After a year as ESF’s interim president, I am confident the College leadership team and the ESF community stand proud having worked collaboratively to achieve progress on a number of important initiatives. This makes me optimistic about the College’s future. Our top three achievements are significant:

- Restoration of campus morale and working relationships between constituencies;
- Successful renegotiation of the shared services contract with Syracuse University at a reasonable cost; and
- Completion of the ESF Discovery Challenge, which plots a powerful and inspiring future for ESF.

The major challenge continues to be financial sustainability. ESF’s unique history resulted in the College being the only SUNY school with a board of trustees. Trustees are a valuable asset, but ESF has struggled for years with a depleted board membership resulting in members continuing to serve beyond their actual appointment end dates. Our board is now operating at full capacity thanks to the addition of four new members who bring complementary expertise and fresh perspectives to ESF. The new trustees are John Bartow, executive director of the Empire State Forest Products Association; Linda Brown-Robinson, president of the Syracuse/Onondaga Chapter of the NAACP; Rick Fedrizzi, chairman and CEO of the International WELL Building Institute; and William Fisher, who serves on the Joint Commission on Public Ethics and as vice chair of the Syracuse Regional Airport Authority. They join board members Matthew Marko, chair; Leslie Talbot, vice chair; Vita DeMarchi; Daniel Fitts; Stephen Sloan; and Grace Leman, student trustee. We are grateful for the dedication of all our board members.

The ESF Discovery Challenge, our version of The Framework for the Future championed at Johns Hopkins University by now-SUNY Chancellor Kristina Johnson, was a tremendous success in engaging the campus community to think creatively about the possibilities for ESF’s future. The Discovery Working Group identified five cross-cutting, visionary initiatives that engaged faculty to work collaboratively. These initiatives are now supported through SUNY funding. The College now must find a way to support an additional eight initiatives that are no less visionary. The People Working Group made a number of important recommendations to better empower our employees, while the Ways and Means Working Group provided several potential financial models for the College. The final comprehensive report has been completed and submitted to Chancellor Johnson. We will be sharing the report with the ESF community soon.

Another important area of focus and success was increasing and improving our regional and international partnerships. Working with Clarkson University leadership, we recognized that we have a large group of water scientists positioned to address New York state’s water challenges. This led us to the joint pursuit and creation of the New York State Center of Excellence for Healthy Water Solutions. In addition, our campus is working to build a state-of-the-art water testing lab to meet regional needs. On the international front, we continue to develop and strengthen our relationships with universities in China, Thailand, India, the Philippines, Kazakhstan, Russia and Nigeria. In May, we graduated our first cohort of 37 Beijing University of Chemical Technology 3+1 bioprocess engineering students.

Our students continue to be what sets us apart. Their commitment to “improving your world” is evident in the increasing number of community service hours they contribute not only within Onondaga County but well beyond. They are active volunteers and leaders with the New York and SUNY Stands with Puerto Rico relief efforts, leading service deployments in January and the last two summers. They continue to raise funds and resources through Acorns to Action, the ESF student-led disaster relief organization. Our students also distinguish themselves in national competitions such as the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon. The ESF team won first place in its division with a net-zero carbon, multi-use, multifamily housing project designed to be built on Syracuse’s south side.

The College remains a leader in sustainability, again being ranked No. 2 as a Top Green College by The Princeton Review. This distinction is important not only in attracting students to ESF, but as a point of pride for current students who believe we should practice what we teach. Additional accolades include being ranked No. 1 in percentage of females enrolled and graduated in engineering, 38th best value by U.S. News & World Report and 10th for graduation percentage by The Chronicle of Higher Education, above all other SUNY campuses.

Last year, we spent much time and effort identifying ESF’s challenges and developing strategies to tackle those challenges. It now rests upon the campus community to embrace and enact the necessary changes. We remain optimistic and see nothing but opportunity for ESF and our community.

David C. Amberg
Interim President
Governor Appoints New Trustees to ESF Board

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo appointed four new members to the ESF Board of Trustees.

We were pleased to welcome four new trustees this year to our board that provides support and oversight for the College — John Bartow, Linda Brown-Robinson, Rick Fedrizzi and William Fisher.

Bartow is the executive director of the Empire State Forest Products Association and prior executive director of the New York State Tug Hill Commission. He graduated from ESF in 1982 with a Bachelor of Science in environmental studies. He has been active as a leader on ESF’s Alumni Association Board.

Brown-Robinson is president of the Syracuse/Onondaga Chapter of the NAACP. She is an active member of a number of local boards, organizations and commissions, including CNY NOW (National Organization for Women), Boys and Girls Club of Syracuse, Onondaga County Aging Services Advisory Board, Onondaga Elders Inc. and a number of InterFaith Works’ subcommittees.

Fedrizzi is chairman and CEO of the International WELL Building Institute, a public benefit corporation advancing buildings that put human health and wellness at the center of their design and operation. Fedrizzi was also the founding chair of the U.S. Green Building Council and developer of the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification program.

