ESF



Student Success | Research and Innovation | Community and Engagement | Operations and Advancement

SUNY COLLEGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND FORESTRY

2025–26 Annual Report

Discovery, Opportunity, and Impact

A summary of the College's annual report to the State University of New York on student success, research, engagement and stewardship.

REPORTING PERIOD

July 2025 – August 2026

October 2026 · www.esf.edu



FROM THE PRESIDENT

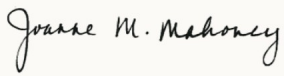
A year of meaningful progress

The 2025–26 academic year was one of meaningful progress for the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry. Across academics, research, engagement and operations, ESF delivered results that matter to New York State and to the world.

Ninety-one percent of the Class of 2025 were employed or continuing their education. We enrolled the first Environmental Studies Ph.D. cohort and renewed specialized accreditation for eight programs.

ESF research expenditures reached $26.7 million. The year's largest new award, $3.29 million from the New York State Office of the Attorney General, supports Indigenous knowledge and restoration work, and the Center for Sustainable Materials Management received $3.25 million from the state's Environmental Protection Fund.

Thanks to more than 9,000 donors, The Campaign for SUNY ESF raised a record $43.5 million. I thank Chancellor John B. King Jr., the SUNY Board of Trustees, Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature for their continued investment in ESF's mission to Improve Our World.



Joanne M. Mahoney
President, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry

Year at a Glance

91%
of the Class of 2025 employed or in graduate school

462
degrees awarded at May 2026 Commencement

$26.7M
in research expenditures, FY 2025–26

246
active research awards, 80 of them new

$43.5M
raised in The Campaign for SUNY ESF, $3.5M above goal

$109M
in ESF College Foundation assets, up 10%

Platinum
STARS 3.0 rating: 1 of 4 worldwide and the only SUNY campus

2,991
participants in 121 K-12 and community programs

Student Success and Academic Excellence

Enrollment and affordability · Academic and basic needs support · Career readiness · New programs

91%
Class of 2025 career outcomes rate, employed or continuing their education

$58K
average undergraduate starting salary

604
students and 98 organizations at Destinations and Degrees, a record

$15.8M
from The Campaign for SUNY ESF to scholarships

Enrollment and affordability

- 383 first-year and 151 transfer students enrolled on the Syracuse campus, from 57 New York counties.
- The Ranger School enrolled 62 new students, and graduate programs welcomed 80.
- More than 1,400 students received ESF College Foundation scholarships totaling more than $1.7 million.
- SUNY Reconnect now covers tuition, fees, books and supplies for adults 25–55 in high-demand associate programs such as The Ranger School's.



Student support

- **Wellness.** The Counseling Center served 310 students in 1,808 appointments; TimelyCare added 557 appointments, rated 4.8 of 5.
- **Tutoring.** 778 Academic Success Center appointments, with services extended into Summer 2026 for the first time.
- **Math.** A new placement system reached 97% completion, and the new Math Center served 400+ students.
- **Basic needs.** Beth's Bounty Food Pantry recorded 1,003 visits and won a College Hunger Grant Fund grant.
- **Belonging.** Student-organization memberships grew from 2,448 to 8,416, with 16,578 approved service hours.

Careers and new programs

- ESF administered 53 summer 2026 NYSDEC internships for students from 10 SUNY campuses.
- Career Champions grew to 145 and earned a 2025 SUNY Career Development Organization award.
- The first Environmental Studies Ph.D. cohort enrolled, and two graduate certificates launched.
- Eight programs earned or renewed specialized accreditation.
- Raymond Bailey and Gabrielle "Gabby" Augustin-Orcel earned SUNY Chancellor's Awards for Student Excellence; Roberto Ortiz Guarneros received the SUNY McConney Award.

Research and Innovation

Discovery · Funding · Partnerships · Students in research

$26.7M
research expenditures in FY 2025–26, up from $22.5M in 2024

246
active awards, 80 of them new, led by 99 faculty investigators

320
scholarly outputs, including 251 journal articles

363
student researchers: 174 undergraduate and 189 graduate

Research spotlights

Bringing back the American chestnut

A *Science* paper on genomic approaches to speed restoration; the blight-tolerant Darling 54 cleared USDA review in August 2026; and Chancellor King broke ground on a $5 million greenhouse renovation.

Funding: $1.5M from the Peter and Carmen Lucia Buck Foundation; $637,000 from USDA NIFA

Indigenous knowledge and restoration

The Center for Native Peoples and the Environment joins Indigenous knowledge and Western science; a *PNAS* study showed Indigenous fire stewardship shaped Great Lakes forests.

