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YOUR PROMISE - THEIR FUTURE AWARD RECIPIENTS

Susan Raymond Basch '74, posthumously & Eli Basch, Esq.

**#BELIKE ANITA AWARD RECIPIENT** 

Bill Calderara

OUTSTANDING GRADUATE OF THE LAST DECADE AWARD RECIPIENT

Alejandro Duran Sanchez '19

CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY AWARD RECIPIENT

**Tony Marmo** 

ANNE R. DONOVAN AWARD FOR FACULTY & STAFF RECIPIENT

**Professor Mark Stewart** 



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#### A LETTER FROM THE COLLEGE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends:

I am deeply grateful for the generosity of our community—and for the trust you place in SUNY Ulster, our students, and our mission. Your support fuels the belief that no one should have to choose between education and family, or between college and basic survival. Completion matters, and thanks to you, we are helping more students cross the finish line.

Because of your generosity, 86% of the Class of 2025 graduated debt-free. That's not just a statistic; it's a transformative outcome.

But your impact goes far beyond tuition assistance. Since 1997, when President Barbara Adams launched the Community Cares Emergency Fund, the Ulster Community College Foundation has been a lifeline for students facing sudden financial hardship—whether it's a car repair, a shutoff notice, or an unexpected dental bill.

These emergencies might seem small, but they can derail a student's education. This fund exists to ensure they don't have to.

Research shows that emergency grants increase student retention and completion rates—but the deeper impact is human. When a student knows someone cares—not just about their grades, but about their life—they begin to believe in themselves again. They feel they belong. That sense of community can be the difference between dropping out and moving forward.

The Community Cares Emergency Fund meets students at their most vulnerable moments—with compassion, urgency, and hope. When you give, you're not just covering a cost. You're sending a message: You matter. We believe in you. Keep going.

One act of generosity can echo for decades. You can be the reason a student stays in college. You can be the one who turns a crisis into a comeback.

I hope you will join us in continuing to build a community that cares—one student, one story, one life at a time.

Warmly,

Alison Buckley, Ed.D.

7th President

## A LETTER FROM THE ULSTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE FOUNDATION, INC. BOARD CHAIR

On behalf of the Ulster Community College Foundation Board of Directors, I am thrilled to welcome you to this year's Soiree for SUNY Ulster.



As Board Chair and proud SUNY Ulster alumnus, I urge you to connect with the College in ways that resonate with you. Whether it's engaging with scholarship recipients whose dreams have been realized through your kindness, learning about innovative programs and facilities made possible by visionary donors, or discovering the outstanding work of our accomplished faculty and dedicated staff. This journal captures the essence of our collective influence white also serving as a call to action.

As we celebrate our accomplishments, we recognize there is always more to achieve. Looking ahead, our goats are ambitious, focusing on promoting student success and meeting the dynamic workforce demands of our community. With your ongoing support, we can broaden our offerings, improve academic programs, and ensure that SUNY Ulster continues to be a crucial link between student career achievement and local economic development.

Thank you for your vital role in this important mission. Your dedication has a profound impact, and together, we wilt shape a brighter and more robust future for our students and the entire community.

Sincerely,



John A. DeGasperis, Esq. '02
Board Chair



#### WELCOME FROM OUR SOIRÉE CO-CHAIRS



On behalf of the Ulster Community College Foundation, Inc. and the 2025 Soiree Committee, we are honored to recognize this year's awardees; Susan Raymond Basch, Posthumously & Eli Burt Basch, Alejandro Duran Sanchez, Tony Marmo, Professor Mark Stewart, and Bill Calderara.

As Co-Chairs, it is a privilege to help bring together alumni, faculty, staff, students, and friends in support of a place that means so much to all of us. We are excited to bring you an inspiring night filled with purpose, connection, and celebration. The proceeds from this event will ensure that current and future students have access to the exceptional education and opportunities that SUNY Ulster provides.

Thank you in advance for your generosity and support. We look forward to sharing a meaningful and memorable evening with you.

Sincerely,

Victoria St. John-Gillian & Robert R. Jacobsen, Esq.

