



THE

CAPITAL REGION PROGRESS REPORT

SIENA SIENA COLLEGE
RESEARCH INSTITUTE

APRIL 11, 2025



AFFORDABILITY



LIVABILITY



OPPORTUNITY



CULTURE

Advocate for Progress
Panel Moderated by Casey Seiler Editor of the Times Union

Siena College - Snyder Hall

Friday, April 11th from 1:00-3:00 PM



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1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Brief Presentation on Research and Findings

Panel Discussion and Brainstorming

2:05 PM - 3:00 PM

Network with Stakeholders

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PIONEERSM

All Together Forward[™]

As a local financial institution for more than 135 years, Pioneer understands the importance of inspiring progress and building healthy communities. We've grown to become "More Than a Bank" with banking, insurance, employee benefits, and wealth management solutions across 22 Capital Region locations. Whether you're an individual, a business, a municipality or public entity, Pioneer is willing to do what it takes to earn your business and help our neighborhoods and communities move All Together Forward.

ABOUT THE CAPITAL REGION PROGRESS REPORT

The Siena College Research Institute (SCRI) has spent the past two decades studying quality of life, youth opportunity, social determinants of health, equity and inclusion, and overall community wellbeing.

In early 2025, SCRI launched a landmark study of the Capital Region, surveying 1,096 residents across four counties: Saratoga, Schenectady, Albany, and Rensselaer. This effort represents one of the first comprehensive regional assessments of its kind.

The Capital Region Community Progress Report offers valuable insights into the region's strengths and areas for growth, helping researchers and organizations identify and address the barriers that prevent people from living their version of the best possible life. These barriers include access to essential resources like quality education, affordable healthcare, economic opportunities, safe housing, and meaningful social and cultural experiences. By highlighting these areas, the report empowers stakeholders, policymakers, and community leaders to build a region where individuals and families have the opportunity to thrive.

With the support of our sponsor, Pioneer, we're proud to share this data with the public and regional stakeholders.



"SCRI and Siena College are profoundly committed to the well-being of the Capital Region. It is our home. We are thrilled to have conducted this benchmark survey giving voice to Capital Region residents that now have identified strengths and challenges we all face. We hope that stakeholders and citizens can use this Progress Report to promote initiatives that address concerns and build on identified strengths to invite more people to invest in the region."

Dr. Don Levy, Director of the Siena College Research Institute

"As a homegrown and locally headquartered institution dedicated to serving the Capital Region, we appreciate the expertise of the Siena College Research Institute in assessing the place we're proud to call home," said Tom Amell, President and CEO of Pioneer. "This report highlights the many strengths of our region, from quality of life and health care to cultural assets and a sense of community, while also noting areas we can improve, such as affordability. Importantly, it reinforces the need to work together to ensure a prosperous future for people, families, businesses throughout our region."

