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**SUFFOLK COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE'S PRESIDENT DR. SHAUN L. MCKAY
AMONG 25 NATIONAL FINALISTS IN AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE PROGRAM**

American Association of Community Colleges to Spotlight Award Finalists April 23rd

Selden, NY –Suffolk County Community College is among a select group of colleges named as a finalist in a prestigious new program designed to recognize innovation and promising practices among two-year colleges nationwide. The Awards of Excellence are sponsored by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), which established the awards this year and will award them annually. Winners in each of five categories will be named April 23rd in San Francisco during the AACC annual convention, an event that attracts close to 2,000 educators, policymakers, corporate and foundation representatives each year.

Suffolk County Community College's President Dr. Shaun L. McKay was recognized in the Emerging Leadership Award category. Other categories include Student Success Award, Exemplary CEO/Board Award, Advancing Diversity Award and Outstanding College/Corporate Partnership Award. For a full list of finalists see www.aacc.nche.edu.

Commenting on the nomination, Dr. McKay stated, "The American Association of Community Colleges is a tremendous advocate for community colleges and gives us a national voice. I am honored to be included as a finalist for their Emerging Leadership Award and to be in the company of so many outstanding leaders and creative thinkers who are paving the way for progress in the community college arena."

Criteria for the Awards of Excellence are designed to reflect innovative practices in areas that relate to recommendations of the 21st-Century Commission on the Future of Community Colleges, a national, blue-ribbon group of education experts that issued its report last spring. In the report (<http://www.aacc.nche.edu/AboutCC/21stcenturyreport/index.html>), members of the commission described a redesigned community college of tomorrow, one that would "reinvent the student experience" and help "reclaim the American dream."

"Over an 18-month period, the 21st-Century Commission provided a bold and forward-thinking blueprint for the community college of the future," said Marie Gnage, chair of the AACC Board of Directors. "With these new awards, AACC intends to elevate community colleges that are in the vanguard of progressive practices. The awardees will receive national visibility, but the spotlight on their exemplary practices will ultimately benefit all community colleges."

Finalists for the AACC Awards of Excellence were chosen by a specially-appointed committee of the association's board of directors, based on specific criteria (<http://www.aacc.nche.edu/About/Awards/Pages/default.aspx>).



Photo Caption: Suffolk County Community College's President Dr. Shaun L. McKay is among 25 National Finalists in the Awards Of Excellence Program sponsored by the American Association of Community Colleges.

About Suffolk County Community College

Suffolk County Community College (SCCC) is the largest community college in the State University of New York (SUNY) system, enrolling approximately 26,000 students at its three campuses in Selden, Brentwood and Riverhead. SCCC offers the Associate in Arts (A.A.), Associate in Science (A.S.), and Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degrees, as well as a variety of certificate programs. Offering affordable college tuition, a highly respected Honors program, extensive extracurricular activities, championship athletic teams, and numerous unified transfer programs, SCCC is a first-choice college for Long Island students. Visit us online at sunysuffolk.edu.

About The American Association of Community Colleges

The American Association of Community Colleges is a national organization representing the nation's over 1,100 community, junior and technical colleges and their 13.5 million students. Community colleges are the largest sector of higher education, enrolling almost half of all U.S. undergraduates. For more information about AACC and community colleges, see www.aacc.nche.edu.

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