Funding: $3.29M from the NYS Office of the Attorney General, the year's largest new award

Healthy lakes for New York

At Skaneateles Lake, Syracuse's drinking-water source, teams track phosphorus and algal blooms; others track PFAS in fish, wastewater and biosolids across the state.

Funding: $2M Nappi gift; $785,000 Clarkson-ESF Center of Excellence; $726,000 in DEC PFAS studies

Students in research

Undergraduates ran St. Lawrence County's first mosquito surveillance program, testing more than 6,000 mosquitoes for 10 viruses. Students also earned NSF Graduate Research and Knauss fellowships.

Funding: $80,000 from SUNY's Summer Undergraduate Research Program

Largest new awards and gifts

$3.29M	NYS Office of the Attorney General: Indigenous knowledge and restoration
$3.25M	NYS DEC: Center for Sustainable Materials Management
$2.0M	Sam and Carol Nappi (gift): protecting the Finger Lakes
$1.5M	Peter and Carmen Lucia Buck Foundation: American chestnut
$1.36M	NYSED: Science and Technology Entry Program

In the public eye

- Faculty published in *Science*, *PNAS* and six Nature Portfolio journals.
- Possible tool use by a wild wolf drew coverage in *Science*, *The New York Times*, *National Geographic* and CNN.

Community, Engagement and Inclusion

Pathways for New Yorkers · Inclusion · Sustainability · Visibility · Campus life

121
K-12 outreach programs with 38 partners

2,991
participants, including 2,405 youth

~770
students in ESF in the High School

~3,000
college credits earned by high school students

Pathways for New Yorkers

- **Timbuctoo Institute.** The third annual institute served 144 New York City high school students; state support rose to $1.675 million.
- **Explore Engineering.** The inaugural program, supported by the Syracuse Pulp & Paper Foundation, engaged 35 rising high school seniors.
- **STEM pathways.** A $1.4 million NYSED STEP grant supports students in grades 7–12.
- **Summits.** ESF hosted the CNY Youth Climate Summit (200+ students) and, for the first time, the NYS Science Congress.



Inclusion and accessibility

- Seth A. Thompson joined ESF as Chief Diversity Officer in August 2025.
- “Countdown to Compliance” sessions on accessible course design, with a $10,000 SUNY EIT Accessibility Grant.
- The Center for Native Peoples and the Environment co-hosted an Onondaga Creek environmental justice listening session.

Sustainability leadership

Platinum
STARS 3.0, the only SUNY campus at that level

56%
campus waste diversion, up from 29% in 2018

212,224
kWh saved through nine energy projects

1,000
trees funded by student-led Ecosia searches

- A 2025 Sustainable Campus Index Top Performer in five of 13 impact areas.

Visibility and campus life

- The Princeton Review ranked ESF No. 4 nationally for environmentally conscious students.
- ESF was the first SUNY institution on *The College Tour*, and the *Funky Foodies* podcast earned two Webby nominations.
- Men’s and women’s cross-country won a fifth straight USCAA national title; women’s track and field also won a national title.
- Write Out Syracuse delivered 60 creative writing workshops in the community.

EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

638
events hosted

~32,000
estimated attendance

19
conferences held

108
student-led events

STEWARDSHIP

Operations and Advancement

Fiscal stewardship · Capital projects · Technology · The Campaign for SUNY ESF · A statewide footprint

$43.5M
raised in The Campaign for SUNY ESF, the most in ESF history

9,058
donors, 60% of them ESF alumni

~$9.5M
FY 2026 cash donations, up 58%

$109M
ESF College Foundation assets, up from $99M

Stewardship and support

- **Fiscal stability.** A Voluntary Separation Program is expected to save about $2.5 million a year; a fee for Syracuse University courses cuts nearly $2 million a year.
- **The Campaign at work.** $24.3 million to academic programs and research and $15.8 million to scholarships.
- **Technology.** A record 7,539 service requests, with the fastest help-desk resolution in six years.

Investing in campus

Lafayette Road chestnut greenhouse renovation	$5.0M
Jahn Laboratory chiller replacement	$3.39M
Jahn Laboratory building controls	$3.34M
Goodnow Mountain Fire Tower restoration	$511K

Plus **$8.07 million** in state investment secured in the 2026 enacted budget, including $3.25 million for the Center for Sustainable Materials Management.

A statewide footprint



About 25,000 acres of forests, field stations and campuses serve as living laboratories. The Ranger School graduated 53 students and hosted 17 NYS Forest Ranger Academy cadets.

Improve Our World

SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry
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Artificial intelligence (AI) was used to assist with the creation of the initial draft of this report. Multiple levels of review and revision were completed by ESF administration to create the final report.

