

# Clarion

NEWSPAPER OF THE PROFESSIONAL STAFF CONGRESS / CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK



APRIL 2014



**AT CCNY**  
**Artist & adjunct**

40 years of making art,  
18 years teaching it.

**PAGE 12**



Pat Arnow

## KNOWLEDGE IS POWER KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Knowledge is power – and if you don't know your rights, you're putting yourself in a weakened position. The PSC is holding a special contract enforcement training session on Tuesday, April 22, and Wednesday, April 23, from 12:00 to 4:00 each day at the PSC Union Hall. Any PSC member who's interested in know-

ing more about the union contract is invited to attend. To find out more, see the article inside this issue, on page 5. Above, Farah Cajuste (left), a grievance counselor in the PSC's Higher Education Officer chapter, and Howard Prince (right), a grievance counselor for full-time faculty. **PAGE 5**

### HEALTH & SAFETY Bronx Center organizes

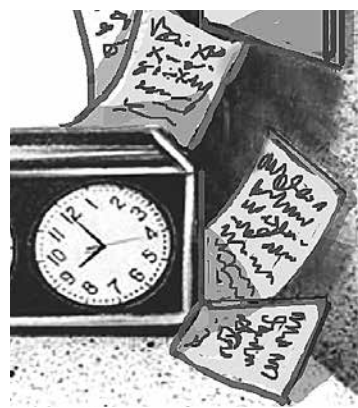
PSC members find that a collective approach gets results on long-standing health and safety problems at CUNY's Bronx Educational Opportunity Center. **PAGE 3**

### AT MEDGAR EVERS College Council says no to ROTC

President Rudy Crew says the ROTC program at Medgar Evers College will close after this semester. "The College Council vote is binding," says MEC's president. **PAGE 2**

### WORK AND/OR LIFE In search of lost time

"As I am writing this article, I should be writing something else: an email..., a letter of recommendation, notes for tomorrow's classes, comments on students' papers...." **PAGE 9**



### PSC PERSPECTIVE How to get a new contract

"When are we getting a new contract?" A letter from PSC President Barbara Bowen to PSC members about bargaining, and where we stand. **PAGE 11**



# MEC votes 'No' to ROTC on campus

By JOHN TARLETON

The Medgar Evers College Council voted decisively on February 24 against authorizing a Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program at its campus. The vote marks the first time in 25 years that a faculty governance body at CUNY has rejected an ROTC program. The final tally was 30 opposed, 21 in favor and four abstentions.

"I think the vote went the way it did because people voted their consciences," said Philip Ording, an assistant professor of mathematics and a member of the College Council.

"It's a tremendous step in CUNY schools taking a stand against militarism and for standing up for democratic governance processes," added Conor Tomás Reed, a graduate assistant in the English department at Medgar Evers College (MEC), who with Ording and others was active in organizing faculty opposition to ROTC.

## LACK OF SUPPORT

CUNY currently has Army ROTC programs at City College, York and Medgar Evers, all launched in 2013. Unlike the programs at CCNY and York, however, the fledgling ROTC program at MEC had never received approval from the school's governance body. In the vote at MEC this February 24, the ROTC curriculum proposal needed support from a majority of College Council members, or 37 votes, in order to pass. The 21 votes in favor fell far short of that mark.

On March 19, MEC President Rudy Crew announced that the col-

## College Council's historic vote ends program

lege's ROTC program would close at the end of the current semester. "The College Council vote is binding," said Crew.

The return of on-campus ROTC programs to CUNY in 2013, years after most were ended during protests over the Vietnam War, had strong backing from CUNY central administration. It followed release of an American Enterprise Institute (AEI) report that decried the lack of ROTC programs in "urban markets," and laid out a blueprint for bringing ROTC back to CUNY and other universities in New York City (see *Clarion*, December 2013).

The AEI report targeted CUNY for special attention on the grounds that City University is "among the top producers of African-American baccalaureates."

## USEFUL DEBATE

The vote by the Medgar Evers College Council marked the second consecutive setback for ROTC at CUNY this year. A plan to bring ROTC to the College of Staten Island (CSI), which CUNY central administration had announced as a fait accompli last Spring, has stalled as no department on that campus has volunteered to host an ROTC program, according to John Lawrence, chair of CSI's psychology department.

The vote at Medgar Evers followed a lengthy discussion during the College Council meeting. Opponents of ROTC criticized the military's role in US wars and armed

interventions abroad, and the high levels of PTSD, suicide and sexual attack experienced by service members. ROTC supporters responded that responsibility for US foreign policy lies with its elected officials and emphasized instead the career opportunities they said the program would offer MEC's student body, predominantly people of color.

"The military is far more diverse than the faculty and the administration at most colleges and universities," noted Wallace Ford, assistant professor in the Department of Public Administration.

Chinyere Egbe, chair of the Department of Economics and Finance, said ROTC opponents were engaged in a "misguided" protest against US policy. "War did not begin with the US. And it did not end with the US," Egbe said. "Let us give our students the opportunity to participate in the process of this country."

The points made at the MEC College Council meeting echoed a discussion at a "town hall" meeting organized on campus the week before. A panel of three speakers in favor of the ROTC and three opposed each made an opening statement, and then took questions from an audience of about 100 people. The event was model-

ed on a similar town hall meeting held at CSI last fall (see *Clarion*, December 2013). Supporters included a colonel who directs the ROTC programs at CUNY and a student currently taking part in the ROTC program at MEC; opponents included two veterans of the Iraq War, one of whom is a student at Queens College. Discussion topics included whether the Army would allow a "military science" course to be taught by an anti-militarist scholar, and if not, what that would mean for academic freedom.

"It was an incredibly useful, democratic debate," said Ording, who said he was inspired to begin organizing against ROTC on his campus after reading coverage in *Clarion* about the town hall at CSI last fall.

Although Medgar Evers College President Rudy Crew has expressed support for ROTC, during the February 24 College Council meeting he stepped aside from the podium to let faculty members share their thoughts. Crew took office last summer and has won the respect of faculty for displaying a more collegial leadership style than his predecessors.

"That was the first time in 20 years that the president of the col-

lege didn't try to bully faculty members in that kind of situation," said Nancy Oley, the College Council secretary. "I think it's a good sign that we're in a new governance environment."

The small ROTC program currently operating at MEC, hosted by the college's department of public administration, has offered 100- and 200-level courses in leadership open to all Medgar Evers students. None of the participants had yet been granted ROTC scholarships nor enrolled in the upper-level courses required for a degree in military science.

## TRUST AND CONCERN

Ford told *Clarion* his department was prepared to abide by the College Council's decision – "a vote is a vote," he said – but would wait for direction from the college administration before making any changes.

President Crew's March 19 statement outlined how the college administration would implement the College Council's decision: "As a result of the College Council vote, and in consideration of those students currently participating, the ROTC program will continue at Medgar Evers until the end of this semester." After MEC's ROTC program is closed, Crew said, "students will be able to take ROTC courses as e-permit at City College and York College," where on-campus ROTC programs continue.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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## Moral Mondays, NC to NY



In North Carolina, the Republican legislature's moves to slash public services and voting rights have brought thousands into the streets in a series of "Moral Mondays" protests. The action on February 8 (above) drew close to 80,000 people, in the largest civil rights rally in the South since the 1965 Selma-to-Montgomery march. The campaign has inspired a counterpart in NYC, targeting Albany for budget and policy decisions that increase economic inequality. For more info, follow Moral Mondays NYC on Facebook and Twitter.

## Don't cut retiree email accounts

● The CUNY administration is beginning to implement a policy of denying retired faculty and professional staff continued access to their college email accounts. It is forcing them to move instead to new, non-college, Microsoft-hosted email accounts that are CUNY in the "cuny.edu" name only, in violation of the negotiated terms of our last contract.

