Catherine Bertini, the 2003 World Food Prize Laureate, will deliver the keynote speech at the second annual "Fire It Up: Lead the Way to Change" Leadership Conference on Tuesday, Oct. 26, at SUNY Cortland.

Bertini will speak on "Building Community Leaders" at 8:45 a.m. in the Corey Union Function Room.

Presented by the College's Institute for Civic Engagement (ICE), the conference takes place from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in Corey Union. The event is part of a grant-funded initiative, "Building Community Leaders," which provides SUNY Cortland students with opportunities to develop their leadership skills for community involvement and service.

The conference is free of charge to SUNY Cortland students, faculty, staff, AmeriCorps members, and local high school students and their teachers. Advance registration is required. To register online, visit the ICE website at www.cortland.edu/civicengagement and open the Fall 2010 Leadership Conference page.


Her talk will draw upon her vast experience gained during years of leadership in public sector management, international organizations, humanitarian relief and nutrition policy.

A founding board member of the Global Humanitarian Forum, she serves on the boards of International Food and Agricultural Development and the Stuart Family Foundation. She has been a juror for the Hilton Foundation Humanitarian Prize, a member of the Advisory Council at Rockefeller College on Public Affairs and Policy, and a member of the Advisory Council at William Jefferson Clinton School of Public Service at the University of Arkansas.

Currently, she co-chairs the Initiative on Global Agriculture Development Project for the Chicago Council on Global Affairs.

Bertini served as a Senior Fellow in Agricultural Development at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. There, she advised on the development of the foundation's new agricultural portfolio, which strives to improve the well-being of poor farmers in Africa and South Asia.

A graduate of SUNY Albany, N.Y., Bertini was presented by SUNY with an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters at SUNY Cortland's 1999 Undergraduate Commencement ceremony. She has received nine other honorary degrees from North American and European institutions of higher learning. Bertini was awarded the 2007 Gene White Lifetime Achievement Award for Child Nutrition.

The program features an afternoon plenary session and workshops based on the Social Change Model of Leadership,
and intended to develop participants’ hands-on leadership skills. Leaders involved in the community at the local level will explain why community service is important, share strategies for getting into the field of community service, offer insights about their own professional paths, and provide tips on developing leadership skills.

In addition to the ICE, the event is sponsored by a congressionally directed grant administered through the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education, Leadership Cortland, Cortland County Youth Bureau, SUNY Cortland AmeriCorps, and the Corporation for National and Community Service.

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