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regrow a forest  
on this land  
and have it fully  
matured within  
ten years"

Jane Sinclair-Piegza,  
senior academic advisor,  
School of Engineering  
and Applied Sciences



UB professor Samina Raja (left) and UB alumna Gail V. Wells share a hug during an orientation for volunteers. Raja's Food Systems Planning and Healthy Communities Lab, known as the UB Food Lab, has supported Freedom Gardens from the effort's inception.



## Homegrown Justice

*A UB alumna sows more than just seeds through Freedom Gardens*

On a Saturday in June, Gail V. Wells, founder of Buffalo Freedom Gardens, was joined by volunteers from the UB Food Lab and others to deliver free raised garden beds to residents in East Side neighborhoods.

The team distributed cedar planter boxes, along with bags of soil, seeds and vegetable seedlings, garden gloves, a bright green watering can, and instructions on caring for the plants.

Since its founding in 2020, Freedom Gardens has installed 134 raised beds in communities of color in Buffalo, and Wells is raising funds to grow the initiative even more.

Wells' work on Buffalo Freedom Gardens combines the early education she received from her grandmother—who taught her how to cultivate new plants from seeds and cuttings, as well as how to cook and bake—with the education she received later at UB, where she earned an undergraduate degree in public policy and administration and a master's degree in urban planning.



And that's the story she wants to tell: "If you listen to the people and use your education, you can make change happen," she says. "You can be a community asset."

Freedom Gardens has provided home gardeners with access to a great variety of vegetables and fresh food "that you wouldn't find necessarily at the big box stores," Wells says. "That's why we like to work with the urban

growers here in Western New York. We try to emphasize culturally appropriate foods."

Part of a broader movement for food justice, the concept of Freedom Gardens as one solution among many, as one partner in a multitude, reflects its mission of reducing the dominance of large corporations in the food system and delivering more control over food production and distribution to people, families and communities.

It's about liberation and independence, Wells says. In learning to grow food, she says, "You learn to take care of yourself." ◉

**Did you know?**

You can read more about Buffalo Freedom Gardens and make a donation to the initiative by visiting [secure.givelively.org/donate/grassroots-gardens-of-western-new-york/buffalo-freedom-gardens](https://secure.givelively.org/donate/grassroots-gardens-of-western-new-york/buffalo-freedom-gardens).



# Shout-outs & Stand-outs

Recognizing what's happening around the community



## Good plan

**Roswell Park** will turn a historic house at 907 Michigan Ave. into a new home for its **Community Outreach and Engagement Team**. The site will serve as a base for public events and programs.



A rendering of the proposed Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center project at 907 Michigan Avenue, which reuses a historic Fruit Belt house from 1878.

## Stop and smell the roses

Have you visited **The Plot Flower Farm** yet? Located behind the former Cantalician Center at 3233 Main St., this pretty patch was built from the ground up with tools from the **Tool Library**.



## Watch for it

Redevelopment projects are forthcoming for the **LaSalle Metro Rail** station and seven acres of surrounding property, with the goal of turning the site into a mix of housing and first-floor retail with an attractive streetscape.

## Meet you there

**The Pocket Park** at 589 Ellicott, a new and improved outdoor social space on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, is bustling with fun events from yoga classes to food truck rodeos.

## Nice work

Construction is underway at what was formerly known as LaSalle Park. Now dubbed **Ralph C. Wilson Centennial Park**, the site is set to undergo exciting improvements totaling over \$110 million.



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## UB Through the Years

### The evolution of UB's mascot

Victor E. Bull never fails to rustle up spirit for UB Bulls athletics. The fierce-but-friendly bull that everybody knows and loves today wasn't always UB's mascot, however.

Way back, there was Buster, an actual live bull that actress Elizabeth Taylor's then-husband, Mike Todd, presented to UB in 1957. Five succeeding Busters trudged the sidelines until 1970. Later on, a costumed character known as Woolly Bully hyped up football fans by dancing to the song of the same name after every touchdown. When Victor made his debut in 1997, he was more Muppet-like in appearance, with a big goofy grin. In 2005, he gained a muscular physique and formidable expression to better match the power of UB's student-athletes.