For CUNY retirees, their college email addresses are critical to maintaining professional contacts, responding to requests for letters of recommendation, etc., and their loss may mean losing years of professional correspondence and possibly access to library electronic resources.

The University's stated position on retired faculty access to college email is that it cannot allow continued access because New York State does not allow individuals who are off the state payroll to use State resources. CUNY's position is demonstrably incorrect since SUNY retired faculty are not only allowed to continue to use SUNY resources – they are encouraged to do so.

The New York State Code of Rules and Regulations includes SUNY policy statements that define the privileges of emeritus status (granted to almost all SUNY faculty retirees) as including the following:

*"Emeritus rank shall carry with it such of the following privileges which in the judgment of the chief administrative officer are feasible: use of library and study facilities, use of office and laboratory space, eligibility for research grants, and representation of the University in professional groups."* (8 NYCRR 339.5)

Several SUNY websites explicitly list continuation of college email – and access to electronic library resources – as among the perquisites granted to retired faculty.

In view of SUNY policy on retired faculty, there is no basis for New York State to object to CUNY faculty and professional staff retirees maintaining the same email and library privileges that SUNY retirees enjoy.

I am totally bewildered as to why the CUNY administration and Board of Trustees are not actively fighting

for the same strong relationship between CUNY and its emeritus faculty that SUNY clearly cherishes.

**Bonnie Nelson**  
Professor and Associate Librarian for  
Information Systems  
John Jay College

PSC First Vice President Steve London responds: *I share Professor Nelson's bewilderment at CUNY's policies toward retirees and professors emeriti. The PSC reached an impasse with CUNY central administration in negotiations on implementing a reasonable email policy for retirees. What should have been a simple, straightforward negotiation over implementation of the agreed-to contractual provision turned into protracted discussions of how CUNY could protect itself from retirees who might not adhere to relevant CUNY policies or might misrepresent who they are. The union did not agree with the restrictive and insulting practices demanded by CUNY. The PSC will continue to pursue implementation policies that value the historic ties between retirees and the University.*



# Timesheet petition makes waves

By PETER HOGNESS

A petition demanding that CUNY negotiate with the PSC over the impact of its rigid new timesheet has been signed by more than 2,500 people – a majority of all CUNY professional staff.

At *Clarion* press time, the petition had been signed by a total of 2,515 employees in the Higher Education Officer (HEO) and College Laboratory Technician (CLT) series, as well as Research Associates and Assistants who are also affected by the new timesheet. At CUNY campuses where the new timesheet is already being used, two-thirds of HEOs and CLTs added their names.

“The response to the petition has been dramatic,” said Iris DeLutro, PSC vice president for professional staff. “People are saying that CUNY needs to negotiate. We work long hours, and often irregular hours, to make this University run. CUNY

## More than 2,500 signatures

needs to recognize and compensate us for *all* of the time we work.”

The strong response from union members has brought forth a response from management. “CUNY has already come to the table,” PSC President Barbara Bowen told the March 13 Delegate Assembly. “We are in ‘discussions’ and making progress.” And management has been willing to consider some changes.

### NOT NINE-TO-FIVE

HEOs and CLTs required to use the new timesheets have complained that they are built around assumptions that don’t reflect the actual work of CUNY professional staff – as if everyone worked only from 9:00 to 5:00, Monday through Friday. Professional staff often work at night or on weekends, and they say the new timesheet’s one-size-fits-all approach doesn’t allow them

to accurately record the time they work. Many also report that supervisors don’t permit recording time worked beyond 35 hours, even when the job requires it.

“Because of our professionalism and commitment, we routinely stay late to staff registration, work through our lunch hours because students need us, respond to late-night calls to repair computer systems, spend nights and weekends writing grants, and more,” the petition says. “We understand our responsibilities as professionals, including the responsibility to record time worked....[But] the rigid timesheet format reveals a lack of understanding of the work we do and the complexity of a university workplace.”

Management’s unilateral imposition of a new system “insults our pro-

fessionalism,” the statement says.

Discontent with the new timesheet even extends beyond those who must use it to record their own hours. “Even from a supervisor’s point of view, these timesheets are a nightmare,” said a CCNY employee in an online comment. “It’s much easier to review a subtractive timesheet than this mess.”

### Signed by a majority of CUNY’s professional staff.

HEO and CLT chapter activists who circulated the petition said it got a strong response. “This has been the biggest campaign I’ve been involved in since I became a grievance counselor in 2008,” said Zoraida Hernandez, a Higher Education Associate who works at Brooklyn College in its Center for Academic Advisement and Student Success. “We had a very good turnout at the first campus HEO meeting where it was discussed. People there not only signed, they volun-

teered to circulate the petition in their departments.”

### UNION-BUILDING

Luis-Alfredo Cartagena, a Senior CLT in the Modern Languages Department at BMCC, said there was also a good response among his college’s CLTs. “Besides getting a lot of signatures on the petition,” he said, “it also became a way for people to get to know each other, to find out more about the issues that the union has fought for in the past and what we are working to maintain.”

HEOs, CLTs and employees in Research titles say that CUNY’s approach to the timesheet issue has shown a lack of respect for the professionalism and dedication they bring to their work every day. Through the petition, they’ve said collectively that this is not acceptable – and that there must be a different approach to how their time is recorded.

# Bronx Center gets problems fixed

By CLARION STAFF

Each year, more than a thousand students enroll at the Bronx Educational Opportunity Center (EOC), a CUNY center that provides job training, college preparation, college placement and more at no cost to low-income New Yorkers. But in recent years, Bronx EOC students, faculty and staff have studied and worked in severely deteriorating conditions.

A sinkhole grew in the parking lot for three years. The main entrance door and two emergency exit doors were difficult or impossible to open and shut. Offices and classrooms were sometimes so cold that occupants wore coats, hats and gloves all day. Black dust everywhere, broken and missing ceiling tiles, filthy walls in need of fresh paint, soiled carpets in need of cleaning, and occasional vermin sightings all contributed to a demoralizing atmosphere.

“You have to understand the students’ perspective,” said Frank Muñoz, the Bronx EOC’s PSC chapter chair. “This is a free program. Things are so dilapidated, it makes you say to yourself, ‘Since it’s free, why should I ask for anything more?’”

### COLLECTIVE ACTION

The PSC represents 14 faculty and professional staff at the Bronx EOC, which is housed in leased space in the Bathgate Industrial Park. Facilities upkeep has been a longtime problem and it has progressively worsened. With the EOC lease set to expire in two years and repeated individual complaints making no impact, Muñoz and many others were convinced that nothing would change until the EOC moved to a new location.

## Health & safety at issue



Frank Muñoz and Jean Grassman worked with other PSC members to fix health and safety hazards at CUNY’s Bronx Educational Opportunity Center.

But he was inspired to try a collective approach after he saw a presentation at a union meeting last fall about another PSC chapter’s successful campaign to secure \$30 million in capital funding to address chronic facilities issues. Bronx Community College Chapter Chair Sharon Persinger and health and safety activist Leslie deGierye described a joint student-faculty effort to document shameful and dangerous conditions at BCC. The campaign included writing postcards and lobbying City Council

members in person to draw attention to the problems, including an enormous sinkhole on the BCC campus (see “Repairs Put Bronx CC ‘On the Right Track,’” *Clarion*, November 2013).

Following BCC’s example, Muñoz organized Bronx EOC members and worked together with members of AFSCME District Council 37, who also work at the EOC, to systematically document every critical maintenance need. Members of both unions contributed by documenting the issues within their

respective departments. The two union chapters then jointly wrote to management last October 18, in a memo that described conditions. The memo reads as a catalog of neglect, detailing conditions such as the following:

*The male bathroom by the main entrance has had a water leak since October 3, 2013, and no repairs have been made. The stalls in all of the bathrooms have no locks. They are disgustingly filthy, rusted and have been broken for years. The urinals and toilets are leaky and when flushed water sprays from the pipes. Several sinks are out of order with no running water, and the ones that do work spray water when the faucets are opened. The ceilings are missing tiles exposing the catwalks and fiberglass insulation. The floors have a constant smell of urine.*

The joint union memo called the learning and working conditions of students, faculty and staff “unacceptable” and gave EOC management two weeks to respond.