Fisher serves on the Joint Commission on Public Ethics and is vice chair of the Syracuse Regional Airport Authority. Fisher was the prior deputy county executive for Onondaga County where he served under Joanie Mahoney, who is now ESF’s chief operating officer.

In addition to the new members being appointed, current Chair Matthew Marko, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Region 7 regional director, was reappointed. Trustees Vita DeMarchi, Daniel Fitts, Stephen Sloan and Leslie Talbot will continue to serve on the board. The student representative is rising junior Grace Leman.

ESF Requests Raise in Undergraduate Non-Resident Tuition

ESF requested permission to charge undergraduate students who are not New York state residents a tuition amount similar to that charged by the four SUNY university centers. The request passed both the state assembly and senate and awaits approval from Governor Andrew Cuomo.

As are the SUNY university centers, ESF is a doctoral-granting institution with an active and robust research program that benefits undergraduates. ESF’s cost structure is more consistent with the university centers than the comprehensive colleges such as Cortland or Oswego.

ESF’s undergraduate non-resident tuition is approximately one-third less than what is charged at the university centers. Moreover, it costs more for New York state undergraduates to attend college in neighboring states than it costs non-New York residents to attend college in New York. There is more parity in these tuition costs with the university centers. As of fall 2020, an out-of-state tuition increase has been approved by the New York State Legislature with annual increases of up to 10 percent for each of the next four years. This will gradually bring the ESF tuition more inline with the other institutions. There will be no immediate increase this fall.

ESF, UMU Share Services

ESF Chief Diversity Officer Malika Carter was appointed to the newly created position of interim chief diversity officer at SUNY Upstate Medical University effective April 1. Serving both campuses in a shared-service model, Carter has begun to coordinate the contributions of both campuses in state and federal reporting; training and professional development; and increasing diversity, equity, access, and inclusion for workforce, students, and community who engage with ESF and Upstate Medical University. Carter has also been able to influence the integration of the PRODiG (Promoting Recruitment, Opportunity, Diversity, Inclusion and Growth) proposals between ESF, Upstate Medical University and Onondaga Community College.

No Change to Academic Excellence and Success Fee

A request to include an Academic Excellence and Success Fee (AESF) as part of ESF’s broad-based fees was not approved for 2019-20.

As part of SUNY’s annual budgeting process, institutions are required to submit proposed changes to their student broad-based fees. These are fees charged to enrolled students to fund separate activities that benefit the student body, excluding activities that are part of the core instructional program. Fee revenue collected from students is restricted and cannot be used for any other purpose.

As part of ESF’s 2019-20 broad-based fee submission, the College requested approval to include the AESF in its broad-based fees. Revenue generated by the AESF fee must be used to enhance and support student academic support services, advisement, research opportunities, equipment, undergraduate scholarships, graduate stipends, tutoring, laboratory support and other academic and student support services.
The AESF is currently approved for the four SUNY university centers. As a doctoral-granting institution, ESF incurs many of the same costs, but the College is not able to generate revenue via the AESF to help fund these costs. Approval and implementation of the AESF fee would have put ESF on equal footing with the other SUNY doctoral-granting university centers.

ESF Examines First-Year Experience
A First-Year Experience Task Force was initiated by Interim President David Amberg to review the first-year experience at ESF and develop an action plan to improve student retention, satisfaction and success. The task force that included students, staff, faculty and administration was charged with researching and identifying issues and stress points for first-year students and developing an action plan to resolve them.

The group assessed existing barriers within the first-year experience and looked for ways to address unmet needs. ESF has the tools, knowledge and resources necessary to address these issues internally; at the same time, College leaders must be sensitive to the financial barriers that exist. Some recommendations are higher-cost projects, but most of those items would have a dramatic return on investment or are necessary to ensure success of targeted student populations in need of support.

Among the recommendations are coordinating first-year course exam dates, engaging faculty beyond first-year instructors in orientation, requiring training in microaggressions and bias in and out of the classroom, hiring a director of student diversity and inclusion for underrepresented people, and professional academic advising in the first and second years. Subsequent accepted recommendations will be considered as part of ESF’s five-year strategic plan.

Class of 2018 Reports First Destinations
The First Destinations for the Class of 2018 showed ESF graduates are experiencing success starting their careers. The Class of 2018 consists of degree recipients from December 2017, May 2018 and August 2018. The report follows graduates for 12 months post-ESF and was based on information for 494 of 640 ESF degree recipients.

Of respondents, 99 percent reported securing full or part-time employment or attending graduate school. For 87.1 percent, those positions related to their ESF major; 93.5 percent found their position within six months of graduation. The average base salary for undergraduates was $44,750.

