

Tuesday, February 17, 2026

9:00 AM EST
1 HR

Registration & Networking Breakfast

10:00 AM EST
10 MINS

Emcee and Welcoming Remarks



Jeff Coltin
Editor-in-Chief
City & State NY

10:10 AM EST
1 HR

The Evolving Landscape of Higher Education in New York



Susan Poser (Moderator)
President
Hofstra University



Danielle McMullen
Assistant Secretary for Education
(Higher Education)
New York State



Dr. William Murphy
Deputy Commissioner for Higher
Education
New York State Education Department



Senator Toby Ann Stavisky
Chair
Higher Education Committee



Janet Silver
Principal
Hinman Straub P.C.

New York's colleges and universities are undergoing rapid and unprecedented change. This panel brings together experts, educators, and policy leaders to explore how today's most pressing forces are reshaping higher education across the state. Discussion will delve into the expanding landscape of student rights, to the evolving expectations students hold for safety, support, and inclusion. Panelists will also examine shifting faculty roles, including academic freedom, governance, research demands, and the changing nature of teaching in a post-pandemic world.

11:10 AM EST
1 HR

Integrated Approaches in Higher Education to Support All Students



Havidán Rodríguez (Moderator)
President
University at Albany, SUNY



Elizabeth Breier
Chief Advocacy Officer and Special Assistant to the Commissioner
NYS OMH Office Of Advocacy and Peer Support Services



Andy Sink
Employment First Director
NYS Office of the Chief Disability Officer



Lieutenant Colonel Oliver Karp
Battalion Commander
U.S. Army NYC Recruiting Battalion



Lara Lai
Education Policy Expert
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This panel explores how colleges can better support every student through coordinated strategies in mental health, special education, and affordability. Speakers will examine expanding campus mental-health services, improving accommodations and inclusive practices for students with disabilities, and addressing financial barriers that impact access and completion.

12:10 PM EST
1 HR, 5 MINS

Lunch

1:15 PM EST
45 MINS

Fireside Chat with Leadership of CUNY & SUNY



Jeff Coltin (Moderator)
Editor in Chief
City & State New York



John B. King Jr.
Chancellor
State University of New York (SUNY)



Félix V. Matos Rodríguez
Chancellor
The City University of New York

2:00 PM EST
1 HR

STEM, Technology & AI Innovation Across New York's Higher Education System



Grant Salmon (Moderator)
Comprehensive Solutions Account
Executive
Trane Technologies



Senator Kristen Gonzalez
Chair
Internet and Technology Committee



Tina Kim
Deputy Comptroller State Government
Accountability
Office of the State Comptroller



Angela Liotta
Vice President of Communications
New York State Higher Education
Services Corporation



Romelia Flores
Distinguished Engineer and Master
Inventor
IBM



Joseph Zaza
ELI Consultant
Executive Leadership Institute

This panel will explore how New York's colleges, universities and specialized programs are advancing STEM education and modernizing their technology and AI capabilities to meet statewide workforce and economic needs. Leaders will discuss strategies to strengthen STEM pathways, expand tech-enabled instruction, and build AI and digital literacy across disciplines. The conversation will cover infrastructure upgrades, new instructional and research tools, cybersecurity readiness, and student support. Panelists will also address equitable access, alignment with state priorities, and collaborative initiatives shaping New York's higher-education tech ecosystem.

3:00 PM EST

Sessions Conclude