

Stronger Than Ever After a Century and a Half

SUNY Cortland President's 2017-18 Annual Report





Red Dragon Strong After 150 Years

By Erik J. Bitterbaum, President, SUNY Cortland

In May, SUNY Cortland concluded its 150th academic year, sending more than 1,930 ambitious graduates out to pursue careers, build healthy lives and make a positive difference in the world. I have no doubt they will succeed. As a scientist, I am making that deduction based on the impressive accomplishments of the more than 80,000 Cortland graduates who came before them. And, of course on my personal interactions with these future leaders.

Plentiful indicators for their future success can be found by reviewing the 2017-18 academic year. During those two semesters, we welcomed our largest freshman class in 30 years and laid the groundwork for what would be a record number of student applicants for Fall 2018.

It was a year of accomplishment in which our students, faculty and staff were recognized nationally for achievements that corresponded to our core priorities. We introduced new academic programs and student opportunities, strengthened our roots in the community and progressed toward our goals of becoming both one of the United States' healthiest campuses and one of its most environmentally sustainable. We increased our engagement with students and alumni as we reconnected with SUNY Cortland's past and prepared for its future.

The campus and alumni community also spent 2017-18 planning a yearlong celebration of the SUNY Cortland Sesquicentennial, which we launched in July, during Alumni Weekend 2018. It will be a year of diverse events seeking to explore connections between our humble beginnings as a Normal School with a graduating class of 10 aspiring teachers to the sprawling, nearly 7,000-student comprehensive college of today. That celebration is supported by two enormous projects undertaken in the last year by the History Department.

Professor and History Department Chair Randi Storch and Associate Professor of History Kevin Sheets finalized an updated version of SUNY Cortland's official history book, which covers 1990 through 2017. The new book — researched and written with the help of faculty, staff, alumni and students — will be published as part of the Sesquicentennial. Also as part of the Sesquicentennial, Storch engaged students in a year-long effort to research and build an interactive digital timeline of the College's first century and a half. That timeline, launched with the Sesquicentennial webpage at Reunion, was created as a living history record that will evolve and grow with the College.

By exploring the College's past, we gained perspective on our future, which was useful in strengthening our strategic planning process. Based on input gathered from across campus, we set a course in 2017 that builds on our solid academic foundation to meet future challenges. To accomplish this, the College developed a list of 11 measurable, strategic objectives that can be tracked to keep SUNY Cortland focused on its core priorities.

In sum, 2017-18 was a year of progress in which we strengthened our position as a leader in academics, transformational education, campus wellness and sustainability. Our 150th year laid a solid foundation from which to launch SUNY Cortland's next century and a half.



Better Than Ever After a Century and a Half

SUNY Cortland stands out for academics, athletics and affordability. Red Dragons dig deeper, reach higher and achieve more. The proof is in the 2017-18 numbers.

Strong outcomes

- 3rd-highest graduation rate in the 64-campus SUNY system
- 99 percent of graduates are employed or pursuing a postgraduate degree within 12 months of graduation

Unlimited opportunity

- 67 majors representing arts and sciences, education and professional studies
- 50+ study abroad options on six continents
- 7 pre-professional programs, including physical therapy, medicine and law
- 3 new majors; environmental geoscience, healthcare management and inclusive early childhood education

Athletic excellence

An NCAA Division III powerhouse

- SUNY Cortland has won NCAA Division III team titles in nine different sports — the second-highest total nationally.
- 105 individual national titles
- 25 team national championships

Ambitious vision

- 300 million dollars in new construction over the last 15 years
- 100 percent use of renewable electricity

Campus profile: 2017-18

- 16:1 student-to-faculty ratio
- 6,913 students
 - 6,346 undergraduate
 - 567 graduate

Diverse student body

- 73 percent white
- 27 percent non-white

Strong outcomes

99



percent of graduates employed or pursuing a postgraduate degree



Majors for every interest

67

majors representing arts and sciences, education and professional studies.



An NCAA Division III powerhouse

SUNY Cortland has won NCAA Division III team titles in nine different sports — the second-highest total nationally.