College to Enhance Experiential Learning
The College explored the standardization of internship practices and processes to create access to and an equitable experience for all students. There is broad support for the following: ensuring a positive/common student experience as well as being able to advance the return on investment for students, student safety and security (compliance and liability), possible revenue generation (summer tuition), and telling the story of student experiences (tracking). Six recommendations are being reviewed as ways for advancing the outlined goals:

- Support a common learning experience for all ESF students engaged in credit-bearing internship, co-op and research experiences;
- Establish common definitions for experiences;
- Formalize registration process and tracking of student experiences;
- Establish common learning objectives, criterion for academic credit, and use of learning agreement;
- Centralize all opportunity postings in one ESF branded system (in addition to faculty-focused communications); and
- Formalize ESF Internship and Co-op Process Model (step model).
Joanie Mahoney Named COO
Joanie Mahoney joined ESF as the College’s chief operating officer in November 2018.

Mahoney brings extensive experience in government and public affairs that will benefit the College as it charts its future. Her experience as Onondaga County executive and her financial experience are an asset to the College as leadership works through ESF’s financial challenges.

Mahoney was the first woman to serve as county executive for Onondaga County; she was elected in 2007. She graduated from Syracuse University’s School of Management and SU’s College of Law. After spending time in private practice, Mahoney accepted a position with the Onondaga County District Attorney’s Office and spent five years as a criminal prosecutor. In 1999, she was elected councilor-at-large in the City of Syracuse where she served a four-year term.

David Newman Named Interim Provost
Dr. David Newman was appointed interim provost in March 2019.

Newman previously served as professor of forest resource economics and policy in the Department of Forest and Natural Resources Management. He served as the chair for close to 11 years and prior to that was the associate dean of academic affairs and professor at the Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources at the University of Georgia. He earned his undergraduate degree in forest management from the University of California at Berkeley and earned his master’s degree and Ph.D. in forest resource economics from Duke University.

Newman succeeds Dr. Nosa Egiebor, who served as provost and executive vice president for the past two years. Egiebor now serves as special assistant to the president for international education programs.

Dr. Melissa Fierke Named EFB Chair
Dr. Melissa K. Fierke, associate professor and director of the Cranberry Lake Biological Station, started her term as chair of the Department of Environmental and Forest Biology March 1, 2019.

Fierke holds a B.S. in environmental chemistry and a B.S. in environmental biology from the Arkansas Tech University. She earned an M.S. in fisheries science and an M.S. in environmental science (water resources) from Oregon State University and her Ph.D. in entomology from the University of Arkansas.

She has active research projects in emerald ash borer (EAB) and EAB parasitoids, density of blacklegged ticks and prevalence of Lyme disease, and pollinators (in willow biomass crops as well as along powerlines).

Faculty, Staff Earn Recognition
Members of the ESF community were honored for their accomplishments and contributions to their fields.

Dr. David Kieber, a professor in the Department of Chemistry, was named a SUNY Distinguished Professor.

Dr. Jacqueline Frair, associate professor in the Department of Environmental and Forest Biology, was named the College’s Exemplary Researcher for 2019-20.

Professor Douglas Daley of the Department of Environmental Resources Engineering received the 2019 College Foundation Award for Exceptional Achievement in Teaching.

Four ESF employees received the SUNY Chancellor’s Award for Excellence: Dr. Robert Malmsheimer of the Department of Forest and Natural Resources Management; Dr. Melissa Fierke of the Department of Environmental and Forest Biology (EFB); Dr. William Powell of EFB; and Laura Crandall, director of student involvement and leadership in the Division of Student Affairs.

College Presents Honorary Degree, Celebrates Alumni
Dr. Bernard Amadei was presented with an honorary degree during Commencement ceremonies in May. He is the founding director of the Mortenson Center in Engineering for Developing Communities. He is also the founding president of Engineers Without Borders-USA and the co-founder of the Engineers Without Borders-International network. During the December Commencement, Graduate of Distinction Awards were bestowed upon Dr. Robert I. Bruck ’78, Dr. Katia R. Aviles-Vazquez ’99 and Mr. Seth Jensen ’05.

ESF Receives High Marks in Rankings
ESF continues to be recognized for excellence with placement on top-college listings from The Princeton Review, U.S. News & World Report and The Chronicle of Higher Education.

ESF was ranked No. 1 among public institutions in the country for enrolling and graduating the highest percentage of women in engineering by The Chronicle of Higher Education.
In The Chronicle of Higher Education’s ranking, “Which Colleges are Best and Worst at Enrolling and Graduating Women in Computer Science and Engineering,” ESF was rated No. 1. Of the College’s engineering graduates, 57.1 percent were women in 2016-17. ESF offers engineering programs in environmental resources engineering, and paper and bioprocess engineering.

The Chronicle also ranked ESF No. 10 among colleges with the highest four-year graduation rates.

ESF is ranked No. 2 in the 2018 Top 50 Green Schools list put out by The Princeton Review. The list is part of The Princeton Review’s “Guide to 399 Green Colleges,” which profiles colleges that have been identified by the education services company as having the most exceptional commitments to sustainability out of several hundred institutions.

The College earned a spot in U.S. News & World Report’s annual Best College Rankings list, coming in at No. 38 among the “Best Value Schools” in the National Universities category. ESF is the highest-ranked SUNY school in the Best Values group. ESF is ranked No. 46 among the Top Public Schools in the National Universities category. The rankings also put ESF at No. 45 among National Universities for the rate of giving among alumni.

