

LI gets \$331M to spur ‘research corridor,’ hub projects

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The entrance to the campus of Stony Brook University is seen in an undated image. (Credit: Heather Walsh)

Long Island is receiving \$331 million to spur a proposed “research corridor” and advance the Nassau and Ronkonkoma hubs as part of the New York State budget, records show.

The budget contains funds for “research and development” projects at Stony Brook University (\$75 million), Northwell Health’s Feinstein Institute for Medical Research (\$50 million), Hofstra University’s engineering school (\$25

million), Cold Spring Harbor Lab’s Center for Therapeutic Research (\$25 million) and [MacArthur Airport renovations](#) (\$6 million).

Separately, the budget also earmarked \$85 million for the [Nassau Hub in Uniondale](#), \$50 million for the [Ronkonkoma Hub](#) near the community’s Long Island Rail Road station and \$15 million to be shared by Brookhaven National Laboratory and Stony Brook University.

The initiatives were part of a broad agenda being advanced by the Long Island Association and the Island’s state delegation.

“The idea here was to get an infusion of money for [a research corridor](#),” said state Sen. Kenneth LaValle (R-Port Jefferson). “Long Island has really become a center where we have linked higher education, our hospitals with the tech business. This money is critically important for making us competitive with other regions of New York State and the entire country.”

The Long Island Association said the funds are crucial.

“These projects will further our efforts to create a research corridor and a 21st century, innovation-based economy on Long Island,” LIA President Kevin Law said in an email.

The Island initiatives were tucked into the capital projects bill that is part of the 2016-17 state budget, which lawmakers approved Friday night. Funds for them actually were secured a year earlier, as part of a [transformative investment projects](#) plan that state lawmakers approved.

The Northwell center would be built on top of the new parking garage at the Nassau County Hub and serve as a “cutting-edge biotechnology

research and development center,” according to Law. The center would address pain and ills of the body through electrical activity, Law said. “You have the beginnings and makings of a biotech park there.”

He added, “Bioelectronic medicine has the potential to revolutionize medicine by replacing and enhancing traditional drug therapies with devices that modulate electrical activity within the nerves.”

The new school at Hofstra would help produce more engineers for a region looking to grow in biotechnology and technology sectors, Law said.

The Cold Spring Harbor center will integrate biology in human genomics with chemistry and protein data to facilitate cancer discoveries, he said.

At Stony Brook, the funding is for a “big data” and biotechnology facility. The plan is for a facility that uses high-performance computing applications to help with advances in cancer and health.

MacArthur Airport received \$6 million to build a new customs facility, also known as a federal inspection services facility, for upcoming international flights.

“You’re really seeing these projects tying in the airport and railroads with research institutions. We are planting the seeds for a new type of economy on Long Island,” Law said. “All of these projects further our efforts to create an innovation-based economy, supported by some mixed-use development improvements of our rail and air infrastructure.”

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