October 30, 2012

Dear SUNY Presidents, Staff, and Students,

As chancellor of the State University of New York, with 64 campuses active in international education efforts throughout New York State, I share in the excitement of the thirteenth annual International Education Week to be held November 12-16, 2012. SUNY and the World, one of the Six Big Ideas of our strategic plan, The Power of SUNY, calls upon us to “nurture a culturally fluent, cross-national mindset”—something that happens every day on SUNY campuses. I am pleased that Governor Cuomo has also honored this week and the importance of international education in our state with his International Education Week proclamation for the second year in a row. This year’s theme is International Education: Striving for a Healthier Future Worldwide.

International Education Week, an annual joint initiative of the U.S. Departments of State and Education, celebrates the importance of international educational exchange, promotes programs that prepare Americans to work in a global marketplace, and welcomes those from abroad to live and study in the United States. I strongly believe that international education and exchange—connecting scholars, educators, and citizens across borders—is fundamental to achieving a more peaceful world. I know for a fact that international education adds richness and diversity to SUNY and New York State.

SUNY is privileged to welcome students and scholars from over 170 countries across our 64 campuses. These students and scholars bring cultural understanding through social, academic, and cultural engagement opportunities. Even more important, they bring the world to our community so that we can experience its cultural richness and diverse perspectives.

As a system, we are proud to offer more than 600 study abroad programs in more than 55 countries, reaching each of the seven continents. These programs provide SUNY students with a tremendous and varied menu of opportunities to explore the world and learn about new cultures first hand, all while working toward their degrees.

Finally, our campuses work tirelessly to find new and innovative ways to expand the impact of international education to our students, staff, and communities. Campuses strive to internationalize curriculum to offer a global perspective to all student—even those that do not leave New York State—so that they may embark on their careers as prepared global citizens.

These activities are an important part of our identity, and one of the things that makes SUNY great. International Education Week allows us the opportunity to celebrate them. So, congratulations to the SUNY community as we join the rest of New York State, the United States, and the world in celebrating International Education Week 2012.

Sincerely,

Nancy L. Zimpher
Chancellor