

College of Law

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Friday, May 8, 2026



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President, State University of New York College of
Environmental Science and Forestry

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Shannon P. Gardner, Associate Dean for Academic Programs; Teaching Professor

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Commencement Speaker

JOANNE MAHONEY '87, L'90
PRESIDENT, STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK COLLEGE OF
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND FORESTRY



Joanne “Joanie” Mahoney ’87, L’90 serves as president of the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry, becoming the first woman to lead the institution when she was appointed in November 2020.

A proud Syracuse native, she earned her Bachelor of Science from Syracuse University’s Whitman School of Management in 1987 and her Juris Doctor from the Syracuse University College of Law in 1990. She currently serves on the College of Law’s Board of Advisors and credits her legal education as the foundation of her distinguished career in public leadership.

Mahoney began her career in private practice at Harris Beach before serving for five years as a criminal prosecutor in the Onondaga County District Attorney’s Office. In 2008, she became the first woman elected Onondaga County Executive, serving three terms and overseeing a county of approximately 460,000 residents. Her tenure combined strong fiscal stewardship, maintaining the county’s highest bond ratings, with forward looking public policy initiatives. In 2011, Governing Magazine named her Public Official of the Year.

In addition to her leadership at SUNY ESF, Mahoney serves on the Board of the New York State Thruway Authority, contributing to statewide infrastructure governance and policy oversight. Across more than three decades in law, government, and higher education, her work reflects the enduring impact of a Syracuse legal education and a sustained commitment to public service.

Joanie currently resides in DeWitt, New York, with her husband, Marc Overdyk. They are the parents of four adult sons.

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The Latin Honors (Summa Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude, Cum Laude) listed in this program are preliminary, unofficial, and symbolic. Recognition at the commencement ceremony does not constitute an official conferral of honors. Final honors will be determined based on your completed academic record and will be reflected on your official Syracuse University transcript and diploma.

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The Class of 2026 had logged more than 1,230 hours of pro bono service. The College of Law's Pro Bono Recognition program has more stringent standards than the 50 hours required for NYS Bar Admission. To be recognized, students must be in good academic standing and complete a minimum of 50 unpaid volunteer hours providing pro bono legal services directly to persons with limited means through work done at a nonprofit organization, a legal services organization, a government agency, or a private firm.

The Outstanding Service Awards are for the top three J.D. graduating student with the most pro bono hours.

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Volume 75

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WHERE THE VALE OF ONONDAGA
MEETS THE EASTERN SKY.
PROUDLY STANDS OUR ALMA MATER
ON HER HILLTOP HIGH.
FLAG WE LOVE! ORANGE! FLOAT FOR AYE,
OLD SYRACUSE, O'ER THEE.
LOYAL BE THY SONS AND DAUGHTERS
TO THY MEMORY.

—Junius W. Stevens, Class of 1895