Persinger and the Executive Committee of the BCC chapter then invited Muñoz to a labor-management meeting with the Bronx Community College administration on November 12. BCC has administrative responsibility for the Bronx EOC.

“It was really positive to work with another chapter and share resources,” Persinger said, “particularly because we’re dealing with the same management and facing the same kinds of issues.”

Repair work finally began later that week. Today, many of the long-

neglected facilities issues have been corrected. All eight bathrooms have been completely renovated. The parking lot has been entirely regraded, although a final paving has been delayed by the winter weather. Indoor air quality has improved after the HVAC system was rebalanced and vent filters were replaced. Two additional custodians have been added to the staff to help with routine cleaning. More work remains to be done, but Muñoz says that PSC members at the Bronx EOC are proud of what has already been accomplished.

### POWER OF UNITY

“It’s still a work in progress,” said David Smith, a CLT at the Bronx EOC. “But it’s like you can see a light at the end of the tunnel. It makes you feel like they heard our voices and things are going to keep getting better.”

### Organizing to end a history of neglect

“This just shows the power of unity,” Muñoz said. “With the two unions coming together, we voiced the opinion of the staff, students, visitors and the larger community. And we made an amazing difference.”

Jean Grassman, co-chair of the PSC Environmental Health & Safety Watchdogs, advised the Bronx EOC chapter throughout the process and visited the EOC facility on November 25 for a site inspection.

“There are nearly 300 buildings across the CUNY campuses, and many are in need of extensive repairs,” Grassman told *Clarion*, “The Bronx EOC chapter has shown again that it is possible to change the physical conditions at CUNY by working together and using the leverage of the union.”

*If you have unsafe conditions on your campus, contact the Watchdogs at 212-354-1252 or hswatchdogs@pscmail.org.*



# State budget in the balance

By PETER HOGNESS

As *Clarion* went to press, the New York State budget was the focus of a down-to-the-wire fight, and the outcome – for CUNY funding and for the budget as a whole – was hard to predict.

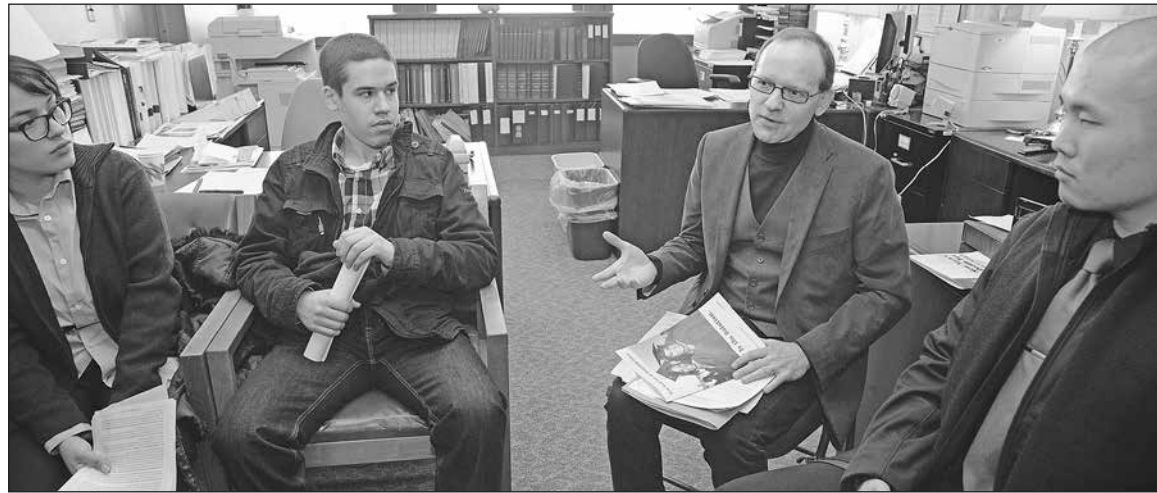
The starting point for the State budget process is the governor's executive budget proposal. Governor Andrew Cuomo's budget plan, released in January, called for large tax breaks for New York's big banks and corporations – but failed to fund nearly \$50 million of CUNY's mandatory cost increases. The underfunding of CUNY's expenses for heat, electricity, building rentals and more was one of many austerity measures that Cuomo proposed in order to pay for his tax-cut plan.

"By siphoning off huge amounts of money into tax cuts for the wealthy, Cuomo's budget forces everyone else into an austerity situation – competing for a small piece of the pie," said PSC First Vice President Steve London.

## UNION ACTION

PSC members and CUNY students went to Albany in February and March to push for a progressive budget solution. And as budget negotiations entered their final days before the April 1 deadline, the union

## Tax cuts for big banks vs. CUNY funding



From left: Students Alexandra Portilla (Brooklyn College) and Alex Nuñez (City Tech); Ron Hayduk, professor of political science, and Danny Zhou, student (both from Queens College). They lobbied for CUNY funding in Albany on Feb. 26.

was among those fighting down to the wire, joining a March 21 rally at State Sen. Marty Golden's office in Bay Ridge to demand he drop his support for tax cuts for the rich.

Budget proposals from the New York Assembly and the State Senate initially looked somewhat better for CUNY – but on the State Senate side, those numbers were not backed by any real funding plan. The Senate's budget bill was widely criticized as a "wish list" designed to appease

constituents, while approving tax breaks for the rich that would have to be paid for by deep budget cuts in the future.

At press time, the total amount of revenue that will actually be available in this year's State budget was very much up for grabs, and that conflict could have a bigger impact on CUNY funding than the number in any paper plan.

Cuomo's tax cuts ranged from eliminating a bank tax worth about

\$300 million per year, to reducing the corporate tax rate from 7.1% to 6.5% (more than \$300 million annually), to slashing the estate tax at a cost of nearly \$200 million per year.

The Assembly's budget plan went along with eliminating the bank tax, but did not give Cuomo his corporate tax reduction. While State Sen. Jeff Klein, leader of the breakaway Independent Democratic Caucus, had announced that the Senate's budget bill would not eliminate

the bank tax, the actual text of the Senate's bill said otherwise. The Senate's bill was in fact full of tax breaks for the wealthiest New Yorkers, including a sales tax reduction for those who buy private planes.

Meanwhile, conflicts raged in Albany over a host of issues related to economic inequality: Mayor Bill de Blasio's universal pre-K plan; reform of New York's Tuition Assistance Plan (see *Clarion*, February 2014); the NYS Dream Act; a charter school power grab and more. The intensity of the clashes reflected what the website Politico.com summed up as "the 1% fight[ing] back hard" against the progressive momentum coming out of November's NYC elections.

## REPUBLICANS FOR CUOMO

When Politico interviewed billionaire Ken Langone, founder of Home Depot and head of Republicans for Cuomo, he compared critics of rising economic inequality to "what Hitler was saying in Germany," which he summed up as a politics of "envy" and "jealousy." Langone had most recently been in the news for saying that Pope Francis should back off on his criticisms of excessive wealth.

A wide coalition of economic-justice groups, from the Alliance for Quality Education to the New York Labor-Religion Coalition, called on Cuomo "to repudiate [these] remarks by Ken Langone" and to return Langone's political donations. The governor, however, declined to do so.

# Pathways lawsuits dismissed

By PETER HOGNESS

On February 21, Judge Anil Singh dismissed a lawsuit challenging the original Pathways resolution adopted by CUNY's Board of Trustees. The suit had been filed by leaders of the PSC and CUNY's University Faculty Senate (UFS).