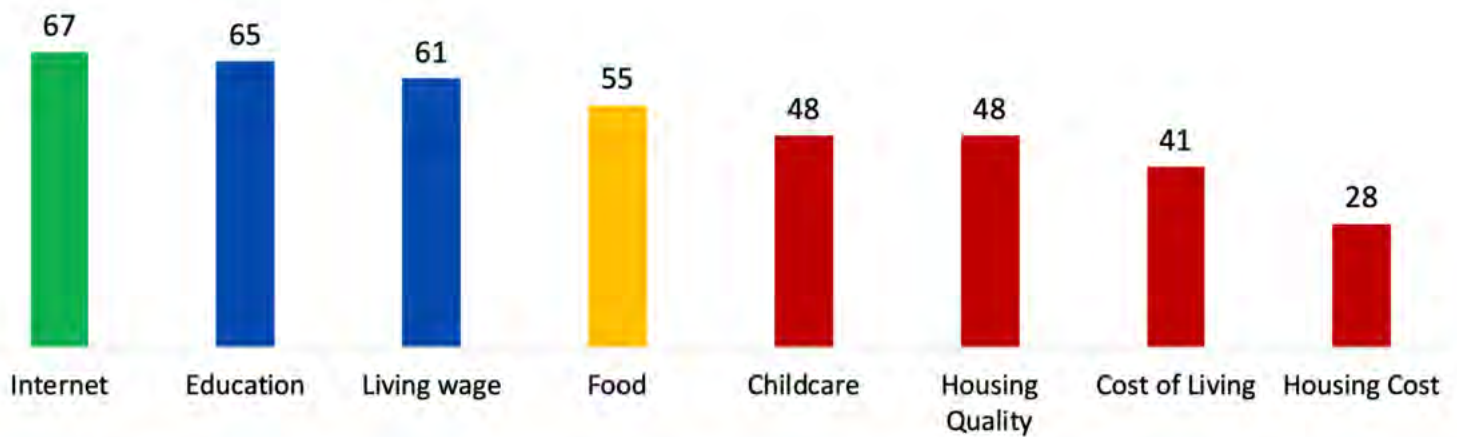
Tom Amell, President and CEO of Pioneer

FINDINGS

Affordability



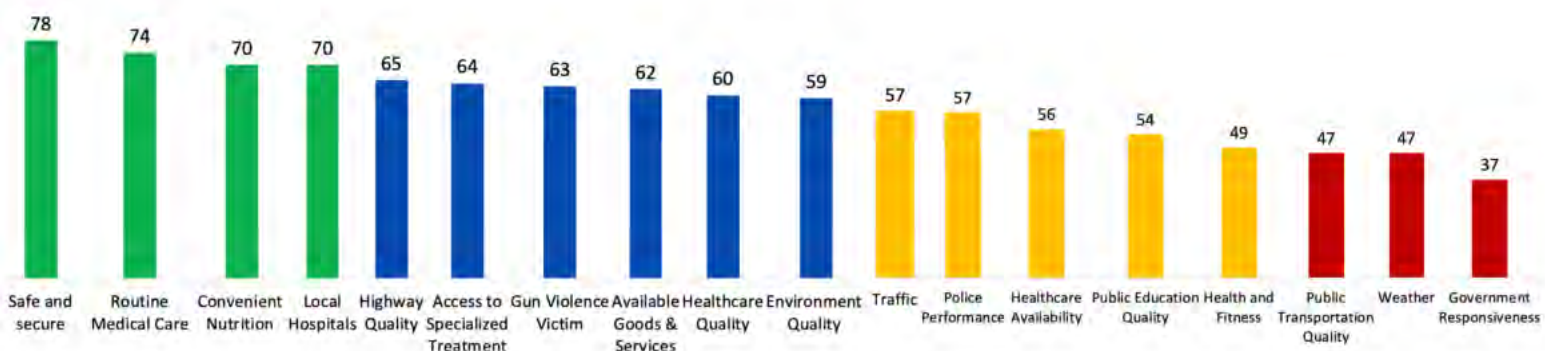
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