



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** University Senate  
**FROM:** Maurie McInnis, President  
**DATE:** October 2, 2023  
**SUBJECT:** President's Report

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### University News and Accolades

#### **Stony Brook University Earns Highest-Ever Ranking from U.S. News & World Report**

Stony Brook University has achieved its highest-ever rankings – and the highest rank ever for a SUNY institution – in *U.S. News & World Report's* [2024 America's Best Colleges](#) publication. SBU, New York's flagship university, is ranked #58 among national universities and #26 among public universities, up 19 and 5 spots, respectively. In addition, SBU climbed to #12 in the U.S. for social mobility, which ties us at #2 among all AAU institutions.

#### **Stony Brook Celebrated Climate Week In New York City, September 17-24**

Stony Brook University celebrated [Climate Week NYC](#) – the largest annual climate event of its kind – from September 17-24. On Monday, September 18, 2023, President McInnis provided an overview on The New York Climate Exchange (NYCE) during a panel discussion on Advancing Coastal Resiliency. Several of our NYCE partners also held events that week that highlighted the climate related work that they are doing.

#### **Dr. Ramasubramanian Appointed Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost, and President of the SUNY Research Foundation Visits Stony Brook University**

Dr. Melur K. "Ram" Ramasubramanian has been named executive vice chancellor for academic affairs and provost and president of the Research Foundation effective November 6. Dr. Ramasubramanian will work with Chancellor King to drive academic excellence across SUNY as well as work to double research across SUNY campuses. Dr. Ramasubramanian, a first-generation college graduate, recently served as vice president for research at the University of Virginia and professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering. In his role as vice president, he increased research expenditures by nearly two thirds in just over four years.

#### **SUNY Chancellor King Visits SBU, Welcomes New Students**

State University of New York (SUNY) Chancellor John B. King, Jr. visited Stony Brook University on August 24 to meet with students as they returned to campus for the fall semester. He met with new students, resident assistants, and other Campus Residences staff. He also visited the LGBTQ\* Center.

## **SUNY Research Day**

For the first time since 2019, the SUNY system brought together hundreds of campus faculty, leaders, and alumni for a two-day summit in Washington, where they outlined SUNY's ambitious research, budgetary, and policy goals for our federal partners, held a research forum, reception, and an advocacy day.

## **2023 Discovery Prize**

The 2023 Stony Brook Foundation Discovery Prize competition took place on September 18<sup>th</sup>. The \$200,000 Discovery Prize competition supports talented early-career faculty who advance pioneering scientific breakthroughs and play a vital role in elevating Stony Brook to the next level of research excellence and innovation. The three finalists were:

- Chris Johnson, associate professor, Department of Chemistry, "A New Platform to Track the Chemistry of Climatically-Relevant but Currently Under-Addressed Ultrafine Aerosol Particles"
- Mengkun Liu, associate professor, Department of Physics and Astronomy, "Revolutionizing Nano Photonics: Exploring a New Highway for Light Matter Interactions"
- Sima Mofakham, assistant professor, Department of Neurosurgery, "Promoting Neurological Recovery Through Self-Organization of Ensembles Encoding Goal-Directed Behavior"

Chris Johnson was selected as the winner.

## **Tiger Teams**

Following the successful 2021-2022 Tiger Teams initiative, in 2022 the OVPR, in collaboration with the Office of the Provost, launched eight Biomedical Tiger Teams focused on opportunities in the Life Sciences. The interdisciplinary teams were asked to focus on identifying future opportunities and current challenges in each of their areas and met regularly during the 2022 Fall semester. They generated reports in early January and engaged with the University community during four public town halls. All of their detailed reports and presentations can be found on the Biomedical Tiger Teams website. At the conclusion of the initiative, five interdisciplinary teams were awarded funds from the Biomedical Sciences Innovation Fund to carry out research that will support applications to establish externally funded research centers. For the 2023-2024 AY, the University is preparing to launch a new round of Tiger Teams to explore research opportunities aligned with the goals of the Climate Exchange.

## **Individual Accolades**

### **Alexander Zamolodchikov Named Co-Recipient of the 2024 Breakthrough Prized in Fundamental Physics**

SBU Distinguished Professor and C.N. Yang/Wei Deng Endowed Chair Alexander Zamolodchikov has been named co-recipient of the 2024 [Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics](#). Zamolodchikov and co-winner John Cardy, University of Oxford, were cited "for profound contributions to statistical physics and quantum field theory, with diverse and far-reaching theory, in different branches of physics and mathematics." The Breakthrough Prize honors an esteemed group of the world's most brilliant minds for impactful scientific discoveries, including a subset responsible for substantial progress in the understanding and treatment of major diseases. The celebration is April 13, 2024, at the 10<sup>th</sup> annual Breakthrough Prize ceremony, held in Los Angeles.

