



Tradition guides our future

SUNY
Cortland

2023 Annual Report

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NOT TOO BIG. NOT TOO SMALL. JUST RIGHT.

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



FROM:
34 states
47 countries

45

minutes from Ithaca, Syracuse and Binghamton to our campus



MAJORS FOR EVERY INTEREST

68

academic majors



*from biomedical sciences
to business economics*

EXCEPTIONAL VALUE

5,400+

students receive a
form of financial aid



*such as grants, loans or
scholarships*

PURPOSE AND PASSION

Top 15%

among 2023
Best Colleges



according to College Factual

STRONG OUTCOMES

85%+

students pursuing internships,
research or field placements



*with support from
Career Services*

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

\$350+ million

in facility upgrades
since 2011

*including space
for business and
the sciences*





Tradition guides our future

By Erik J. Bitterbaum
President

SUNY Cortland's traditions are always such a striking symbol to me about what this university stands for and how it strives to best support its students, faculty and staff. Over the past 155 years of this institution's history, Cortland has developed some important recurring moments, whether it is the football team running onto the field before a Cortaca Jug game, the "moving up" rock behind Old Main where students gathered to celebrate the end of an academic year, the annual Transformations student research event – which dates back to 1997 – or hearing our beautiful alma mater sung at the end of the Commencement ceremonies.

Each time I experience one of these or countless other events, I feel a deep pride in knowing that, for generations, Cortland students have gained access to a quality and affordable education. While a great deal has changed since the university was first founded, Cortland remains committed to a foundation of providing diverse learning experiences and teaching our students to grow as engaged citizens through outstanding teaching, scholarship and service from our faculty and staff.

As we move into the future – a future that promises many challenges for higher education – Cortland must evolve and adapt to the changing circumstances while staying true to its tradition of putting students first.

I was quite encouraged to hear the four major goals that new SUNY Chancellor John B. King Jr. has set for the entire system: student success; diversity, equity and inclusion; research and scholarship; and economic development and upward mobility. These objectives for SUNY are aimed at the years ahead, but I see their roots in Cortland's long history of transformational education.

Student success comes down to offering a comprehensive system that manages their academic, social, mental and physical well-being. At Cortland, faculty and staff are critical in forming lasting and meaningful relationships with students that go beyond mentorship. Tutoring, counseling and advisement services also guide students through the often most rigorous and stressful parts of their young lives. Opportunities for recreation, social and physical activity bolster our students with the strength and confidence to succeed.

Diversity, equity and inclusion are vital to building a community that represents the global citizenry our graduates are preparing to enter. Cortland has made significant progress in adding more people from underrepresented backgrounds to the student body in the past two decades and is looking to similarly continue to diversify its faculty and staff. The university also has created new traditions, including Abraham Lincoln DeMond 1889 Day, which celebrates its first Black graduate at the start of Black History Month each year.

Research and scholarship are taken seriously by Cortland's faculty and students alike. Faculty are working on many funded and sponsored projects ranging from chemistry by computer to sustainable milk production to how we can protect milkweed for both monarch butterfly populations and investigating new pharmaceuticals, to name just a few. So many Cortland undergraduates get hands-on opportunities to do their own research in nearly every major, which opens doors to graduate school and beyond.

Economic development and upward mobility are at the heart of what the university aims to do for its students both while they are on campus and in their careers post-graduation. Generous donors have given to scholarship funds that allow students to access education that may otherwise be out of reach. Our alumni have gone on to be innovators, pioneers and leaders in ways that have far-reaching benefits. The university, as the largest employer in Cortland County, also realizes its responsibility to be a good neighbor to the other industries, businesses and providers of services in our area.

Cortland is prepared to face whatever challenges await us in the years ahead. I believe that. The university has 155 years of history, tradition and success behind us that will both guide and propel us forward into an exciting new future.

SUNY Cortland welcomed two new senior leaders into its President's Cabinet in 2023.

Introducing new leadership

Dr. Ann McClellan is the university's newest provost and vice president for Academic Affairs and will lead faculty and professional staff in growing Cortland's academic reputation and its commitment to students. Formerly the interim provost and vice president for Academic Affairs at Plymouth State (N.H.) University, McClellan holds a Ph.D. in English from the University of Cincinnati. She taught 20th century British Literature at Plymouth State for 14 years before she became the university's associate provost in 2019.

McClellan, who has authored books on Sherlock Holmes, fan studies and British women writers, was a leader in diversity at Plymouth State. She led the search for the school's first chief diversity officer and the development of a Center for Diversity, Equity and Social Justice. SUNY's Promoting Recruiting Opportunity, Diversity, Inclusion and Growth (PRODiG) initiative will be key to McClellan's goals in further diversifying Cortland's faculty and staff and preparing students for careers after graduation.