105

individual national titles

25

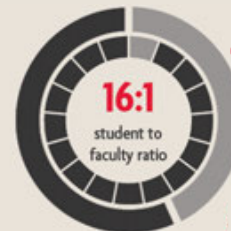
team national championships

300



million dollars in new construction over 15 years, bringing cutting-edge facilities to campus

A great place to connect



6,900
students



Notable Recognition 2017-18

Overall Best Value

Money magazine

For a second consecutive year, SUNY Cortland was ranked in the top 5 percent of all four-year colleges in the United States as a “Best College for Your Money.” SUNY Cortland was ranked No. 117 in the nation out of 2,400 colleges and universities, highest among SUNY’s comprehensive colleges. Affordable tuition, low student debt and successful early career earnings give SUNY Cortland students a strong return on their investment.



Wall Street Journal

SUNY Cortland was the second-highest ranked SUNY comprehensive college in the *Wall Street Journal's 2018 U.S. college rankings*, trailing only SUNY New Paltz. The WSJ analysis looked at academic strength, student engagement, college resources and educational outcomes.

US News

SUNY Cortland rose significantly in U.S. News & World Report’s annual ranking of the “Best Colleges” in the nation, landing 48th in the news organization’s survey of what it considers the best regional universities in the Northeast. The improvement continues a trend that began two years ago, when the College was ranked 74th.

Program-specific praise

Teacher preparation

SUNY Cortland ranked No. 23 nationally in *BestValueSchools.com's* listing of the 50 best value colleges for teaching degrees. SUNY Cortland was the top college in the SUNY system on the list and CUNY Queens College, which ranked No. 18, was the only New York state college ranked higher.

Sports medicine

CollegeChoice.net ranked the College as the 10th best in the nation for preparing undergraduates for sports medicine careers. *CollegeChoice.net* lauded SUNY Cortland for its student research, student-run clubs and organizations such as the Athletics Trainers Club and study abroad programs in England, Germany and Australia.



Special education

SUNY Cortland has one of the best special education teaching programs in the United States, according to a ranking by *CollegeChoice.net*, an online college search site, which rated the College 23rd in the nation in its 2018 evaluation. The evaluation was based on academic reputation, tuition, early career earnings and acceptance rates.

Sport management

SUNY Cortland’s *online master’s degree in sport management* earned national recognition in just its fourth year of existence. It was ranked among the “Best Online Master’s in Sport Management Programs 2018” by *BestColleges.com*, which lauded its flexibility for working professionals.

Transfer students

SUNY Cortland, which recently was the only SUNY institution named to Phi Theta Kappa’s 2018 Transfer Honor Roll. The international honor society for two-year college students recognized 112 institutions across the country for their success in developing community college transfer pathways.



Communication disorders:

Zippia.com, a company that helps young people find good careers, rated SUNY Cortland’s communication disorders major as the No. 2 program of its kind in New York state. The firm evaluated career results, program size, graduation rate and cost.

Our Mission

SUNY Cortland is an academic community dedicated to diverse learning experiences. Students grow as engaged citizens with a strong social conscience fostered by outstanding teaching, scholarship and service.

Our Vision

SUNY Cortland will be a college of opportunity, from which students graduate with the knowledge, integrity, skills and compassion to excel as leaders, citizens, scholars, teachers and champions of excellence. Prospective students and employees will choose SUNY Cortland in response to its nationally recognized academic programs, innovation and experiential learning, and the rich intellectual, social and athletic life on the campus. SUNY Cortland will be a center for intellectual, cultural and economic growth, distinguished by successful partnerships with organizations, schools, agencies and businesses throughout the region, the nation and the world.



Our Values

Student Focus

All decisions, plans and actions revolve around students' academic, personal, social and cultural development and wellness.

Integrity

Dedication to honesty, hard work, high personal and professional standards, and respect for people, perspectives, and the environment.

Intellectual Life

Commitment to inquiry, academic rigor, creativity, lifelong learning and contribution to discipline, profession, and the greater good.

Our Priorities

Academic Excellence

We will cultivate academic programs that provide students with the best opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills and dispositions. This means ensuring that we have relevant and engaging curriculum, effective and innovative delivery methods, appropriate facilities and a culture of continual improvement. We will foster the highest levels of student and faculty engagement and support faculty contributions to their disciplines, the college and communities locally and globally.