**Test of Time:** What was the name of Victor's sister, who was introduced in 2001 and then put out to pasture six years later? Find the answer at the bottom of the back cover.



# A Blueprint for Learning

*Buffalo-based teacher prep program gets national recognition*

**T**he U.S. Department of Education spotlighted UB's Teacher Residency Program, which recruits and trains community members to become teachers, as a model for states, school districts and universities to address the national teacher shortage.

The program, a partnership between the Graduate School of Education and the Buffalo Public Schools, was one of eight partnerships between school districts and universities highlighted for their efforts in developing programs that build or strengthen pathways toward creating a more diverse teacher workforce.

Many school districts have faced significant challenges in attracting and retaining teachers, a problem that has been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. These shortages have a direct impact on educational opportunity for students, and research shows that educator shortages disproportionately impact students of color, students from low-income backgrounds, students with disabilities and students from rural communities, according to U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona.

Launched in 2019, the UB Teacher Residency Program enables individuals interested in a career in education to earn New York State initial teacher certification through a paid residency. The one-year program combines coursework with experience teaching alongside a mentor for an entire school year in the Buffalo Public Schools.

The program works toward building more equity in the quality of school experiences for historically underserved communities in Buffalo by hiring and retaining racially, ethnically and linguistically diverse teachers.

By shifting the balance of teacher education from university classroom-based learning to a community-based residency model grounded in practical experience, the program also bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world experience in K-12 classrooms.

"Preparing, supporting and retaining excellent teachers who reflect the racial, ethnic and linguistic diversity of the communities they serve requires a collaborative approach and investment, as Secretary Cardona has highlighted," says Amanda Winkelsas, director of the UB Teacher Residency Program and clinical assistant professor of learning and instruction.

"When universities, school districts and community stakeholders work together to recruit, prepare and support teachers, we can make the necessary progress toward achieving more equitable, inclusive and just learning experiences for students."

To help educational leaders, policymakers and researchers emulate the program, a team of researchers and educators at UB and the Buffalo Public Schools published "A Case for Change in Teacher Preparation: Developing Community-Based Residency Programs." The book serves as a blueprint for launching teacher residency programs at other universities and in school districts around the country. ●

➔ **To learn more about the UB Teacher Residency Program, meet program enrollees or apply, visit the UB Graduate School of Education's website at [ed.buffalo.edu/residency](http://ed.buffalo.edu/residency).**



Sydney Favors, now a Teacher Residency Program graduate, teaches a history class at South Park High School in 2019.

## COMMUNITY

# Matters

A note from UB's Office of Government and Community Relations



The university laments the lives both lost and harmed in the May 14 attack and vows to work toward racial justice.

**"As a scholarly community, we have both the power and the responsibility to combat hate. And to that, we are deeply committed." – Satish K. Tripathi**

In a statement issued by UB's president following the racist attack at the Tops supermarket on Jefferson Avenue in May, the university pledged to continue to promote racial and social justice on campus and in Western New York.

For UB's faculty, staff and students, that work takes many forms—from health care to food systems, economic development and more.

For LaGarrett King, director of the UB Center for K-12 Black History and Racial Literacy Education, and associate professor of social studies education in UB's Graduate School of Education, it starts with education.

"Educators need to be active in helping eradicate racism," King told UB's faculty and staff newspaper in June.

"To be clear, an educator can do just so much, but ignoring the issue alto-

gether is not the answer," he explained. "First, educators need to take a self-assessment of how their identity was formed. For most, ideas and our lived experiences around race, along with geography, class, gender, sexuality and more, have influenced how we perceive ourselves and others. This may mean leaving racial comfort zones and being open to experiencing others' lives."

Classrooms can be places of opportunity to listen and learn from communities and students of color who have experienced racism, King believes. This would entail providing a "judge-free zone where the objective is to listen to what these persons are conveying and not be offensive," he said.

As Buffalo continues to heal—and pushes to be better—UB's Office of Community Relations is here to listen and learn. ●

➔ **Let us know what's on your mind. Call us at 716-829-3099, email [communityrelations@buffalo.edu](mailto:communityrelations@buffalo.edu) or visit [buffalo.edu/community](http://buffalo.edu/community).**

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## Research Round-up

What UB's inquiring minds want to know

### 1 Is Paxlovid safe for children?

Certain children who contract COVID-19 are at a higher risk of progression to severe disease. Pfizer has tapped UB to help conduct an international clinical trial to test the drug Paxlovid, which has proved life-saving for adults with COVID-19, in these pediatric patients ages 12 to 17.

