



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Zellnor Myrie

## News: On Earth Day, Myrie Announces State Budget Funding For New Climate Careers Initiative

ZELLNOR MYRIE April 22, 2022

**BROOKLYN**— In honor of Earth Day 2022, **Senator Zellnor Y. Myrie (D-Central Brooklyn)** announced this year's State Budget includes funding for an innovative partnership to connect young people from New York City to career pathways in climate and environmental science. The program will be jointly led by SUNY's College of Environmental Science and Forestry and CUNY's Medgar Evers College, and will bring students to the Adirondack Park for an innovative summer experience.

"Communities like the ones I represent have been on the receiving end of environmental injustice for far too long, and as we've seen with recent major storms, our warming climate disproportionately impacts low-income people of color," **said Senator Myrie**. "This funding will expose the next generation of climate leaders to career pathways in sustainability and environmental science, as well as racial justice and civil rights history in the Adirondacks. I'm grateful to my partner, Assembly Member Michaelle Solages, who helped lead the fight for this important program."

New York's Adirondack Park was a cradle of the early civil rights movement, dating back to the mid-1800s. Specifically, Timbuctoo, outside of Lake Placid, was the site of an early black suffrage settlement, one of eight known settlements in the Adirondacks that enabled 3,000

black men to meet the property requirements granting them the right to vote in New York. This history of opportunity at Timbuctoo will be honored and celebrated by creating a modern Timbuctoo Pipeline at the intersection of climate science and green careers, preparing young people for the threats and opportunities of the 21st century.

The Timbuctoo Pipeline Summer Climate and Careers Institute creates an innovative partnership dedicated to providing an introduction to environmental and climate science, an exploration of intersectional careers, and addressing systemic issues of access from an equity and justice perspective. This summer institute will connect youth from the Hudson River harbor to its headwaters in the Adirondack Mountains.

“I am pleased that CUNY-Medgar Evers College (MEC), a College with social justice in its DNA, will serve as one of the lead institutions in this important environmental science and social justice initiative,” **said MEC President Patricia Ramsey**. “MEC offers an environmental science bachelor’s degree program with faculty expertise in numerical modeling of planetary atmospheres, indoor/outdoor health, and renewable and sustainable energy. The faculty currently involve undergraduate students in their research and incorporate collaborations with K-12 teachers and students in NYC, as described on our website. This funding will help MEC to expand the hands-on experiences outside of NYC to the Timbuctoo community in the Adirondacks, where nature will be our laboratory and our classroom.”

“From the kernel of an idea in Lake Placid this past fall to a fully funded program following the adoption of the New York State Budget, all of ESF stands ready to quickly and deliberately implement this truly historic and unprecedented youth education and job training initiative. We are grateful to Senator Myrie, Assembly Member Solages, our many partners in the Senate and the Assembly, and to Governor Hochul for their steadfast support of this initiative throughout the budget process. This funding will help to change the lives of

hundreds of future climate warriors and we are truly honored to now have this opportunity to put the talents of our faculty and students to work in developing a world class STEM education and green job training program in the heart of the Adirondack Park," **said SUNY ESF President Joanne M. Mahoney.**

"There was a lot of good news in the state budget for the Adirondack Park, but the Timbuctoo project is unique because it both looks back at history and forward to the future," **Adirondack**

**Council Executive Director William C. Janeway said.** "By looking at the historic role that the Adirondacks played in Black suffrage and using that as a springboard to train the next generation in climate change mitigation, the Timbuctoo Climate and Careers Institute will make the Adirondack Park more equitable for all New Yorkers. The Adirondack Council offers our

deepest thanks to our champions Senator Myrie and Assembly Member Solages, and all the members of the state Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic, and Asian Legislative Caucus for this accomplishment."

"The Timbuctoo Climate and Careers Institute is the culmination of something that started before the Civil War," **Forever Adirondacks Campaign Director Aaron Mair said.** "The original Timbuctoo settlement of the mid-1800s offered Black people a new opportunity and a way to have a say in their future. This program will offer a similar experience. By training new generations of New Yorkers about the national treasure that is the Adirondack Park, they can see the multitude of benefits the Park provides to everyone - from New York City to Buffalo to Plattsburgh - and leverage that training into protecting the environment in the future. Thank you to Senator Myrie and Assembly Member Solages for their leadership on this pivotal piece of our collective futures."

“The Nature Conservancy applauds the creation of the Timbuctoo Summer Climate and Careers Institute. We are all hands on deck in addressing the climate crisis and ensuring equitable access to New York’s natural treasures – the Adirondack Park and the Hudson River. Creating meaningful education and career opportunities for young people is paramount. This program will deepen young people’s connections to local history and increase interest in and access to environmental careers. We thank Governor Hochul, legislative leaders, and program champions Senator Myrie and Assembly Member Solages, for ensuring this program was supported in the recently enacted state budget,” **said Peg Olsen, The Nature Conservancy’s Adirondack Director.**

"Over 150 years ago, the Adirondacks offered people of color a glimpse of a more equitable, promising future," **concluded Senator Myrie.** "Today's young people can learn about this rich history while also preparing to confront today's climate crisis. I look forward to participants in this program leading the way toward a greener and more sustainable New York rooted in social justice."

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