"I think we can lean into some of the structures that are already here to create new undergraduate and graduate degrees and certificates in diversity, equity and inclusion, options that could pair with education degrees and would work in various industries and non-profits," McClellan said. "We see, especially post-COVID, with how much we've moved online, even more than before, that our students have to have these global communication skills and understandings of diverse cultures and values."

Richard Coyne '07, who had served as associate vice president for Institutional Advancement since 2020, was named Cortland's vice president for Institutional Advancement following the retirement of Peter Perkins. Coyne will provide leadership and vision for the offices of Alumni Engagement, Communications, Development, Marketing, Foundation Financial Services, Advancement Information Services and the Cortland College Foundation.

A key player in several recent success stories at Cortland, Coyne drove the "All In: Building on Success" comprehensive campaign that raised \$30.5 million upon its completion in 2022. He did important planning for Cortaca Jug football games at MetLife and Yankee stadiums in 2019 and 2022, respectively, and worked to create innovative fundraising opportunities during the pandemic. A Student Emergency Fund to support students facing unforeseen financial hardships has raised more than \$400,000 and a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Fund that will back programming and professional development has received more than \$90,000. Coyne also has grown the Michael J. Bond '75, M.D. Alumni/Undergraduate Science Symposium that connects graduates and current students on crucial research topics.



"Across the board, from engagement, marketing and communications perspectives, it's a responsibility that we continue to pound our chest, if you will, about the outstanding education provided by Cortland and its tremendous value in terms of affordability," Coyne said. "You sprinkle in all of the cultural, social and athletic experiences and it's clear that we offer the total package. Institutional Advancement plays a critical role in helping to attract students to Cortland, keeping alumni, parents and our campus constituents - faculty, staff and emeriti - engaged with the university, whether that's giving back of their time or making financial contributions if they're able."



President Bitterbaum hosted several leaders on campus in the past year, including SUNY Chancellor John B. King Jr. (left) and U.S. Representative Marc Molinaro (R-19) (right) as well as State Senator Lea Webb (D-52) and Assemblyperson Dr. Anna R. Kelles (D-125).

Mission, values and priorities

SUNY Cortland is a university of opportunity that prepares its students with knowledge, integrity, skills and compassion to excel as leaders, citizens, scholars, teachers and champions of excellence. Students and employees choose SUNY Cortland for its nationally recognized academic programs, innovation and experiential learning and the rich intellectual, social and athletic life on campus. The university is a center for cultural and economic growth, distinguished by successful partnerships with organizations, schools, agencies and businesses throughout the region, nation and world.



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.

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.

Priorities

Academic excellence

Academic programs are cultivated to provide students with the best opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills and dispositions. Relevant and engaging curricula, effective and innovative delivery methods, appropriate facilities and a culture of continual improvement are vital components.

Transformational education

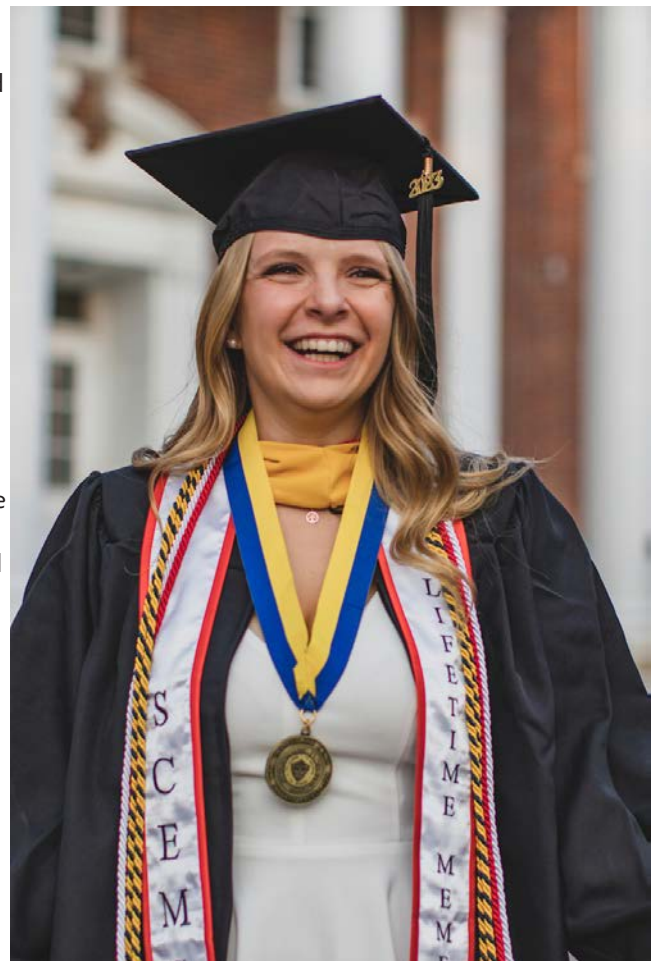
Intentionally designed and highly effective educational opportunities challenge how students see themselves and the world in profound new ways. It challenges students to reflect, acknowledge their self-efficacy and continually expand their understanding and skills to be engaged in their lives and communities.