### 2 Is there any way to thwart 'super bugs'?

The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases awarded UB researchers a \$4 million grant to study the underlying mechanisms of hypermutation in strains of antibiotic-resistant bacteria, and to develop new treatment strategies to combat the deadly infections they cause.

### 3 Might a fungus help clean up lead-contaminated soil?

In cities like Buffalo, it can be dangerous to grow food due to the buildup of toxins in the soil over decades of heavy industry. With funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, UB researchers are investigating whether mycelium, the substance from which mushrooms form, could allow for more effective clean-up by binding with heavy metals and other organic pollutants.

Learn more about UB research initiatives that affect your life at [buffalo.edu/community/outreach/research](http://buffalo.edu/community/outreach/research).



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# A Broader Landscape

How Olmsted helped to shape more than green spaces

**F**rederick Law Olmsted is best known as a 19th-century landscape architect. Here in Buffalo, the Olmsted Park System is an ever-present reminder of that legacy. But now a UB faculty member has provided a view of his work beyond this profession. In an audio course titled "The Enduring Genius of Frederick Law Olmsted," available for purchase through Audible, Adam Rome, professor of environment and sustainability in the College of Arts and Sciences, details Olmsted's contributions in journalism, social reform and other fields.

Olmsted's endeavors outside of landscape architecture varied. He not only designed Central Park in partnership with Calvert Vaux, but also oversaw its construction as park superintendent. Other management roles included leading the U.S. Sanitary Commission, which provided medical assistance to Union troops during the Civil War. Before all of that, Olmsted was a journalist. As Rome recounts, Olmsted's newspaper work included dispatches from the antebellum South for The New York Times that "built support for the abolition of slavery" and formed the basis of his influential book "The Cotton Kingdom."

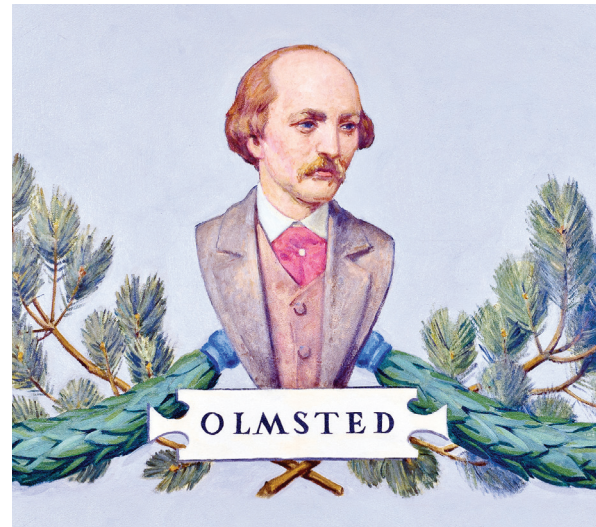
"Throughout his life, Olmsted asked big questions about the sustainability of society," Rome said. "Olmsted's life tells us a lot about the great challenges of his time—and ours. His way of thinking about what makes cities sustainable is incredibly relevant. He would also have a lot to say about the present, especially about how we might deal with climate change and social divisions."

Ingrained in Olmsted's work on public parks, said Rome, was the idea that cities must plan for the future, and that green spaces were integral to the sustainability of cities. Parks could improve health and well-being. People needed a place to go to escape from busy streetscapes, congestion, noise and stress. Trees cleaned the air.

Those ideas remain relevant now. Olmsted and Vaux designed a system of parks in Buffalo, and it was on a walk in one of those parks—Delaware Park—that Rome decided to create his audio course.

This was early in the COVID-19 pandemic, and the park offered some respite from the pressures of the day. The temperature had dipped below freezing, but despite the cold, Rome stood in the snow, watching the sunset. The beauty of the moment inspired him.

"The park is 150 years old," he noted. "It's survived a lot of change, and that always helps me to feel hope that our society will endure, that we'll find ways to get past all our troubles." ●



Portrait of Frederick Law Olmsted, Architect of the Capitol. Allyn Cox Oil on Canvas 1973-1974.

ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

## Remembering Jonathan Daniels

The UB and Buffalo communities suffered a monumental loss with the tragic death of Jonathan Daniels and two of his daughters, Jordan (a recent graduate of UB's MBA program) and Jensen, in a house fire in July.

Dr. Daniels was a pediatrician who served as associate director of admissions in the Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, the chair of the school's anti-racism curriculum initiative, and a regular guest lecturer in the Health in the Neighborhood course and the Competency in Health Inequities workshop series. He was also a member of Buffalo's African American Health Equity Task Force, which advises UB's Community Health Equity Research Institute.

Janessa Givens Daniels, his wife and UB's senior associate director of financial aid, was able to escape the fire with injuries. Their daughter Jillian, a 2020 UB graduate, was not home at the time.

Testaments to Dr. Daniels' inspiring and impactful work came from the numerous people whose lives he touched, including his patients and their families, his friends and neighbors, and his colleagues. Often, those groups intersected.

In a tribute statement written shortly after his death, faculty and staff at the Community Health Equity Research Institute described him as irreplaceable. "He was a social justice advocate. He was a pediatrician who was invested in the lives of his young patients, acted as a role model and was an example of excellence and of kindness. As a medical professor, he was a mentor, advocate and supporter for students of color," it read in part. "His untimely death leaves a void in our lives and this community. Dr. Jonathan Daniels' life was heavier than a mountain. It was filled with duty, responsibility and love. He was a giant of a man."





# Born to Be Wild

How a UB family plans to regrow a forest

**A**bout 70 miles southwest of Buffalo, a UB staffer and her family are tending to the trees. They recently launched a reforestation project that aims to transform a swath of wayward farmland into a healthy forest of native trees and shrubs, where wildlife flourishes and helps blunt the effects of climate change.

When Jane Sinclair-Piegza, a senior academic advisor in the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences' Office of Undergraduate Education, and her husband, Larry, purchased the Chautauqua County property in the spring of 2021, they initially planned to build a summer cottage. But as the couple walked the roughly 32 acres—a flat, open field most recently used to grow corn—a new vision emerged.

"We do things like composting and recycling to minimize our environmental footprint. But we're always trying to find ways to make a bigger impact," said Jane. "Our goal is to regrow a forest on this land and have it fully matured within ten years."

**"Our goal is to regrow a forest on this land and have it fully matured within ten years."**

**Jane Sinclair-Piegza**

Scout Troop 286 in Tonawanda; Girl Scouts of Western New York; Girl Scout Troop 20033 in Fredonia; and Girl Scout Troop 20025 in Brocton.

Additional volunteers included Carey Casillo-Young, a master gardener from Chautauqua County, and Jeff Brockelbank, a forestry supervisor with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).

To support their efforts, the couple applied for and received a grant from the Regenerate New York Forestry Cost Share Grant Program, which, according to the DEC, supports "the regeneration of forests so they may continue to deliver vital services such as mitigating climate change, protecting air and water quality, and supporting the economy."

The grant helped the couple procure an array of saplings, which ranged in height from 6 inches to a couple of feet, depending on the tree type.

"We planted red oak, white oak, balsam fir, white pine, swamp white oak, black cherry, serviceberry, mountain ash and common persimmon," said Jane.

Volunteers helped get the tiny trees into the ground, placing protective sleeves around each tree to ensure that animals don't eat them before they have a chance to grow.

Ultimately, the couple hopes to plant nearly 6,000 trees and apply to have the budding forest certified as a National Wildlife Federation wildlife habitat.

"We're already looking ahead to next year," Jane said, "and how we can plant even more trees." ●



Jane Sinclair-Piegza gathers saplings ready to be planted on her property overlooking Lake Erie.



## Have You Heard...

Good news worth sharing

### We won the gold.

→ The \$8.7 million adaptive-re-use renovation of Townsend Hall, a nearly 120-year-old building on the South Campus, received Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council, the most widely used green building rating system in the world. Townsend Hall is now home to UB Human Resources.

### Plastics recycling got a big boost.

→ UB was selected to receive \$4.5 million from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation to create a research center for improving plastic recycling. The new center will aim to develop secondary recyclables markets to ease cost burdens on municipal recycling programs, as well as determine best practices for streamlining the recycling process, especially with lower-grade plastics.

