use Review Procedure) process from 60 to 90 days.

While he does not want the community to become gentrified like Bedford-Stuyvesant or Bushwick, he feels things must change.

“The issue I see in my community is saying it’s going to be affordable housing and then it’s turned into something else,” he stated.

Riley credited his growth and success to Heastie and Bailey, who taught him the willingness to work with people even if they do not agree.

He also expressed gratitude to his mother saying, “I live my life in making sure I make my mother proud. I’ve never seen somebody sacrifice so much.”

Riley, who recently saw his father three years ago for the first time since high school, hopes he can change lives for young men and women in the community and set an example for his two daughters, Brooke and Kate.

“You have to remember why you are doing this, because you love the community,” he said.

Kevin C. Riley for New York City Council

By *ohtadmin* | on December 16, 2020



The ouster of Andy King from the City Council in October has created the need for a special election in the Bronx 12th District, to replace King.

The Bronx 12th District covers parts of the north-east Bronx, Wakefield, Olinville, Edenwald, Eastchester, Baychester, Williamsbridge, and Co-Op City. It is a district with a substantial Caribbean-American population and one in which we have a special interest and has been following the development there.

The Special Election for District 12 is set for December 22 and the race is essentially between two candidates, Kevin Riley, the Community Relations officer for Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie and a district leader for the 83rd Assembly District in the Bronx, and

Pamela Hamilton-Jonson, the President of the 47th Precinct Council and a Community board member.

Both candidates bring records of community involvement and have been active in the District; Hamilton-Johnson ran previously for the City Council, unsuccessfully, while this will be Riley's first attempt to be elected to that office.

CARIB NEWS endorses Kevin Riley because of his proven record of accomplishments in the Bronx where he was born and raised. Riley, as Community director for Speaker Heastie, has brought resources to many of the community projects in the district, including some with direct support for Caribbean-American projects.

From a young man who succeeded against the odds of an incarcerated father, he applied himself to receive a BA from **SUNY College, Old Westbury**, and an MPA in Public Affairs from Metropolitan College of New York; an admirable achievement.

He has used his academic achievement to come back to his community to be of value and of service and been at the forefront to address violence and justice within the community.

We agree with the Teamster Joint Council's endorsement that "Kevin Riley will be a champion in the City Council for working people in the Bronx".

Elections have consequences and we are urging the community to go out and vote. City Council elections are very important and impact community lives directly – let your vote count.

We enthusiastically endorse Kevin Riley for the Bronx 12th District. Go out and vote for him!

New Hyde Park-Garden City Park students accepted into math program

By The Island Now

December 1, 2020

New Hyde Park-Garden City Park Union Free School District recently announced that one current student and three former students were accepted into a highly competitive mathematics program at the Institute of Creative Problem Solving for Gifted and Talented Students at **SUNY Old Westbury**.



The students are Alan Aphraim, a sixth-grader at Hillside Grade School; Atharva Bhagare, a former Hillside Grade School student; Sherwin Fernandes, a former New Hyde Park Road School student, and Alexander Krawczyk, a former Garden City Park School student. Bhagare, Fernandes and Krawczyk are now seventh graders at New Hyde Park Memorial High School.

Each year, more than 500 students are nominated on Long Island for 84 available spots in the mathematics program. The four students, who were recommended and applied for the program last spring, began classes in September. They will spend 60 hours in remote classes and on related outside projects. They will learn about mathematics topics such as algebra, geometry and number theory, as well as others not included in the standard courses of study, such as problem-solving applied to probability, theory of finite differences and mass point geometry. Additionally, selected applications of mathematics taken from science and engineering are presented and discussed.

Photo caption: Hillside Grade School sixth grader Alan Aphraim was accepted into the mathematics program at the Institute of Creative Problem Solving for Gifted and Talented Students at SUNY Old Westbury.

Photo courtesy of the New Hyde Park-Garden City Park Union Free School District

Sage's Pontari names coaching staff

By Ann King Russell Sage College Athletics

Nov 30, 2020

ALBANY, NY – Russell Sage College's head baseball coach Nick Pontari (Troy, NY/Troy) announced his staff for the Gators as they continue recruiting and preparing for the team's first year of varsity play in 2020-2021. Joining the program at Russell Sage College are Karl Steffen, Shawn Gibson, Lenny Kies, and Wayne Baker.

Russell Sage College, an NCAA Division III institution, competes as a member of the Empire 8 conference and will commence varsity baseball play during the 2021-2022 academic year. The Gator baseball team will open their first varsity campaign in the spring of 2022.

"It is with great excitement that we finally make the announcement of the rest of our coaching staff for our baseball program here at Russell Sage College," noted head coach Nick Pontari.

Pontari added, "The ability to bring on a man like Coach Steff, who has experience starting the program at RPI, and has demonstrated decades of success, is invaluable, and everyone in our program benefits immediately the day he steps on campus." He continued, "His versatility to work with any position on the field, specifically with pitching staffs will help ensure that our guys are ready to pitch on day one, day in and day out. With over 1,000 games coached as a Head Coach, Coach Steffan sits in the Top 10 at the Division III level in wins, and will bring that winning culture here to Russell Sage."

"Coach Gibson brings an impressive resume as well," noted Pontari. As a standout player at Schenectady Country Community College, he helped lead his team to a Top 15 national ranking at the junior college level. "He brings an "old school" mentality and toughness to our program, and specifically our infielders. With a teaching degree from Brockport, Coach Gibson is a teacher at heart, with high IQ of the game, but the most impressive part is his ability to relate to his student-athletes, and make sure his students or athletes learn what he is teaching."

"Coach Kies will be adding years of experience to our staff," commented Pontari. Kies has spent his whole life in athletics, most recently as the Director of Athletics in the Bethlehem School District. "His day in and day out interaction with both students and student-athletes over the past decades will bring a level of knowledge and relate-ability to our young men that is rare. His plating experience as an outfielder at both St. John's University and Oneonta State will help build a foundation for our young outfielders here at Russell Sage. In addition to his playing experience, his connections in not only Section 2, but downstate and in NYC will help our recruiting efforts tremendously in our early years."

"Wayne Baker will join our staff and have the primary responsibility of working with catchers," added Pontari. "Having the opportunity to play against Baker in college, when he was at Oneonta State was an honor," remarked Pontari. "He always demonstrated high character, and extreme level of competitiveness, and a determination to make his teammates around him better. His knowledge behind the dish will help our catchers succeed early in their career. Baker's most recent stop in athletics has been him working with Prep Baseball Report, one of the top recruiting organizations nationally. With these career experiences, he will help find future Gators for our program in the upcoming years."

Lenny Kies

Len Kies joins the staff as an assistant coach whose primary responsibilities will be working with the outfielders, hitters and assisting with recruiting.

Kies is currently the Director of Athletics for the Bethlehem Central School District and has been an athletic administrator for the past 16 years. He brings a wealth of experience to the Gators as he has held assistant coaching positions at Division III [SUNY-Old Westbury](#) and Division I Manhattan College in addition to serving as a member of the Athletic Director's Advisory Council at Stony Brook University.

In the summer, Kies has also worked as a member of the coaching staff for the Sag Harbor Whalers of the Hamptons Collegiate Baseball League as well as for the LI Shamrocks of the Atlantic Collegiate Baseball League.

As a player, Kies played for St. John's University before finishing his career at Oneonta State, where he earned a B.S. in business economics. He also holds master's degrees in both elementary education and school district administration from Long Island University.