Well-being

Personal and community well-being is advocated through academic disciplines and campus programming and facilities. The university promotes the physical, emotional, cultural and social well-being of students and employees, determines areas of greatest need and responds with policies and programs that recognize the well-being of each individual as critical to its strength as a whole.

Maximization of resources

This priority 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 is dedicated to responsible use of natural resources and considers impact on the environment.



Cortland in the rankings

For many years, the university has consistently landed on lists in national publications touting its strengths. *Money* magazine has listed Cortland as a “Best College for your Money,” *Sierra* magazine placed Cortland among its top 100 “Cool Schools” for sustainability for six consecutive years and the campus and the city of Cortland were named the safest campus and college town in the state in 2019, respectively. A selection of recent recognition includes:

Washington Monthly

Cortland was ranked No. 45 in the nation on *Washington Monthly's* 2023 Master's University list, which uses factors including 8-year graduation rate, net price for families making \$75,000 or less, social mobility, research and service. Placing at No. 7 nationally on the magazine's service scale, Cortland was noted for its commitment to helping others in the community.

The Princeton Review

Named to The Princeton Review's unranked list of the top 150 “Best Northeast” colleges and universities, Cortland scored an 88 out of 99 on the admissions selectivity scale. The metric uses high school class rank and GPA as well as the percentage of applicants accepted to demonstrate selectiveness.

BestColleges.com

A picturesque small city setting, a walkable downtown and plenty of recreational options put Cortland at No. 5 on this “Best College Towns in New York” list. The university similarly was recognized as the 20th safest college town in the nation – and the safest in New York – by Safewise.com in 2019.

Realtor.com

The National Association of Realtors put Cortland at the top of its 2023 “10 most affordable small towns where you'd actually like to live” list. With many faculty and staff opting to live in town for housing affordability and dining, entertainment and recreation options, Cortland is a terrific place to live. Proximity to campus leads to deeper connections in the community and makes employees more accessible to students.

BestAccreditedColleges.org

The Foundations and Social Advocacy Department, which houses the inclusive childhood education major, was recognized as having the No. 3 bachelor's degree program in special education. Cortland offers dual certification in special education at both the early childhood and childhood education levels.



College Factual

College Factual's comprehensive 2023 Best Colleges lists placed Cortland among the top 15% of colleges and universities in the nation, ranked Cortland higher than any other SUNY comprehensive university and noted several academic departments for the quality of their offerings. Cortland was No. 1 nationally in physical education, No. 2 in sports studies and was listed as offering top ten programs in the state in subjects including therapeutic recreation, special education, history and health education. The university also placed among the top 10% in the country for being a “best bachelor's degree college for the money” in terms of overall value for students and their families.

Student achievement

Cortland students continue to excel, especially in scholarship, service, internships, undergraduate research and athletics.

A trio of students were recognized with 2023 SUNY Chancellor's Awards for Student Excellence: **Lawrence Bruce '22**, **Forlenda Hunte '23** and **Daniel Reischer '22**.

- Bruce was an accomplished researcher and presenter who was an inspirational leader for LGBTQ+ students.
- Hunte, a three-year women's basketball captain, helped fellow students as a supplemental instruction leader for anatomy and physiology classes and was a role model for student-athletes in her time as president of the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee.
- Reischer, in addition to award-winning research and writing, served in multiple roles in student government, expanded safe housing for LGBTQ+ students and organized a mutual aid drive to collect clothing, bedding and cookware for students in need.



(Left to right: Bruce, Hunte and Reischer)

In other notable student news:

- **Caesaré German '23** is one of the university's thriving non-traditional students. After graduating from high school in 2006, German balanced work, community college studies and caring for a loved one dealing with an illness. She returned to college at Cortland and is majoring in inclusive childhood education. German, who has received scholarship support from Cortland's Urban Recruitment of Educators (C.U.R.E.) program, has received four institutional scholarships, including awards for future teachers and non-traditional students. In 2023, she was one of only 15 winners of a national Alpha Sigma Lambda scholarship for adult students.
- **Nia Vega '23** (right) received the Norman R. McConney Jr. Award for Educational Opportunity Program Student Excellence in 2023 for her leadership in several equity and social justice initiatives. A recipient of a 2022-23 Newman Civic Fellowship, Vega completed research in social justice with sociology faculty that helped educators understand perceptions of race and racism in the greater Cortland community. She also served as president of campus clubs Men of Value and Excellence (M.O.V.E.) and Ritmo Latino, a dance team.
- **Miranda Kistner '23** is spending the 2023-24 school year teaching abroad at Colegio Decroly, a high school in Madrid, Spain on a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant Award. Having earned dual degrees in adolescence education and Spanish with a minor in teacher of English as a second language, Kistner got hands-on language immersion in Spanish during a five-week academic trip to Costa Rica in 2022.
- **Taylor Hunter '22**, former Student Government Association president, was selected as a PGA WORKS Fellow by the Western New York PGA section. She played an integral role in assisting with marketing and communications efforts to promote golfers, events and programming in the Buffalo area.