"We maintain that the initial Pathways resolution was passed in violation of the law and feel confident that our position will eventually be upheld," responded PSC President Barbara Bowen and UFS Chair Terrence Martell in a joint statement. The union and UFS are consulting with attorneys about legal strategy and a decision on filing an appeal.

"Nothing in the legal decision changes the terrible impact Pathways is having on our students or the importance of our collective fight for a curriculum that offers a meaningful college education," the PSC and UFS leaders emphasized. "Pathways is wrong for our students, it represents a betrayal of CUNY's mission, and we will continue our resistance."

In its efforts to dismiss faculty actions against Pathways, the CUNY administration has so far won in one arena and lost in another. Two months before Judge Singh ruled for CUNY in court, an arbitrator had rejected CUNY's request to dismiss a PSC grievance over Path-

## Union, UFS consider appeal

ways implementation (see *Clarion*, January 2014). Arbitration hearings on the merits of the grievance are still to be scheduled.

Outside of the courtroom and the grievance process, Bowen and Martell noted that the overwhelming faculty opposition to Pathways has forced CUNY to make the first substantive changes to the administration-imposed curriculum (see *Clarion*, February 2014), and that the problems with Pathways have become an issue in New York City politics (see pages 6-7).

## FACULTY ROLE

At issue in the lawsuit was the role of elected faculty bodies in formulating CUNY policy on curriculum. In briefs and in oral arguments last November 6, the PSC and UFS described how CUNY administrators had designed and implemented Pathways through a series of brand-new administration-appointed committees, instead of through CUNY's elected faculty senates. The union and the UFS charged that this violated a 1997 settlement in an earlier lawsuit, *Polishook v. CUNY*.

As part of the *Polishook* settlement, the Board of Trustees had adopted

a resolution reaffirming "that the faculty, in accordance with CUNY Bylaws section 8.6 'shall be responsible, subject to guidelines, if any, as established by the board, for the formulation of policy relating to the admission and retention of students,...curriculum, awarding of college credit, and granting of degrees,'" and that this should be done "through the college faculty senates...or the University Faculty Senate." While the PSC-UFS lawsuit did not contest the board's right to ultimately make its own decision, it insisted that the role of faculty senates was not optional.

Judge Singh disagreed. CUNY Bylaws, he ruled, "do not provide that the faculty and Faculty Senate have the exclusive right to formulate academic policy," and "the 1997 resolution did not...limit the board's power to initiate policy." Therefore, he concluded, the court had no grounds to interfere with the trustees' Pathways decisions, and the lawsuit must be dismissed.

A second lawsuit by the union, charging violations of the state's Open Meetings Law, was also dismissed by Judge Singh. In this case

the PSC detailed how, after many college senates refused to approve Pathways courses, a number of college administration decided, in private, what Pathways courses to submit to CUNY central administration. Since college senates are subject to New York's Open Meetings Law, the arrogation of their decision-making to a private administration meeting was in violation of that law, the union said.

But Judge Singh's dismissal of this case did not address Pathways decisions at the college level. Instead, he found that CUNY trustees and central administration had not violated the Open Meetings Law in their own actions on Pathways, and he then moved to dismiss this second suit.

To initiate an appeal in either of the two cases, the PSC and UFS must file the first papers in April.

## ARBITRATION

The December arbitration ruling followed a different chain of reasoning, rejecting CUNY's request for dismissal of the PSC's contractual grievance over Pathways implementation. It held that the PSC had the right to bring this grievance under terms of the union contract, because "faculty duties and responsibilities with respect to curriculum development and implementation" are a "fundamental condition of employ-

ment at any academic institution."

The arbitrator's ruling did not speak to the merits of the grievance filed by the PSC, which charges that the implementation of Pathways has violated various elements of the union contract. But it held that faculty rights on curriculum are within the scope of the contract, and that the union's arguments on the merits of its case should therefore be heard – something that CUNY had tried to prevent. Further action on the union grievance is expected later this year.

## ON CAMPUS

In the wake of the administration's first substantive changes to Pathways (see *Clarion*, January 2014), faculty at the campus level continued to express opposition to the new general education rules. In addition to testimony before the City Council (see pages 6-7), the Brooklyn College PSC chapter unanimously approved an anti-Pathways resolution for submission to the Stated Meeting of the college's faculty on April 8. Declaring that "Pathways has significantly undermined the educational standards at Brooklyn College, including the elimination of science labs, speech and foreign language requirements," the resolution says that CUNY and college administrations must respect the faculty's role in curriculum decisions.

Noting that BC's Faculty Council is moving to "develop new general education requirements at Brooklyn College," the resolution calls on administrators to implement "whatever general education requirements are adopted by the Faculty Council."



# Knowing your contract

The PSC will hold a contract enforcement training session on April 22 and 23, from 12:00 to 4:00 pm each day at the PSC Union Hall. Clarion's Peter Hogness spoke with Debra Bergen, the PSC's director of contract enforcement, about what's planned:

**Q Who is this workshop for?**

**A** Any PSC member who's interested in knowing more about the union contract is invited to attend. Knowledge is power, and any time you don't know your rights, or your colleagues' rights, you are putting yourself in a weaker position. By learning more, you can make yourself stronger and make the union stronger.

**Q It's aimed at chapter leaders, as well as grievance counselors?**

**A** Definitely. Any chapter leader, anyone active on their campus, would find it worthwhile to attend.

The contract enforcement training is of course important for prospective grievance counselors – and for current grievance counselors if they want to sharpen their skills. If you're thinking about becoming a grievance counselor in the future, and you want to know more about what that means – well, this is a great way to find out.

The bottom line, though, is something that Barbara Bowen often says – this is information that every union member should have. And everyone who wants to learn about the contract is welcome.

**Q What's different about the training this year?**

**A** We generally hold an eight-week training program on contract enforcement every Fall. We'll do that again this Fall, but this Spring we are offering an opportunity to learn the essential information about our contractual rights in a special two-day workshop in the afternoons of Tuesday and Wednesday, April 22 and 23.

We're doing this for a number of reasons, but one of them is that we rely on members to be grievance counselors, and we need members willing to step forward into the role. The big changes in the administration on some campuses in recent years mean that it's more important than ever for our members to be aware of their rights. Colleges have appointed new presidents, who have appointed new labor designees [a college administration's officer for labor relations]. And all too often, they don't know the contract. So we've seen a sharp rise in contract violations, often involving really basic issues.

This year, we've found ourselves revisiting issues that have already

## Training session April 22 & 23



From left: Danny Lynch, a grievance counselor for full-time faculty; and Ruben Rangel, a grievance counselor for adjuncts.

been the subject of PSC grievances, where we've already won in arbitration, and where our position has been sustained. So we are now in the process of having to educate college administrators about these basics of the contract, because CUNY doesn't do it.

**Q So you're seeing more contract violations, as well as more elementary kinds of contract violations, than in the past?**

**A** Yes, exactly. And that highlights the importance of PSC members knowing the contract, and knowing it well. Because if you don't know the contract, your rights may be violated and you may not even be aware of it. Or someone else in your department may be treated unfairly, and they won't know that there is something they could do about it.

It is important that every campus chapter have an appointed grievance counselor who is available to members so that as contract violations occur we can identify them and act. Every campus needs a grievance counselor – but the grievance counselor still can't be everywhere at once. That is why we also need a broad network of members who know the contract well and can spread that knowledge to other members.

As the university has become more corporatized, management has become more rigid and less respectful of academic values such as consultation and collegiality. As a result, union members have to become more vigilant in knowing their rights and enforcing them.

**Q What kind of information will be presented at the training workshop, and how are the sessions organized?**

**A** The first day is an overview of basic contract rights and the union's contract enforcement operation. We'll review key provisions of the contract, for example those that affect untenured and uncertificated members of both the faculty and professional staff – observations, evaluations, junior faculty released time, overtime. We'll cover those sections and more – provisions that affect full-time faculty, part-time faculty and professional staff.