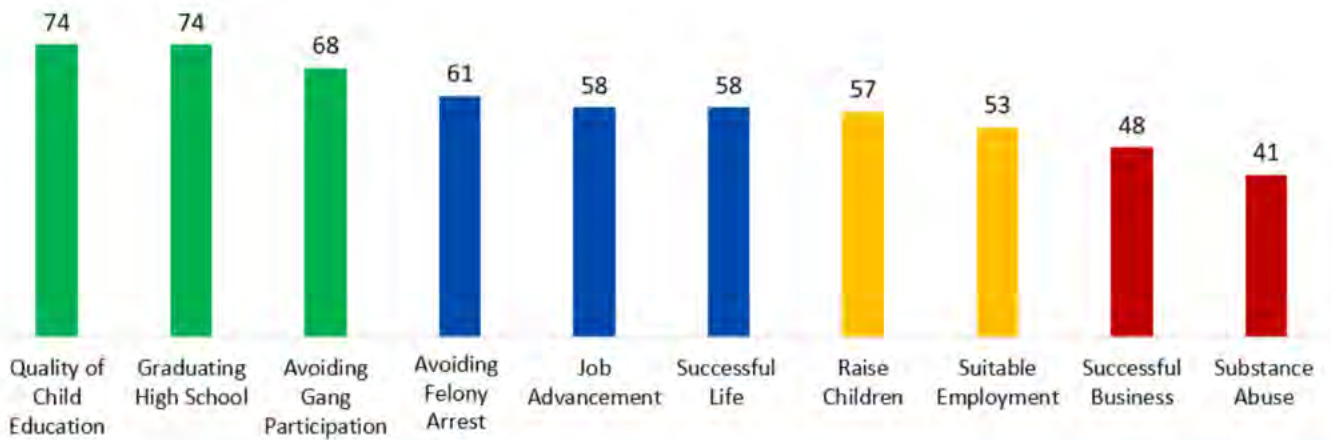
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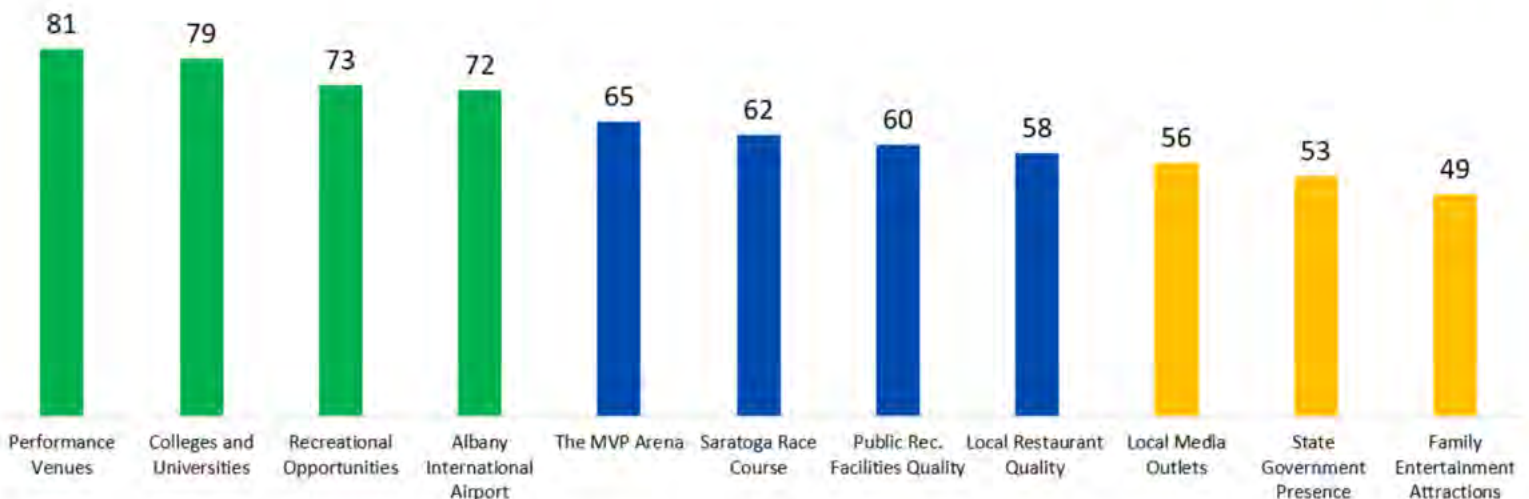
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Opportunity