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#### YOUR PROMISE - THEIR FUTURE AWARD

## 2025 AWARD RECIPIENT SUSAN RAYMOND BASCH '74 POSTHUMOUSLY

#### & ELI BURT BASCH

BASCH KEEGAN & SPADA, LLP



Kingston native, Eli B. Basch, has been helping Ulster County injury victims for over forty years. He has dedicated his career to helping injury victims and the families of individuals who were injured or killed in Ulster County car accidents, tractor-trailer accidents, falls, fires, explosions, recreational accidents, boating accidents, plane crashes, construction accidents, defective product accidents, and medical negligence.

Mr. Basch is widely regarded as one of the most experienced and successful personal injury attorneys in Upstate New York. With over 250 trial verdicts and more than 5,000 settlements to his credit, Eli has handled more trials than any other personal injury lawyer currently practicing in Ulster County. In fact, he has represented more injury victims than any other lawyer in the history of Ulster County.

In 2011, Eli Basch was named a Super Lawyer of Upstate New York by Super Lawyers Magazine, and he's been recognized among the Top 100 Trial Lawyers of New York State since 2007. His reputation has earned him a position on the Governor's Screening Committee for Judicial Appointments, and he previously served on the Committee for Professional Standards in the Third Judicial Department from 1998 to 2004.

Mr. Basch lives in Kingston just two miles from his office. Mr. Basch welcomes the opportunity to sit down and visit with you to discuss how he can help you deal with your serious personal injury, wrongful death, or property damage claim.

Susan spent her early childhood years in New Jersey before moving with her family to Kerhonkson, where she attended elementary, junior high, and graduated from Rondout Valley High School. Her education continued at Ulster County Community College and SUNY New Paltz, where she obtained her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education, her Master's in Early Childhood Education, and her certificate in both studio art and art education. Susan was a lifelong learner and continued to take courses throughout her life. She studied and received certificates from the Gemological Institute of America. Susan retired as an elementary art teacher at the Duzine Elementary School in New Patz, having previously taught at the Vandenberg Learning Center at SUNY New Paltz. After retirement, she expressed her creativity at Susan Basch Studio. Susan was a maker beginning in childhood and continued to use her magical hands throughout her life. She was a mixed media artist working in fibers, metals, gemstones, and beads. Kumihimo, the Japanese method of cord making, along with traditional jewelry making, were the techniques she used to create one-of-a-kind necklaces. In addition to that, she created works of art in felt, for which she received awards. She utilized natural dyes from an early age, growing, harvesting, and gathering from nature and her garden. Susan's creations have been exhibited both nationally and internationally. Susan was a gracious hostess, welcoming friends, family, and the community into her home.





#### **#BELIKEANITA**

#### **2025 AWARD RECIPIENT**

#### **WILLIAM "BILL" CALDERARA**

**ULSTER SAVINGS BANK PRESIDENT & CEO** 



William "Bill" Calderara is an accomplished bank executive with over 30 years of experience in leadership, strategic planning, business development, operations, risk management, finance, and lending.

He is currently President and CEO of Ulster Savings Bank, a \$1.3 billion Mutual Bank serving the Hudson Valley for over 174 years. Ulster Savings has been certified as a Great Place to Work, named one of America's Best Regional Banks by Newsweek, a 4-time winner with the local Chronogrammies voted for Best Bank, as well as a longtime 5 star rated bank by Bauer Financial. That award signifies the highest level of financial strength and stability-recognizing Ulster Savings Bank as one of the strongest banks in the nation.

Currently, he serves as a board member of the New York State Bankers Association, Pattern for Progress of the Hudson Valley, Ulster Strong, The Center for Financial Training, Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce, and the Hudson Valley Economic Development Corporation. He also serves as Treasurer of the Ulster County Italian American Foundation and is a member of the Kingston Rotary Club.

He is a multiple Rotary Paul Harris Fellow, a United Way Leadership Giving Society Member, a Lifetime Member of the National Eagle Scout Association--having earned the Eagle Scout Rank in 1978-- and teaches at the Graduate School of Banking at the University of Colorado Boulder. He previously served on the New York State Department of Banking Advisory Board and Fannie Mae's Advisory Council.

