



Stony Brook University

From the Desk of President Samuel L. Stanley Jr.

As I write this letter, our country and our world are in turmoil. Social injustice, global insecurity, the rapid depletion of our natural resources and income inequality at its highest since the Great Depression — all combine to create an atmosphere of cynicism and despair. By every measure these are challenging times. Yet I remain convinced that we will weather this storm and emerge even stronger.

This perception is shaped by my daily interactions with faculty and students who inspire me intellectually, emotionally and professionally. And although they come to Stony Brook with widely diverse backgrounds, talents and interests, they all share one thing in common: the drive to make a positive difference in the world.

Providing young people with the skills to meet the challenges of their generation is one of the basic functions of a university. At its best, higher education prepares students to be effective problem solvers who can assume the mantle of leadership in our increasingly interdependent and global society — while also being tolerant, compassionate and inclusive.

With your support, we do this and more at Stony Brook University. We give our students the tools to reach higher and think bigger, within an environment that not only encourages academic achievement, but also inspires creativity and innovation.

Other universities may make similar claims, but few can do so while being counted among the top 1 percent of universities in the world, while having 67 percent of their students come from families with incomes of less than \$75,000, while managing a national energy laboratory and while delivering excellent health care at the only tertiary care facility in the county. That's a rare combination indeed in American higher education.

The School of Choice, an Alma Mater of Pride

Year after year, we continue to attract the best and brightest students. This year we received almost 35,000 applications for 2,900 places — we are now the seventh most selective public university among our 62 American Association of Universities (AAU) peers.

This year alone, we've had a record three Goldwater Scholars, 11 NSF graduate research fellows and two Fulbright scholars. And thanks to Stony Brook's return on investment, top-notch research facilities and star faculty, we continue to be recognized for our outstanding academic programs and affordability — including, most recently, as a “best- buy” school in *Fiske Guide to Colleges 2017*.

This past May, more than 6,000 young people became newly minted Stony Brook alumni, each with his or her personal record of achievement. Celebrating our remarkable students is more than a commencement tradition; it is something we do all year long, and I am delighted to share four of their stories here.

- Ruchi Shah developed an all-natural mosquito repellent designed to fight illnesses such as malaria and the Zika virus while still in high school. At Stony Brook, Ruchi carried out award-winning cancer research, became the youngest speaker at the first *Forbes* Women's Summit, and was selected this April by *Glamour* magazine as one of 10 College Women of the Year...all while maintaining a perfect 4.0 GPA. I am delighted that Ruchi will be attending Stony Brook Medicine this fall.
- Michael Bleidistel enlisted in the Marines after high school, vowing to become a doctor after helping care for the wounded while deployed in Fallujah and Al Asad. After his tour was complete, he enrolled at Stony Brook where, thanks to faculty and academic service support, he thrived. Along with a demanding course load, he found time to work as a research assistant in the Department of Psychiatry and serve as an emergency medical technician in Port Jefferson...and, yes, Michael will be attending medical school this fall.
- Danielle Meyers was the first in her family to go to college and one of the few to attend college after being in the foster care system. At Stony Brook, Danielle worked as a tutor, a teaching assistant and a lab assistant. She was identified by the state as a role model for other foster youth and was

selected as a youth ambassador for the at-risk youth College Access Challenge Grant Program. A recipient of SUNY's Outstanding Academic Achievement Award four years in a row, she will be entering Stony Brook's graduate program in the School of Social Welfare with advanced standing this fall.

- Jameel Warney, a three-time America East player and Stony Brook's all-time leading scorer, led Seawolves basketball to the NCAA March Madness for the first time ever. He recently played on the Dallas Mavericks' Summer League team and hopes to become part of their regular roster.

These students embody the strength of diversity at Stony Brook and demonstrate how our spirited and dynamic campus community helps bring out the best in each of them. It's common knowledge that the country's best universities are also the most diverse.

Recently, bestcolleges.com evaluated the *U.S. News & World Report* top 100 academic schools and found that Stony Brook ranked seventh for diversity on the list, in the company of MIT, Columbia and Stanford. In addition, *Money* and *Essence* magazines placed Stony Brook among the top 50 colleges to offer the most value for African-American students.

As part of our long-standing commitment to a campus that's truly reflective of the world in which our students live, this year Stony Brook rededicated itself to actively ensuring an inclusive community. For instance, we became one of 10 HeforShe University Champions — one of only two in the United States — dedicated to supporting the UN Women's global initiative for gender equality.

I'm also very proud that we rolled out our new "Plan for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity," which articulates specific goals and tactics for ensuring an inclusive community for all, no matter their ethnicity, age, gender, religion, ability, veteran status, socioeconomic level and sexual orientation. (For more, visit stonybrook.edu/diversityplan)

Top Minds Working on the Toughest Problems

Stony Brook professors are brilliant scholars whose passion to generate and transmit new knowledge creates the foundation for all our endeavors.