### Dental care delivers.

→ A \$550,000 grant from the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation is helping the UB School of Dental Medicine provide dental care at the Buffalo City Mission to individuals without housing. It will also support the delivery of nearly 3,000 dental visits to uninsured and underinsured children at more than 30 Head Start programs and elementary schools in the region.

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# ACTION ITEMS

## Opportunities to connect with UB

### View the legacy.

"O'nigōēi:yo:h Thinking In Indian," an exhibition of contemporary art by nearly 50 artists from the Haudenosaunee Confederacy in commemoration of 50 years of Indigenous studies at UB, runs through Oct. 4 across two venues: UB Art Gallery in the Center for the Arts and UB Anderson Gallery.

### Boost your resume.

Micro-credentials are a convenient option for both traditional and nontraditional students to gain workforce skills without the financial and time commitments of a full degree program—and UB has more than 70 to offer. Find selections open to non-UB students on the program website at [buffalo.edu/micro-credentials/offerings](http://buffalo.edu/micro-credentials/offerings).

### Give a suit new life.

Donations of clean, gently used professional clothing are put to good use by *Hired*, a program that enables UB students to "shop" for interview or job attire at no cost. To donate, call 716-829-5743 to arrange a drop-off time at 101 Statler Commissary on the North Campus.

### Cheer on the Bulls.

Football season is here! The Bulls' home opener is Sept. 10 against Holy Cross. For tickets, visit [ubbulls.com/tickets](http://ubbulls.com/tickets) or call 1-877-UB-THERE.



## Questions for Chantele Thompson, UB doctoral student and chief diversity officer for the City of Buffalo

Born and raised in Buffalo, Chantele Thompson has always felt she was meant to make an impact on her city and the people who live there.

"I didn't know it would be as the city's chief diversity officer," she said. "But I knew that my work would be with underrepresented groups. I've always fought for them."

Now responsible for designing and implementing initiatives that promote equity and inclusion within the city's workforce, as well as among its residents, she also oversees the Office of Contract Compliance and the Office of New Americans.

Prior to her current appointment, Chantele held professional roles in education and health and human services, in addition to a long list of volunteer leadership efforts. It was a lot—and yet, despite having several degrees already under her belt, she decided to enroll in UB's department of Africana and American Studies doctoral program. She's currently in her second year. Below, we talk about how she manages to keep going strong.

### How has the job been going?

**1** I started two days after the May 14th shooting. I knew when I accepted the appointment that it would be a big, high-profile position with lots of responsibility, so that weekend was supposed to be a relaxing time in preparation for this new, exciting thing that I was jumping into. And then everything changed. It required me to shift priorities quickly, which is always to be expected in government, but this—this was a big one.

As a result, I'm working as part of the May 14 Commission through the National Compassion Fund, which designs policy regarding all the donations received for the family members of the victims and the survivors. I'm also continuing some initiatives that my predecessor started, like Buy Black Buffalo, a partnership with The Exchange at Beverly Gray and M&T Bank, to drive attention to Black-owned businesses in the city of Buffalo. Another initiative we're working on is called Hyperlink Buffalo, powered by AT&T. It supports minority-owned businesses with a low digital footprint by partnering with area creative agencies that can assist with website design, social media presence, etc. We know the digital space is so important, so we want to close the gap by creating a stronger presence for business owners who might not have the capital, staffing or skills to address those needs.

### What motivated you to pursue a PhD at this stage in your life?

**2** When I started doing equity and inclusion work, I found I had more questions than answers. And, so, you know, researchers ask questions. Although my interests relate specifically to Black people in the U.S., I've benefited from taking courses related to Indigenous studies and being introduced to other cultural groups and people from all walks of life.

### You co-founded Black Girls Hike Buffalo in 2019. What was behind that?

**3** Due to stereotypes, as well as the way things are set up regionally, African Americans have not always been drawn to outdoor spaces. So we wanted to promote health equity by getting folks more active and encouraging them to hit the trails. I'm not as involved as I once was, with my busy schedule. But the Eternal Flame trail [in Chestnut Ridge Park] continues to be a favorite of mine, because it's quick and easy to get to.