SUNY Cortland's faculty and staff participate in many activities and projects outside the scope of their teaching and research that benefit students and people in the greater Cortland community.

Faculty and staff achievement

Three members of the Cortland faculty spoke at a TEDx forum held on campus in the spring of 2023. The theme was "Freedom Dreaming," and the forum asked presenters to explore the idea of a better future and the pathways to get there. **Marcus Bell** (right), assistant professor in the Sociology/Anthropology Department, presented "All Black Lives Matter: Exploring My Own Double Consciousness." **Renee Heitmann**, a lecturer in the Performing Arts Department, spoke about "How Kindness Can Change Your Life." **Shena Driscoll Salvato**, a lecturer in the Modern Languages Department, delivered a talk on "Embracing the Freedom to FLIT: Follow Leads Intuitively Trusting." Ten speakers were chosen from a pool of 122 applicants, with some of the speakers coming from as far away as California. The university aims to make this an annual event.



- Lt. **Danielle Salisbury** (left), a member of the University Police Department, has earned national recognition for advancing the representation and experiences of women in policing. The 30x30 Initiative, an organization working to advance women police recruits by 30% by 2030, featured Salisbury on its website for her creation of a Pride Month badge UPD officers wore in June 2022. Salisbury sold more than 500 copies of the "Serving with Pride" patch, with the proceeds going to Point Foundation, which empowers LGBTQ+ students to achieve academic and leadership potential.
- Distinguished Service Professor **Bonni Hodges** of the Health Department worked with other faculty members to create the DIII Athlete Wellbeing and Athletic Leadership Virtual Symposium in 2022. It is the first event of its kind to focus on Division III student-athletes.

- Assistant Professor **Tracy McPherson Hudson '89, M '93, Ed.D.** (right) of the Physical Education Department was honored by the NAACP for her contributions to the organization's Youth and College Division of New York. Hudson, who had been a school principal for 15 years before joining the faculty in 2021, has long been a leader in her community, leading voter registration drives, obesity awareness, domestic violence awareness and other initiatives to support health and learning. She currently serves as faculty advisor to SUNY Cortland's NAACP chapter and is working to found a chapter of Delta Sigma Theta, an historically Black sorority.

- **Lori Reichel**, assistant professor in the Health Department, is the creator and host of "The Puberty Prof" podcast. On more than 120 episodes to date, she interviews national experts on topics such as body image and sexuality that make it easier for parents and children to open important conversations on a key transitional period in life. Digitent, a marketing representative for content producers, has picked up the podcast to help Reichel continue to grow her audience.



Research and scholarship

Undergraduate research remains a cornerstone of the educational experience for many Cortland students. Whether they work one-on-one with faculty through sponsored fellowships in the summer or they are presenting their findings at Transformations, the university's annual research fair, students receive invaluable hands-on practice that paves their way to graduate school and builds lasting skills that help them early in their careers. Cortland faculty are also doing innovative, grant-funded work leading to key discoveries.



- **The Michael J. Bond '75, M.D. Alumni/Undergraduate Science Symposium**, now in its eighth year, has become a bridge between today's students and Cortland graduates who are now experts in their fields. The event combines student presentations on their research with mentorship and guidance from alumni. Recent speakers include **Chelsea Cook '09, Ph.D.**, an assistant professor of biological sciences at Marquette University, **Brennan Gerlach '13, Ph.D.**, a principal scientist at the Novartis Institutes for Biomedical Research and **Eric Larsson '76, Ph.D.**, executive director of clinical services at Lovass Institute Midwest.

- A grant from the Parkinson Voice Project has allowed a local alumna, **Michele Chisholm Clukey '14, M '16**, to work with two dozen current graduate students in the Communication Disorders and Sciences Department. A speech-language pathologist at Guthrie Cortland Medical Center, Clukey is teaching students to work with individuals with Parkinson's to regain voice volume. In its fifth year of funding, the grant program gives future clinicians an advantage over others who lack this direct experience. A separate program with Guthrie Cortland is giving students the opportunity to intern in the Emergency Department, preparing those on pre-med and pre-health tracks.



