THEIR STORY IS OUR STORY

Annual Report | 2006 - 2007
From the President

This year represented a significant turning point for Onondaga Community College. Surpassing the 10,000-student milestone and, most certainly, the integration of residential students has added new life and energy to an already vibrant campus community.

There is no question that the College and its employees have had to stretch considerably in order to effectively accommodate record growth and to integrate residence halls into the College culture. Among the many operations to be completely revamped was dining services where a newly renovated, modern Dining Commons has recently replaced the former 1970s-style cafeteria. Residential students now use a Smart Card to access dining, bookstore, vending and other services. Wireless Internet service is now available to all students across campus 24 hours a day, seven days a week. And a comprehensive plan has been implemented to promote the safety and security of the entire campus community.

Even with these dramatic changes and double-digit enrollment increases in recent years, Onondaga Community College remains committed to its core mission that is unique in Central New York—access to high-quality college programs for local citizens. Onondaga is the second-largest institution of higher education in Central New York, but we take pride in the fact that our class size still averages 16 students. Even as access to educational technology rapidly expands, students continue to receive the kind of individual support and personal encouragement that is the hallmark of an Onondaga Community College education.

The greatest impact of any institution is to make a positive difference that transforms the lives of individuals, families and communities. Onondaga Community College has not wavered from this commitment in its proud history of nearly 50 years, a story that is told by those who know Onondaga best. I am very proud to showcase the many accomplishments of our extraordinary students and of Onondaga Community College in this year’s annual report.

Sincerely,

Debbie L. Sydow, Ph.D.
President
The story of both our students and Onondaga Community College—our past, present, and most definitely our future—is a story about perseverance and aspiration. A college that opened with 500 students in an old typewriter factory in Downtown Syracuse, Onondaga now has more than 35,000 alumni and was recently named one of the fastest-growing community colleges in the nation by *Community College Week*. Our graduates include local CEOs, health care providers at all levels, business owners, engineers, and world-renowned artists and musicians. Still we, and our students, continue to persevere and to aspire to even greater accomplishments in the years ahead.
The world of radio and television just comes naturally to me. I’ve always dreamed of being the on-air personality or working behind the scenes as an executive producer. And now, as the operations manager of Onondaga’s Internet radio station, SuperMix, I’m getting the hands-on experience that this career demands. I really feel like I’m on my way.

Before coming to Onondaga, I attended a four-year school. But it really wasn’t the right fit for me. The Onondaga campus is close to home and an affordable way for me to get the experience and education I need. What I like most about this career is that I can be creative and get involved in a variety of activities. Every professor has been willing to go the extra mile to encourage me to learn as much as I can and to experience as much as possible. Last year, I had the chance to earn college credit while participating in a paid internship experience at Walt Disney World®.

After graduation, I know I will be ready to transfer to a four-year school to complete my bachelor’s degree in radio and television production. Coming to Onondaga allowed me to figure out what I really wanted to do.
State-of-the-art facilities for today’s students

A $50 million investment in capital improvements over the past five years has transformed Onondaga Community College, largely constructed in the early 1970’s, to a modern 270-acre campus that offers its students state-of-the-art facilities for teaching and learning. Over the past few years, these advances have included the addition of three suite-style residence halls, a 16,000-square foot addition to the Gordon Student Center, the opening of Student Central—a one-stop hub for core enrollment and student services—and the purchase of a 14-acre parcel adjacent to the main campus.

The College has completed the 2008-2013 Facilities Master Plan, which includes $130 million in new projects. The capital plan is ready to implement following state approval of a five-year capital allocation for State University of New York in the 2008 budget cycle.