We'll also look at how the union is structured for contract enforcement, and how the PSC Central Office works with the chapters at the campus level to carry it out. We'll also focus on the rights that the contract provides for union activity, so that chapter activists know what

rights they have to communicate with members and to be provided with facilities and services, the right to bulletin boards or discussions on campus email, things of that nature.

And we'll take a general look at university policies that our members have to comply with and that sometimes they are accused of violating, which will lead us to a discussion of investigatory meetings and our members' right to union representation when those occur.

**Q And the second day?**

**A** The second day there will be some hands-on skill-building. We'll also talk about labor-management meetings and what tools you can use to make those

more effective.

So, we'll look at the grievance process, how you investigate, prepare and present a Step One and a Step Two grievance. We're hoping to bring in a panel of grievance counselors and have them speak to their experiences. We'll look at what the contract provides for grievance and arbitration process, what is the authority of the arbitrator, and what to expect in terms of remedies when the contract has been violated.

For instance, if someone is denied a reappointment with tenure and we can show that the college president's stated reasons for that decision are arbitrary, not based on the record of guidance, an arbitrator may overturn that denial. But that doesn't mean the person who's been wronged will automatically get tenure: the arbitrator doesn't have that power. What an arbitrator can do is order that the decision be reviewed by an independent committee, which makes an independent academic judgment on the members' professional record, potentially overturning the non-reappointment.

**Q Can you say more about the skill-building?**

**A** Sure. We'll do some exercises on how to address workplace issues without going through the grievance process – how to develop strategies, how to organize union members around an issue.

We'll also do some hands-on role-playing on how to conduct a labor-management meeting. On some campuses there is a lot of frustration around labor-management meetings. The chapter may have presented an issue numerous times, and each time management will shake their heads and say, "We'll follow up," but nothing gets done.

For labor-management meetings to be as effective as possible, I think we need to give chapter leaders some ammunition that they can use in countering management's responses: What kinds of tools does the contract provide? What's the most effective way to present the issues, and how do we make the college administration more accountable? We aim to help people improve their skills.

**Q What's your goal for the contract enforcement training?**

**A** We want people to walk away with a sense that, yes, I know what my basic rights are and I understand how the contract is being enforced. And that maybe I'd like to be a part of that.

*The contract enforcement training will be held April 22 and 23, from 12:00 to 4:00 pm each day, at the PSC Union Hall. To sign up to attend, RSVP to dbergen@pscmail.org no later than April 11.*

## CALENDAR

**MONDAY, APRIL 7 / 1:00-3:00 pm:** The Retirees Chapter Meeting will host Connie Razza, Director for Strategic Research on Economic Justice, Wall Street Accountability, Immigrant & Civil Rights at the Center for Popular Democracy. PSC Union Hall, 61 Broadway, 16th floor. For info, email bfriedheim@gmail.com.

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9 / 6:30 pm:** "Saving CUNY's Past," a public program launching the CUNY Digital History Archive. Discussions will include *The Fight for Open Admissions, 1969-1976*, and *Student Activism against Cutbacks, 1980s-present*. Sponsored by American Social History Project/Center for Media and Learning. CUNY Graduate Center, Segal Theatre, 365 Fifth Avenue. For info, email cuny.dha@gmail.com.

**FRIDAY, APRIL 11 / 4:00 pm:** "First Fridays" adjunct meeting. PSC Union Hall, 61 Broadway, 16th floor. For info, contact Marcia Newfield at mnewfield@pscmail.org.

**FRIDAY, APRIL 11 / 6:00-9:00 pm:** Labor Goes to the Movies screens *Vidas Secas* (1963), on the struggle for life of skilled but landless peasants in the drought-ridden northeast of Brazil. A classic of the Cinema Novo movement of the 1960s. PSC Union Hall, 61 Broadway, 16th floor. For info, see psc-cuny.org.

**TUESDAY, APRIL 22 / 12:00-4:00 pm:** An Introduction to Contract Enforcement and the Grievance Process (see article, left). Day One of a two-day workshop: Overview of the contract. PSC Union Hall, 61 Broadway, 16th floor. RSVP to Debra Bergen at dbergen@pscmail.org, no later than April 11, 2014.

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23 / 12:00-4:00 pm:** An Introduction to Contract Enforcement and the Grievance Process (see article, left). Day Two of a two-day workshop: Skill-building. PSC Union Hall, 61 Broadway, 16th floor. RSVP to Debra Bergen at dbergen@pscmail.org, no later than April 11, 2014.

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23 / 5:30 pm reception, 6:00 pm presentation:** Academic Freedom Forum on Purging CUNY Faculty: Lessons of the Forties and Fifties for Today. A talk by Marjorie Heins, author of *Priests of Our Democracy: The Supreme Court, Academic Freedom, and the Anti-Communist Purge*. Commentary by Frank Deale, CUNY Law School, on the implications for CUNY today. PSC Union Hall, 61 Broadway, 16th floor.

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 7 / 9:00 am-4:00 pm:** CUNY at the Council. Join PSC members & students for grassroots lobbying on CUNY funding. Meet with City Council members in their 250 Broadway offices. Sign up beforehand at psc-cuny.org/CUNYatCouncil2014.



# What Pathways means in CUNY

Speakers from more than a dozen campuses testified at the New York City Council Higher Education Committee's first hearing on the CUNY administration's Pathways curriculum. Below are excerpts from some of the testimony at the February 25 hearing, which included many specific accounts of how Pathways has begun to undermine CUNY students' education.

**MICHAEL BATSON**  
Adjunct Lecturer in History  
College of Staten Island

I teach in a program at the College of Staten Island taken by all incoming freshmen, designed to introduce them to the major ideas, institutions and issues of the United States. The course plays an important part in socializing freshmen to the college experience, helping them move from merely summarizing to analyzing, working with them on building critical thinking skills, and teaching them how to create sustained and supported arguments.... Now that the course has been reduced from four credits to three, we are being asked to cover the same material in 45 hours instead of 60. That reduction in contact hours can only come at the expense of depth, breadth and rigor.

What is happening in this one particular course is taking place across the entire curriculum, from the humanities to the natural sciences, and across every campus at CUNY.... I would ask that this policy be revisited. Where the motivation is to help our students, we can find common ground. The administration, faculty and students working together can talk about the real issues affecting graduation rates, and work on solutions that don't water down our students' education.



Saavik Ford, Associate Professor of Astronomy at BMCC

**SAAVIK FORD**  
Associate Professor of Astronomy  
Borough of Manhattan Community College  
At BMCC, pre-Pathways, our liberal arts majors took two science courses, each with a rigorous lab, each for five hours per week. Now they take two science courses, only one with a lab, each meeting for only

## City Council examines impact on students



Barbara Bowen, PSC President

three hours per week. Our students deserve more than three-fifths of a science class....

Current national best practice is a four-credit laboratory class, meeting for at least five hours per week for non-science majors. We invite national ridicule – not to mention transfer problems – by shortening our courses at the expense of understanding. In our increasingly scientific and technical world, when people must be scientifically literate to participate in many of our political discussions, cutting time on science leaves our students disenfranchised as citizens of the future....

Given CUNY's long, proud history as a leader in science, and the fact that this is the CUNY Decade of Science, I implore you to let the faculty fix the transfer situation – without diminishing the scientific rigor of a CUNY degree.

**SETH LIPNER**  
Professor of Law  
Baruch College

I am chair of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee at [Baruch's] Zicklin School [of Business], a position I have held for 21 years.... During my tenure on the curriculum committee, Baruch College developed and implemented what I consider to be the two most signal advancements in our curriculum: the advent of "communication intensive courses" stressing writing and speech (and the requirement that our students take a set number of such courses in order to graduate), and a requirement that our business majors take a minor in a liberal arts subject of their choosing. These minors all include a liberal arts "capstone" course that emphasizes both critical thinking and high-level oral and written communication....