Transformational Education

We will provide intentionally designed and highly effective educational opportunities that challenge how students see themselves and the world in profound new ways. Transformational education involves all of the opportunities that expose students to new environments, cultures, perspectives and knowledge. It also challenges them to reflect, acknowledge their self-efficacy, and continually expand their understanding and skills to be more engaged agents in their lives and their communities.

Well-being

We will advocate for personal and community well-being through our academic disciplines and our campus programming and facilities. We actively promote the physical, emotional, cultural and social well-being of our students and employees, determine areas of greatest need, and respond with policies and programs that recognize the well-being of each individual is critical to our strength as a whole. This includes striving to be a campus community that enacts values of inclusivity, collaboration, respect, and care where contributions to the community are recognized and we hold ourselves accountable for supporting a positive campus climate.

Maximization of Resources

We will sustain resources and carefully align our decision-making and allocation process with the mission-based functions of the college and our strategic vision for the campus. Maximizing resources includes being fiscally responsible, thinking about efficiency while maintaining excellence, and communicating clearly about resource allocation. It also means focusing on sustainability and ensuring that the campus maintains a dedication to responsible use of natural resources and consideration of our impact on our environment.

Institutional Objectives

The Institutional Objectives are focused, intentional changes with measurable outcomes derived from our four strategic priorities. They were established during the 2017-18 year to complement the ongoing mission-critical work of the campus and are in addition to objectives within operational plans. These 11 indicators are measures that will be used to assess progress over the next five years. As we measure progress toward these objectives, we anticipate that new initiatives will emerge and new indicators will inform our progress.



1. Enhance the assessment of student learning and development and utilize evidence to strengthen programs.
2. Improve student achievement in written and oral communication
3. Increase persistence and degree completion for first-year, transfer and underrepresented student.
4. Promote faculty engagement in the life of the college and in faculty members' respective disciplines.
5. Increase the percentage of courses taught by full-time faculty.
6. Expand the impact of applied learning by increasing opportunities and increasing the quality of experiences.
7. Strengthen our community through a focus on inclusion, civility and accountability.
8. Increase institutional financial support to students through scholarship fundraising.
9. Increase revenue to campus from non-tuition sources.
10. Enhance the quality of spaces and facilities for academic programs and the overall student experience.
11. Increase the environmental sustainability of the campus and community.

2017-18: The year in review

Over the course of the previous year, SUNY Cortland made progress in all four of its priority areas: academic excellence, transformational education, well-being and maximization of resources.

Academic Excellence

Campus-hosted conferences

Sustainability conference

SUNY Cortland hosted New York Coalition for Sustainability in Higher Education's sixth annual conference at SUNY Cortland, drawing college officials from colleges across the state.

SUNY-wide history conference

"Tuning Talks: A Tuning Conference for SUNY Historians," a two-day conference, was hosted by SUNY Cortland's History Department. The conference brought dozens of SUNY history faculty from all over the state to discuss how to align history curriculum, program assessments and outreach with the historical skills that history majors develop at the college level.

Conference on Instruction and Technology

Faculty and staff from SUNY campuses across the state will soon gather at SUNY Cortland for the 27th annual **Conference on Instruction and Technology (CIT)**, SUNY's largest and most anticipated event related to the use of instructional technology in education.

Alumni-Undergraduate Science Symposium

Alumni with backgrounds in scientific research returned to campus to share their experiences with three dozen current students during the second annual Alumni-Undergraduate Science Symposium. A number of the students and recent alumni also presented updates on their research.

Cheney Institute

Education leaders from throughout Central New York learned about encouraging innovation and creativity in schools from internationally recognized author and speaker George Couros during the 10th annual Francis J. Cheney Educational Leadership Institute. The event, named after Francis J. Cheney, who served as Cortland Normal School principal from 1891 until his death in 1912.

Faculty Research

Faculty throughout SUNY Cortland pursued academic research during the 2017-18 year ranging from tree-ring analysis in intertidal zones to new approaches to prevent underage drinking and drug use among college students. Examples of this work include:

- Steven Broyles, professor and department chair of biological science, **received a \$1 million grant from the National Science Foundation** to investigate the molecular and chemical ecology of milkweed plants, which could have medicinal applications.
- A collaborative effort between the College's Kinesiology and Communication Sciences and Disorders departments is finding **innovative ways to improve the lives of people with Parkinson's disease** by using exercise equipment designed for professional skiers.