This year, Stony Brook researchers provided new findings about what really causes cancer. Yusuf Hannun, MD, director of the Stony Brook University Cancer Center, working with colleagues from our Departments of Medicine, Pathology, Biochemistry, and Applied Math and Statistics (ranked third in the country) provided quantitative evidence that lifestyle and environmental exposures weigh heavily on the development of 70 to 90 percent of cancers.

Setting his sights on eliminating a deadly fungus, Maurizio Del Poeta, MD, a professor in the Department of Molecular Genetics and Microbiology, received \$6 million in NIH funding to research antifungal compounds and to develop a vaccine that, if successful, will prevent 1 million deaths worldwide each year.

And does it really matter if you sleep on your side, stomach or back? It does if you want to reduce your chances of developing Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and other neurological diseases. Stony Brook University researchers Hedok Lee, PhD, and Helene Benveniste, MD, PhD, and their colleagues found that sleeping on one's side is the best position to most efficiently remove waste from the brain.

Vital research work such as this continues unabated at Stony Brook, even though competition for federal dollars has never been fiercer. We continue to compete for and win major funding from the NSF, NIH, NOAA and many other federal and state agencies, extending our impact far beyond our campus boundaries.

For instance, scientists at Stony Brook's Advanced Energy Research and Technology Center led by Benjamin Lawler, PhD, and Sotirios Mamalis, PhD, are developing technology that may one day simultaneously reduce fuel consumption and emissions, thanks to a \$1 million grant from the Department of Energy — one of only eight awarded to research teams around the country investigating advanced vehicle technologies.

I am also delighted that Stony Brook is the new home of a National Science Foundation program, SENCER, designed to strengthen undergraduate student learning and interest in the STEMM (science, technology, engineering, math and medicine) disciplines by connecting course topics to critical issues of local, national and global importance.

Excellence Extends to the Arts and Humanities

A notable faculty appointment reflects Stony Brook's aim of becoming a leader in the study of modern American art and builds upon our strength as the steward of the Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center. Katy Siegel, PhD, was recruited earlier this year as the Eugene V. and Clare E. Thaw Endowed Chair in Modern American Art.

Recognized for her ability to seamlessly cross between academic and curatorial work, Siegel has just received the high honor of co-curating the U.S. Pavilion at the 2017 Venice Biennale.

Knowing that intellectually curious students will be more engaged international citizens, Associate Professor of English Eric Haralson applied for and received a grant from the Empowerment Charitable Trust to oversee a three-year project, "Global Citizenship and World Literature." Haralson will develop an activist-oriented curriculum that encourages students to get involved in international causes as engaged global citizens.

Reflecting our renowned Music Department, two of the top three awardees of the new \$100,000 M-Prize from the University of Michigan are associated with Stony Brook University. The inaugural grand prize went to the Calidore Quartet — in residence here for the past two years mentoring with the Emerson String Quartet — and first place in the senior open went to Yarn/Wire, four Stony Brook Doctor of Musical Arts recipients who formed their ensemble here while students.

And History Professor Nancy Tomes' new book, *Remaking the American Patient: How Madison Avenue and Modern Medicine Turned Patients Into Consumers*, was reviewed in *The New York Times* as "a seamless and utterly fascinating narrative" about how the good old days in health care never really existed.

If I tried to itemize all of the past year's remarkable accomplishments on campus in this one letter, it would run to hundreds of pages. But I'd like to share some facts with you that illustrate Stony Brook's growing reputation and put the importance of our research into perspective:

- This year alone, our research studies garnered more than 5.1 billion media impressions.

- An important barometer of our teaching and research excellence is the number of our faculty members elected to national academies by their peers. It is a point of pride that we have more academy members than all the 61 other SUNY campuses combined — 33 in total.
- Also underscoring our leadership position is the more than \$211 million in government grants that our faculty successfully competed for last year.

A Campus of Innovation and Discovery

This year we opened the new 70,000-square-foot, \$41 million computer science building. This state-of-the-art facility advances our goal as a top public research university of educating and training future generations of computer scientists. And with 1,700 majors enrolled in computer science undergraduate, MS and PhD programs — and alumni working for top global organizations including Google, Apple, Yahoo, Bloomberg, Amazon, Dow Jones, IBM, Oracle and Reuters — we are well on our way to achieving our goal.

The heart of every campus is its library, and by the end of this summer we'll have completed a multimillion-dollar renovation — supported in part by the Stony Brook Foundation — that will transform the Reading Rooms into “Knowledge Commons.” With technology improvements, modern furniture and creatively designed collaboration spaces, our library will be a haven for quiet study or group learning.

Undergoing similar transformation is the outdated image of Stony Brook as a commuter school. With the addition of our new \$168.6 million, 759-room Toll Drive residence halls with integrated dining facilities, we now have more than 10,300 on-campus beds, more than any in the entire SUNY system — a necessity given that our student population has swelled to a record 25,272.

