

OFFICERS

James Davis
President
Andrea Vásquez
First Vice President
Penny Lewis
Secretary
Felicia Wharton
Treasurer
Lawrence Bosket
Jennifer Gaboury
Luke Elliott-Negri
Sharon Persinger
Youngmin Seo
University-wide Officers
David Hatchett
Vice President Senior Colleges

Michael Batson
Susan Kang
George Sanchez
Senior College Officers
Sharon Utakis
Vice President
Community Colleges
Geoffrey Kurtz
Howard Meltzer
Emily Schnee
Community College Officers

Iris DeLutro
Vice President
Cross Campus Units

Myrlene Dieudonne
Amy Jeu
Janet Winter
Cross Campus Officers

Rosa Squillacote
Vice President
Part-Time Personnel

Ángel Martínez
Pamela Stenberg
Lynne Turner
Part-Time College Officers

Marva Lilly
Nancy Romer
Retiree Officers

Peter I. Hoberman
Vice President Emeritus
Cross Campus Units

STAFF

Dean Hubbard
Executive Director

Naomi Zauderer
Associate Executive Director

Faye H. Alladin
Director,
Financial Services

Deirdre Brill
Director, Organizing

Tiffany Brown
Coordinator, Legislation

Ida Cheng
Director of Strategic
Research & Special Assistant
to the President

Fran Clark
Director, Communications

Bettina Damiani
Director, Legislation

Greg Douros
Coordinator, Contract Administration

Brian Graf
Coordinator, Organizing

Denyse Procope-Gregoire
Coordinator, Membership Records

Renee Lasher
Director, Contract Administration

Faye Moore
Coordinator, Contract Administration

Ari Paul
Editor, Clarion

Emma Powell
Coordinator, Contract Administration

Samantha Sherry
Membership System Administrator

Peter Zwiebach
Director, Legal Affairs

June 10, 2021

Dear Mayor de Blasio:

We are writing as community college leaders of the Professional Staff Congress (PSC/CUNY) to ask that you recommit to supporting CUNY's community college students in the upcoming budget. Your Executive Budget calls for devastating cuts that will leave our community colleges unable to provide the neediest and least prepared students in New York City with the education they deserve.

At a time when the federal government has directed over six billion dollars to New York City to aid in our recovery from the COVID pandemic, it is unthinkable to choose this moment to defund our students' futures. Instead, we should be investing in our community colleges and CUNY as a whole. The one-time federal money CUNY has been allocated cannot function as a replacement for recurring financial commitment from the City, particularly given the unsustainability of the austerity status quo. The federal stimulus to the city budget presents a unique opportunity for the City to provide the resources our colleges need so that they can prepare New Yorkers for a generation of success.

The PSC/CUNY was proud to stand beside you with our early endorsement during your first mayoral run. Now, we call on you to remember your commitment to CUNY and to public higher education for all students regardless of their background. Additionally, we call on you to strengthen CUNY as one vital element of a broad commitment to equity and inclusion for all New Yorkers, many of whom have been left behind for far too long. The community colleges embody the promise of open admissions. Since the end of remediation at the senior colleges, we have become the key CUNY institutions that open up opportunities for thousands of students who, for many reasons, need additional academic preparation. CUNY's community colleges have a history of educating the poor, people of color, and immigrants. Now, just as our society has begun to recognize the damage caused by institutional racism, we are being forced to grapple with more austerity. A truly equitable recovery must not defund the institutions on the front lines with New York's least privileged. We have achieved great success with programs such as ASAP, veterans' programs, and Adult and Continuing Education. As a result, many of our students have gone on to obtain advanced degrees and recognition within their chosen professions. Yet, much more can be done to expand these programs to all students.

Another example, CLIP and CUNY Start are immersive and holistic semester-long programs that meet up to five hours per day to provide students with a dedicated opportunity to develop their academic skills and acquire "college knowledge," at low cost, without depleting their financial aid, prior to matriculation. Any threats to programs like these will have a long-term impact on students' ability to complete their academic careers successfully.

Specifically, we ask that you support the budget priorities listed below.

1. \$67 Million to eliminate cuts proposed in the Executive Budget.
2. \$3 Million to reinvest in one-time FY21 budget restorations.
3. Approximately \$40 Million, as requested by the CUNY administration, to provide revenue support to offset the loss in tuition from enrollment declines resulting from the pandemic.
4. \$20.4 Million for new investment in a strong public higher education system in New York City – A New Deal for CUNY.

Our city is at a critical juncture. The time to rebuild a better and more equitable New York City is now. And Borough of Manhattan, Bronx, Guttman, Hostos, Kingsborough, La Guardia, and Queensborough Community Colleges will be at the forefront of that future.

We thank you for your support.

Sharon Utakis, Vice President of Community Colleges, Bronx Community College
Emily Schnee, Community College Officer, Kingsborough Community College
Howard Meltzer, Community College Officer, Borough of Manhattan Community College
Geoffry Kurtz, Community College Officer, Borough of Manhattan Community College
Craig Bernardini, Chapter Chair, Hostos Community College
Scott Cally, Chapter Chair, Kingsborough Community College
Edmund Clingan, Chapter Chair, Queensborough Community College
Yasmin Edwards, Chapter Chair, Bronx Community College
Kathleen Offenholly, Chapter Chair, Borough of Manhattan Community College
Laura Tanenbaum, Acting Chapter Chair, LaGuardia Community College
Alia Tyner-Mullings, Chapter Chair, Guttman Community College