

Forging Partnerships
with Government, Industry
and Community

update on
OUTREACH
UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY



Update on Outreach Newsletter

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Division for Outreach

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Partnership with Amsterdam to Benefit Latino Youth and UAlbany

The dramatic increase in immigration from Latin American and Caribbean nations to the U.S. that began in the mid 1960s and continued unabated through the 1990s has created social challenges, but also opportunities for a rich field of study and coordinated outreach efforts. New York's Latino population growth in the 1990s also advanced at a much more rapid rate — five and a half times greater — outside of New York City than within.



▲ Carlos Schmidt (left), president of the Amsterdam-Latino Alliance, and Provost Carlos Santiago discuss the range of initiatives offered by the new Amsterdam-UAlbany Partnership for Latino Empowerment.

One of the highest of all Latino growth rates is in the City of Amsterdam and the University at Albany has taken note. "The city is an important part of our greater region, and both Amsterdam as a whole and its Latino community in particular offer programmatic opportunities that can be of significant mutual value," said Carlos E. Santiago, UAlbany's Academic Provost.

Since 1999, through what was then known as the Council of Latino Service Providers (CLASP) in Amsterdam, several of the University's bilingual practicum students in counseling psychology have provided clinical services to patients at St. Mary's Hospital's Mental Health Unit. In turn, the students receive invaluable training experience through an internship supervised by the hospital's Dr. Jose Rossy-Millan.

Rossy-Millan was also the key facilitator in generating conversations between two UAlbany faculty members — clinical psychologist Edelgard Wulfert and social psychologist Monica Rodriguez — and members of the Amsterdam community. The result was a grant proposal to the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration that seeks to significantly alleviate substance abuse in Amsterdam's Latino community, with UAlbany a co-investigator on the project with Dr. Rossy-Millan.

"Amsterdam offers the opportunity to make a difference," said Rossy-Millan. "We hope, by developing partnerships with the University, that our city can be living laboratory for confronting and solving many of the social problems that urban areas face today — including drug abuse, gangs, and failure in schools."

Such initiatives have expanded Amsterdam and UAlbany cooperation to the point that this year CLASP evolved into a new informal alliance — the Amsterdam-University at Albany Partnership for Latino Empowerment. Rossy-Millan said that he has personally consulted with nine UAlbany faculty members already regarding potential collaborations.

"The goals of this partnership are large but attainable," said Santiago. "We very much want to elevate many of these collaborations to the programmatic level, particularly those involving Amsterdam's Latino youth. This will create profound educational experiences for our own students and opening up new, important research avenues for our faculty."

"One of the major concerns for Amsterdam is that we have huge problems and yet we are budgeted out," said Carlos Schmidt, president of the Amsterdam-Latino Alliance. "Therefore, partnerships mean everything to us if we are to find solutions. That is the great value of the open door we now have with the researchers of the University at Albany."

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High Schoolers Plumb Science and Public Health Fields at East Campus

Three years ago, Michelle Przedwiecki thought the University's East Campus in Rensselaer a perfect locale for a program that afforded high school seniors a leg up on college majors and careers in the field of public health.

Then, suddenly, during "Questar III New Visions" first year of 2000-01, "the East Campus just expanded," said Przedwiecki, the program's coordinator. "Many new biotech com-



A Michelle Przedwiecki, Questar III program director, instructs a group of select high school seniors from three local counties who get college-level career-directed coursework in public health and science at the East Campus.

panies moved in, the Center for Comparative Function Genomics (CCFG) grew significantly, and government labs came on the site — eventually including the State Police forensic labs."

The result was that the original course selections that the program offered to select high school seniors from Rensselaer, Columbia and Greene counties evolved in 2001-2002 into "Introduction to Public Health" and "Contemporary Issues in Biological Science."

"So, in addition to just focusing on public health, we now have a program that provides opportunities for students interested in

careers in biology, chemistry and environmental science, plus applied fields such as public health, biotechnology, forensics and medicine," said Przedwiecki.

At the Questar III program in Scientific Research & World Health, students receive a full complement of science, English and social studies course five mornings per week. They also get intensive, small group training in important new fields, said School of Public Health (SPH) Dean Peter J. Levin.

"We're delighted to participate in a program that gives bright high school seniors this rare opportunity to deal with public health issues in a real world setting," said Levin.

UAlbany's is one of four career-directed programs operating in the three-county region. Others deal with the arts (at Russell Sage College), math and engineering (R.P.I.), and health care (Columbia Memorial Hospital).

At the East Campus site, students are mentored by a variety of researchers from SPH and CCFG, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, the State Police forensics training laboratory, and private industries based on the campus, including several incubator firms.

"Everybody from the University, government and private firms have just been great in donating their time to teach these students," said Przedwiecki. "The School of Public Health did a lot to get the program off the ground. Gene Schuler (UAlbany director for technology development), provides us with lab space and a personal tour of the facilities.

"Plus, all the companies involved have helped set up labs in their areas, or given lectures, or conducted tours." Przedwiecki said that students often engage in experiments with companies, either hands-on or, when

state forensic lab or private firm investigations are particularly sensitive, by "job-shadowing" the professional researchers.