This year, the second phase of the Gordon Student Center project continued to progress with the opening of an 11,000-square-foot modern food court-style Dining Commons, replacing the original cafeteria. The $5.3 million renovated facility, which has received rave reviews for its new offerings, extended hours and up-to-date décor, also provides a Starbucks-style coffee café and the “Bistro.” This area, which seats approximately 60 people for more intimate gatherings, transforms into a full-service teaching and learning space each spring semester when the College’s Hospitality students fully operate one of the hottest tickets on campus—a restaurant whose lunch reservations tend to be booked for the entire semester on the first day it opens.
Lisa GreenPope ’08
Math/Science, winner of the National Coca-Cola Scholarship

I’ve always wanted to use my life to help others. When I first came to Onondaga, the Nursing program really interested me. It wasn’t until I participated in a unique five-week research opportunity through Onondaga at Binghamton University that I discovered my true passion. While there, I conducted research in behavioral neurobiology alongside other students from two and four-year colleges. My new career goal? To become a biomedical researcher.

Jason Montague ’08
Dual Major in Math/Science and Engineering Science

I moved to upstate New York from Sonoma Valley, California looking for a change. Choosing a community college made sense to me for a number of reasons. Affordability was important, but being able to take a variety of classes to discover where my strengths lie was key. I’m pursuing a dual degree in Math/Science and Engineering Science and plan to transfer to a four-year school when I graduate.

What I’ve learned over the last two years is that I don’t have to rush myself through to a four-year college. In fact, I feel more established and better prepared to transfer because of my time spent at Onondaga. I know now what’s important to me and I can see more clearly the possibilities for my future.
Being part of the back-to-back championship men’s lacrosse team was an amazing experience. I didn’t come to Onondaga right out of high school, choosing instead to work in the construction industry. But then Coach Wilbur called wanting to recruit me to play for the Onondaga lacrosse team. After discussing it with my family, I decided that I have the rest of my life to work – now is the time for college. I chose humanities as my major with an emphasis on law enforcement. And I played defense for the lacrosse team. Two decisions. No regrets.

Honestly, if Onondaga wasn’t here, I would not have gone to college at all. It just worked best for me. I’m now in training at the Central New Police Academy right on the campus and hope to someday become a Sheriff for the county. The Academy is tough. Tougher than winning a championship. But, it’s something I really want. I love Central New York. My family is here and it’s where I want to spend the rest of my life.

Kayla Spivey ’09

Nursing,
President of Whole Earth Club

I started at Onondaga Community College as a Humanities major with a journalism concentration. My goals were to focus on my studies and use my talents to make a positive impact on the world. After working part-time at a local hospital as a nursing assistant, I realized that nursing is my calling—specifically the fields of oncology and HIV/AIDS. Eventually, I would like to travel internationally with an HIV/AIDS Foundation and help educate underdeveloped countries about prevention and treatment and to give care to those already affected.

I believe the purpose of college is to explore your options and your interests in order to uncover a career path that is right for you. This has certainly been true for me at Onondaga. There are a variety of courses to choose from that help students find their niche. And there are so many opportunities to get involved in the campus community. I am president of the Whole Earth Club and I think we’ve made some great progress so far in informing the campus community about “green” ways of life. I’ve met new people, I’ve set new goals for myself, and I love the fact that I’m making a difference at Onondaga.
**Optimal environment for teaching and learning**

Across the campus footbridge to Mawhinney Hall, a $7.2 million project to renovate the building (originally constructed in 1975) to more fully fulfill its purpose as the campus’ main academic building was completed. The renovations brought 39 classrooms up to the Classroom Design Standards (developed and approved in 2005) that ensures the environment in each classroom—including lighting, heating/cooling, seating and sound—is optimal for teaching and learning.

Wireless access for Onondaga students is now possible throughout the campus as technology allowing students to log in when and where they choose was fully implemented in 2007. Wi-fi in the Gordon Student Center, Whitney Applied Technology Center and Mawhinney Hall, including four brand-new wireless hubs, is now fully operational, so students are using laptops all across campus, even on the beautiful lawns.

**Online application drives double-digit increases**

Keeping pace with today’s technology and the expectations of modern students is also the focus of the Strategic Enrollment Management initiative at Onondaga. An enrollment manager was hired in 2006, and key accomplishments this year include the implementation of the comprehensive Recruitment Plan and the College’s first free online application, which helped to generate a 33 percent increase in admission applications for fall 2007.