Fueling an Economic Engine

At a time when many parts of the country are still trying to recover from the worst economic crisis of our era, Stony Brook continues to be an engine of the area's economy.

As Long Island's largest single-site employer, and with faculty who have 312 inventions and 580 U.S. patents to their name, Stony Brook provides full- or part-time jobs to more than 14,000 New Yorkers, with a direct economic impact of \$4.65 billion. And this impact is felt across the region — Stony Brook is effectively responsible for generating 60,000 jobs, or 7.5 percent of the employment in Suffolk County.

All this and more is why New York State partnered with Stony Brook University in its Start Up New York initiative, which provides major incentives for businesses to relocate, start up or significantly expand in New York through affiliations with private and public universities. To date, we've designated 210,600 square feet of space for the 19-plus companies that will soon be moving to campus in fields such as biotechnology, smart grid information technologies, agribusiness process and more.

To complement these efforts, funding is in place for two new buildings in our Research and Discovery Park: a \$60 million, 200,000-square-foot Innovation and Discovery Center to act as a “mezzanine structure” to promote the growth of startup businesses and to allow Stony Brook incubator companies to step up to the next level, and a \$75 million Institute for Discovery and Innovation in Medicine & Engineering (I-DIME). This institute will link Stony Brook's strength in advanced data analytics with pioneering research to solve the vexing problems of today and of the future.

It will be built with the capacity to service a changing set of needs, beginning with cutting-edge research into brain chips, next-generation drug development and new frontiers in precision-directed cancer treatment. In the future, these initial areas will be joined by other strategically identified initiatives to drive collaboration, innovation, discovery, technology transfer and licensing through to commercialization.

Staking Our Reputation on Excellence

Attracting students, faculty, partnerships and philanthropy demands that we clarify and promote what differentiates us from competing universities. A recent survey of key constituents about their perception of Stony Brook revealed mixed results, with some reflecting an outdated image of Stony Brook. We knew it was time that our strong and versatile identity was expressed in a new and creative way, and we unveiled “Far Beyond” in April.

“Far Beyond” serves as a sustainable platform to tell our story and attract the best and brightest students, faculty and staff; connect with alumni in a more meaningful way; increase philanthropic support; and extend the university’s impact and visibility around the world. I hope you will take a look at our new website and materials and visit campus to view our banners and building signage, all of which bring its meaning to life. (For more information, visit stonybrook.edu)

Your Support Matters

For the past five years, the predictable and modest tuition increases provided by SUNY2020 funding enabled us to hire 246 new faculty members, which allowed us to add new sections in key courses to clear obstacles to graduation. We were also able to increase our four-year graduation rate to 51 percent, grow financial aid, add 19 new academic programs and reduce the faculty/student ratio from 28:1 to 17:1.

Most important, Stony Brook continued to maintain one of the lowest tuitions of the AAU — reflected in the fact that 40 percent of Stony Brook students graduate with no debt and the average debt of those who borrow is \$2,500 below the national average.

Unfortunately, SUNY2020 expired this year. I remain hopeful that lawmakers will consider extending it as part of next year’s state budget.

We’re proud of our well-rounded offerings with recognized strengths in STEMM — the programs that cost more to educate a student. If we are to advance new knowledge in these areas, we must compete for the best students and faculty and their world-changing research. Though the approximately 20 percent of our budget covered by New York State is generous compared to some other states, providing a high-quality, low-cost education is an expensive endeavor.

To make sure we can remain on the forefront of educating students, conducting groundbreaking research and contributing to solutions for our collective future, we launched “The Campaign for Stony Brook,” the most ambitious fundraising initiative in SUNY history, aiming to raise \$600 million by June 30, 2018. I’m pleased to report that we’ve already raised \$463 million from over 38,000 donors to benefit students, faculty and programs across campus. While I’m proud of what

we've accomplished so far, we still have the considerable challenge of raising \$137 million by June 30, 2018, which will require our collective efforts.

Among our key priorities is funding for scholarships and research — impacting all areas across campus. Attracting more endowed chairs and professorships to recruit and retain our stars — typically named for the donors who establish them — is at the center of our fundraising efforts. It is imperative that we keep excellence in reach for students, no matter their means. You can learn more about the Campaign and how you can participate at stonybrook.edu/campaign.

I know there are many ways you could invest your time, talent and treasure, but few have the multiplier effect we offer here at Stony Brook.

Whether your contributions support a talented student, an endowed chair or professorship, Stony Brook Children's Hospital or the University Cancer Center, or any number of worthy areas on campus, your investment will impact generations to come.

I am always aware of my responsibility to safeguard the trust you place in me and in Stony Brook, and I hope that you are as proud of these achievements and as optimistic about and confident in our future as I am.

Together, we go far beyond.

Sincerely,

Samuel L. Stanley Jr., M.D.
President