October 2017

To: The SUNY Graduate Student/Alumni Community
From: Kristina M. Johnson, PhD, SUNY Chancellor
Re: Support for the PhD Career Pathways Surveys

I am writing to ask you to help SUNY’s ongoing efforts to strengthen the ways we prepare graduate students for today’s diverse career opportunities, within and outside of the academy, by sharing your candid feedback as part of the PhD Career Pathways Surveys. This survey series is specifically designed to inform curriculum, professional development, and career services across SUNY’s graduate programs, to better support student success. We hope you will participate!

SUNY’s four outstanding University Centers were among only 29 universities nationally selected to participate in this National Science Foundation and Andrew W. Mellon Foundation-funded project. My thanks to the University at Albany, Binghamton University, Stony Brook University, and the University at Buffalo for their partnership and leadership in this collaborative project.

This project aims to help SUNY better understand the career goals of our PhD students; the types of opportunities they find upon graduation and beyond; and, the skill sets that they believe are particularly important to finishing their doctorate, gaining their first position, and advancing in their career.

For my own experience, my PhD and post-doc education set me on an amazing path across academic research, university department and administrative leadership, senior experience at a federal agency, and starting my own business. It is a path that led to my becoming the thirteenth chancellor of the SUNY system in September 2017. It has been an incredible experience so far and one that I know was positively influenced by my graduate preparation. The great thing about PhD Career Pathways Survey series is that it allows SUNY to collect invaluable information from you now and over time, and in ways that we can immediately put to use to enhance your graduate study experience and that of future students.

In closing, I want to thank you in advance for what I hope will be your agreement to participate. Thank you for choosing a SUNY university campus as the place to pursue your graduate studies. For those of you who have completed, my heartfelt congratulations. For those still working, stay the course. My best wishes to all of you.