

Commentary/Op-Ed - January 2018

Op-Ed: Taking on Rochester's College Success Problem

Graduation rates are alarmingly low at community colleges in Rochester and surrounding counties, and they are making very little progress. College leaders are already developing new models to support student success, but they need state backing to scale up their best ideas.

by Matt A.V. Chaban & Eli Dvorkin

New York State has a huge college success problem and Rochester is no exception. At colleges in the greater Rochester area, graduation rates have barely budged since 2008, while nearly every other region of the state has seen improvement. These rates are serious cause for concern, especially at a time when a shot at a middle-class job increasingly requires a college degree.

In this *Democrat & Chronicle* op-ed, the Center for an Urban Future's Policy Director and Fisher Fellow Matt A.V. Chaban and Managing Editor Eli Dvorkin call to leaders Governor Andrew Cuomo, Assembly Majority Leader Joe Morelle, and State Senator Joseph E. Robach to make college success a priority by creating a Student Success Fund that would have money dedicated to implementing and growing a host of student success programs at public colleges.

Read the op-ed here.

This op-ed is a continuation of the Center for an Urban Future's extensive research on higher education in New York, including the groundbreaking study *Degrees of Difficulty: Boosting College Success in New York City*.

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Center for an Urban Future (CUF) is an independent, nonprofit think tank that generates innovative policies to create jobs, reduce inequality, and help lower income New Yorkers climb into the middle class. For 20 years, CUF has published accessible, data-driven reports on ways to grow and diversify the economy and expand opportunity that are anchored in rigorous research, not preconceived notions about outcome. Our work has been a powerful catalyst for policy change in New York City and serves as an invaluable resource for government officials, community groups, nonprofit practitioners and business leaders as they advocate for and implement policies to address some of New York's biggest challenges and opportunities.



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