The Enrollment Advisory Council was appointed this year, with the charge of developing recommendations for the full implementation of Strategic Enrollment Management at Onondaga in 2008.
I always knew I would go to college. I chose Onondaga for two reasons: to live in the residence halls and to play basketball. I grew up in Central New York, but I really wanted to be on my own for the first time. And Onondaga gave me that opportunity. The residence halls are everything I thought they would be. Plus, I’m not very far from my family for visits on the weekends.

In high school, I played basketball as a point guard and was recruited by Coach Wheeler to play for Onondaga. The biggest difference between playing high school and college ball is that everyone is here because they want to be. We’re a strong team. I like athletics—it’s what I’m good at. I’m a general studies major and my dream job is to teach physical education and coach at the high school level. But for now, my goal is to help the Onondaga women’s basketball team make history.

Jessica Clark
General Studies, campus resident, member of the 2007 Women’s Basketball NJCAA Midstate Conference Championship Team
Reaccreditation: Middle States Commission on Higher Education

The College successfully completed the second of a required three-year process for reaccreditation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, one of the premier accrediting bodies of colleges and universities in the United States. The Middle States Steering Committee led the development of the Document Roadmap, an extensive documentation effort designed to show the institution’s compliance with each of the 14 standards required by Middle States. The College’s selected topics project focuses on identifying and making recommendations to eliminate any barriers to fulfillment of the College’s “Promise of Self-Discovery.” The College’s draft self-study, “Fulfilling the Promise of Self-Discovery,” was submitted to Middle States in fall 2007, with the evaluation team visit scheduled for March 2008.

Residence halls open at full capacity

This past year marked one of the most significant milestones in the history of Onondaga with the opening of the residence halls over Labor Day weekend 2006. The three ultra-modern, suite-style facilities were in great demand by the halls’ first residents. The Office of Residence Life welcomed its first Residence Life director, three residence hall directors and 18 resident assistants. In addition, learning communities, intramurals and a full slate of residence life programming that is open to the entire campus community were implemented to provide students the full college experience.

Comprehensive service improvements

A comprehensive review of the College’s offerings relative to dining, the College bookstore and vending options was completed in 2006. The results of the review were a newly renovated dining facility, a revamped menu of food and beverage offerings, a food-court style service area and a very popular coffee café that serves Starbucks beverages and on-the-go meals and snacks to busy students and staff. In addition, the groundwork was laid for the Career and Applied Learning Center (CAL Center), a central hub for career services, internships, workshops and employment opportunities that opened this fall in the lobby of Mawhinney Hall, the main academic building on the campus.

Championship athletic teams

The Onondaga Lazers’ athletic teams continued to outpace their opponents in 2006-07. Highlighting the season, indeed the entire year, was the back-to-back national championship by the Men’s Lacrosse Team in 2006 and 2007. The College’s men’s and women’s basketball teams also won the 2007 Midstate Athletic Conference Championships, the Men’s Tennis Team captured the NJCAA Region III National Championship and advanced to the National Championships, and tennis Head Coach John LaRose celebrated his 100th win as a college coach and was inducted into the NJCAA Men’s Tennis Hall of Fame. In Fall 2007, the College announced the addition of Women’s Lacrosse to the athletic roster. Recruitment by Head Coach Amy Spin will occur in 2008 with the first Women’s Lacrosse team fielded in spring 2009.
TOTAL ENROLLMENT

total headcount for fall semester

GORDON STUDENT CENTER COFFEE CAFÉ

RESIDENCE HALLS
I came to the United States from Iran three years ago and at Onondaga I’ve discovered a whole new life. My father attended school in upstate New York and our family had taken many vacations to America, so when I arrived at Onondaga I was familiar with American customs. My biggest challenge was perfecting my limited knowledge of the English language.

