

Guided Walking Tour of Downtown Albany: Education history at your feet!

Albany holds a special place in the history of education in New York State, much of which can be found in walking distance from the conference venue.

Unique in New York State, Albany is home to historical places and major agencies that impacted the social, political and institutional history of education in the state and beyond. We encourage you to learn more about this history, and the people who actively promoted and advocated for education in New York, by taking a walking tour of downtown Albany during the CIES Northeast Regional Conference. The information below provides an initial idea of why certain buildings and locations represent important landmarks in the creation, expansion and reform of education in New York. It is not meant to be exhaustive.

We welcome your comments on this document, which we intend to revise after the conference. and make available to current and future students attending UAlbany's School of Education. Please send your thoughts and suggestions to SEACHange@

Need a map here which corresponds to the places listed below

1. New York State Education Department Building
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Background information on each institution

1) New York State Education Department Building

89 Washington Avenue, Albany, 12234

The building celebrates the unification of two individual education offices: the Department of Public Instruction, presiding over elementary schools in NY, and the Board of Regents, responsible for all remaining educational institutions, from high schools to universities. The Unification Act of 1904 brought the two together under the name of the State Education Department. Dr. Andrew Sloan Draper, selected to be the first Commissioner of Education, launched the campaign to build a home for the department - the first one in the country.

The construction of the NYS Education Department took six years, from 1908 to 1912, and was acclaimed as "one of the 12 most beautiful buildings in the world." It boasts a neoclassical colonnade of 36 pillars, the longest in the US and possibly in the world. Henry Hornbostel, the bold architect, crowned his long row of columns with an abnormally high entablature.

In the past, the building housed both the State Library on its second floor and the State Museum on the fifth floor. In 1978 they were moved to the Cultural Education Center. Contained in the building are a number of elegant sculptures on the subject of education by Charles Keck as well as mural paintings by Will H. Low,

also known as “Gentle Will.” Visitors can get a look at the Regents Room, enjoy the magnificent rotunda, and drop by the Commissioner’s office designed in Tudor Gothic style.

For more information: <http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/a-guide-to-nys-education-building.pdf>

2) Albany Law School

80 New Scotland Ave, Albany, 12208

The Albany Law School is the nation's oldest independent school of law. Founded in 1851, the Law School has played an important role in the development of legal education in the United States.

In mid-19th century America, the standard preparation for the bar was a legal clerkship. The School's founders—Amos Dean, Ira Harris and Amasa Parker, all successful lawyers active in public affairs—believed this approach fell short in preparing young lawyers for the profession. The trio set out to replace it with a structured course of studies that encompassed a thorough knowledge of legal principles as well as actual experience in applying them. This philosophy of legal education caught hold and the Albany Law School flourished. Combining legal theory and courtroom practice continues to be a hallmark of law schools throughout the US today.

The Albany Law School has attracted and produced many distinguished alumni, including:

- ◆ *David Brewer*, U.S. Supreme Court Justice
- ◆ *Robert H. Jackson*, U.S. Supreme Court Justice
- ◆ *William McKinley*, the 25th President of the United States
- ◆ *Kate Stoneman*, the first woman admitted to the New York State Bar Association.

For further information, see <http://www.albanylaw.edu/about/history>

3) Albany Free School

8 Elm St, Albany, NY, 12202

Founded in 1969 by Mary Leue, the Albany Free School is the oldest inner-city independent alternative school in the country. Motivated by her ten-year-old son’s frustration in one of Albany’s better public schools, Mary decided to teach him at home instead. Soon three of Mark’s also-suffering friends joined in and soon afterwards a little independent school was born. At the close of the first year, Mary and her four students voted unanimously to continue the school for another year, with later coined the school’s name as “The Free School.” Four years later the school was burgeoning with thirty kids, six full-time teachers, and a host of interns and volunteers. As the population of The Free School steadily grew, it also diversified. Students came from the inner city and uptown neighborhoods as well as suburban communities and rural towns. Last year the school celebrated its 45 year anniversary with a strong and steady enrolment. At The Free School traditional academic subjects are taught in small classes with an emphasis on hands-on, experiential learning. Students learn at their own pace without the pressures of grades, homework or standardized tests.

