

# SUNY New Paltz benefits region, president says

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**KINGSTON** — SUNY New Paltz President Steven Poskanzer on Thursday unveiled a recently completed study of the university's regional economic impact and made a case for the institution as a vital part of the area's cultural and economic vitality.

"Having a college or university in your back yard, in your region is about the best thing you could have," Poskanzer said during a speech at the monthly breakfast meeting of the Ulster County Chamber of Commerce. "It is a major economic driver."

Armed with charts showing some results of the study, which was compiled by the college's business school, Poskanzer said during his remarks at the Kingston Holiday Inn that SUNY New Paltz pumps money, jobs and talent into the region.

**AMONG THE** findings he noted:

- The college puts \$195.5 million into the local economy annually. That figure includes \$41.7 million in salaries, \$6.4 million in direct spending by the school on services and supplies, \$70.6

- million in student spending and \$1.5 million in spending by visitors to the school.

- The school employs 1,594 people, 70 percent of whom live in Ulster County. "We are kind of like a recession-proof industry," said Poskanzer, who placed the college second only to the county government as the largest employer in Ulster County. "We are rooted here. We are staying here."

- In recent years, the school has graduated 1,019 business professionals, 1,086 artists, 751 media workers, 264 nurses and 492 engineers, scientists and mathematicians. And with 45 per-



Poskanzer

cent of alumni residing in the Hudson Valley, including 15 percent in Ulster County, the school serves to create a well-educated workforce that, in turn, will bring jobs and economic development to the region.

Poskanzer said the study will help to refute claims that the college, which does not pay local taxes, is a drain on the local economy.

**IN RESPONSE** to a question about another hot-button issue — the recent trend of student voters swinging local elections — Poskanzer said voting among the historically apathetic 18-21-year-old demographic should be applauded, not discouraged.

"Nationwide, voting among 18- to 21-year-olds is disturbingly low," Poskanzer said. "Young people need to start the habit of voting early on, and it's a good thing if they feel invested in the political process. I believe students should vote wherever they feel the most emotionally connected."