



June 14, 2021

To SUNY Poly Faculty, Staff, and Students:

While we are in the midst of our summer session, I want to share my pride as SUNY Polytechnic Institute marks 55 years since its inception—and also highlight how far we have come.

The SUNY Poly you know today began in 1966 when Upper Division College began offering graduate programs to students at a local elementary school. From there, the institution moved to a former mill building in West Utica in 1971. It was later remodeled and additional buildings were leased in West Utica and Rome and renamed the “State University of New York College of Technology at Utica-Rome.” In the mid-1980s, the college transitioned to our current Mohawk Valley location before the name changed again to the “State University of New York Institute of Technology at Utica-Rome (SUNYIT).”

The merger of the SUNY College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering (CNSE) and SUNYIT to form SUNY Polytechnic Institute was a further extension of our original mission, transforming the aspirations of the Institute to now include the research intensive, entrepreneurial culture of CNSE, while maintaining the attributes that were so appealing to students for the preceding fifty years. We moved from the early mission as “a college with strong emphasis upon the sciences and technology” to one that continues to prepare students for a wide range of careers and fosters a culture of research, entrepreneurship, and innovation while leveraging New York’s rapidly growing high-tech ecosystem.

It is particularly striking to me that while a current prevalent theme and emphasis in higher education is the need to “meet students where they are,” this attribute is very much part of SUNY Poly’s DNA—and this is a direct result of our history. Whether we consider our transfer students, our four-year undergraduate students, our professional undergraduate and graduate degree seekers, or the graduate researchers developing the next generation of materials, nanotechnologies, and advanced manufacturing processes, we specialize in serving a vast array of learners—and we have that expertise precisely because of our history and the effective combination of our constituent parts.

As we mark 55 years, I ask you to join me in taking a moment to consider all the work by those faculty, staff, students, and alumni who built this institution into the inspiring academic force for good that it has become. These efforts undoubtedly result from the dedication of many whom we keep in our thoughts each day—along with everyone who continues to serve SUNY Poly’s mission.

Celebrating this anniversary of the founding of our institution, I hope you share a SUNY Poly-related memory or old photo on your Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or Snapchat account with #SUNYPoly55 to help show how far we’ve come, and all that we offer today.

While we have faced challenges, especially in the last year due to the pandemic, we will continue SUNY Poly’s legacy of broadening our reach and impact, whether it be through new, cutting-edge academic programs and online options for our students, pioneering research by our faculty, or impactful partnerships across our regions. Together, we can set the stage for our future SUNY Poly colleagues and students to look back fondly at what we are doing to provide them with a robust future to reach SUNY Poly’s full potential.



I am thrilled to join you as we mark this moment in SUNY Poly's history. I look forward to continuing our focus on further forging ahead this fall.

Sincerely,

Dr. Tod A. Laursen
Acting President
SUNY Polytechnic Institute