The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) recognized ESF as a top performer in its 2019 Sustainable Campus Index. The index recognizes top-performing sustainable colleges and universities overall and in 17 impact areas, as measured by the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS).

ESF was ranked as follows: Curriculum, No.5; public engagement, No. 2; Purchasing, No. 5 and Research, No. 2. ESF was ranked No. 9 in the Overall Top Performer category for doctoral granting institutions. This is especially noteworthy as most of the institutions ranked above ESF are must larger. ESF is also the only New York state school in the Top 10.

ESF Continues to Lead in Sustainability

The College realized a number of important sustainability objectives, including a reduction of energy expenditures by 50 percent over the last few years. This is a result of bringing the College’s Combined Heat and Power Plant (CHP), which includes a biomass boiler, into 100 percent operation and implementing a number of Energy Conservation Measures (ECMs) with existing high-energy consuming mechanical building systems. This considerably reduced ESF’s reliance on external energy from a high-carbon production source.

The College was designated a Leader by the NYS REV Campus Challenge, which promotes clean-energy efforts by colleges and universities in New York state. The program, part of the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), recognizes and supports schools that implement clean-energy projects and principles on campus, in the classroom and in surrounding communities. Leader is the top category among participants and includes 22 colleges and universities throughout the state.

The College’s first-ever Energy Master Plan was initiated and is close to being finalized. The plan includes objectives focused on major carbon reduction and moving toward 100 percent renewable energy sourcing, meeting SUNY and New York state’s energy and carbon goals. Associated with the new energy plan, ESF is one of a handful of inaugural institutions statewide committing to participate with the NY Higher Education Large Scale Renewable Energy (LSRE) project led by SUNY.

ESF is rolling-out a Zero Waste Campus campaign, including aggressive waste reduction, recycling and composting. Along with ESF’s No. 2 national green school ranking, the College achieved the highest STARS (Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System) rating (No. 9) in New York state (Gold status) and is expected to be among a select number of higher education institutions that have reached the highest STARS level — Platinum — by 2020. STARS, administered by the American Association for Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), is the industry-standard, third-party verified sustainability rating system. ESF uses STARS as its sustainability roadmap.
International Partnerships Established

ESF continues to build on its existing international partnerships and establish new opportunities. The College is collaborating with Beijing University of Chemical Technology (BUCT) in China to enhance the existing 3+1 Dual B.S. Degree Articulation program in bioprocess engineering. The first cohort of 38 BUCT students spent a year at ESF completing their degrees in bioprocess engineering. They graduated from ESF in May 2019. The second cohort of 33 BUCT students will arrive at ESF this fall.

ESF’s partnership with South China University of Technology (SCUT) continues. This is a relatively small exchange program where SCUT students spend one or two semesters at ESF. SCUT also sends students to ESF for summer visitation.

Representatives from Bowen University in Nigeria visited ESF in early 2018 to discuss a partnership. A proposal to establish a 2+2 Dual B.S. Degree Articulation program in chemistry, environmental studies and engineering disciplines was developed. Bowen University shared its curriculum with ESF in hopes of starting the partnership with ESF’s Department of Chemistry. Dr. Nosa Egiebor, special assistant to the president for international educational programs, visited Bowen University in early August to continue the negotiation.

ESF is in ongoing discussions with North China University of Technology (NCUT) to establish a 2+2 Dual B.S. Degree Articulation with ESF in landscape architecture and construction management. The department chairs in landscape architecture, and forest and natural resources management are reviewing the NCUT curricula to provide guidance for the next steps in the negotiation.

ESF is in preliminary discussions with Hubei University in China on a variety of partnerships at the undergraduate and graduate levels. No clear directions have been indicated as yet.

In July, a team from ESF including Interim President David Amberg and professors Donald Leopold, Lee Newman and Guy Lanza traveled to Western Siberia and Kazakhstan to continue the development of new multidisciplinary teaching and research programs in the environmental sciences.

During the visit, ESF and University of Tyumen (UT) faculty agreed to develop new research and teaching programs, including dual diploma options in restoration and remediation that will involve both faculty and students. A Memorandum of Agreement outlining the new joint programs between ESF and UT was signed. The ESF team also visited faculty and administrators at Pavlodar State University (PSU) in Northern Kazakhstan near the border with Western Siberia. The Kazakhstan initiative was funded by a program development grant from American Councils in Washington, D.C. Faculty and administrators from PSU visited ESF in July to continue planning for joint programs that emphasize multidisciplinary approaches to restoring and remediating contaminated ecosystems that face additional stress from climate change.

ESF Launches First Online Bachelor’s Degree

ESF launched its first online bachelor’s degree — a program in sustainability management that prepares students for entry-level jobs or mid-career opportunities in the growing field of sustainability.