For more information about the Albany Free School: <http://www.albanyfreeschool.org/learn/>

4) Old Albany Academy Building

Academy Park, Albany, 12207

The Albany Academy was established by the Albany City Council in 1813 to educate the sons of the city's most prosperous citizens in classics, mathematics and science. In 1815 Philip Hooker, then Albany's most prominent architect, appeared before the school's building committee with a proposal. By that point he had already designed the nearby City Hall and State Capitol buildings (both since replaced), and pointed to his years of experience and his "close application in the research of ancient and modern architecture." Hooker's

Federal style design, with extensive classically-inspired decoration, echoed the school's original curricular focus. His proposed design included a chapel on the second floor, which survives intact to this day.

When it opened in 1817 the new building of the Old Albany Academy was matched with a new school principal - T. Romeyn Beck. He would serve in that position until 1848, shaping the school profoundly. Not only did he distinguish himself as an administrator, he also contributed to the field of medicine with *Elements of Medical Jurisprudence* (1823) it was the first significant work on forensic medicine. He was also instrumental in establishing the state's geological survey and library.

Beck hired a talented early graduate of the Academy, Joseph Henry, who returned as a science teacher. In addition to teaching science, Henry conducted research with the help of his assistant and students. In 1827, he began experimenting with electromagnetism, a recent discovery. He found ways to increase the strength of an electromagnet and discovered electrical inductance. Often he would demonstrate these properties to students by using a wire routed around the classroom to make an iron bar ring a small bell. This was not only the prototype of the modern electric doorbell, the stronger electrical signal he was able to send over a wire eventually helped Samuel F.B. Morse develop the first practical telegraph. The same principle continues to make long-distance wired data transmission possible.

The school remained in Hooker building until the 1920s, even as competing private schools were established and city neighborhoods moved further from the river. In the 1920s the Academy bought 30 acres of property on Highland Avenue and built a school design by Marcus T. Reynolds, among the city's most prominent architects. The School's move to Highland Avenue coincided with the growth of city's newer, more suburban neighborhoods.

Just before the Great Depression, the city of Albany agreed to buy the old Hooker building for \$450,000 (\$6.41 million in modern dollars). Marcus T. Reynolds supervised the building's renovation, primarily to its interior, including a new marble double staircase and modifications to the center hall. On the outside he commissioned a copper replacement for the original wooden cupola that duplicated it exactly. The John Flanagan statue of Henry was placed in the front and the building renamed in his memory. In the 1930s, the Albany City School District moved into the building, which it continues to use as its main offices.

Text adapted from this wikipedia page https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Albany_Academy_Building

5) Albany Medical College

43 New Scotland Avenue, Albany, 12208

Albany Medical College (AMC) was founded in 1839 by Alden March and James H. Armsby and is one of the oldest medical schools in the nation. The college is part of the Albany Medical Center, which includes the Albany Medical Center Hospital.

Over its 170-year history, Albany Medical College has attracted and produced many leaders in medicine and medical research. Among its present and past faculty, researchers, and alumni count two Nobel Prize winners, two Lasker Award winners, two MacArthur Fellowship recipients, one Gairdner Foundation International Award winner, former Surgeon Generals of the United States Army and the Air Force, several presidents and CEOs of major academic hospitals, as well as an early president and co-founder of the American Medical Association. AMC is attributed as the site where David S. Sheridan perfected the modern-day disposable catheter, among other major discoveries and innovations. Among AMC alumni accomplishments include the discovery of the hormone leptin, the invention of computed tomography, and the discovery of oral rehydration therapy.

- ◆ In 1899, famous physician and proclaimed "Father of Modern Medicine" Sir William Osler charged the graduating students of the Albany Medical College to "care more particularly for the individual patient than for the special features of the disease" during a famous address. This quote has since been paraphrased as, "Care for the patient, not the disease."
- ◆ JD (Scrubs), the main character from *Scrubs (TV Show)*, is based on Dr. Jonathan Doris, from the MD class of 1998, who is a long-time friend of Bill Lawrence (producer).

- ◆ AMC is the only level-1 trauma center and academic medical center for the 25 county region between New York and Montreal. The Medical College's attendings, residents, and students are often the first to see unique pathology arising from the area population of over two million. The center regularly treats patients from Western New England, Southern Quebec, and Upstate New York.

Along with the Albany College of Pharmacy, the Albany Law School, the Dudley Observatory, the Graduate College of Union University, and Union College, the Medical College is one of the constituent entities of Union University. In 1958 the Medical College established a public radio station that took on the call letters WAMC, which it no longer owns.