Mr. Calderara has received numerous awards and recognition, most recently he was honored by Ulster County Regional Chamber of Commerce as Chamber Champion in 2024. He was inducted into the SUNY New Paltz School of Business Hall of Fame as the 2019 Businessperson of the Year and received the National Eagle Scout Association's Outstanding Eagle Scout Award, also in 2019. In his spare time, Bill is also a professional ski instructor having earned PSIA Level 2.

He and his wife, Patti, have three adult children and four grandkids.







#### STRY OUTSTANDING GRADUATE OF THE LAST DECADE

#### **2025 AWARD RECIPIENT**

#### **ALEJANDRO DURAN SANCHEZ '19**

VULNA UNALIGN CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER & SUNY ULSTER ALUMNI SOCIETY CO-CHAIR



Alejandro Duran Sanchez was born in Mexico and came to the United States at just three years old. After a short time in California, his family settled in Kingston, New York — a city that would become the backdrop for most of his life. As a young child, Alejandro entered the Head Start program without knowing a word of English. Thanks to the help of dedicated teachers and his own determination, he quickly picked up the language and never looked back. From Sophie Finn Elementary to J. Watson Bailey, a brief three-year stint in Indiana, and then returning to graduate from Kingston High School, Alejandro's early years were marked by constant change, resilience, and growth.

Although academics didn't come first for him in high school — athletics often took the spotlight — Alejandro always knew he had more to give. After being rejected from several colleges, he chose to attend SUNY Ulster, despite the doubts of many around him. While some looked down on community college, Alejandro saw opportunity. He poured himself into his studies, earned high honors, joined student government, worked closely with the admissions and marketing departments, and built lasting connections. It wasn't long before the very colleges that once turned him away — including Siena and University at Albany — were now offering him acceptance letters and scholarships.

Alejandro transferred to University at Albany, where he majored in marketing and graduated with his bachelor's degree. Throughout college, he worked over 40-60 hours a week between ShopRite and Starbucks, grinding to make ends meet while keeping his goals in focus. Just four months after graduating, Alejandro made a bold decision: to launch his own business. With money saved up and a starter camera, he founded Volna Unalign, a digital marketing and media agency that is now going on five years strong. What started as a solo hustle is now a thriving business with clients across the Hudson Valley — and soon, across the country — producing high-quality content, videos, and marketing strategies for businesses big and small.

None of it, Alejandro says, would have happened without SUNY Ulster. That school gave him a second chance — a space to grow, to lead, and to believe in himself. Their motto, "Start here, go far," isn't just a slogan to him. It's his story. And he wears that journey with pride, proving that with grit, heart, and vision, you can come from anywhere and create something extraordinary.



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#### CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY

## 2025 AWARD RECIPIENT

#### **TONY MARMO**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, NORMANN STAFFING



Tony Marmo is the President of Normann Staffing, located in Kingston, New York. Tony bought the business in May 2014 which was opened in 1980 by Lorraine and Rob Normann. Since then, Normann Staffing has served hundreds of businesses and placed thousands of employees into jobs in Ulster, Dutchess, Orange, Greene, Columbia and Sullivan counties.

Previously, Tony was employed by The Kingston Hospital in Kingston, New York for 23 years, serving as CEO for 9 years. He also has been employed in the long-term care field for 10 years, having served as the Administrator for 3 Skilled Nursing Facilities, Northeast Center for Special Care in Kingston New York, Diamond Hill in Troy, New York, and Care One in Ridgewood, New Jersey. Tony still holds an active license to operate a Nursing Home in New York State. Tony has a bachelor of business administration degree from Pace University and a master's degree in public administration from Long Island University.

He currently serves as President of Ulster Strong, a pro economic development board and serves on the Boards of the Hudson Valley Pattern For Progress, the Hudson Valley Economic Development Corporation, Rotary Club of Kingston, Rotary District 7210 and the Ulster County Italian American Foundation. He is an active community volunteer, serving as the Rotary International District 7210 Governor, Rotary Assistant Governor, 3 time Past President of the Highland Rotary Club and current member of the Kingston Rotary Club. He currently serves as the Hudson Valley Rotary District Membership Chair. Tony is the Co-Founder and Immediate Past President of the Ulster County Italian American Foundation. He is a past board member of the YMCA of Ulster County, the American Heart Association, the American Cancer Society and Junior Achievement. He volunteered as a co-host on Kingston Community Radio/WGHQ for 20 years, and most recently, he is a co-host of Tutto Italiano! on Radio Kingston/WKNY.