The program, which enrolled its first students in the fall of 2019 is designed for transfer students. They will take courses typically offered during the third and fourth years of a four-year undergraduate program and, upon completion, earn a Bachelor of Science.

ESF Celebrates Debut of Digital Storytelling Studio

ESF opened its new Digital Storytelling Studio (DSS), a hub for brainstorming, composing and editing digital stories about science and the environment, Oct. 9, 2018.

The DSS offers free storytelling services to students and faculty. The studio offers the loan of audio and video equipment to support projects such as podcasts, short films, videos, photo montages, story maps and other hybrid digital media. It also serves as a space where students can work on digital projects and is equipped with four computers and the appropriate editing software.

ESF WELCOMED 38 STUDENTS FROM THE BEIJING UNIVERSITY OF CHEMICAL TECHNOLOGY
College Receives $16.8M in New Awards in 2018-19
Research continues to thrive at ESF. During the 2018-19 fiscal year, ESF was awarded $16.8 million in new awards. In addition, during the course of the year, ESF researchers:

- published more than 275 peer-reviewed articles and abstracts;
- submitted four new technology disclosures;
- had two patents issued;
- had licensing agreements on three technologies; and
- were involved with 333 projects with more than $15.5 million in research expenditures.

ESF Launches Discovery Challenge
ESF began planning its future with the ESF Discovery Challenge. The Discovery Challenge engaged the ESF community to identify five cross-cutting initiatives that are now supported by SUNY funding; each project receives up to $200,000 annually for three years. The Discovery Challenge report has been completed and submitted to SUNY administration for review. Work has begun on the chosen projects.

The initiative builds on ESF’s strengths, assets and partnerships to position the College for future growth, enhanced prominence and increased funding streams. It will also identify ways to build new academic, industry and government relationships so the College can have a true global impact.

The ESF Discovery Challenge established three advisory groups to the president: The Discovery Advisory Group, The People Advisory Group, and the Ways and Means Advisory Group.

ESF Team Reports Discovery of Unusual Molecule
Dr. David Kieber of the Department of Chemistry and Ph.D. student Liang Chen worked on a project with collaborators from the Friedrich-Schiller University Jena in Germany that discovered an unusual molecule that is produced in the oceans by planktonic microalgae and bacteria. Their study was published in the prestigious science journal Nature.

The new molecule is produced in ocean waters that range from subtropical to polar. It is structurally related to the organic sulfur compound dimethylsulfoniopropionate (DMSP), a well-known antioxidant that is produced by marine algae in massive quantities — 2 billion tons annually — on a global scale.

Kieber is interested in DMSP because it is a key compound in nearly all harmful marine algal blooms that plague coastal communities worldwide. It also plays a significant role in the occurrence of several large algal blooms in Antarctica, which he has studied in past projects.

Clarkson, ESF to Partner in New Center of Excellence
ESF and Clarkson University were designated to launch New York state’s new Center of Excellence (CoE) in Healthy Water Solutions. State funding for the new CoE was supported by state Senator Rachel May and Assemblyman Al Stirpe with signatures from representatives from around the state. The first year of funding is currently at $125,000. The two partners plan a collaborative model to deploy experts and students to deliver technology innovations and research-based solutions with local partners taking on complex challenges in aquatic systems and water infrastructures.

Community Invited to ESF to Share Ideas about Future of Erie Canal
ESF hosted one of five sessions this summer asking community members to share their ideas to reimagine the Erie Canal.

The ESF session was part of Reimagine the Canals, a state-sponsored initiative to identify new uses for the Erie Canal. A series of sessions were moderated by the Rockefeller Institute of Government. Members of the institute will also help the task force analyze the data collected.

The initiative, launched in May by Governor Andrew Cuomo, builds on last year’s Reimagine the Canals Competition, which sought innovative ideas to boost local economies, increase recreation and strengthen environmental resilience along the Erie Canal. ESF Chief Operating Officer Joanie Mahoney is the chair of the Reimagine the Canals Task Force.

New Frog Species Described
Matthew Schlesinger, a zoologist with the ESF-based New York Natural Heritage Program, was part of a team that helped define the range and unique characteristics of the recently discovered Atlantic Coast leopard frog.

A study published in November 2018 in the journal PLOS ONE pinpointed the frog’s range along the Eastern Seaboard, its unusual call and a list of traits distinguishing it from the more common northern and southern leopard frogs. Schlesinger and his colleagues first described the Atlantic Coast leopard frog as a distinct species in a study in PLOS ONE in 2014.
College Creates On-campus Food Pantry

The College will open Beth’s Bounty: The Food Pantry at ESF this fall. The pantry was created and is run by Alpha Xi Sigma Honor Society, with assistance from a committee of ESF employees. The pantry was created to address food insecurity on campus and will provide free food for any student experiencing hunger and/or struggling to obtain food because of financial hardships. The College is working with the Food Bank of Central New York and has received donations from a number of local businesses. Monetary donations have been received from alumni, staff and faculty.

The food pantry program is named in memory of student Beth Ann Newkirk who died from injuries suffered in a house fire in June.

