

## **SUNY Delegation Signs Initial Agreement with Cuban Ministry of Education**

In a ceremony at the Hotel Nacional in Havana, Cuba, The State University of New York system of public colleges and universities signed an agreement with the Cuban Ministry of Higher Education (known by its Spanish acronym MES) that opens the door to collaborations between SUNY's 64-campus system and the 22 universities and higher education institutions that the MES oversees in all provinces of the Cuban Republic. According to Cuban Vice Minister Aurora Fernandez Gonzalez, this is the first agreement that the ministry has entered into with a U.S. university or university system. SUNY Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Alexander Cartwright acknowledged the extraordinary opportunities created by bringing together the diverse curricular strengths of the SUNY System and the Cuban Ministry.

A high-level SUNY delegation spent an entire week in Cuba, visiting and meeting with a total of eleven Cuban university rectors, academic officials and faculty. Led by Dr. Cartwright, the delegation was comprised of four SUNY campus Presidents, three campus Vice Presidents, four senior international officers, several deans and department chairs and a team from SUNY System's Office of Global Affairs.

In addition to the meetings with the MES, the SUNY delegation met with students currently enrolled in SUNY study abroad programs in Havana. These students, participating in programs at University of Albany and SUNY Oswego, demonstrated to representatives of both the Cuban and SUNY delegations that the new agreement is being built on a solid foundation of mutual respect and common goals. The delegation also received a briefing at the U.S. Embassy in Havana as well as visited universities in the provinces of Matanzas, Villa Clara and Cienfuegos. To finish the week, the University of Cienfuegos hosted a meeting that gave the SUNY delegation the opportunity to sit down and meet with rectors from six provincial universities of Cuba.

The SUNY delegation and its Cuban hosts spent the week exploring partnerships in the following disciplines, as well as innovative exchanges of faculty, researchers and professional staff:

Art Restoration and Museum Science  
Community Health  
Electrical and Civil Engineering  
Language and Caribbean Studies  
Information Systems  
Sustainable Agriculture  
Art & Design, Interior Design and Industrial Design