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**SUFFOLK COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE TO BENEFIT FROM
NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE'S BUDGET EFFORTS**

Selden, NY – New York State's recently approved budget for the 2012-2013 fiscal year held good news for community colleges. By raising the level of base State aid by \$150 per full-time equivalent (FTE) student, the budget provides an additional \$31.3 million for the State's two-year institutions. This is the first increase in community college base aid since the 2007-2008 fiscal year. As the largest community college in the State University (SUNY) system, the increase in base aid will mean approximately \$3.0 million in additional funding for Suffolk County Community College.

The current community college funding structure calls for State aid to support 40 percent of the operating costs for two-year colleges, with the sponsoring county and student tuition covering the remaining costs. The State contribution has reached the 40 percent level only once since 1970.

Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver made a strong recommendation for the State to fully fund its share of community college operating costs in the lead-up to this year's State of the State speech. At that time, he said, "To strengthen the third rung of the ladder, we are proposing to increase the State's support for our community colleges. With high unemployment and widespread under-employment, more and more of our citizens are looking to community colleges for a new path to a better life. By law, this State is obligated to fund up to 40-percent of the operational budgets of our community colleges, but only once in four decades has the state fully met that obligation. Now, when these learning centers are so important to our economy, to our companies and to our workers, we must increase our investment in them."

"The community college experience is the gateway to higher education for many students. With the increased funding I was able to secure, it ensures access and affordability for students who enroll at our State's largest two-year institution, Suffolk County Community College," said New York State Senator Kenneth P. LaValle, chair of the Senate's Higher Education Committee.

This year, under SUNY Chancellor Nancy Zimpher's leadership, the State's community college presidents actively advocated for a plan of systematic annual increases to fund State base aid. The State base aid plan originally requested that this rate be increased by \$205 annually over the

next five years, beginning in 2012-2013. Governor Cuomo put forth an Executive Budget proposal that maintained the rate at its current level of \$2,122 per full-time equivalent student.

"I would like to thank the Governor, members of the New York State Legislature, and especially the Long Island delegation, for their leadership in supporting the State's community colleges. With this budget, New York has chosen to invest strategically in the future of education in our region and throughout the entire state," said Dr. Shaun L. McKay, President of Suffolk County Community College.

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 transfer programs, SCCC is a first-choice college for Long Island students. Visit us online at sunysuffolk.edu.

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