### What are your goals for Buffalo?

**4** My hope is that East Buffalo and the folks in the Black community can really be a part of all the great changes happening in our city, in a way that feels meaningful to them and is sustainable. And I hope my work can lay some of those foundations.





# HELP FOR HELPERS

## WHAT CAREGIVERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HEALTH CARE ADVOCACY

UB researchers have an important message for caregivers: Do not be afraid to advocate for the rights of your loved ones during care transitions.

A recent study by David M. Jacobs, assistant professor, and Amanda A. Foster, postdoctoral associate, both in the School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, brought attention to the need for stronger health care advocacy guidelines.

Foster said interviewees in the study, which was funded by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, shared similar stories about their interactions within the health care system at transitions of care.

“What we are seeing so far from this study is that the health care system has large gaps in communication between patients, their caregivers and their health care team during care transitions,” Foster said.

“This may lead to patient and caregiver frustrations, errors in care and unnecessary hospital readmissions. The knowledge we gain from this study will be crucial in advocating for systemic change in optimizing health care system communication and processes at the legislative and administrative levels.”

Foster and Jacobs aim to increase awareness of this issue in the months to come and seek to empower caregivers to take action.

### Five tips for advocating for your loved one within a health care system:



#### If you see something, say something.

Caregivers know their loved ones best. If you notice a new symptom or the person under your care is acting differently, report it to the health care team immediately.



#### Be prepared.

Have all legal paperwork regarding your loved one’s medical wishes up to date and ready to provide at any time during a hospital stay. You should also have a list of medications (name, strength, directions, use, prescriber) and a list of their providers (name, address, phone number, reason for seeing the provider).



#### Document everything.

Be sure to document what you are told by each provider, including new diagnoses, changes in medications and status of health conditions. This can be helpful in advocating for your loved one and ensuring all members of their health care team are on the same page.



#### Know before you go.

Be sure you and your loved one understand all discharge instructions before you leave the hospital. Make sure that a health care team member reviews the instructions with you. Don’t be afraid to ask questions or raise concerns. Ensure all needs are met before you leave the hospital.



#### Keep addressing questions to the health care team.

While it may feel uncomfortable or out of character, keep asking questions to the health care team until you get the answers you need.

→ Anyone who has questions about health care advocacy can contact Foster at [aafoster@buffalo.edu](mailto:aafoster@buffalo.edu) or 716-645-4774.

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## A web resource for the community!

Find news, opportunities and other resources at [buffalo.edu/community](https://buffalo.edu/community).



## The Big Picture

**Spinning a web of kindness** Meet UB Spider-Man. Dressed head to toe in the iconic red and blue get-up, he was a fixture of the North Campus community for years, frequently showing up in unexpected places to the delight of those around. → The student behind the mask, who graduated in the spring, managed to keep his true identity a well-guarded secret. But, in an interview with UB's faculty/staff newspaper in May, he revealed the motivations behind his superhero habit. → During his second year, he realized there were many students on campus who would benefit from kindness and understanding. He had the web-slinger costume from a past Halloween sitting in his closet, so he decided to put it on and approach people as a character they know and love. → He soon found that the suit made it easier to talk to people, while his anonymity fostered trust among those he met. UB Spider-Man said he often encountered students struggling with their coursework and their mental health, especially during midterms or finals. He was happy to find a small way to help. → "Everyone needs positivity," said UB Spider-Man. ●

### STOP BY AND SAY HELLO!

Reach UB's Office of Government and Community Relations at 716-829-3099 or [communityrelations@buffalo.edu](mailto:communityrelations@buffalo.edu), or visit us at 120 Parker Hall on the South Campus.

As a flagship university, the University at Buffalo is the largest and most comprehensive institution in the State University of New York system. If you have questions about UB's programs or wish to be added to the mailing list for this publication, please call 716-829-3099, or send an email to [communityrelations@buffalo.edu](mailto:communityrelations@buffalo.edu). Produced by the Division of University Communications, University at Buffalo. Editor: Sally Jarzab. Designer: Richard Klingensmith. Contributors: Charlotte Hsu, Cory Nealon, Grace Osaba, Marcene Robinson and Christopher Schobert.

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