Eighty percent of Baruch College students will graduate with degrees in business. Business students take more than half their college credits in business, professional and technical subjects. It is especially important that these business stu-

dents, who will compete for jobs with students from the best private and public institutions, gain both the communication skills and the depth of general knowledge which these curricular innovations foster.

Unfortunately, the Pathways general education rules allow many transfer students to pursue a less rigorous, lowest-common-denominator curriculum that permits them to avoid fulfilling these two degree requirements.... By permitting such students to avoid these and other previously existing degree requirements, the Pathways general education rules threaten to harm our educational efforts and damage our college's reputation for excellence....

It is not too late for CUNY to reconsider and amend the Pathways general education program.

**NIVEDITA MAJUMDAR**  
Associate Professor of English  
John Jay College

Will Pathways improve graduation rates? The primary reason for low graduation rates in CUNY has to do with the demographics of our student body. Our largely immigrant and working-class students have to negotiate work schedules and family responsibilities while attending college. Based on conversations with my students over the years, I know that the decision to drop out is always an extremely difficult one. Their decision has little to do with curriculum; it is almost always a question of time and financial resources. How will a program like Pathways that streamlines curriculum help with this core problem?...

[Pathways'] reduction in the general education curriculum ensures that our students are denied a well-rounded liberal arts education. It means students could graduate with a bachelor's degree without ever having taken a literature or a history course, or without any train-

ing in a foreign language, or with reduced time in science labs. Our students are thus denied the intrinsic value of a good education. We also know that for higher levels of the job market, both in the public and private sectors, employers seek candidates with well-honed analytical skills, something acquired through a well-rounded and not a vocationalized education. Pathways ensures that our students will be equipped to fill only a certain stratum of the job market....

Pathways works against CUNY's admirable mission of providing quality education to the underprivileged population of the city. As educators we know that our students are capable and deserving of the best. We do need to engage with the question of graduation rates, but let us not try to do that at the expense of providing the best possible education to our students.

**JONATHAN NATOV**  
Professor of Mathematics  
New York City College of Technology

I am the coordinator of [City Tech's] bachelor of science degree program in applied mathematics.

The applied mathematics program at City Tech was designed to be practical. With extensive input from our industry advisory board, we put together a professionally oriented program. A key feature was the areas of concentration, which allowed students to study mathematical applications in depth. In 2007, our external evaluator praised our program as being an "exemplar" of the mission of City Tech.

Under Pathways, however, we face the challenge of having diluted degree requirements. Essentially the problem is that bachelor of science degrees can no longer specify courses in the common core. The result is that specified upper-level courses are replaced by lower-level unspecified courses....

**Pathways undermines quality ed for students.**



"We are the 92%": A reminder of last May's "no confidence" vote on Pathways.



Inez Barron, the new chair of the City Council's

For example, to progress to upper-level engineering courses, students need to take physics. Under Pathways, we must accept any science. To ensure students take physics, and keep our degree requirements to a strict 120-credit limit, we must now make room for physics by cutting other courses. Unfortunately, the cut courses have to be upper-level. Clearly, we cannot cut the lower-level engineering courses, as they are prerequisites for upper-level courses.

Our hope is that students interested in applied mathematics make good choices so as to allow them access to upper-level coursework, but we cannot guarantee it. Before Pathways, calculus was the minimal contributory math course and that is appropriate for applied mathematics. Under Pathways, the first contributory course is likely to be a lower-level college algebra course.

Surely the intention was not to lower the standards of a bachelor of science degree, but that is the result.

**MANFRED PHILIPP**  
Professor of Chemistry  
Former Chair, University Faculty Senate  
Lehman College

CUNY's trustees voted for Pathways over the opposition of college senates across the system. My college senate, representing faculty, students and administration, has voted twice to oppose the implementation of Pathways. My opposition to Pathways is informed by my 36-plus years of experience in CUNY.

[To cite one] of the many reasons why my colleagues and I oppose Pathways.... Pathways will act to reduce graduation rates by releasing community college students from the need to complete the community college associate's degree. Pathways does this by allowing students to transfer all of their course credits to the senior colleges before graduation.

Prior to CUNY's Pathways, Lehman College would readily accept community college core curriculum credits whenever the student completed the community college



# classrooms



Dave Sanders

## Higher Education Committee

curriculum with an associate's degree. Pathways, by severing credit transfer from community college graduation, confronts those transfer students with a senior college curriculum that they often are not ready to handle. The unique ability of community college faculty to prepare their students for the more rigorous senior college curricula is wasted. Not only that – having

students leave before graduation harms community colleges by reducing their graduation rates....

By allowing premature transfer with full transfer of credit, Pathways fosters a population of students that leaves CUNY with *no degree at all*, [without] the associate's degree that they could have received had they not transferred early....

Pathways is a disgrace. The vast majority of my full-time colleagues in all parts of CUNY have voted *no confidence* in Pathways. We ask... to abolish Pathways and return the CUNY curriculum to the status prior to Pathways implementation.

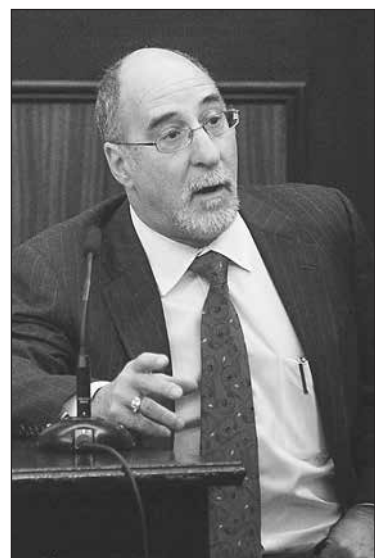
### KATE SCHOWE

College Laboratory Technician  
John Jay College

I am a College Laboratory Technician [CLT] for environmental and natural science courses. Four of the five lab courses I am responsible for are Pathways labs. I am the CLT for 13 sections of Pathways labs every week, allowing me to directly observe the impact [that] limiting lab contact hours to one hour per week is having on our students and faculty.

After all students arrive and instructors give a brief overview of the purpose of the lab and methods, the students are left with, at the very most, 30 minutes to complete the lab exercise and 10 minutes to complete the lab report. I often hear students complain that there is not enough time. From my experience, I would estimate one-third of the students are able to comfortably complete the lab in 40 minutes.... The remainder often feel...rushed and/or confused.... The instructors and students [often have] no time to discuss the results at the end of a lab, or...to provide detailed, thoughtful answers to lab report questions.

I recently was the CLT for a lab section in which the instructor began lab with a brief presenta-



Dave Sanders

Seth Lipner, Prof. of Law at Baruch

## How is Pathways affecting you and your students?

**DESPITE CUNY** central administration's recent announcement that some changes in its Pathways curriculum must be revised in large part because of intense and sustained faculty criticism, the most harmful provisions of Pathways remain in place. This announcement was joined to the central administration's declaration that Pathways will be assessed.

If review of Pathways is to be thorough and unbiased, however, it is essential that it reflect the concrete experiences of those "on the front lines" – the faculty and staff who work with CUNY students every day. It is for

this reason that we are requesting that you weigh in on your experience with Pathways. How has Pathways affected the particular courses you teach or programs with which you are familiar? How is Pathways affecting your students? You can describe your experiences with Pathways online, at [tinyurl.com/Pathways-Experience](http://tinyurl.com/Pathways-Experience).

With a new chancellor about to take office, with evaluation of Pathways in progress, it's an important time to speak out about how Pathways is affecting your work and your students' education. Please go to [tinyurl.com/Pathways-Experience](http://tinyurl.com/Pathways-Experience) and add your voice.

tion and discussion in order to ensure that students understood the purpose of the lab and relevant background information. In a traditional lab course, a similar discussion would have taken place in [a separate class session]. However, because this was a Pathways lab, this brief overview resulted in 90% of the students not being able to complete the lab. The instructor had to tell the students to stop before they collected any data because they had run out of time.... Additional [class] time would make a huge difference in the student's overall lab experience.

