The University at Buffalo has a climate action plan to achieve carbon neutrality, and signed the American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment, pledging to reduce or offset all of its greenhouse gas emissions. A key component to this climate action plan is addressing the impact of the University at Buffalo’s transportation system, which accounts for 25% of the university’s carbon footprint. The electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, combined with other innovative technologies, additional transportation demand initiatives, and other efforts will ultimately allow the University at Buffalo to be more energy independent and move toward its goal of being climate-neutral by 2030.

What they did

The University at Buffalo partnered with the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), ChargePoint, and National Grid to install charging stations in 2013. They were installed at three locations: Bonner Hall and Bissell Hall on the North Campus, and Diefendorf Hall on the South Campus. When classes are in session, most of the charging station spaces are restricted to students or staff with permits, otherwise they are available to the public. Charging is limited to three hours per session. For example, a professor leases a Toyota Prius plug-in and is able to use its all-electric range to commute to campus. After three hours of charging at Bonner Hall, he or she can commute home on electricity and may not use any gas for his daily travels.

ChargeNY accelerates the use of plug-in electric vehicles on the road by making infrastructure such as charging stations more available, easier to use, and more economically viable in New York State.
Support and results
The University at Buffalo shows a successful EV charging station installation in a higher education setting. The charging station locations have about one charge event or more per day. Faculty members, who tend to fit the typical EV driver profile of being educated and technically savvy with a higher income, are seen as an ideal EV user with on-campus dwell times of approximately eight hours and short average commutes. Another key element of project success was incorporating the charging stations into the university’s sustainability strategy of being climate-neutral by 2030.

Get started
Visit nysersa.ny.gov/ChargeNY or call 1-866-NYSERDA to learn how you can reduce your energy consumption and costs.