EFB Faculty, Students Spend Spring Break in Ecuador

Four faculty members from the ESF Department of Environmental and Forest Biology (EFB) spent spring break in Ecuador, teaching and working on research projects.

Dr. Martin Dovciak and Dr. Donald Stewart took 20 students in the tropical ecology course to the Tiputini Biodiversity Station deep in the rainforests of the Yasuni Biosphere Reserve. The students learned about nature conservation, sustainable resource management and biological diversity during an intensive field study.

Dr. Brian Leydet traveled to Ecuador’s El Oro Province, working in parallel with ongoing disease surveillance efforts through the Institute for Global Health & Translational Science at SUNY Upstate Medical University. He provided tick- and tick-borne disease expertise in collaboration with Ecuadorian tick expert Sandra Enriquez of the Central University of Ecuador. He also guided the research of a doctoral student from the Translational Biomedical Science Program at the University of Rochester who is investigating tick-borne diseases in Ecuador as well as the perception of tick-borne disease risk in Ecuadorian deaf communities.

Dr. Stephen Teale traveled to the Galapagos to conduct field research on an invasive fly that parasitizes Darwin’s finches. He and his students and collaborators are working at the Charles Darwin Research Station on Santa Cruz Island to identify the chemical basis of odor cues that the parasite uses to locate bird nests, mates and food. These chemical attractants will then be used to help control the parasite and increase nestling survival.

ESF Continues to Stand with Puerto Rico

ESF students continue to stand with Puerto Rico two years after Hurricane Maria devastated the island.

ESF students, staff and faculty have participated in multiple trips to the island to assist with relief efforts as part of the SUNY Stands with Puerto Rico initiative, a partnership with Governor Andrew Cuomo’s NY Stands with Puerto Rico Recovery and Rebuilding Initiative. Chief of Staff and Chief Sustainability Officer Mark Lichtenstein is a member of the SUNY Puerto Rico Task Force established by SUNY Chancellor Kristina Johnson.

In June, five ESF students joined other SUNY students and staff for three weeks to continue disaster relief efforts in Yabucoa, Puerto Rico, in the eastern region of the island. ESF led one of 100 deployments that took place throughout the summer. They worked with All Hands and Hearts (AHAH), one of the disaster relief organizations partnering with SUNY on the initiative, repairing roofs to increase resiliency to future storms. The teams also inspected houses for mold and performed sanitation treatments on impacted areas. During the ESF-led trip 1,160 hours of disaster relief efforts were completed. Earlier trips saw students working in Vieques, an island off the eastern coast of Puerto Rico.

During their weeklong stay the team helped build three short recreational trails, cleared trees that fell because of the storm, cleaned litter from a public park, painted the inside of a school, cleared land for farming, documented a trail system in the national refuge and prepared the Boys & Girls Club for new students.

A number of the students on the trips are members of Acorns to Action, ESF’s student-led relief organization.

ESF Represented at Forestry and Wood Products Summit

Members of the ESF community attended the first Forestry and Wood Products Summit, held in Binghamton Oct. 25, 2018. The summit highlighted the state’s forest and wood products industry, and brought together industry experts to identify paths to sustain existing forest product markets and promote the development of new markets. Interim President David Amberg was featured in a video highlighting the potential of the state’s forest and wood products industry; the video debuted during the summit. (www.youtube.com/watch?v=dfk91E6Tlg&t=12s)

He also served on a panel focused on meeting the needs of the forest and wood products industry and used the opportunity to highlight ESF’s role in workforce development in this area.

Dr. Cornelius B. Murphy, Jr. of ESF’s Department of Environmental and Resources Engineering presented on the New Forest Economy, addressing issues including resources utilization, emerging technologies, and sustainability and carbon sequestration.
Student Honored with Chancellor’s Award

Marissa Lathrop, an environmental education and interpretation major with a minor in writing and rhetoric, received the SUNY Chancellor’s Award for Student Excellence. Lathrop was a highly successful member of the women’s cross-country and track-and-field teams. She served as women’s cross-country team captain her junior and senior years, holds every ESF distance record and was recognized for her excellence as both a student and a student-athlete when she was named a National All-American as a runner and a National All-Academic for earning a 3.5 or higher cumulative grade point average.

Division of Student Affairs Meets Needs

ESF’s Division of Student Affairs worked to meet the needs of students academically, socially, mentally and professionally.

The Peer Tutoring program continued to provide record numbers of tutoring hours (4,344) during the fall 2018 semester and a significant number of hours (1,998) in spring 2019. The program provides individual/small-group tutoring and large-group tutoring by qualified undergraduate and graduate students.

Community service remains a hallmark of the ESF experience with more than 19,000 hours of service provided by students. Student organizations are required to perform some form of service and through this initiative 14,932 hours of service were contributed. The annual Campus Days of Service yielded 308 hours. During Alternative Spring Break, students and staff contributed 708 hours with the non-profit A Tiny Home for Good framing tiny homes for Syracuse’s homeless. Blood drives and Saturday of Service rounded out service at ESF with 3,156 hours of service.