Academic facilities

The updated **Ross E. Bowers Hall Science Museum** formally opened in SUNY Cortland's recently renovated science complex. The updated museum features a giant, interactive periodic table of elements; an ornithology exhibit featuring preserved passenger pigeons; and a mural that lets visitors "see" what the hills behind Bowers Hall looked like 17,000 years ago.

SUNY Cortland completed its new greenhouse, part of the Bowers Hall science complex, and inaugurated it with a **gift of more than 100 rare or unusual plants from the U.S. Botanical Garden**.

The College **created three new, high-tech collaborative learning areas**, converting three classrooms in SUNY Cortland's Professional Studies Building, Memorial Library and Old Main.



Teacher Preparation

The [Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation \(CAEP\)](#) gave [unofficial approval to SUNY Cortland's education program](#) for national accreditation under a new regime of toughened standards. When formally approved this fall, the College will be one of only eight New York teacher education programs with CAEP accreditation.

[SUNY Cortland was awarded a \\$1.6 million grant](#) from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to support three years of Northeast Regional Noyce Conferences, supporting the NSF's Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program which provides resources for students seeking careers in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) teaching who agree to work in a high-need school district. SUNY Cortland has won \$4.6 million from the NSF to provide Noyce scholarships and other support since 2009.

The [National Endowment for the Arts](#) awarded another round of funding to "Forever Wild," a weeklong immersive experience for K-12 educators, that explores the historical importance of the Adirondack wilderness during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. The unique Cortland program relies on the College's [William H. Parks Family Center for Environmental and Outdoor Education](#) in Raquette Lake, N.Y., as a central teaching tool. Since 2012, variations of program have earned more than \$900,000 from NEH grants. An award of \$165,198 will fund two weeks of the program in summer 2019.

[Four SUNY Cortland students presented at the National Association for Professional Development Schools \(NAPDS\) National Conference](#) in Jacksonville, Fla., sharing their experiences in the College's PDS initiative, a cutting-edge program in which teacher education students spend the bulk of their time in classroom settings.

The SUNY Cortland Alumni Association created a new recognition, [honoring three Distinguished Educators](#) in what will become an annual award. The new honor reflects the College's roots and continuing role in teacher education.

SUNY Cortland [introduced a new certificate program](#) for high-achieving teachers looking to make leadership skills stand out on their résumés with an Advanced Certificate in Teacher Leadership.

Innovation

SUNY Cortland [added three new majors](#) in science, business and education that build on the College's academic strengths and open new career paths for students entering an ever-changing economy, culture and world.

- [The environmental geoscience major](#) replaces an environmental science concentration that was embedded within the geology program, creating a more direct and focused route for students interested in combining earth science and environmental issues.
- [The healthcare management major](#) was introduced for students interested in working on the business side of healthcare, a fast-growing professional field. It is one of the first four-year programs of its kind within the SUNY system.
- [The inclusive early childhood education major](#) allows aspiring teachers to earn dual certification in early childhood education and early childhood: special education, learning to teach students of all abilities from preschool settings through second grade.

The newly-created SUNY Cortland [Institute of Applied Geospatial and Drone Technology](#) won a \$100,000 state [Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant](#) to serve as a resource for entrepreneurs and startup companies as the City of Cortland strives to become a hub for geographic information systems (GIS), technology used for digital map-making, and drones. The Institute will be led by the College's Geography Department and involve students studying GIS and other fields.



A team of 10 SUNY Cortland business economics students made it to the **semi-final round of the annual Fed Challenge**, in which they present their analysis and forecast for the United States economy to a panel of economists and staff members from the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

A class of SUNY Cortland history students researched and **created an online timeline of the College's 150-year history** in recognition of its Sesquicentennial. The ever-evolving digital timeline is live on the **College website** and is planned to be available on an interactive computer screen mounted in Old Main, the oldest building on campus.

SUNY Cortland's geology major was the first in the state to **qualify students for licensing** as professional geologists.

The Communication and Media Studies Department changed its name to reflect curriculum and program changes made to has evolved to better prepare students for promising careers in an ever-changing field.

Members of the Buffalo Bills' strength and conditioning and athletic training staffs offered a variety of presentations during **the College's annual Sports Medicine Symposium**.

Transformational Education

Applied learning

A total of 2,549 students spent 155,519 hours engaged in applied learning activity during the 2017-18 academic year.