As part of the social studies component of the curriculum, students become familiar with the ways government and economics impact health care. They also read literary classics that deal with areas of health care, the environment and the human struggle with disease.

"The New Visions programs are a new and growing area for us at Questar III," said Cliff Hebert, administrator of the Rensselaer County Education Center. "We've seen where students who have completed their required coursework are looking for a challenge in their senior years. So we're hoping to provide them with the opportunity to do career exploration and obtain college and high school credits.

"The feedback from parents at our open houses indicates that they and their children love the program. We have students who can walk through high level high school courses but who here find a lot more study involved. It's a challenge, but they've adapted well and the word has spread. We started with 4-5 students per class three years ago and we've grown to 9-12 — just about the right size."

The level of challenge is so advanced, in fact, that students successfully completing Questar III courses can earn six college credits through UAlbany's University in the High School Program.

"Questar III is an example of how new programs within the University can lead to positive impact far beyond our walls," said Schuler. "The use of our own and our industry partners' facilities and programs here at the East Campus was not originally thought of in terms of high school programming. But, by letting school districts and business ventures such as First Visions know that we are approachable, constructive programs such as Questar have taken root."

UAlbany-Amsterdam Partnership

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Toward this purpose, the partnership has plans to approach the State Legislature for support of a more formal and comprehensive association engaging the city and the University. It would encompass a series of research and community-building initiatives involving edu-

cation, economic development, cultural enrichment and the overall realization of Amsterdam as a whole, proudly diverse city.

Rossy-Millan said the Amsterdam Latino community faces many challenges shared by most others across the state, "but we are also

in a unique city in that we are a very small city with a relatively sizable Latino community. It is an opportunity for your researchers and students to work with a very diverse client population while we formulate solutions that will challenge poverty, failing school standards and substantial unemployment."

Santiago calls UAlbany an ideal institution

Executive Roundtable Confronts New Concerns of Nonprofits

New York State's 51,000 nonprofit organizations face profound uncertainties these days, exacerbated by the events of September 11.

Due to the terrorist attacks and economic slowdown, the state faces budget deficits for the next several years and, as a result, funding opportunities from government to nonprofits will decrease. Even before Sept. 11, a number of environmental pressures were being felt. Heightened competitiveness, insufficient information about the benefits and pitfalls of commercialization strategies, uncertainty about private philanthropic contributions, and increased pressures to quantify nonprofit groups' impact on individuals and communities constitute major challenges.

"Government funding and a strong stock market have been the ballast for nonprofit organizations," said Patrick J. Bulgaro, former New York State Director of the Budget and C.E.O. of the Center for the Disabled, and now chair of the new Nonprofit Executive Roundtable, part of UAlbany's Rockefeller College Initiative on Nonprofit Management and Governance.

"The impact of these challenges is already evident in shortfalls reported by many nonprofits in non-relief individual philanthropic contributions, special event proceeds, and earned income."

Aggravating this situation, said Bulgaro, is the growing tendency of donors to target specific nonprofit projects as opposed to bolstering organizations' general operating budgets. He also cites the increasing trend of state governments to contract services out to for-profit companies, a practice that can leave nonprofits at a disadvantage in the bidding process.

"The result is that nonprofit organizations have to manage themselves in smarter and better ways, with new skills sets in financing, entrepreneurship and education as part of their makeup," said Bulgaro. "Competent, well-informed executives and directors willing to ask tough questions, plus a highly productive workforce, will be more critical than ever as nonprofits cope with 21st Century challenges."

A planning group made up of such nonprofit leaders is the first major step of the Initiative. The Roundtable, funded by a \$100,000 grant from New York State, will include nonprofit organizations in the Capital Region that deal with human services, recreation, the arts, culture, health and employment.

Bulgaro said the Roundtable has three purposes: one, to create an informal, confidential forum for nonprofit executives to "pick each other's brains on items of particular importance at this time of fiscal scarcity;" two, to identify issues and advise original research efforts that will advance the generic needs of nonprofit managers. An example, he said, would be an attempt to assess the impact of the nonprofit sector on the Capital Region economy and quality of life.

Thirdly, he said the group "will find ways to leverage the resources of the University to aid the nonprofit sector." The state grant provides for projects and research assistance that will add research capacity to the Roundtable, and also funds a public lecture series.

Judith Saidel, director of the Initiative and UAlbany's Center for Women in Government & Civil Society, said this is the "right historic and strategic moment" for getting the Initiative on Nonprofit Management and Governance off the ground. "New York State

to work with Amsterdam on these issues. "In addition to an outstanding record of community service, the University has a distinguished tradition in the study of the growth of ethnic communities in the Capital Region and beyond. One of the most intensive areas of study at the University has centered upon the Latino/Hispanic population."

UAlbany pioneered the development of ethnic studies in the early 1970s with its department of Puerto Rican, Latin American, and Caribbean studies. The campus is home to a peer-reviewed journal, *The Latino Research Review*, and has been the host organization of the Puerto Rican Studies Association.