- Students and faculty are partnering with peers from SUNY Oswego and the Tunison Lake Ontario Biological Station in Cortland on a \$635,000 grant from United States Geological Services to conserve the coregonine subfamily of fish found in the Great Lakes. Research will focus on how pollution, overfishing and climate change have contributed to their decline. Funding renewal could grow to \$3 million over the next five years.

- Associate Professor **Katherine Hicks** of the Chemistry Department is part of a \$345,000 grant from the National Science Foundation that is being done virtually with peers from Ithaca College and the University of Minnesota. A pilot program was inspired by the difficulties of getting in the lab during the COVID-19 pandemic. Students do 30 hours of research and professional development per week for 10 weeks over the summer, expanding access to research for those who find an online platform most convenient. "We realized that there's this group of students who, for whatever reason can't do an in-person experience or they can't stay at their home institutions

and do research," Hicks said. "Maybe they have some sort of medical issue. Maybe they have a family. Maybe they need to work third shift. One group of students that we didn't anticipate were athletes. Student athletes have to practice over the summer at their home institutions, and they can't commit to going somewhere else for the whole time."

- **Peter Ducey**, SUNY distinguished teaching professor in the Biological Sciences Department, was an expert source for CNN and NBC News on stories about invasive hammerhead flatworms in August 2023. Ducey's past research on flatworms helped temper some of the panic that was caused by a new wave of sightings. "Sometimes people are interested in invasive worms because it's a sky is falling, 'These invasives are going to eat up everything' kind of thing," Ducey said. "And this is not really one of those cases in general."



Economic development and upward mobility



Cortland has long prided itself on being an agent of change in breaking the cycle of poverty. In addition to scholarships and student support programs that give students access to a quality education, the skills that they develop in the classroom and through hands-on learning prepare students for success in the profession that they choose. *Washington Monthly* cited Cortland as No. 54 in the nation on its social mobility scale in 2021.

Additionally, forging relationships with local and regional business and industry leaders – as well as Cortland alumni who are experts in their fields across the country – is key to finding students the best fits for their interests and talents.

- The National Realtor Association placed Cortland atop its list of the “10 Most Affordable Small Towns Where You’d Actually Like to Live, 2023 Edition.” The survey looked at 543 micropolitan areas across the country of populations from 10,000 to 50,000 people and measured home list prices against dining, entertainment, recreation and quality-of-life businesses in those areas. Cortland was cited for its proximity to natural beauty, the Ithaca and Syracuse areas and that its college campus was recently named the safest in New York state as reasons for people to settle here. These factors help attract and retain faculty and staff and may entice students to stay in the area following graduation. Cortland students are strengthening this relationship by engaging in community service. More than 250 students worked at 45 job sites during the university’s Big Event in April, doing yard work and completing tasks that were requested by neighbors throughout the city.

- **Micron**, a leading advanced technology manufacturer, has agreed to partner with the state to build a \$100 billion semiconductor facility in Clay, N.Y. The biggest private investment in the history of the state aims to employ 9,000 people and transform the Central New York economy. SUNY Cortland is hopeful it can lead to a significant relationship with the university as a potential collaborator in internships and research. **Kevin Younis '94** (right), chief operating officer and executive deputy commissioner of Empire State Development, worked for two years to negotiate a deal of tax and other incentives to bring Micron to the area.

- **The Cortland Regional Sports Council** has worked to make Cortland a central location for a wide variety of athletic tournaments and events. SUNY Cortland has played host to the Empire State Senior Games, which draws more than 1,100 competitors and spectators annually, since 2011. The SUNY Cortland Stadium Complex hosts boys and girls high school lacrosse and soccer state championships. The newly constructed Gutchess Lumber Sports Complex in nearby Cortlandville attracts thousands of athlete and their families to Cortland County.



- **Cortland’s Urban Recruitment of Educators (C.U.R.E.)** provides social mobility to college students enrolled in the program and it also aims to install passionate and highly skilled teachers in schools that have the most need. C.U.R.E. students receive \$4,000 in scholarship support per year over four years under the condition that they commit to teaching for at least two years in an urban area upon graduation. The scholarships provide access to education for students in financial need and their passion for teaching that comes from the mentorship and support provided through C.U.R.E. often benefits the schools hiring them. Since 1998, more than 250 students have been admitted to the program and a majority have continued on as teacher leaders or administrators.

Student success



Education doesn't take a one-size-fits-all approach at Cortland. Students seeking support for their academics, the transition from community college, well-being and personal lives have many resources at their disposal. The university's culture of inclusivity and friendliness also helps students forge meaningful and lasting connections with faculty and staff.