The Office of Career Services offers personalized services, programs and resources to guide students in developing the necessary skills to advance through ESF and into a career. The annual Environmental Career Fair was the largest to date. With 108 employers participating — two-thirds of which featured ESF alumni — the fair broke last year’s record. Building on the success of the spring event, a fall Environmental Career Fair is slated for October.

Working individually and collaboratively, Career Services hosted 16 programs in fall 2018 and 16 in spring 2019.

Career presentations/programming reached 1,017 students.

Additionally, Career Services staff were invited to make presentations to classes and at club meetings, reaching an additional 429 students. The office continues to keep direct advising for students as a priority with 605 total advising sessions occurring during the 2018-19 year.

Counseling Services experienced a 58 percent increase in office visits over the previous year illustrating the need for continued mental health services on campus. Close to 15 percent of the total student body availed themselves of Counseling Services in 2018-19. Counseling Services hosted 45 outreach events garnering 2,748 participants.

Student organizations provide more than a place to share common interests. At ESF, students have 170-plus opportunities for leadership within the 38 student organizations and eight special interest groups on campus. More than 730 students are involved in at least one student organization. Clubs offer students the opportunity to participate in community service, outdoor activities and professional development, and provide additional educational opportunities and social contact.

Survey Engages Alumni in ESF’s Inclusion Efforts

A survey was issued to alumni seeking their input on issues of inclusion, diversity and equity at ESF. More than 300 alumni participated in the survey from ESF’s Office of Alumni Relations in partnership with Institutional Research and the Office of Inclusion, Diversity and Equity (OIDE). Respondents were asked about their personal identities and experiences; perceptions and opinions about issues relating to inclusion, diversity and equity at ESF; and thoughts on actions that could be taken by the OIDE and alumni organizations to increase inclusion.

Alumni will be given the opportunity to help strengthen identity specific affinity networks and offered an opportunity to support students as alumni volunteers, alumni advisers or ambassadors.

The annual survey was administered in March 2019. Survey questions and results will be shared with the ESF community this fall.
Athletics Update: ESF Wins 2 National Championships

The Mighty Oaks athletics program had a strong year with national championship trophies added to the College's trophy case.

The women's cross-country team won the USCAA National Championship for the first time in program history. Senior Marissa Lathrop finished first overall in the 6K race, and two other Mighty Oaks runners placed in the top five. The men's team finished in second place overall.

In men's golf, senior Sean Barron won the individual title at the USCAA National Championships. Barron edged the second-place finisher by one stroke.

Both the men's and women's soccer teams, under new Head Coach Adam Scalisi, had winning seasons and qualified for the USCAA National Championships.

The men's basketball team finished with an 8-12 overall record under first-year Head Coach John D'Antonio. The season was highlighted by an overtime win against Paul Smith's College. The game marked the second year the team played its Senior Night game in the Carrier Dome.

Both the men's and women's Woodsmen's teams continued to dominate in competition taking first place at several meets throughout the year.

ESF's bass fishing team participated in the College Fishing National Championship. Despite a strong start on the first day, the fish were not biting the second day, leading to an unfavorable finish. A great experience was had by all team members.
Philanthropic Support Strong for ESF College Foundation

The ESF College Foundation was the beneficiary of another strong year of philanthropic support. As of March 31, 2019, total assets of the Foundation equaled $74.9 million, a 2.25 percent increase in assets over the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2018. Despite a significant mid-year decline in investment markets, the Foundation’s endowment rebounded to a value of $36 million as of June 2019.

The November 2017 staff addition to the annual fund program bore fruit this year. Total annual fund gifts increased 6.2 percent from fiscal year 2018 to fiscal year 2019. The average gift per annual fund donor increased 7.9 percent to a record $202, thanks in part to increased membership in the College’s leadership annual giving gift society. The 1911 Society requires members to make annual unrestricted gifts of at least $1,911 to commemorate the year of the College’s founding.

The Foundation recorded cash donations of over $2.5 million in fiscal year 2019 as compared to $3.3 million the previous year. The significant difference was a realized cash bequest of $1.3 million in fiscal year 2018. Documented unrealized bequests in 2019 exceed $1 million. These bequests will benefit the College in future years. Significant cash contributions included over $900,000 in support of tree restoration programs; over $300,000 for waterfowl and wetlands conservation; over $200,000 for private land conservation studies; and over $100,000 for the program of the Camp Fire Conservation Fund professor. An ESF alumni couple pledged $250,000 for the continued expansion of the career development program for ESF students.

A partnership between development staff and the ESF Center for Native Peoples and the Environment resulted in an invitation to participate in the prestigious Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Indigenous Graduate Partnership. Funding from the Sloan Foundation will fully support Native American graduate students anticipated to enroll at ESF in fall 2019. Additional funding from the Sloan Foundation will support ESF’s efforts to improve the recruitment and retention of American Indian and Alaska Native graduate students.