### SUSAN JACOBOWITZ

Associate Professor of English  
Queensborough Community College

My introduction to Pathways was particularly traumatic; as a member of the English Department at Queensborough Community College, we were directed to change our three-credit, four-hour composition classes to three-credit, three-hour classes to make them fit into Pathways. Voting our collec-

**'A mockery of shared governance.'**

tive conscience, thinking about the needs of our students and their goals, we voted to maintain our classes at four hours. What followed is part of the public record: the threat to fire all full-time and adjunct faculty, the warning that the English department at Queensborough would be closed and students would have to fulfill their English requirements elsewhere.

Pathways has run roughshod over faculty and made a mockery of shared governance. But ultimately, this is not about faculty; it is about students. Pathways threatens to gut the CUNY undergraduate degree in order to enhance graduation rates. This proud institution, which has served so many so well for so many years, is in danger of becoming the symbol of the "pretty good" or "good enough" education....

Our students have the same potential as other college students. If rigor is taken out of their degree in the form of foreign languages or lab requirements – if working in a recognized academic discipline is replaced with satisfying requirements for various "buckets" – it is the students who suffer....

We must keep opportunity alive for CUNY students.

## Pathways hits bumpy road in council hearing

### Sharp questions for CUNY reps

By DAVID SIMS

The City University of New York's controversial Pathways curriculum came under the City Council's microscope February 25, with the administration defending itself against widespread dissatisfaction from its faculty and confusion from its students over the new standards.

The PSC testified in protest against the curriculum, which the administration says is designed to smooth transfers between CUNY schools. The union has launched lawsuits and a vote of no confidence in Pathways, calling it "austerity education" that exists only to move students through college more quickly and boost graduation statistics, rather than provide quality teaching.

### A DIMINISHED DEGREE

"The reason faculty voted no confidence is that we believe the Pathways curriculum degrades education for CUNY students," PSC President Barbara Bowen told the council. "It's part of a national agenda which we also see in K-12 education that focuses on standardization and testing rather than quality and teaching."

The hearing was convened by new Council Higher Education Committee Chair Inez Barron, who questioned CUNY's motivations in implementing Pathways, and expressed concern with "whether it'll diminish the value of a CUNY degree."

CUNY's Interim Executive Vice Chancellor, Julia Wrigley, said that individual schools had bristled at Pathways because they were used to setting their own curricula, but that the increased rate of transfer between CUNY programs (about 29% of freshmen in total) necessitated a University-wide change.

"We're hopeful that as Pathways continues, faculty will increasingly

recognize that they maintain a fundamental control of the curriculum," she said. "We are hopeful that as this change settles in to the University, people will recognize that it does not strip the faculty of their fundamental prerogatives."

When confronted with the 92% vote of no confidence organized by the PSC, in a referendum conducted by the American Arbitration Association last May, Wrigley said, "Among those who voted, it was a high level of negative vote, but many faculty members did not vote," prompting cries of anger from the council gallery.

Bowen later noted that "there was an extraordinarily high level of participation by the full-time faculty," with nearly two-thirds voting.

Wrigley said she was hoping to understand the issues faculty have with Pathways to tweak it moving forward, but stood by the program as the future of the University.

"I think that making the University a more integrated university has been helpful," she said. "We'll look at whether students in practice have been able to take their courses with them... We want to understand what the issues are for faculty members and students and colleges."

Bowen said Pathways was part of a growing trend obsessed with increasing "college-completion" stats around the nation. "We make a serious error of scale if we think of Pathways as purely a CUNY phenomenon.... CUNY is attempting to make sure that the university measures up."

### AUSTERITY EDUCATION

The real solution, she said, would be adequate funding. "We believe that Pathways is an accommodation to underfunding and the only response is to insist on full funding.... However benign the goal of improving graduation rates, Pathways is not politically innocent. It is about graduating more students in a shorter time at lower cost."

Nivedita Majumdar, an associate professor of English at John Jay College, explained how Pathways had confused her and her colleagues because of a "lack of democratic participation" in its creation.

"The reduction in the general-education curriculum ensures that our students are denied a well-rounded liberal-arts education," she said. "It means students could graduate with a bachelor's degree without ever having taken a literature or a history course or without any training in a foreign language or with reduced time in science labs."



Dave Sanders

CUNY representatives (from left): Senior Vice Chancellor for Legal Affairs Frederick Schaffer; Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Frank Sanchez; Interim Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost Julia Wrigley.

Originally published in The Chief ([thechiefleader.com](http://thechiefleader.com)), New York City's civil service weekly.



On this page Clarion reprints information from the PSC’s audited financial statement for the year ending August 31, 2013. Due to limited space, only the 2013 figures are included here, and text of Note 1 is abridged. The full audited statement, which includes figures for the year ending August 31, 2012, is available at [psc-cuny.org/PSC-budget-FY2013](http://psc-cuny.org/PSC-budget-FY2013).

PROFESSIONAL STAFF CONGRESS/CUNY  
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND AUDITOR’S REPORT  
AUGUST 31, 2013 AND 2012

Independent Auditor’s Report

Board of Directors, Professional Staff Congress/CUNY

**Report on the Financial Statements:** We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Professional Staff Congress/CUNY, which comprise the balance sheet as of August 31, 2013 and 2012, and the related statements of revenues, expenses and changes in net assets, and cash flows for the years then ended and the related notes to the financial statements.

**Management’s Responsibility for the Financial Statements:** Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

**Auditor’s Responsibility :** Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
AUGUST 31, 2013 AND 2012

NOTE 1 - NATURE OF ORGANIZATION

Professional Staff Congress/CUNY (“PSC/CUNY”) was created by a merger of the Legislative Conference of The City University of New York and the United Federation of College Teachers. It was created to be the collective bargaining representative of the instructional staff of the City University of New York.

PSC/CUNY is a not-for-profit organization exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(5) of the Internal Revenue Code. PSC/CUNY’s primary sources of revenues are membership dues and agency fees....

NOTE 2 - SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

**Basis of accounting -** The financial statements are prepared on the accrual basis of accounting.

**Use of estimates -** The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

**Cash and cash equivalents -** For financial statement purposes, the organization includes all liquid instruments with maturities at the time of purchase of three months or less to be cash equivalents. Included in cash is \$229,554 at August 31, 2013 and 2012, which is security for the lease (Note 5), which will be held until the termination of such lease in 2022.

**Certificates of deposit -** Certificates of deposit have maturity dates of more than three months and are considered investments for purposes of cash flow reporting.

**Investments -** Investments are recorded at fair value. PSC/CUNY invests in various securities. Investment securities, in general, are exposed to various risks such as interest rate, credit, and overall market volatility. Due to the level of risk associated with certain investment securities, it is reasonably possible that changes in the values of investment securities will occur in the near term, based on the markets’ fluctuations, and that such changes could materially affect the amounts reported in the financial statements.

**Accounts and dues receivable -** Receivables are recorded as revenues are recognized. PSC/CUNY does not charge or accrue interest on outstanding receivables.

**Allowance for doubtful accounts -** Receivables are charged to bad debt expense when they are determined to be uncollectible based upon a periodic review of the accounts by management. Factors used to determine whether an allowance should be recorded include the age of the receivable and a review of payments subsequent to year end. PSC/CUNY has determined that no allowance for doubtful accounts for receivables is necessary as of August 31, 2013 and 2012.

**Fixed assets -** Fixed assets are recorded at cost. Items with a cost in excess of \$500 and an estimated useful life of greater than one year are capitalized. Depreciation is recorded on the straight-line method over the estimated useful life of the asset. Leasehold improvements are amortized on the straight-line method over the lesser of the term of the lease or the estimated useful life of the improvements.