- **Advisement and Transition** provides support to students who are newly transitioning to college and with topics including academic planning, major choice and academic decision-making. This office also manages a one-credit course, COR 101: The Cortland Experience, which is a required seminar that facilitates the intellectual and social integration of first-time college students. It focuses on orientation, personal wellness and introducing the university's vision of diversity, equity and inclusion. Cortland has been named to the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Roll, which recognizes transfer student success, every year since 2018.
- **Memorial Library's** faculty and staff do much more than just help students access research materials. Librarians provided research help 1,525 times during the 2022-23 academic year, both in-person and online, guiding students on how to best find and cite trustworthy information in their assignments. The library's technology support offers assistance to users who need help with their own equipment or need to check out university-provided items.



- **The Learning Center** allows a variety of opportunities for students to receive professional or student-led tutoring either on campus or online. Programs such as Nightowl, a real-time online source for tutoring in writing, math, chemistry, biology, physics and psychology, help students get up to speed with their coursework and instills skills that serve them in future semesters as well.
- **The Writing Center** provides face-to-face appointments between students and professional staff who can assist with any portion of the writing process, from development and structure to better understanding revision, audience and clarity.
- **The Educational Opportunity Program** is a launching pad for students who would otherwise be excluded from higher education because of their perceived lack of academic preparation or economic disadvantage. EOP offers academic support, counseling and monetary aid that allows young scholars to thrive.

- **Conley Counseling and Wellness Services** includes three separate offices that support students in their mental and physical health and well-being. The Counseling Center's services include free and confidential mental health assistance as well as access to online and off-campus mental health care providers. The Health Promotion and Prevention Education offices engage students, faculty and staff with resources and awareness to help them make healthy choices.
- **Career Services** guides students through resume writing, interview tips and making connections with alumni via Handshake, an online portal that helps them find job opportunities. Staff also takes professional portraits that students can use on social media and stand out in their job hunt.
- **The Student Life Center**, a 150,000-square-foot facility that opened in 2015, is a critical piece in the well-being of Cortland students. Each day, it serves approximately 2,000 students – nearly one-third of the student body – who use it to run, swim, lift weights or participate in group activities like yoga, meditation and intramural sports.
- University Police's newest four-legged member is **Meekah** (right), an English Labrador retriever who is the department's first therapy dog. She will join UPD officers on daily calls, crisis incidents, special events and community outreach programs. UPD has also been using K-9 Red, a German shorthair pointer who specializes in bomb-sniffing and missing person tracking, since 2019.



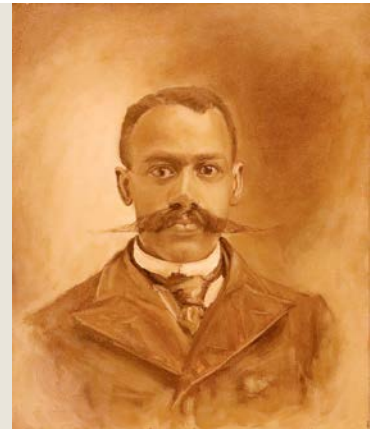
Diversity, equity and inclusion

Cortland's Institutional Equity and Inclusion Office is driving several significant projects and initiatives to develop a culture of diversity and inclusion among the campus community. The office strives to ensure an institutional focus on diversity, equity and inclusion, eliminate barriers of discrimination and foster a welcoming, engaging and inclusive environment through the recruitment of under-represented students, faculty and staff.

A number of campus-wide committees connect people across the university. These committees include: Culturally Responsive Teaching, the President's Council on Inclusive Excellence, the Anti-Racism Task Force and the Diversity Narratives Project.



On Feb. 1, 2023, the university celebrated **Abraham Lincoln DeMond** 1889 Day, which honored the university's first Black graduate. DeMond (right) went on to become a politically active pastor from the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Ala., the same church from which Martin Luther King Jr. helped launch the civil rights movement. He delivered an oration from the Dexter Avenue church on Jan. 1, 1900 that outlined the achievements of Black Americans and called for them to be given full rights as American citizens. The speech was published and distributed to great acclaim in its time and has since been archived by the Library of Congress.



DeMond Day, coinciding with the start of Black History Month, was the idea of **Tatum Pittman '23** (above), an adolescence education: English major from Poughkeepsie, N.Y. who was enrolled in Cortland's Urban Recruitment of Educators (C.U.R.E.) program. Pittman spoke at the ceremony, as did **Ernest Logan '73**, president emeritus of the American Federation of School Administrators. They were joined by Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer **Lorraine Lopez-Janove**, President **Erik J. Bitterbaum** and **Daniel Walker '06**, president of the SUNY Cortland Alumni Association. State Senator **Lea Webb** issued a proclamation honoring the day and its importance to campus.

A glass case displaying items that memorialize DeMond's life are on display in Corey Union. The campus community plans to celebrate DeMond Day each Feb. 1 in the years to come to remember the university's contributions to Black history.

