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Contact:

Pamm Lent (Governor's Office) | pamm.lent@esd.ny.gov | (716) 846-8309

Laura Magee (ESD) | laura.magee@esd.ny.gov | (716) 846-8239 | (800) 260-7313

Western New York Regional Economic Development Council Announces Dr. Virginia Horvath to Serve as Co-Chair of WNYREDC

The Western New York Regional Economic Development Council (WNYREDC) today announced that State University of New York at Fredonia President Dr. Virginia “Ginny” Horvath will serve as the academic co-chair of the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council (WNYREDC). Dr. Horvath, who has been a member of the WNYREDC since 2015, will lead the Regional Council in collaboration with Council Co-Chair Jeff Belt, President of SolEpoxy Inc. She replaces Dr. Satish K. Tripathi, who served on the council since 2011, effective immediately.

“The REDC has been an innovative force since it began, with business leaders, elected officials, and higher education leaders working together to advance our region,” said **Dr. Horvath**. “I look forward to assisting in this leadership role, as the REDC continues our commitment to economic growth in Buffalo and in communities across Western New York.”

Dr. Horvath became the 13th President of Fredonia on July 1, 2012. She was the Vice President for Academic Affairs at Fredonia for seven years, overseeing academic programs, Rockefeller Arts Center, Reed Library, information technology, graduate studies and research, Extended Learning, and a range of academic support services. Dr. Horvath, who also holds rank as a Professor of English, previously worked at Kent State University where she was a recipient of the Distinguished Teaching Award and was Dean of Academic and Student Services for the Kent State University (Ohio) Regional Campuses, and Assistant to the President for Strategic Planning. She served on the AASCU Provosts Steering Committee, a national initiative for re-imagining undergraduate education in the United States.

“It has been an incredible honor for me to serve as co-chair of the WNYREDC and a great privilege to work alongside our councilmembers and so many members of our broader community to advance WNY’s vision for sustained economic prosperity,” said **University at Buffalo President Satish K. Tripathi**. “These past five-plus years have been a truly rewarding experience for me. Together, our council has worked beside Governor Cuomo and members of his administration to chart an ambitious new course for economic development in WNY by capitalizing on our region’s outstanding strengths. Under the governor’s leadership, we have been able to invest strategically in our region, and as a result, Western New York has emerged stronger economically through improved job opportunities and with a focus on the collaborative spirit of innovation that has become a hallmark of our region. I am pleased to have been a part

of the inaugural leadership of the WNYREDC and I know our regional council will continue its path to prosperity under the leadership of our co-chairs, President Horvath and Jeff Belt.”

“We have accomplished so much under the leadership of Dr. Tripathi and while we are sad to see him go, we are excited that Dr. Horvath brings to the table an understanding of this region, its history and the future we hope to create for our younger generations,” **said Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul, Chair of the Regional Economic Development Councils.** “I have worked closely with Dr. Horvath in her capacity as President of SUNY Fredonia and know her outstanding leadership skills will be put to excellent use as co-chair of the WNY REDC.”

“While I am sad to see Dr. Tripathi, who has led the council admirably since its inception and ushered the council through many great achievements, leave the council, I am pleased that Dr. Horvath has been named co-chair,” said **Jeff Belt, WNYREDC Co-Chair and SolEpoxy President.** “Having served on the council, Ginny is familiar with the council and its strategic plan and brings an ambitious agenda to the role as a forefront leader in education in Western New York. I look forward to this new partnership as the council investment, creates jobs and leverages the private sector in our five-county region.”

Originally from Amherst, N.Y., Dr. Horvath is a graduate of the Buffalo Seminary and now serves on its Board of Trustees. She also serves on the Board of Trustees of the Lake Erie Regional Health System of New York. She earned a B.A. in English from the State University of New York at Buffalo and an M.A. and Ph.D. in English from Kent State University.

In the first six rounds of the Regional Council initiative, the Western New York region has been awarded \$418.4 million in state support for 551 projects across the region. The Western New York region’s 2011 strategic plan, “[A Strategy for Prosperity](#),” leverages the region’s strategic advantages in key industry sectors including advanced manufacturing, agriculture, bi-national logistics, energy, health & life sciences, higher education, professional services and tourism. The plan focuses on economic enablers that promote smart growth, prepare the workforce and foster a culture of entrepreneurship.

To learn more about the WNYREDC, visit <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/content/western-new-york>.

About the Regional Economic Development Councils

The Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) initiative is a key component of Governor Cuomo's approach to State investment and economic development. In 2011, Governor Cuomo established 10 Regional Councils to develop long-term strategic plans for economic growth for their regions. The Councils are public-private partnerships made up of local experts and stakeholders from business, academia, local government, and non-governmental organizations. The Regional Councils have redefined the way New York invests in jobs and economic growth by putting in place a community-based, bottom up approach and establishing a competitive process for State resources.

After six rounds of the REDC process, more than \$4.6 billion has been awarded to more than 5,200 job creation and community development projects consistent with each region's strategic plan, projecting to create and retain more than 210,000 jobs. For more information on the Regional Councils, visit www.regionalcouncils.ny.gov.

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