



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael F. Nozzolio

Senator Nozzolio and Assemblyman Kolb Announce Funding to Build World-Class Viticulture Center at Geneva Ag-Tech Park

MICHAEL F. NOZZOLIO March 29, 2012

| ISSUE: **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**



State Senator Mike Nozzolio and State Assemblyman Brian Kolb today announced that they have successfully secured \$8 million in the State Budget for a major expansion at the Cornell Agriculture and Food Technology Park that will create local jobs and continue to put our region at the cutting edge of agricultural research and development.

The funding will be used by Finger Lakes Community College to construct a new state-of-the-art Viticulture Center as a permanent location for College's groundbreaking Viticulture and Wine Technology Program- the only program of its kind in the Northeast.

"As winemaking continues to grow jobs in the Finger Lakes Region, and is one of the fastest growing economic engines in our State, the need for individuals with the specialized knowledge and skills to pursue a career in the wine and grape industry continues to increase," said Senator Nozzolio. "FLCC's Viticulture program is critically important to the Finger Lakes Region's continued emergence as one of the premier winemaking areas of the Country, and I am greatly pleased that we were able to bring this important expansion of the program to Geneva."

"The investment that we helped secure will promote regional, long-term job development and create more private sector jobs, a win-win for our community and economy. Specifically, this funding will expand FLCC's innovative Viticulture and Wine Technology program, while supporting a new Viticulture Center at Geneva's Ag-tech Farm. The Finger Lakes is synonymous with great wines – these two initiatives will ensure our community continues leading the way in the production and sale of some of the very best wine ever made – and reaps real economic dividends in the process," said Assemblyman Kolb.

The new Viticulture Center's location at the Ag Tech Park will put students in close proximity to over 50 local wineries and all of the region's wine trails, as well as FLCC's teaching vineyard in Yates County. The Center will include a world-class winemaking lab, including a grape crushing pad and rooms for storing and aging wine, classroom space and another small teaching vineyard. The Ag-Tech Park location provides significant potential for expanding the Viticulture program in the future through partnerships with Cornell University

and other food and agricultural organizations that utilize the Park. Currently, FLCC's Viticulture and Wine Technology curriculum enables students to transfer to Cornell's four-year viticulture program.

"We are very excited about the opportunity to partner with FLCC in their Viticulture program and in the training of students who will drive our State's wine and grape industry," said Cornell College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Dean Kathryn Boor. "We thank the Senator and Assemblyman for their strong support of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and our programs in Geneva. This funding will also be greatly important for improving facilities on the Geneva campus and addressing the challenges and opportunities of New York's food and agriculture industries."

"We are delighted that Senator Nozzolio and Assemblyman Kolb have secured funding to support the construction of a teaching winery for the FLCC Viticulture and Wine Technology program. The FLCC Viticulture Center will provide our students with a rich learning environment and graduates of the program will contribute in significant ways to the region's thriving wine industry. We already have a strong relationship with Cornell, and having the opportunity to build our Viticulture Center in Geneva at the Cornell Agricultural and Food Technology Park will only serve to strengthen that important partnership," said Barbara Risser, President of Finger Lakes Community College.

"We are extremely grateful to Senator Nozzolio and Assemblyman Kolb for securing the significant funding for capital projects at the Experiment Station in Geneva," said Dr. Tom Burr, Director of the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station at the Ag-Tech Park. "Having the Viticulture facility adjacent to our main campus at the Cornell Agriculture and Food Technology Park will stimulate a strong Cornell-FLCC partnership for training of viticulture students who will be essential to the New York grape industry workforce. Our faculty and staff look forward to working with students and faculty from FLCC."

Geneva Mayor Ron Alcock stated, "This achievement is yet another example of the State, County, City, and Community College System working in conjunction to move New York's economy forward. This funding, and the jobs it will help to create, ensures the viability of the Finger Lakes brand as the Northeast's top wine region."

Geneva City Manager Matt Horn said, "Senator Nozzolio, the Board of Supervisors, and the Geneva City Council have long cited job creation, job development and the expansion of the Finger Lakes wine industry as drivers to our success. This project delivers on each of these areas, and will be a key strategic link in our workforce development chain."

"This is a wonderful opportunity for FLCC, Ontario County and Cornell's Ag and Tech Research Center. The ability of Senator Nozzolio and Assemblyman Kolb to bring this all together is an excellent example of inter-government cooperation and will maximize the resources of both the Ag-Tech Park's research and FLCC's education programs. Those factors in combination will help create jobs and boost agriculture, our region's top enterprise," said Ontario County Board of Supervisors Chairman Ted Fafinski.

"The FLCC Viticulture program was established in response to the ever expanding wine and tourism industries right here in the Finger Lakes. With over sixty wineries located along Seneca Lake and next to some of the leading scientists in the world, the Agricultural Tech Park located in Geneva is a natural, permanent home for the program. Now thanks to the efforts and forward thinking of Senator Nozzolio and Assemblyman Kolb, grant money has been secured to make this plan a reality. The Senator and Assemblyman continue to work hard for their constituents and deliver once again," said Geneva City Supervisor Charlie Evangelista.

“Congratulations should be given to Senator Nozzolio and Assemblyman Kolb for their tireless efforts to bring the Viticulture Program to Geneva. Because of their efforts this program will not only benefit the Geneva Community but all of the surrounding areas including Ontario County,” said Geneva Town Supervisor Mary Luckern.

“Economic Development in Ontario County and the Finger Lakes requires visionary leadership. Helping to create a pipeline of skilled professionals for our viticulture industry is critically important,” said Michael J. Manikowski, Director of the Ontario County Economic Development Corporation. “On behalf of economic development in Ontario County, I would like to thank Senator Nozzolio and Assemblyman Kolb for advocating on behalf of capital funding in this year’s State budget for FLCC’s Viticulture Center.”

The Viticulture Center is part of the Finger Lakes Economic Development Council’s five-year plan to build upon our region’s strengths to accelerate the Finger Lakes’ economic transformation. The Geneva City Council, Geneva Chamber of Commerce and numerous local wineries also strongly support the project.

“The Geneva Area Chamber of Commerce sends sincere appreciation and thanks to Senator Michael Nozzolio for his outstanding work in support of the Finger Lakes Community College Viticulture finding a permanent home in Geneva. The Senator, along with Minority Leader Brian Kolb, have been instrumental in leading this project to a positive conclusion and their support in the endeavor is greatly appreciated,” said Geneva Chamber of Commerce President Spike Herzig.

“Senator Nozzolio and Assemblyman Kolb have once again given a superb and timely effort in gaining the funding to establish the Viticulture program. Their hard and diligent work has paid off with the students, the Finger Lakes area, FLCC and the local taxpayers, said Geneva Business Improvement District Executive Director John Hicks.

Senator Nozzolio and Assemblyman Kolb identified and redirected the \$8 million in capital funding for the Viticulture Center from a dormant grant appropriation. In addition to the Viticulture Center, part of the funding secured

will also be used to repair and modernize several greenhouse facilities used for agricultural research at the Ag-Tech Park's Experiment Station.

"The new Finger Lakes Community College Viticulture Center will enable our State's future winemakers to study at the same site where some of the most innovative agricultural research in the Nation is taking place every day," said Senator Nozzolio. "It was a pleasure working with Assemblyman Kolb, FLCC, Cornell University and the City of Geneva to make this important job-creating project a reality."

###