In June, many faculty, staff, students and alumni gathered at the third annual Cortland County **Juneteenth** Celebration in Courthouse Park in downtown Cortland. A collaborative initiative between the university and Tompkins Cortland Community College, the Cortland County Community of Color, also known as C4, has worked to organize events and connect the colleges to their neighbors. Presidents Bitterbaum and **Amy Kremenek** of TC3 offered remarks, as did keynote speaker **Tracy McPherson Hudson '89, M '93, Ed.D.**, an assistant professor of physical education.



Cortland welcomed **53 international students** from other nations in the fall of 2023, a new record. They are attracted by academic offerings such as biomedical sciences and sport management and they provide invaluable perspectives to our campus community.

The fifth annual **TransAction** conference, which focuses on the needs and experiences of transgender and gender queer students in the higher education environment, was held in March. **Becca Barile** (left), vice president for campus life at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, was the keynote speaker. Her talk touched on the growing number of political and personal attacks on transgender and gender diverse people and the history of gender diversity.

Strategic planning and campaign updates

Strategic planning and accreditation

The university is engaging in a new round of strategic planning following a successful accreditation visit from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education in 2022. Cortland's accreditation status was not only confirmed, the Middle States reviewers offered no recommendations for improvement and were pleased to see the progress the university had made in its effectiveness and ability to fulfill its mission and goals since the last visit. Middle States will conduct a midpoint peer review in 2026 and the next full self-study evaluation will take place during the 2029-30 academic year.

Faculty and staff are engaging in work to update and enhance the university's strategic plan. It will aim to build on the work that has already been done to identify priorities, allocate resources and assess progress. Cortland's most significant priorities include cultivating academic excellence, providing opportunities for transformational education, advocating for well-being and sustaining and maximizing resources.



Beyond the campaign, the university's annual one-day fundraising event, the Cortland Challenge, continues to set a high mark for fundraising among SUNY's comprehensive universities. The 2023 challenge raised \$401,000 in 24 hours from 3,064 individual donors. Previous challenges have raised similarly impressive results, including \$473,000 in 2022 and \$313,000 in 2021. Students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents and friends can choose from a variety of causes, such as scholarships, technology, events, professional development, athletics and Alumni Engagement support, as well as unrestricted giving.

A special weeklong Cortaca Challenge held in the lead up to the 2022 game raised \$285,531, beating Ithaca College's \$255,174. More than \$200,000 of the money raised will go to the Cortland Fund, which addresses the university's most pressing needs.

"All In: Building on Success" campaign concludes

Cortland's comprehensive campaign, "All In: Building on Success," officially wrapped with a dinner and celebration with donors at Yankee Stadium the night before the Cortaca Jug football game against Ithaca College in November 2022. The campaign exceeded its goal of raising \$25 million, bringing in more than \$30.5 million from 13,426 donors.

The funds raised through the campaign will support five key goals: strengthening student access and success; enriching Cortland's unique educational experience; supporting academic programs and faculty; nurturing SUNY's healthiest, most athletic campus; and building a lifetime network.

Thousands of students will receive scholarships to lessen the financial burdens on their families and reduce student debt. Funds will also expand the hands-on learning experiences that broaden student perspectives and prepare them for professional careers. Faculty will benefit from professional development opportunities and expanded access to travel for research and other activities that help them pursue innovation and raise the national profile of the university. Cortland's athletics, a proud Division III powerhouse, will be able to maintain and strengthen this reputation as a point of pride. Finally, the relationships between current students and the university's more than 80,000 living alumni can grow to create additional pathways for internships and advice.



Alumni in the news

Whether it's education, athletics, business, science or entertainment, Cortland's 80,000 alumni amaze us with all that they have accomplished since graduation. Among the highlights:

