



Chancellor's Message



Chancellor Nancy Cantor greets students from Delaware Academy in Syracuse at her inauguration. The students presented her with a framed photograph.

GREAT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION, PRIVATE as well as public, cannot be ivory towers. They must be engaged with the public at home, around the nation, and around the world.

This “public engagement” goes beyond what is generally known as “public service”—a long and honorable tradition of volunteer work in the community. Public engagement involves setting up ongoing partnerships with neighborhood groups, community centers, foundations, not-for-profit groups, arts and cultural groups, industry, government, health care organizations, alumni, and educational institutions at all levels. These partnerships, which could draw faculty and students from all over the University, need to have shared goals and decision-making, and they should be sustained.

If the central missions of SU are discovery and education, why do we want to expand beyond the classroom, the laboratory, and the campus? Why should we care about public engagement, local and global? We should care because:

- The vitality of our ideas, the creativity of our scholarly work, and the timeliness of our innovations can be tested in the marketplace of public engagement.
- We cannot be said to be “educating” our students if we do not engage the world that they are preparing to lead.
- We can transfer our knowledge to change the world in which our students, faculty, staff, alumni, neighbors, and citizens everywhere, are living.
- Making those discoveries, educating those students, and transferring that knowledge renews public trust in our scholarly community.

Our students rightly want more of the world of ideas and of issues and expertise than any one institution can give. They also, rightly, want to engage in action research, testing their knowledge with partners who can really push back.

We hope to attract residents of many communities—next door or across the nation or the world. This year we are collaborating with the Organization for Tropical Studies at Duke University to offer Syracuse undergraduates the experience of hands-on field study in tropical biology in the jungles of Costa Rica. Or they may participate in environmental research in Kruger National Park in South Africa.

Closer to home, we are committed and ready to establish new partnerships among the extraordinary arts communities on our campus, in New York City, in this region, and in our sister institutions. I have in mind accelerated collaborations and even shared spaces. If we can build a new arts network in a region already rich in “arts capital,” we can make the whole more than the sum of our separate parts.

I’m very excited about these possibilities. Please join us as a partner with your own suggestions and thoughts! I look forward to hearing from you.

Cordially,

Nancy Cantor
Chancellor and President