Opportunities Committee Report
4/8/2022

In attendance: Mary Garcia, Patrick Romain (Co-Chairs)
Grace Maxon-Clarke           Oswego
Maria Brickhouse             Buffalo
Jude Layatilleke             Buffalo
Daniel Braun
Susan Udin
Toby Cronk
Lei Huang
Christopher King
Kitt Oliver
Sidney Contreras
Mindy Heath
Jessica Boulia
Vivette Dukes

Discussions were guided to address a few areas which included successes and stressors during the Pandemic and as we all get used to the “New Normal” in a post COVID world. Many Counselors and directors worked diligently to keep our students engaged and present in their academic work as well as staying connected to each other and our programs.

We recognize the challenges this presented with losing some students and actually now recruiting new students and pursuing our current students in order to retain them and graduate them despite the loss of time, stress of family, financial challenges and the loss of their self during this time. Programs are busy in continued efforts to bring our applicants to campus as accepted students and getting ready for in person summer programs.

Programs continue to Engage, provide tutoring and mentorship, and remain connected within the Counseling and campus/program community.

The Committee addressed the Mental Health issues faced by our students and their families, but also the stressors staff faced in acquiring a work-life balance during this time and having the moment to meet with their Counselor there are more conversations in retrospect on how the Pandemic affected
their families and self on so many levels which included Academics, Technology, Personal and just as importantly their environment (home and community, as well as online approach to living).

The Medical field had its challenges in supporting their SUNY environment while providing care and support to patients, student, systems, etc. There has been an exodus of retirees, resignations, etc. of staff leaving SUNY for other opportunities i.e. telecommuting. As a committee, we also recognize the efforts all medical centers from the beginning of pandemic to present in assisting our students, families and communities during this time.

We noted that EOC was not present, we know that they have been challenged prior to pandemic and we are wondering on their issues before, during and currently what they are dealing with and how we can advocate for such an invaluable program and students.

We also discussed the importance of Political Literacy and our continued advocacy efforts for EOP. Though financially it will be a better year, we also discussed the importance of continued academic support, and hopes that we can continue to address Student Loan Debt crisis, as a few students did take out loans during the Pandemic, though they were home and received CARES act funding but yet needed more funds to help with insecurities in housing, food, etc. We had a few students intern with NYS Assemblymembers (locally and virtually). They learned a great deal. My hope is that we can continue to encourage this.

We look forward to meeting in the Fall.

Meeting Adjourned: 10:15am