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UB 2020 plan represents commitment to excellence

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I take issue with the shortsighted analysis in the recent letter, “New York cannot afford expansion UB is seeking.” As a former undergraduate at the University of Rochester and a current medical student at Case Western Reserve University, I have firsthand experience with the role that institutions of higher learning can play in revitalizing Rust Belt cities: Buffalo sorely needs the solid jobs and influx of money that universities can provide.

Therefore, after the state government ran our city into the ground, asking it to provide funding for UB’s expansion is certainly acceptable, regardless of its financial situation.

More importantly, what the author derisively calls an “ego trip” is a mentality that neither he nor the rest of the area has recently seen—the demonstrable perseverance to improve the region. Not only will he catapult his institution into the academic elite, but UB President John Simpson is laying down a plan for Buffalo to reinvent itself in a post-industrial economy.

Notwithstanding that it will attract tens of thousands of young people and high quality of faculty when it is implemented, UB 2020 represents a commitment to excellence that Buffalo needs when—not if—it returns to relevancy.

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