

**Testimony of Alexandra Story, Adjunct Professor
Before the Board of Trustees of the City University of New York**

**Concerning Funding for Adjunct Health Insurance
In the CUNY Budget Request (Calendar Item 3.A.)**

21 November, 2011

I'm an adjunct professor at BMCC, where I'm teaching my 7th semester of ESL writing classes for a population of students who desperately need what I can offer them, as so many of CUNY's students have English as a second language. I love my work and take it very seriously. Before getting my masters degree in TESOL, I taught ESL in small private language schools for eight years. Getting my degree and deciding to become a professor was a very conscious decision for me, and I didn't hesitate when I made the commitment to four years of graduate school and to become a professor (I was pregnant twice so it took me a while).

With difficult budget negotiations ahead of you regarding CUNY funding in general and adjunct health insurance funding in particular, I urge you to look at what we as adjuncts have brought to CUNY – the hard work the adjuncts put in for really very little money. My love of teaching and commitment to learning often seems to go mostly unrecognized, with the exception of the appreciation I receive from a great deal of my students for helping them approach their writing skills in a new way they had never thought of before.

As an adjunct professor who had thyroid cancer three years ago, and is still in need of regular medical check-ups, health insurance is crucial for me. On the wages I make as an adjunct, I am just able to barely get by as a single mother of two boys ages 5 and 8. The loss of my health insurance would be crippling to me and as much as I love teaching and find it gratifying, I would have to change careers to find one that offered health insurance.

Health insurance for adjuncts needs to be made a priority. We teach more than half of the University's courses. We put in the same work for each course as the full-time professors. We deserve to have our health needs treated equally.

CUNY has said it has a commitment to achieve adjunct health insurance from the state. I ask you to hold to that commitment, and let the State know that it is crucial that adjunct health care funds become part of the budget.

Thank you,

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