



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Susan Serino

## SERINO CELEBRATES GRAND OPENING OF UPSTATE LABORATORY WITH FOCUS ON LYME AND TBD RESEARCH

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| ISSUE: **LYME AND TICK-BORNE DISEASES**



SYRACUSE, NY – In an effort to continue raising critical awareness for Lyme and tick-borne diseases, Senator Sue Serino traveled to SUNY Upstate Medical University for the grand opening of the Vector Biocontainment Laboratory, the first biosafety level 3 in the SUNY System, which will focus research on infectious diseases like Lyme and other tick-borne illnesses.

*“I always say education is the key to prevention, and the studies that will be conducted at the Vector Biocontainment Lab will help us understand ticks and the spread of Lyme disease in a whole new way,” said Senator Sue Serino. “With more and more people spending time outdoors, and an increased number in those being diagnosed with Lyme, it’s crucial that we do all that we can to fully understand this disease and its transmission. This past year has reminded us of the critical role that science plays in our lives, and I am thrilled to see the development of this world-class resource right here in New York State.”*

In addition to studying the spread of Lyme and tick-borne diseases (TBDs), the facility will allow Upstate to conduct extensive research on infectious diseases such as coronavirus, West Nile encephalitis, Zika virus and more. The lab is being directed by renowned researcher, Saravanan Thangamani, PhD, who is celebrated worldwide for his groundbreaking work on Lyme and TBDs.

Since taking office, Senator Serino has focused on and advocated for increased funding for Lyme and TBD research, education and prevention, and in 2018 was able to secure an unprecedented \$1 million to go directly to these initiatives in New York State. Earlier this month, Serino joined her legislative colleagues, Lyme disease experts and advocates to call for at least \$1.5 million to be included in the 2021-2022 Executive Budget to continue this work. [To learn more about these efforts, click here.](#)

This new facility was funded by the NYSUNY 2020 Challenge Grant program, which was established to help expand long-term economic and academic plans on SUNY campuses across New York State.

[To learn more about the Vector Biocontainment Lab, click here.](#)