Santiago lauded Amsterdam's "traditions



Meeting at Rockefeller College are Executive Roundtable members (left to right) Judith Lyons of the Community Foundation of the Capital Region; chair Pat Bulgaro, Judith Saidel of UAlbany; Alan Krafchin of the Center for the Disabled; Sheri Sanduski of the NYS Rehabilitation Association; and John Flynn of the Capital District YMCA.

residents are more aware than ever of the importance of a vital civil society," she said.

She also calls UAlbany "particularly qualified and well positioned" to implement this effort. "Many faculty members and administrators have teaching and research expertise in nonprofit management and leadership, in public policy, and in public management. Many are also active in all levels of voluntary sector organizations and policy networks."

The Initiative overlaps with UAlbany's new graduate Certificate on Nonprofit Management and Leadership, launched in January 2002 and housed in Rockefeller College. The Certificate increases access to continuing professional education for staff and volunteers within the voluntary sector and provides important learning opportunities in nonprofit management and governance.

Saidel said the Initiative's future objectives to enhance nonprofit-related education in the Capital Region could include:

- ◆ Workforce undergraduate scholarships;
- ◆ Tuition assistance for the new graduate certificate; and
- ◆ Visiting professorships that will bring national management and governance experts to Albany for extensive interaction with the Executive Roundtable, University community, and general public.

and of civic leadership, from Mayor John Duchessi to the Amsterdam Latino Alliance, all eager to deal with a broad spectrum of community concerns. Through integrated approaches, we can explore and find mutual benefit in the areas of economic development, educational opportunity, Latino scholarship, and health care training."

Technology Transfer Pradeep Haldar, director of Energy and Environmental Technologies at Albany NanoTech, UAlbany's nanotechnology research and development center, will spearhead a new consortium of Capital Region companies that will market the region's burgeoning alternative and renewable energy industry.

The appointment of Haldar came in conjunction with the announcement of the new coalition, New Energy New York, by Sen. Chuck Schumer on Dec. 12, at CESTM.

"Alternative energy will do for the Capital Region what microchips did for Silicon Valley," said Schumer. "Companies in this region are on the forefront of new energy technologies as the U.S. moves away from foreign energy dependence."

The coalition includes several locally based energy-technology companies, including Plug Power Inc. of Latham, Mechanical Technology Inc. of Albany, Blasch Precision Ceramics of Menands, Intermagnetics General Corp. of Latham, EYP Mission Critical Facilities Inc. of Albany and GE's research unit in Niskayuna.

Key to Haldar's efforts will be the creation of a large, outdoor "test bed" for companies developing new sources of electricity. Electricity successfully produced by these companies then could be used to power the University's nanotechnology research. Besides testing at UAlbany, Haldar believes that companies will be able to conduct real-world tests of their equipment across the Capital Region.

The \$20 million project should be com

pleted within the next few years, he said.

Health Care Continuing Education at the School of Public Health produces a monthly satellite broadcast that provides continuing education opportunities for public health and human service professionals. "The Third Thursday Breakfast Broadcast Satellite Videoconference" is held each third Thursday of the month from 9 to 10 a.m. on both C-band and KU-band digital. Audiences register through a downlink, found at <http://www.albany.edu/docs.sph/coned/t2b2.html>.

Broadcasts to date have dealt with a guide to finding solid health information on the Internet, and the latest major health initiatives of New York's Department of Health.

On Feb. 20, the topic will be "Creating Health Equity Through Social Justice," and on March 20 speakers will advise on low cost, innovative ways to improve the distribution and preparation of fresh vegetables and fruits.

Performing Arts The combined efforts of UAlbany, the Siena College Music Series, Albany Pro Musica and the Glimmerglass Opera Company will produce the first American performance of the Sir Thomas Arne opera *Alfred* in nearly 250 years on Friday, Jan. 24, at 8 p.m. in the Main Theatre of the Performing Arts Center (PAC).

Alfred, written in 1740, is set during the 9th Century wars between King Alfred and the Danes, which resulted in Alfred uniting England.

Popular early — it was produced in Philadelphia in 1757 by a future signer of the Declaration of Independence — *Alfred* has but one lasting claim to fame: its final chorus of "Rule Britannia."

The production will be directed by Langdon Brown, director of graduate studies in the Department of Theatre. It will be played by Siena's Franciscan Chamber Orchestra, and sung by four

principal soloists from Glimmerglass's Young American Artist Program. Members from Albany Pro Musica and the University



Opera subject Alfred the Great

Chamber Singers, both directed by David Janower of UAlbany's Department of Music, will form the chorus.

Patrick Ferlo, PAC director, said the production is the result of growing artistic collaborations between UAlbany and Siena. A chief facilitator for these has been Ann-Marie Barker Schwartz, director of the Siena College Music series, who produced a concert featuring UAlbany professor/pianist R. Findlay Cockrell at the PAC two years ago. Barker Schwartz is also an adjunct teacher of violin and viola at UAlbany and is in the graduate program in history.

A pre-concert discussion will start at 7:15 p.m. For information, phone 442-3997.

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