

Dear Alumnus,

Greetings from your alma mater! Do you sometimes stop to think about why it was you chose Buffalo State College? Perhaps it was because of the distinguished history of the campus and its personnel. Possibly it was because you believe in Buffalo State's commitment to enhancing the intellectual, personal, and professional growth of future educators. Or maybe it was because Buffalo is your home and you felt compelled to support the surrounding community. Whatever your reasons, the faculty, staff, and no doubt your own students, are grateful that you chose Buffalo State College as your alma mater and are excited at the prospect of your continued involvement as an alumnus.

Two years ago I was recruited to Buffalo State on the strength of what I perceived to be an earnestness and genuine resolve among senior administrators and faculty who seek to make this institution a national leader in the realm of educational policy and practice. I am a native of Chicago and have an academic background in sciences and education. My tenure in higher education has resulted in a myriad of experiences at rural, suburban, and urban locations across the country. My work with students in Pk-12 settings has consistently reminded me of the necessity of systemic community building and reciprocal school-university relationships. As a teacher educator, I am committed to facilitating the empowerment of pre-service and in-service teachers. As a scholar-activist, one of my primary areas of interest centers on the recruitment, retention, support, and successful matriculation of culturally, linguistically, and racially diverse students on university campuses. My experiences have convinced me that higher education stagnates when it is isolated, but thrives when it connects with the communities that surround it. I know that colleges and universities can seek out and empower the voices of individuals from diverse backgrounds and experiences, thus realizing the richness and breadth available in our communities.

As the first Dean of the newly formed School of Education, I firmly assert that it is essential for Buffalo State faculty and staff to prepare future school personnel to promote and maintain individual responsibility, intellect, and enthusiasm. Our graduates must generate a legacy of integrity, dedication, and passion for creating educational settings that are responsive to and respectful of the needs of all individuals whom they serve. Throughout my conversations with university and school district leaders, I quickly learned of the issues and struggles faced by the schools, teachers, and students of Western New York. In response, the faculty and staff of the School of Education seek a more meaningful collaboration with the Pk-12 schools in order to better understand what we must do at the college level to better educate and prepare teachers to be effective change agents for children.

Buffalo State College is an institution of approximately 12,000 undergraduates with a deep and abiding commitment to being of service to the most hard-pressed schools in the nation; including those in urban and rural settings. As a graduate of the Buffalo State College Teacher Education Program, you undoubtedly understand the impact of our program's commitment to enhancing the intellectual, personal, and professional growth of future educators for our nation's children. Presently, Buffalo State College ranks second in graduating the highest number of teacher education candidates and has maintained national accreditation (NCATE) longer than any other teacher education program and institution in the state of New York. We are continually working to maintain the highest standards of delivery and outcomes for our students; unfortunately, our

departments and programs are afflicted greatly by state-wide budget cuts. What is most sad and frustrating is that it is the individuals and programs—those responsible for meeting the needs of our nation's children—that are most affected by the inadequacy of resources.

All is not lost, however. Our students and faculty have been steadfast and innovative in finding ways to move forward. The reality is, nevertheless, that we now need commitment from outside sources to maintain the high quality of our valuable programs. Specifically, we intend to seek funds to enhance the following initiatives:

- Tutoring programs offered through the Center for Excellence in Urban and Rural Education
- Mentoring programs for new students and new School of Education faculty
- Scholarship programs for students from underrepresented groups
- Volunteer programs to allow faculty and staff to work in area schools
- Research funding to allow faculty to maintain cutting-edge scholarship and pedagogy
- Travel assistance for students presenting action research results at state and national events

Your contribution will supply direct educational assistance and advancement for current students who are focused on becoming pedagogical servants of children and communities. As an alumnus, your contribution not only provides necessary resources, but it is also a symbol of your loyalty to and complicity in the high-quality reputation of Buffalo State College in the world of professional education.

If you are unable to contribute at this time, I thank you for your time in reading this letter, ask that you reconsider at a later date, and invite you to visit your campus and my office in the future. All the best!

Sincerely,

Ronald S. Rochon, Ph.D.
Dean, School of Education and
Associate Vice President for Teacher Education

Name

Street Address

City, State Zip

Graduation Year

- Donation Enclosed
- \$25
 - \$50
 - \$100
 - \$200
 - Other \$ _____