Text adapted from the AMC wikipedia page https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albany_Medical_College

6) New York State Museum

310 Madison Ave, Albany, 12210

On April 15, 1836, Governor William Marcy appointed the staff of the state's first official Geological and Natural History Survey to conduct "a grand and comprehensive collection of the natural productions of the State of New York to exhibit under one roof its animal, mineral and vegetable wealth". Crates and barrels of fossils, rocks, and mineral specimens collected during the Survey eventually filled three rooms in Old State Hall. In an effort to end confusion over the status of the collections which sat unstudied and disorganized for seven years, the Legislature created the "State Cabinet of Natural History" in 1843. In 1845, the Legislature placed the Cabinet under the guidance of the Board of Regents. That year, the Cabinet opened its doors to the public.

The Old State House was the first official depository for the collections of the State Cabinet of Natural History from 1842 to 1855. Constructed from 1797-1799 at an estimated cost of \$10,000, the brick building was four-stories high, situated between State Lodge Streets. Most notably, Old State Hall was the first public building erected by New York State Government in Albany after the Revolution. It originally housed the State departments -- Secretary of State, Comptroller, State Treasurer, Attorney General and the Executive Chamber -- until the newly constructed Capitol opened in 1808. Any remaining state offices moved to the New State Hall, built in 1842, and the State Cabinet was then placed in this building as recommended by Governor Seward. The Hall was demolished in 1855.

Within ten years, the Cabinet had amassed more collections than Old State Hall could accommodate. Upon completion in 1857, Geological and Agricultural Hall became the State Cabinet's headquarters and the focus shifted from housing a collection of objects to regarding the museum as "living organization".

On May 2, 1870, the State Cabinet of Natural History was deemed by Legislature to be "a museum of scientific and practical geology and general natural history" and its name was officially changed to "The New York State Museum of Natural History." James Hall, who held the title of both State Geologist and State Paleontologist, was appointed as the Museum's first director.

On March 29, 1911, fire broke out in the Capitol. From the Assembly Library, it spread to the State Library near several museum displays on temporary exhibit. Of 10,000 archaeological artifacts and ethnographic objects, only about 1,500 were recovered, most of which were damaged.

In 1912, the Museum moves into the newly constructed State Education Building. Although open to the public in 1915, a dedication ceremony hosted by former President Theodore Roosevelt was held on December 29, 1916. "A museum of this character," he stated, "has more than one function to fulfill. It must present to the people as a whole in vivid and yet truthful form, knowledge of the natural objects of our countryside...in such a fashion as to be readily understood."

Over the next several decades, the Museum continues to expand and outgrows its space in the State Education Building. In 1962, the Legislature approved the construction of a 98.5 acre governmental park proposed by Nelson Rockefeller in the heart of downtown Albany – The Empire State Plaza. Included in the proposal were plans for a new Museum building. The 11-story, 1.5 million square foot Cultural Education Center was completed in 1976 and today houses the State Museum, State Library, and State Archives.

Over the next several years, the Museum opens several important galleries and exhibitions including Native Peoples of New York Hall, Great Art Series, the Carousel, the World Trade Center exhibition, and South Street Seaport.

Today, the New York State Museum is one of the largest tourist attractions in the Capital Region welcoming approximately half a million visitors annually. The Museum's collections include over 15 million specimens and artifacts that reflect over 170 years of research in the earth sciences, biology and human history. Over 100,000 square feet of exhibition space gives visitors an opportunity to learn more about New York State's natural, cultural and human history. Free public programs – for children, families and adults – are offered throughout the year. And in June 2015, the Museum announced that it will begin a \$14 million renovation, including 35,000 square feet of new exhibitions.

Information taken from the Museum's website <http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/about/history>

7) The Sage College

140 New Scotland Avenue, Albany, 12208

Russell Sage College was founded in Troy, New York, in 1916 by Margaret Olivia Slocum Sage and named in honor of her late husband, who had left her his considerable fortune. With Eliza Kellas, head of the Emma Willard School, Mrs. Sage was active in the women's suffrage movement; in founding the new College, they proposed to offer women the means of independence through the combination of broad education in the liberal arts with preparation for specific professional careers. Initially, the college operated under the charter of the Emma Willard School, granting its first baccalaureate degree in 1918 and graduating its first class in 1920. In 1927, the New York State Board of Regents granted a separate charter for Russell Sage College and reaffirmed the status of Emma Willard as a secondary school.