He is married to Lee Ann Marmo, and resides in Ulster Park, New York. Tony has three adult children, Michael, Lucas, Vincent and three grandchildren Adrian, Isla and Liam.







#### ANNE R. DONOVAN AWARD FOR FACULTY & STAFF

#### **2025 AWARD RECIPIENT**

#### MARK STEWART, Ph.D.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ENGINEERING, SUNY ULSTER



Professor Mark Stewart joined the SUNY Ulster faculty in 2014. Since then, Mark's taught numerous classes for the engineering department, such as Digital Logic, Engineering Programming, and Electric Circuit Analysis to name a few. Mark's primary areas of expertise are semiconductor devices, physics, and math.

Professor Stewart has a passion for moving the world forward and understands that engineering is crucial to this. He strongly believes that engineers can help find technical solutions to the world's problems and especially enjoys exposing students in non-science majors to all the possibilities. Mark has always been passionate about community college where everyone has an opportunity to succeed. When asked about his purpose at SUNY Ulster, Mark shared, "I am here to help interested partners become world class engineers."

Professor Stewart was recently awarded the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. The Chancellor's Awards for Excellence are System-level honors conferred to acknowledge and provide system-wide recognition for consistently superior professional achievement and to encourage the ongoing pursuit of excellence.

When Mark isn't in the classroom at SUNY Ulster, he's busy coordinating the inner workings of SUNY Ulster's engineering department and, for the last five years, the math team on campus. A colleague stated, "Mark is always active beyond engineering, helping in math. He's a pleasure to work with and is kind to our students."

Prior to SUNY Ulster, Mark was an Assistant Professor of Physics at East Stroudsburg University in Pennsylvania and an Assistant Professor of Engineering and Mathematics at Northwest College in Wyoming. Professor Stewart has authored numerous papers over the years.

Professor Stewart graduated with his BA in Physics and Applied Mathematics from Drew University and earned his Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering from Lehigh University.



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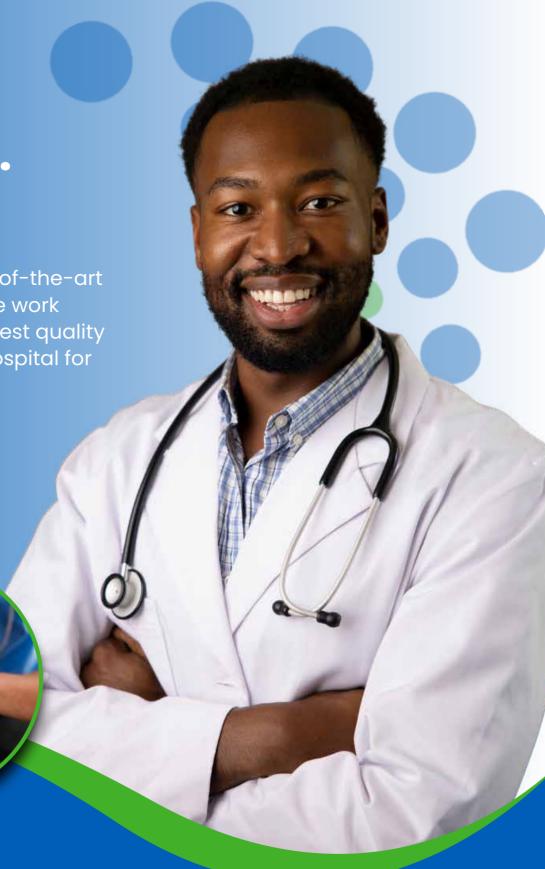
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We are honored to have our own
President and CEO Bill Calderara
receive the #BeLikeAnita Award for his
dedication to SUNY Ulster.

## Congratulations!

And to fellow awardees:

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Tony Marmo

Professor Mark Stewart



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