The ESF College Foundation development program compares well among SUNY peers. A recent SUNY Fundraising Report ranked ESF 15th among 32 colleges for total dollars raised in fiscal year 2017-18. The same report cited ESF College Foundation as having a low operating expense ratio, indicating that the majority of funds raised provide direct benefit to ESF students and academic programs. The Foundation provided over $3.5 million in support to ESF students and academic programs in fiscal year 2018, a 22 percent increase in funding over the previous fiscal year.

Roosevelt Wild Life Collections Get New Home

The new Roosevelt Wild Life Collections and Classroom facility opened in the Gateway Center this spring. The new space supports vertebrate taxonomy instruction with space for students to work with nearly 1,000 mammal, bird, amphibian and reptile specimens.

Two Campus Spaces Renovated

Two well-used spaces on campus received renovations in the last year.

Illick 5’s renovations brought the 50-year-old auditorium into the 21st century. The renovation included asbestos abatement and widening the auditorium to accommodate a new ADA-compliant ramp and wheelchair-accessible student positions. New seating and work surfaces more than triple the work surface available to each student.

Energy-efficient LED lighting units were integrated with air diffusers, speakers and wireless access points into the ceiling areas. The teaching area boasts the latest teaching technology, including control of two widescreen rear units projecting onto a double-wide glass projection surface. Each student position features a single outlet beneath the writing surface to provide power for laptops and other devices.

Alumni Lounge (known informally as Nifkin Lounge) underwent its own makeover in response to requests from the Undergraduate Student Association. The lounge, heavily used by students, staff and faculty, was last updated around 2005.

The open-concept gathering space received new paint, flooring, furnishings and window treatments. Heavy velour drapes were replaced with translucent roller shades that not only brighten the room but showcase the full brilliance of the stained-glass center window depicting “Adirondack Splendor,” a gift of the ESF class of 1950. New carpeting was installed and the staff in Instructional Technology Services made improvements to the audiovisual equipment and provided an instructor podium.

College Updates Facilities Master Plan

The State University Construction Fund hired JMZ Architects & Planners from Glens Falls, New York, to update ESF’s Facilities Master Plan. JMZ has extensive experience in higher education
planning and has conducted work throughout the country and within the SUNY system. JMZ reviewed the 2012 master plan and current strategic planning efforts such as ESF’s ongoing Discovery Challenge plan. Current academic program, enrollment and retention data is being analyzed and consolidated to form the basis of a comprehensive academic space utilization study. JMZ is preparing general space utilization guidance for ESF’s eight academic divisions and departments, as well as the library and the Ranger School. JMZ is meeting with stakeholders to determine and prioritize needs, and develop group net square-foot space budgets. They are developing concept alternatives for key buildings and the main campus as a whole.

JMZ is evaluating ESF’s enrollment history over the past five years and future enrollment projections by the College as a whole. These figures are then broken down further to the school, department and program levels. They will also break down the data by undergraduate and graduate divisions. JMZ is also evaluating the retention and completion data from the Assessment Office and Institutional Research. They are reviewing all academic programs and information about new programs or planned programmatic changes. Also included in JMZ’s scope of work is an assessment of conditions and suitability for intended uses for existing buildings. The assessment includes general physical conditions of buildings and systems, life expectancies, life safety, data, communications and AV technologies, as well as classroom capacities and room for expansion.

JMZ has been interviewing members of the College leadership team to set parameters for space types and allocations, including shared space. The Facilities Master Plan Update was started in April 2019 and is expected to conclude in the spring of 2020. The final report will serve as ESF’s planning roadmap for future renovations and space allocations.

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Marshall Hall Readies for Remodel

Plans for a major remodel of Marshall Hall are on track to start in summer 2020.

Chiang|O’Brien Architects of Ithaca are working with ESF and the State University Construction Fund to develop plans for the building’s first major remodel in its 85-year history.

The building houses the departments of landscape architecture and environmental studies, along with key instructional and social spaces for the campus community. The historically significant exterior and prominent interior spaces, such as the spiral staircase, will be preserved in the remodel.

Plans include increasing accessibility to the building from multiple entry points. This includes an elevator, stair and entry addition to better connect the west end of campus to the main quad.

Classrooms and seminar rooms, including the auditorium, will feature flexible arrangements as instruction dictates. The inclusion of right-sized offices will allow all faculty to be located on the second floor in a mixed collegial arrangement. Student spaces for formal and informal interactions and learning will be included on every floor.

One of two large, open studios will be created by using a large previously unrealized space among the concealed deep steel trusses above the auditorium. A number of laboratories and a grab-and-go café from the basement level will be permanently relocated in other campus buildings.

Well-controlled, efficient heating and cooling systems will exceed the Deep Energy Retrofit targets and provide flexibility for future connections as ESF’s campus-wide energy master plan evolves. Energy-inefficient windows and two missing skylights will be replaced allowing for daylight to reach nearly all building interiors.

All building occupants will be relocated during construction. The renovation is estimated to be completed late summer 2022.