## **Executive Searches and Leadership Updates**

- **Vice President for Research**-The search committee has been charged and Opus Partners has been selected as the search firm. The search committee is chaired by CEAS Dean Andrew Singer and RSOM Dean Peter Igarashi.
- **Chief Innovation Officer (formerly VP of Economic Development)**- The search committee has been charged and Russell Reynolds has been selected as the search firm. The search committee is chaired by Carl Lejuex, Executive Vice President and Provost, and Judy Greiman, Chief Deputy to the President and SVP for Government & Community Relations.

## **Fall Enrollment Snapshot**

A total of 25,865 students were registered at the end of Day 15 in fall 2023, 153 more than last year at the same point in the term. Compared to fall 2022, the following changes were observed by area:

- +69 West Campus undergraduates
- +89 Graduate School (West, HSC, Southampton)
- +26 School of Professional Development
- 22 East Campus/HSC
- 38 Southampton location

The is the final enrollment distribution report of the term.

## **Student Affairs Update**

- Student Health Services is partnering with CVS to offer the updated COVID vaccine for our campus community, including students, faculty, and staff. The vaccination pods will start mid-October.
- The SBU food pantry is celebrating its 10-year anniversary serving the Stony Brook University community and recently received a \$10,000 donation from Stop & Shop to support a greater number of students.
- We celebrated National Hazing Prevention Week the week of September 25. This initiative raises awareness on how to prevent, stop, and report hazing when it occurs and empower others to do the same in their organizations, schools, and communities.
- We recently held the first annual Be Well Fest at which over 400 students learned about on-campus and off-campus health and wellness services and participated in outdoor activities such as lawn games, tie-dye activities, and enjoyed free food and giveaways.
- Despite the rainy weather, we hosted a successful Family Weekend from Friday, September 22 to Sunday, September 24, with over 350 people in attendance. Several fun and educational activities were offered for students and their families.
- The Center for Prevention and Outreach has coordinated a series of events throughout the month of September to raise awareness and support for mental health and mental illness, including the 6th Annual Walk of Hope that took place on Wednesday, September 27. The Stony Brook community gathered on the academic mall in support of mental health and to educate students about extensive campus resources.

## **Advancement Update**

Since the start of the 2024 fiscal year, \$3.4 million has been generously pledged or contributed by more than 1,123 donors. Their investments in our students, research, healthcare and campus programs provide critical support, helping to elevate the University.

### **Generous contributions since the last update include:**

- \$425,000 gift to the Presidential Fund for Excellence
- \$150,000 pledge for the Stony Brook Southampton FoodLab Fund
- \$125,000 gift to the Alda Center for Communicating Science
- \$100,000 gift to the Turkana Basin Institute
- \$100,000 pledge towards a fellowship in Abstract Expressionism
- \$62,000 gift to the Adolescent Medicine Fund for Excellence in the Department of Pediatrics
- \$50,000 gift to the Human Evolution Conference
- \$50,000 pledge to the Gobler Lab Project for Oyster Research in the School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences

## **Upcoming Events**

- **State of the University Address**- Wednesday, October 11<sup>th</sup> – 1:00pm in the Staller Center Main Stage. It will also be streamed live.
- **CommUniversity Day 2023** – the celebration of Stony Brook’s campus and community – will take place on Saturday, October 14<sup>th</sup> – 12:00pm. Festivities will include interactive hands-on activities for this free, fun, family-friendly day showcasing some of the best academics, medicine, sports and entertainment that Stony Brook has to offer.
- **Wolfstock Homecoming Festival** - Homecoming weekend will be filled with activities running from October 19<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Homecoming football game will be on Saturday, October 21<sup>st</sup> – 3:30pm, when the Seawolves take on the University of New Hampshire Wildcats.

## **Athletics Update<sup>1</sup>**

- Women’s Basketball head coach Ashley Langford agreed to a contract extension through 2028. Over her two seasons at Stony Brook, Langford has guided the Seawolves to a stellar 41-19 record, including a 23-5 mark at Island Federal Arena. She has posted the highest winning percentage (.683) of any head coach in program history and the team has averaged 20 wins per season under her watch.
- The basketball schedules for the 2023-24 season are now finalized with the women opening at home against Columbia on Nov. 6 and the men opening on the road at St. John’s on Nov. 7.
- Men’s Soccer sits atop the CAA standing and remains unbeaten in CAA play following a 1-1 draw against Northeastern. The 2-0-2 start in conference play is the program’s best since 2018.
- Volleyball earned their first CAA road win of the season on September 24 by sweeping the College of Charleston by a score of 3-0 (25-23, 25-23, 25-16).

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<sup>1</sup> As of September 26, 2023

- Men's Cross Country is ranked No. 4 in the Northeast Region behind Syracuse, Harvard and Iona. Graduate student Shane Henderson finished in first place at each of the team's first two meets of the season.
- Football alum Tyrone Wheatley Jr., who was a member of the Stony Brook squad that reached the NCAA playoffs in 2018, became the latest Seawolf to play in the NFL when he earned a roster spot with the New England Patriots.