Almost 60 faculty reported using applied learning in at least one of their courses.

International Education

President Erik J. Bitterbaum signed memorandums of understanding in Cuba with a pair of Havana universities, **establishing educational opportunities for SUNY Cortland students and faculty** and formalizing a partnership that has been ongoing for several years.

Nearly 20 percent of SUNY Cortland's 2018 graduating class (282 students) studied abroad as a Cortland student. That marks the fourth consecutive year of participation growth for a total increase of 27 percent since 2013-14.

Twelve SUNY Cortland students **participated in SUNY's Mock European Union** program in Brussels and SUNY Cortland will assume the Mock EU presidency this fall.

Three SUNY Cortland students studying in Mangalore, India, **created artwork that was displayed in a show** at the center of their host campus.

SUNY Cortland continued to sponsor increasingly popular faculty-led trips abroad, including a group of 18 sport management majors who **studied international sport culture in Spain and Madrid**.

Civic Engagement

Cortland's fourth annual Big Event drew more than 650 student volunteers to more than 50 work sites throughout the Cortland area. The student-run event provides cleanup and minor repairs and landscaping to the community.

Nearly 750 members of the campus community helped raise awareness of relationship abuse as part of a national **"Around the World for Yeadley"** effort for the One Love Foundation. Members of the SUNY Cortland community logged 4,185,448 yards.



The **Cortland Wishmakers**, a student-run club on campus formed in 2016, raised \$8,000 for the **Make-A-Wish Foundation** in December 2017.

Almost all of the participants in 2017's successful **Cortland-area CROP Hunger Walk** were SUNY Cortland students, with 94 percent of the walkers coming from the College. The event raised \$8,900 to fight world hunger and support local food pantries.

A group of 25 SUNY Cortland sport management majors **volunteered to help organizers of the New York City Marathon** host a successful event. It was the largest contingent of volunteers since students began helping out four years ago.

Student Research

The College offered 10 summer undergraduate research fellowships in 2017, bringing to 100 the number of students participating in the program over the last decade. Notable work by students included:

- **Investigation into fractal tilings**, complex geometric shapes that have applications in video game design, medical research and computer encryption.
- **Evaluating motor skill development** of children in Native American cultures relative to that of children in surrounding communities.

More than 100 students presented the results of undergraduate research projects at SUNY Cortland's annual "**Transformations: A Student Research and Creativity Conference.**" One student traveled to The 2018 PyeongChang Paralympic Games in South Korea to research **the historic development of Paralympic winter sports.**



Performing Arts

SUNY Cortland was named one of "The 5 Most Underrated Theatre Colleges" for the Northeast by **OnStageBlog.com**, which lauded the College for its contemporary training standards, facilities and performances. The Performing Arts Department's incoming freshman class was the largest in the program's history, aided by recruiting auditions held in New York City.



The Performing Arts Department's 2017-18 of plays and musicals was intentionally designed to explore the perspective of women in different eras of history and spark discussions about modern women's issues in the "me too" era.

Brown Auditorium underwent extensive renovations, giving the college another high-quality venue for performances and events.

Several performing arts majors landed roles as extras and several communications students interned with the film crew when actor and director William Fichtner **filmed two scenes for a new movie, "Cold Brook," on campus.**

Communication and Media Studies

Student organizers of the annual **Blackbird film festival showcased 120 student and professional films** during the three-year-old festival. The festival focused on women and intentionally selected films created by women to make up the majority of the selections. The festival also hosted panels on women in film.

Cortland State Television (CSTV), the student video and television club, **acquired access to broadcast the station's programs via Channel 20** on SUNY Cortland's closed network, broadening the reach of its content. The channel will run student-generated news and a variety of shows, as well as athletic contests and material from Blackbird.

Raquette Lake

The college **launched a five-year, \$250,000 pe-year program** to restore and upgrade its two historic wilderness education facilities in the Adirondacks, sited at different locations along the wooded shores of Raquette Lake. This approach enabled the College to do building maintenance and make extensive repairs to the Camp's main dock.

The College's **Trailblazers wilderness orientation program** for incoming SUNY Cortland students continued to grow, with 43 new students spending a week at the College's William H. Parks Family Center for Environmental and Outdoor Education. That represents a fivefold increase from its inaugural year in 2014.