During World War II, an "emergency men's division" was created and in 1942 the first graduate degree was conferred. In 1949, an Albany Division was opened, offering two-year, four-year and graduate degrees under the charter of Russell Sage College and extending the College's mission to include the education of men on the second campus. The Sage Junior College of Albany received its own degree-granting powers in 1957. In 1995, the Sage Graduate School became authorized to grant degrees independently, the Sage Evening College became recognized as a separate administrative unit, and the institution was re-chartered by the Board of Regents of the state of New York as The Sage Colleges, often referred to for the sake of convenience as "Sage." The words "Russell Sage College" now refer only to the college for women. In 2001, the Sage Junior College of Albany and Sage Evening College were replaced by a single entity, Sage College of Albany.

In 2009 Sage restructured its graduate programs around three key areas of strength and expertise to create the Esteves School of Education, School of Health Sciences, and School of Management.

Information taken from the Sage College website <https://www.sage.edu/about/mission-history/>

8) Maria College

700 New Scotland Ave, Albany, 12208

Maria College was founded in 1958 by the Religious Sisters of Mercy to serve as a sister formation college, an institution providing higher education for the community of sisters. Under the leadership of its first

president, Sister Mary Borromeo Warren, the College's focus on solely educating sisters changed, and the college received permission to open its doors to the public in 1965.

In the early 1970s, the college opened a preschool that served Albany families for more than 40 years. Now closed, the campus school building has been renamed, Mercy Hall, and was dedicated in 2017 to the Frank E. O'Brien, Jr. Student Support Center.

In 1975, Maria College purchased a cloistered convent campus that abutted the administration building grounds. This beautiful campus area, now known as Marian Hall, is home to nursing, health sciences, faculty offices, a student lounge and a great hall that is frequently used for campus events. Known for its stunning architecture and inner courtyard, Marian Hall was awarded a designation by the Historic Albany Foundation in 1986.

Maria College is one of the 17 institutions sponsored by the national Conference for Mercy Higher Education network, which currently enrolls more than 40,000 students throughout the United States. Although chartered in 1958 as a junior college, the original intent by Maria's first president was for institution to become a four-year college. This dream has become a reality—Maria College is offering four and two year degrees and a certificate program.

Text adapted from the college's website <https://mariacollege.edu/about-maria/history>

9) College of Saint Rose

432 Western Ave, Albany, 12203

The idea for The College of Saint Rose was conceived by Monsignor Joseph A. Delaney, the vicar-general of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany in 1920. He aimed to create a Catholic college for women in the large swath of land between the two nearest Catholic colleges, those in New York City and Buffalo. Upon application and granting of a provisional charter from the Board of Regents, The College of Saint Rose was officially established as a Roman Catholic college for women with a liberal arts curriculum in Albany, New York on June 28, 1920.

Its founders selected the name of Saint Rose to honor the first canonized saint in the Americas, Saint Rose of Lima. Initially, emphasis was placed on the professional training of teachers, but it quickly expanded to include preparation for business and other professions.

As needs in the Albany area increased, the College expanded and revised its programs to meet those needs. An evening division was developed in 1946 to serve World War II veterans and was re-instituted in 1974 to respond to continuing education needs. In 1949, a graduate school was added to provide master's degree programs.

Men were admitted to both the original evening and graduate divisions, and in 1969 the College became fully co-educational. Housing for males became available in the 1970s.

In December 2015, the college announced plans to eliminate 27 academic programs and 23 faculty positions. The School of Arts and Humanities and the School of Education were hit the hardest, with undergraduate programs like art education and religious studies and graduate programs like history/political science and educational technology being cut from the college. The programs chosen to be eliminated enroll just four percent of the student body and 12 programs enrolled none. The move will allow the college to invest in its more popular programs, including accounting, communication sciences, music, computer science, criminal justice and forensics, among others. Although the college described the cuts as a necessity to ensure the college's future visibility and a "reprioritization of academic programs to meet the changing needs of students, increase enrollment and secure the college's financial future," faculty protested the plan. Two months later, the faculty voted no confidence in the college president. An investigatory committee of the American Association of University Professors concluded that the layoffs "violated shared governance and undermined tenure and academic freedom" and that they "violated the association's principles and standards".

Information retrieved from the college's wikipedia page
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/College_of_Saint_Rose#History

10) Harmanus Bleecker Library *19 Dove St, Albany, 12210*

Harmanus Bleecker, the grandson of a former Colonial-era mayor, served a term in the House of Representatives in the early 1810s, when he was still a young man. He practiced law locally and served on the board of several civic organizations. In his later life he served as Ambassador to the Netherlands in the Martin van Buren administration.