- **Bert Mandelbaum '75, M.D.** is the team doctor for the United States' men's soccer national team, which participated in the World Cup in Qatar in 2022. He is a supporter of the Mandelbaum '75 Sports Medicine Symposium, a one-day conference on campus that connects students, faculty and industry professionals on emerging topics in the industry.
- **Julie Lyons '84** (right) was a cross country, indoor track and lacrosse athlete at Cortland and has been determined to stay active after being diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 2009. She participates in Challenged Athletes Foundation (CAF) events, being mentored by Paralympians in events such as curling, skiing and wheelchair basketball. Lyons regularly meets up with **Eva Kristof '19**, the regional programs and community relations manager for CAF in Northern California.
- **Richard Watts '85**, a journalism professor at the University of Vermont, founded the Center for Community News, a nonprofit that is working to create and connect student newsrooms throughout the country. He held a faculty training session on campus in April 2023 that brought together professors from nine New York campuses.
- **Greg Sankey '87**, commissioner of the Southeastern Conference (SEC), returned to campus in March 2023 to speak to students over two days about leadership and careers in sports. SEC teams have won more than 40 national titles since Sankey began leading the conference.
- **Cary Carbonaro '90**, author of the No. 1 Amazon bestseller *The Money Queen's Guide for Women Who Want to Build Wealth and Banish Fear*, recently endowed a scholarship for business economics majors who have a goal of supporting women in business in the future.
- **Elisa Rodriguez M '19** was named to the International Literacy Organization's 30 Under 30 literacy leaders. A K-5 intervention specialist at Newfield (N.Y.) Elementary School, Rodriguez is bringing creativity and joy to learning about reading. She also organizes literacy-centered professional opportunities for practicing and preservice educators through virtual sessions that assess how the pandemic changed the teaching and learning of literacy skills.
- **Kyle Richard '20** has joined It's On Us, a national organization committed to raising awareness about sexual violence, as its associate director of men's engagement and special projects. During his time as a student-athlete, Richard was shot twice while confronting the perpetrator of a sexual assault in progress. He returned to the football field in a matter of months and was recognized with accolades including a Biden Courage Award and the Orange Bowl Courage Award – the first Division III player to be honored with the award.
- **Kasey Jacob '21** worked with children in a counseling center in Mangalore, India as an undergraduate through Cortland's study abroad program. She's returning to create a peer mentorship program for adolescent girls after winning a Fulbright Student Research Grant. She plans to pursue a master's degree in education policy and leadership when she returns in 2024.



SUNY Cortland's Musical Legacy Committee, a task force of alumni and current and former staff, held a ceremony in October 2022 to officially dedicate a Steinway piano used by Billy Joel during his campus concerts in the 1970s. The piano is still in use by students in the Performing Arts Department today. "I'm grateful that SUNY Cortland students are still able to play the same piano that I performed on back in '72 and '74," Joel wrote. "Thank you to SUNY Cortland for your dedication to music education and enriching the lives of today's young people through music."

Athletics and the arts

SUNY Cortland's football team played on the national stage for the second time in four years, bringing the Cortaca Jug Game 2022 rivalry against Ithaca College to Yankee Stadium in the Bronx. Ithaca won the game, 34-17, but the game's attendance of 40,232 was the second-largest crowd in Division III history. The record attendance for a Division III sporting event of 45,161 was set when Cortland and Ithaca played at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey in 2019. Thousands of Cortland alumni, parents, family and friends joined students, faculty and staff in the stands in a great celebration of Red Dragon pride. The game, broadcast live on the YES Network, reached college football fans and thousands more who couldn't be there in person. Cortland's football team finished the season with a 9-2 record, advancing to the first round of the NCAA Division III playoffs.



Home to 25 team national champions and 106 individual national champions, Cortland remains committed to student-athlete excellence both on the playing field and in the classroom. A school record 278 student-athletes were listed to the SUNYAC Commissioner's Academic Honor Roll for maintaining a GPA of at least 3.3.

Other athletics highlights from the 2022-23 academic year included:

- **Baseball** finished with a 34-13 record, qualified for the NCAA Division III tournament and made a preseason trip to the Dominican Republic for exhibition games and community service
- **Women's basketball** went 24-5, won the SUNYAC tournament and beat Saint Vincent (Pa.) in the first round of the NCAA tournament
- **Field hockey** won the SUNYAC title and qualified for the NCAA tournament
- **Women's lacrosse** finished 14-5 and earned an at-large bid to the NCAA tournament
- **Men's soccer** won two games in the NCAA tournament, reaching the third round
- **Women's volleyball** was 22-6, won the SUNYAC title and reached the NCAA tournament's second round



The university once again hosted the **Blackbird Film Festival** in April. In its ninth year, the festival screened 97 films that were narrowed down from a pool of 990 entries. Filmmakers from Costa Rica and France traveled to Cortland to attend and the festival drew applicants from the United Kingdom, Australia, Spain, Italy, China and South Korea. At least half of the films selected for screening were written or directed by women. A team of student interns from the Communication and Media Studies Department worked to evaluate submissions, promote the festival and organize the three-day event, which is free and open to the public.

In the arts, Cortland students and faculty put on four major productions during the 2022-23 academic year: "Cortland New Voices: Remix," "Big Fish," "Company" and "Possessing Harriet," a play based on the true story of escaped slaves, abolitionists and the emerging leaders of the women's rights movement crossing paths in Syracuse in 1839.

Seniors in the musical theatre major also participated in a showcase at Ripley-Grier Studios in New York City for agents, casting directors and other industry professionals. **Elizabeth Fitzpatrick**, a sophomore musical theatre major, spent this past summer as an intern for the Shubert Organization, a producing company that owns 17 Broadway theatres. She worked at the Shubert Theatre, assisting on the new, Tony-winning musical "Some Like it Hot."





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