Cultural Assets



MEET THE PANELISTS

Kelli Arnold

Executive Vice President, Chief Strategy & Innovations Officer
Pioneer Bank

Kelli Arnold brings diverse experience in finance and community development to her role at Pioneer. She has led multistate teams in commercial, health care, nonprofit, and municipal banking, and began her career in health care policy and regulation. Kelli holds a BA from SUNY Oswego and an MBA in Health Care Administration from Union Graduate College. She currently serves on the board of Whitney Young Health Center, previously chaired the board at the SEAT Center in Schenectady, and has served with the Interfaith Partnership for the Homeless, Capital Affordable Housing Funding Corporation, Rensselaer Regional Chamber of Commerce, and CenterState CEO. Kelli is also a dedicated mentor, supporting young professionals through both corporate and community-based initiatives.

Kevin Johnson

Executive Director of the Palace Performing Arts Center,
Known locally as the Palace Theatre

Kevin Johnson is the Executive Director of the Palace Performing Arts Center, home to Albany's iconic Palace Theatre. A serial entrepreneur, Kevin also leads ventures in real estate, film, and sports and entertainment marketing. With over 30 years of experience as a promoter, producer, and fundraiser, he brings a dynamic perspective to the Capital Region's arts and business communities. A graduate of the College of St. Rose, Kevin is deeply involved in the region, serving on boards including the Capital Region Chamber, Albany Black Chamber of Commerce, Discover Albany, and Fair-Game, while mentoring individuals and organizations across the community.

Michael Miller

Executive Vice President, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)
Northeast Shared Services

Mike joined Price Chopper/Market 32 in 1993, holding key roles across Human Resources, Merchandising, and Operations, including Director of Operations for the Market 32 brand. In June 2023, he became Executive Vice President, Chief Administrative Officer, overseeing HR, Legal, Government Affairs, Corporate Communications, and Risk Management. Mike is known for his commitment to an inclusive workforce and led the creation of Price Chopper's Hiring Advantage, which brings together HR and talent acquisition leaders to help people with disabilities develop key skills like resume writing, interview techniques, and job application navigation. He serves on the boards of NYSID and the SUNY Culinary School and holds an MBA from SUNY Albany.



MEET THE PANELISTS



Chiquita D'Arbeau

Executive Director
Albany Housing Authority

Chiquita D'Arbeau has been a dedicated professional in the public housing sector since 1996. After serving as Deputy Director of the Albany Housing Authority from 2014 to 2020, she was appointed Executive Director in 2020, where she leads efforts to provide quality housing and destigmatize public housing. Chiquita holds a BS in Community and Human Services, an Executive Director Education Certification from Rutgers University, and various leadership certifications. Her dedication has earned her multiple accolades, including the Black and Latino Achievers Award, the SUNY Empire State College Community Service Award, and the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. Women of Color Award. Actively involved in local organizations, Chiquita is also a passionate volunteer.



Patrick Doyle

Interim CEO & Youth Development Leader
Boys & Girls Club of the Capital Area

Patrick Doyle has served the Boys & Girls Clubs for 25 years, holding key leadership roles including Chief Operating Officer, Chief Development Officer, and currently Interim CEO of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Capital Area. Recognized nationally, Patrick was named a No Kid Hungry After School Meals Champion and received the National Boys & Girls Clubs Horizon Award. Locally, he's earned accolades such as Albany Business Review 40 Under 40 and the Troy Youth Award. As Interim CEO, he continues to lead efforts to expand high-quality programming, empowering youth throughout the Capital Region.

MODERATOR



Casey Seiler

Editor, Times Union

Casey Seiler is the Times Union's editor. He previously served as managing editor, Capitol Bureau chief and entertainment editor. He is a longtime contributor to WMHT's weekly political roundup "New York Now." Before arriving in Albany in 2000, Seiler worked at the Burlington Free Press in Vermont and the Jackson Hole Guide in Wyoming. A graduate of Northwestern University, Seiler is a Buffalo native who grew up in Louisville, Ky. He lives in Albany's lovely Pine Hills.



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The Times Union is the leading news organization in New York’s Capital Region. The newspaper is widely respected for its focus on local news and watchdog reporting. With a commitment to informing and engaging the community, the Times Union plays a vital role in shaping public conversation and awareness.



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF THE CAPITAL AREA

Our mission is to inspire and enable young people, especially those who need us most, to realize their full potential to become productive, caring responsible citizens. Boys & Girls Clubs provide a safe haven for more than 3 Million youth, giving them an opportunity to discover their great futures.



The Martin Group is a strategic communications and marketing agency with offices in the Capital Region and across New York State. A partner to regional and national brands, the firm helps organizations share powerful stories, shift perceptions, tackle their toughest challenges, and create lasting impact. Learn how The Martin Group makes a difference at martingroup.co.

TO OUR PARTICIPATING STAKEHOLDERS

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the dedicated community leaders and stakeholders participating in today’s roundtable discussions. Your time, insights, and collaborations are instrumental in driving meaningful progress across the Capital Region.

AND TO OUR GUESTS