After his death in 1848, he left his estate to his much younger wife with the stipulation that, upon her death, the money would be spent to benefit the city. She survived him by almost 40 years, and the executor of her estate decided the \$130,000 (\$3.54 million in modern dollars) would best be spent to benefit the Young Men's Association, an organization Bleecker had strongly supported and served on the board of. Harmanus Bleecker Hall, a library and theater complex, was built in 1889 on Washington near Lark Street.

Thirty years later, in 1919, the board of the Young Men's Association decided it would be better off with a structure dedicated purely for use as a library. It sold the hall and used the proceeds to build the library. Architect Albert W. Fuller, designer of many significant local buildings from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, received the commission. His Classical Revival building, distinguished by its solid rectangular form, contrast between stonework rusticated on the first floor and smooth above, archways and heavily [decorated](#) entrance pavilion, is considered one of Albany's finest examples of the style. Along with the similar University Club of Albany building across Washington, completed a few years later, which complements it despite being in the Colonial Revival style, are his last major works in the city where he lived his life and built most of his buildings.

The association deeded the new building to the city near the end of 1924. It was the first library building in the city, and the beginning of Albany's current public library system. By 1977 the library had grown to the point that it moved out of the building. A small bookstore operated out of a small portion of the rear basement. After over a decade, the city decided to sell the building in 1990. It took another decade until Capital Partners, a local investment firm, bought it in 2001.

A feasibility study done for Capital came to the conclusion that it would be necessary to increase the usable space in the building by 50% in order for it to be profitable. Accordingly, the mezzanine level and its unique flooring were removed to create a full third level. This added 5,000 square feet (460 m²) of leasable space.¹ The infrastructure had to be upgraded to modern building codes, so the walls were insulated and all the plumbing, heating and electrical systems replaced with modern equipment. An internal elevator was added to make the building disabled accessible. The fully occupied restored building has attracted a number of tenants, including notably The Brighter Choice Foundation (Albany Charter School Network), a prominent not-for-profit advocating for school choice in Albany, New York, the Lawsuit Reform Alliance of New York, a statewide advocacy organization, and Relentless Awareness, a preeminent New York communications firm.

Information adapted from the Library's wikipedia page
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harmanus_Bleecker_Library

11) Philip Livingston Magnet Academy *315 Northern Blvd, Albany, NY 12210*

Philip Livingston Magnet Academy (when built, it was Philip Livingston Junior High) is a remnant of an era that thought city schools should be landmarks. Up close, it's massive: Two long wings stretch out from the central building, which is topped with the cupola. It has an air about it, as if it was built for a grand and serious purpose.

Constructed in the early 1930s, the school was named after Albany native Philip Livingston, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. A 1936 book on Albany schools called it "Albany's outstanding school building."

"It is the embodiment of the ideals of beauty and utility," wrote Charles Blessing in *Albany Schools and Colleges Yesterday and Today*. "The designers omitted nothing that might contribute to the comfort, convenience, safety and health of the student body. It is a triumph of science and art made possible by the cooperation of educators, architects, engineers and landscape artists."

The school was built as part of a Depression-era project to train workers in the building trades. Its interior brickwork features a variety of patterns, reflecting where people were taught different masonry techniques. And the basement is cavernous: Built as a bomb shelter, it's two to three stories deep. Because Livingston also had a full kitchen, staff there would cook meals for other district schools. The food would be transported by van to schools that lacked full kitchens, where it would be re-warmed to serve to students.

The need for renovations and declining enrollment combined to doom the place. As other Albany schools were rehabilitated or replaced, Livingston crumbled. In 1932-'33, its first school year, nearly 1,400 students attended Livingston. In its last year, the school had an enrollment of about 270. It graduated its last group of eighth-graders on June 25, 2009.

For a time, Livingston was considered as a potential home for one of the high school's four themed academies; the location would have focused on nanoscience, engineering, and environmental sciences. Science might have been a natural fit for the property; behind the school stretches the Tivoli Preserve, where middle school teachers used to take their classes for field study. The school board voted down that proposal in 2006.

In 2011 a Long Island-based developer bought it for \$3.5 million, with the intention of converting it into senior housing. Support for the sale among the school board members was not unanimous. Renovations were completed and the apartments opened in 2013; the 1967 cafeteria wing was removed during that time to provide more parking.

Adapted from <http://alloveralbany.com/archive/2011/03/02/name-that-landmark-livingston-school> and the building's wikipedia page: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philip_Livingston_Magnet_Academy