Well-Being

Diversity

SUNY Cortland continued to improve the ethnic and racial diversity of its student body. In 2017-18, more than 26 percent of our students identified as Hispanic, African-American, or some other underrepresented group.

SUNY Cortland **appointed James A. Felton III as chief diversity officer**, reporting directly to president Bitterbaum. His charge is to assess, update and implement the campus-wide Diversity Strategic Plan, collaborate with student organizations, academic departments and develop partnerships.

SUNY Cortland completed the Title IX Five-Year Athletics Self-Study, and a gender climate survey of faculty, staff and students.

The College's work in improving accessibility and inclusiveness for students with disabilities continued, highlighted by SUNY Cortland's goalball team **winning the national championship**. Goalball is an adaptive sport for visually impaired players.

Student health/wellness

The College's state-of-the-art Student Life Center **received national recognition** in 2017-18 from trade magazines in the fields of athletic business and recreational facilities. Each day, an average of 2,000 students use the facility to lift weights, run on the elevated track, play basketball and engage in activities such as yoga and meditation, group exercise classes, swimming and many other offerings.

The Cortland Cupboard, a campus food pantry that makes basic grocery and personal care items available to students free of charge, opened to help address food insecurity among students living off campus.

The College completed the first year of its commitment to become one of the nation's healthiest campuses through **Partnership for a Healthier America's (PHA) Healthier Campus Initiative**.

The College experienced strong participation in its **"Wellness Wednesdays"** events, which were held weekly during both spring and fall semesters.

Safety

The national **Green Dot** awareness program against sexual assault and other types of violence was launched on campus and programming continued year-round.

Student, faculty and staff bystander intervention training through the national **"It's On Us"** program was done throughout the year.

The College, through the University Police Department, was **awarded StormReady certification** by the National Weather Service and the New York State StormReady Advisory Board.

Maximize Resources

New Resources

SUNY Cortland increased winter session enrollment by 30 percent in 2017-18, strengthening a supplemental revenue stream from our strong fall and spring enrollment numbers. Enrollment during summer session also increased.

The College's Art and Art History Department developed a potential new revenue source by launching a hands-on **summer art camp** for teenagers on campus. The inaugural class enrolled 15 students. Based on that successful introduction, the College is exploring similar camps in other fields.

The William H. Parks family Center for Environmental and Outdoor Education generated additional outside income by renting the facilities at Raquette Lake to **Vera Bradley for a fashion shoot**. The College is now looking into whether there is additional income to be made through use of the Adirondack camps for photo and film shoots.



Giving

Yearly giving to SUNY Cortland 's annual fund reached a record single-year high during 2017-18, raising \$926,496 from alumni, faculty, staff, students and friends.

The College hired a consultant to begin planning Cortland's next major capital campaign, to launch sometime in 2019.

Two SUNY Cortland alumni — a Wall Street executive and a professional sculptor — combined resources and talent to create an imposing metal **sculpture of a red dragon** in front of the SUNY Cortland stadium complex. The gift created a new signature landmark on campus and has been helpful in both recruitment, donor cultivation and enhancing student life.

Alumni and Communication and Media Studies Department faculty created an endowed **media innovation fund** to help communications students gain real-world experience and keep up with constantly changing communications technology.

Environmental sustainability

SUNY Cortland was once again lauded as **one of the most environmentally sustainable colleges in the nation**, according to the Sierra Club's 2017 "**Cool Schools**" rankings. Cortland was the only SUNY comprehensive college to make the Sierra Club's list of the top 100 campuses for successfully integrating "green" practices at all levels of college life.

The College was renewed as one of 34 **Bee Campus USA** sites by Bee City USA, a national organization dedicated to raising awareness about natural pollinators, like bees. SUNY Cortland also continues to be recognized as an official **Tree Campus** by meeting **Tree Campus USA's** five core standards for sustaining campus forestry.

New LED light fixtures were installed in Old Main, the oldest building on campus. The new lights use less than one fifth the energy of the old ones and in just six months saved enough energy to power five residential homes for about a year.

Two new solar projects were completed, **one at the William H. Parks Family Center for Environmental and Outdoor Education at Raquette Lake**, and one on the roof of the Whittaker Building, which houses University Police operations.