Through architecture, my goal is to create something new. Something that has never been created before. I am a very creative person and architecture gives me the opportunity to sharpen my skills. I’ve found that I’m most drawn to commercial architecture. My professors gave me the chance to put my skills to the test when they assigned me the project of creating a concept design for a Green Living Center on campus. I thoroughly enjoyed the challenge and am pleased that a computer animation tour of the center is featured on the College Web site.

Architecture gives me the chance to visually communicate my thoughts and ideas to the world. After Onondaga, I plan to continue my studies in architectural technology at a four-year school in New York.
The case for public support

As the only community-based institution of higher education in Central New York that exists to serve local students, the College continued its advocacy efforts for adequate public funding to ensure that access for students is not jeopardized by increased tuition costs. This important effort was advanced with increased funding from the state of $100 per full-time equivalent (FTE) student. College support from the local sponsor remained at $8.4 million.

The efforts of the OCC Foundation continued with the historic announcement of the largest single monetary gift in the College's history, a $500,000 gift from the WRG Baker Foundation in January. This brings total gifts to date to $835,000, an important milestone in the "quiet phase" for the upcoming Capital Campaign, which also saw the completion of the pre-campaign study.

This was a record year for grants with an additional $500,000 grant from the National Science Foundation for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) scholarships. The Legacy Society, a leadership giving program, was launched in 2006, and the 2007 OCC Scholarship Classic organized by the OCC Alumni Association raised $42,000 for student scholarships, an increase of 20 percent.

Workforce and economic development

Since its inception two years ago, the Office of Corporate and Public Partnerships at Onondaga has provided workforce training to support the growth and advancement of more than 40 companies and organizations in Central New York, including Time Warner, Verizon and Crucible Steel. This year, the College became one of only 12 community colleges across the country to become a member of Anheuser-Busch's national education consortium to provide training to incumbent employees. The College is also engaged in ongoing training with companies such as Excellus BlueCross BlueShield, St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center, and Destiny USA.
Campus Climate Commitment: Sustainability Plan

Sustainability has gained increased attention and has been an important focus of Onondaga Community College over the past several years. In spring 2006, Onondaga President Debbie L. Sydow, Ph.D., joined with more than 300 other university and college presidents in the signing of the American College & University Presidents’ Climate Commitment. The College has committed through this agreement to create a comprehensive institutional action plan to begin to move toward climate neutrality, including implementing green standards for all buildings; investigating and adopting “green” options for the campus; and encouraging public transportation.

This effort was further advanced in fall 2007 with a $700,000 workforce development grant to the College secured by Senator John DeFrancisco. The grant will be used, in part, to fund the development of the College’s Sustainability Institute and Sustainability Plan, an effort that is well underway by the presidential-appointed Sustainability Task Force.

In 2006-2007, Onondaga recycled 910 pounds of batteries, more than 30 tons of paper fiber, 90 pounds of sharps items and 740 pounds of fluorescent lamps.

The College welcomed record crowds to the 25th anniversary of the Syracuse M&T Jazz Fest. Nearly 75,000 people attended the three-day festival to take in the sounds of music legend Béla Fleck and the Flecktones, the Dave Brubeck Quartet, and the Queen of Soul Aretha Franklin.
**Mission**

Onondaga Community College makes high quality educational programs and services accessible to our diverse citizenry, empowering individuals to explore and discover their inherent potential and to transform themselves to live, work and thrive in our global community.

**Vision**

Onondaga Community College will be recognized as a leader in higher education and as one of the nation’s most innovative community colleges. Students will discover at Onondaga highly credentialed faculty who have chosen to dedicate their careers to teaching, employees who focus on the value of and service to a diverse student body, and an inclusive and welcoming environment that supports achievement of highest potential. Lifelong learning will be nurtured by personal connection, innovative technology, global perspectives and open minds. Through its unique stewardship and public responsibility to prepare citizens for productive careers in this region, Onondaga will serve a primary role in enriching and enhancing the quality of life for all who live and work in Central New York.