



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

## Griffo, Brindisi Secure Vital Funding for Economic Development in the Mohawk Valley

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO March 29, 2014

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Assemblyman Anthony Brindisi (D-Utica) and State Senator Joseph A. Griffo (R-Rome) jointly announced today that the state budget contains critical funding for “Nano Utica,” drone initiatives at Griffiss International Airport, SUNYIT staffing and military base retention efforts.

“The Mohawk Valley is positioning itself as an innovative leader in nano and cyber technology, and this budget invests in programs that will facilitate the growth of more good-paying, quality high-tech jobs right in our own backyard,” **Assemblyman Brindisi stated.**

“Assemblyman Brindisi and I recognize the importance of technology in this 21<sup>st</sup> century economy. That’s why we worked hard this budget season to ensure that the state kept its \$180 million commitment to the emerging nanotechnology industry in Marcy as well as providing additional funding for NUAIR’s forthcoming drone research. We’ve also made sure that the state keeps adding to our military base retention funds so we can continue to develop Griffiss and keep Fort Drum strong,” **Senator Griffo stated.**

Specifically, the final budget includes \$180 million for the Nano Utica initiative at SUNYIT's Computer Chip Commercialization Center (“Quad C”), one of the state’s next major hubs of nanotechnology research and development (A.8554-E, S.6354-E).

“The NYS budget includes funding for strategic investments that are critical to the region’s economic growth. Specifically, we are pleased to see \$180 million in funding for the Nano Utica project, which was part of the Governor’s proposed budget and is the cornerstone for the region’s economic transformation,” **Steven DiMeo, President, Mohawk Valley EDGE stated.**

Additionally, the budget includes \$1 million for the Northeast UAS Airspace Integration Research Alliance (NUAIR) at Griffiss International Airport (A.8553-E, S.6353-E). The funding for NUAIR’s drone program – which is anticipated to create 468 jobs and generate \$10 million in tax revenue – will assist with start-up costs, Assemblyman Brindisi and Senator Griffo noted.

Recently, the Federal Aviation Administration selected Griffiss International Airport as one of six national sites designated for drone aircraft development. The airport teamed up with

NUAIR, a regional alliance of private, academic and military institutions, to lead research and testing to determine how to safely integrate unmanned vehicles and systems into the national airspace.

The budget also provides \$500,000 for the State University of New York Institute of Technology (SUNYIT) for the services and expenses of staffing and research faculty at the college (A.8550-E, S.6350-E). This funding comes at a crucial time as the merger between SUNYIT and CNSE to create a world-class SUNY Institute of Nanoscale Science, Engineering and Technology (INSET) was recently approved, and the “Quad C” facility is expected to be completed later this year.

“SUNYIT’s specialization in STEM programs will enhance our efforts to hire students from the Mohawk Valley for the ‘Quad C’ facility, and allow us to better market the nanotechnology site to potential developers,” **Assemblyman Brindisi stated.**

“Senator Griffo and Assemblyman Brindisi are to be commended with their success in securing additional funding for research faculty at SUNYIT, which complements the SUNY Board of Trustee’s decision to merge SUNY CNSE and SUNYIT into a new degree granting institution,” **Steven DiMeo, President, Mohawk Valley EDGE stated.** “We are also appreciative of the legislature’s support for NUAIR and funding to continue the transformation of former military installations across this state. This is not only an on-time budget, but a budget that helps to improve the state’s economic competitiveness.”

Finally, both legislators helped maintain funding for the Mohawk Valley’s military base retention efforts as part of a statewide military base retention program (A.8553-E, S.6353-E). The funding will help protect jobs in the Mohawk Valley and safeguard local military assets, they noted.