**Deferred rent -** Operating leases are straight-lined over the term of the lease. Deferred rent has been recorded for the difference between the fixed payment and the rent expense.

**Unrestricted net assets -** Unrestricted net assets include funds having no restriction as to use or purpose imposed by donors.

**Membership dues -** Membership dues are recognized as revenue over the membership period. Dues come directly from members through payroll deductions and direct payments.

est level of any input that is significant to the fair value measurement. Valuation techniques used need to maximize the use of observable inputs and minimize the use of unobservable inputs.

The following is a description of the valuation methodologies used for assets measured at fair value. There have been no changes in the methodologies used at August 31, 2013 as compared to those used at August 31, 2012.

**Money market funds -** Valued at the closing price reported on the active market on which the individual securities are traded.

**Equity and bond mutual funds -** Valued at the net asset value (NAV) of shares held at year end.

**Cash, equities and U.S. Treasury notes -** Valued at the closing price reported on the active market on which the individual securities are traded.

**Cash equivalents, government agencies and Federal National Mortgage Association pools -** Valued at other significant observable inputs (including quoted prices for similar investments, interest rates, prepayment spreads, credit risks, and adjusted quoted prices on foreign equity securities that were adjusted in accordance with pricing procedures approved by the Trustee).

The methods described above may produce a fair value calculation that may not be indicative of net realizable value or reflective of future fair values. Furthermore, while PSC/CUNY believes its valuation methods are appropriate and consistent with other market participants, the use of different methodologies or assumptions to determine the fair value of certain financial instruments could result in a different fair value measurement at the reporting date.

**Reclassifications -** To conform to the current year’s presentation, accrued pension payable that was previously presented as long-term liability was reclassified between short-term and long-term. In 2012, amounts in functional expenses were allocated using a different percentage for management and general; they were reclassified in 2013 to conform to updated allocation percentages. Additionally, certain investments were reclassified from Level 1 to Level 2 investments.

**Uncertainty in income taxes -** PSC/CUNY has determined that there are no material uncertain tax positions that require recognition or disclosure in the financial statements. Periods ending August 31, 2010 and subsequent remain subject to examination by applicable taxing authorities.

**Subsequent events -** Subsequent events have been evaluated through March 6, 2014, which is the date the financial statements were available to be released.

NOTE 3 - INVESTMENTS AND FAIR VALUE HIERARCHY

The following table sets forth by level, within the fair value hierarchy, the assets at fair value as of August 31, 2013 and 2012:

	2013	2012
	Level 1	Level 1
Money market funds	\$ 203	\$ 203
Equity mutual funds	952,892	983,205
Bond mutual funds	3,999,760	4,616,199
	<u>\$ 4,952,855</u>	<u>\$ 5,599,607</u>

NOTE 4 - FIXED ASSETS

	2013	2012	Useful Lives
Equipment	\$ 593,519	\$ 481,953	5 years
Leasehold improvements	568,119	448,759	15 years
Furniture and fixtures	<u>315,920</u>	<u>284,889</u>	5-7 years
	1,477,558	1,215,601	
Accumulated depreciation and amortization	<u>(914,051)</u>	<u>(834,184)</u>	
	<u>\$ 563,507</u>	<u>\$ 381,417</u>	

NOTE 5 - LEASE COMMITMENTS

PSC/CUNY rents space for its administrative office. The lease includes provisions for escalations and utility charges. The lease expires August 31, 2022. Rent is being expensed on the straight-line method over the term of the lease. PSC/CUNY acquired a lease for additional space in fiscal year 2013, which also expires on August 31, 2022.

Rent expense for the years ended August 31, 2013 and 2012 was \$1,105,006 and \$930,872, respectively.

Minimum payments required under the lease are as follows:

2014	\$ 1,037,400
2015	1,065,940
2016	1,100,017
2017	1,160,822
2018	1,192,266
Thereafter	<u>5,046,668</u>
	<u>\$ 10,603,113</u>

PSC/CUNY rents out a portion of its premises to an affiliated organization. Total rental income for the years ended August 31, 2013 and 2012 was \$200,573 and \$186,670, respectively. The sublease is effective through August 31, 2022. The affiliated organization shall pay PSC/CUNY a sum equal to 23.90% of the 15th-floor rent due from PSC/CUNY to the owner of the premises.

Rental income over the term of the lease is as follows:

2014	\$ 178,788
2015	182,361
2016	187,824
2017	200,722
2018	204,736
Thereafter	<u>823,171</u>
	<u>\$ 1,777,602</u>

NOTE 6 - PENSION PLANS

Clerical and support staff are covered by a noncontributory defined contribution pension plan administered by Local 153 - OPEIU. Contributions to this plan amounted to \$87,675 for the year ended August 31, 2013 and \$71,278 for the year ended August 31, 2012.

PSC/CUNY also sponsors a defined benefit pension plan covering all professional (non-clerical/support) employees who are over the age of twenty-one and have completed one year of service, except those covered above and temporary professional employees. All contributions are made by PSC/CUNY.

The following table summarizes the benefit obligations, fair value of assets, funded status and accrued benefit costs as of August 31, 2013 and 2012 and employer contributions, benefits paid and net periodic pension costs for the years then ended:

	2013	2012
Benefit obligation	\$ (3,427,321)	\$ (3,180,927)
Fair value of plan assets	<u>2,126,772</u>	<u>1,742,743</u>
Funded status	<u>\$ (1,300,549)</u>	<u>\$ (1,438,184)</u>
Accrued pension payable benefit cost recognized in the balance sheet	<u>\$ (1,300,549)</u>	<u>\$ (1,438,184)</u>
Benefits paid	<u>\$ 23,433</u>	<u>\$ 11,795</u>
Contributions	<u>\$ 211,872</u>	<u>\$ 206,374</u>
Net periodic pension cost	<u>\$ 523,339</u>	<u>\$ 380,174</u>

Weighted average assumptions as of August 31, 2013 and 2012:

	2013	2012
Discount rate	5.0%	5.0%
Expected return on plan assets	7.0%	7.0%
Rate of compensation increase	4.0%	4.0%

PSC/CUNY’s pension plan asset allocations by asset category are as follows:

	2013		
Asset Category	Level 1	Level 2	Total
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 41,043	\$ 92,022	\$ 133,065
Equities			
Common stock - domestic	949,939		949,939
Common stock - American depository receipts	83,330		83,330
Fixed-income securities			
U.S. Treasury notes	121,193		121,193
Government agencies		244,202	244,202
Federal National Mortgage Association Pools		42,162	42,162
Mutual funds			
Equity funds	<u>552,881</u>		<u>552,881</u>
Total	<u>\$1,748,386</u>	<u>\$378,386</u>	<u>\$ 2,126,772</u>

	2012		
Asset Category	Level 1	Level 2	Total
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 17,294	\$ 38,009	\$ 55,303
Equities			
Common stock - domestic	763,792		763,792
Common stock - American depository receipts	102,471		102,471
Fixed-income securities			
U.S. Treasury notes	127,092		127,092
Government agencies		57,852	57,852
Federal National Mortgage Association Pools		63,074	63,074
Mutual funds			
Equity funds	<u>573,159</u>		<u>573,159</u>
Total	<u>\$1,583,808</u>	<u>\$158,935</u>	<u>\$ 1,742,743</u>

PSC/CUNY’s investment policies are designed to ensure that adequate plan assets are available to provide future payments of pension benefits to eligible participants. Taking into account the expected long-term rate of return on plan assets, PSC/CUNY formulates the investment portfolio composed of the optimal combination of cash and cash equivalents, equities, fixed income and mutual funds.

Cash Flows

Projected company contributions for next fiscal year is \$220,000.

The following benefit payments, which reflect expected future service, are expected to be paid as follows:

2014	\$ 589,586
2015	-
2016	-
2017	-
2018	-
2019-2023	3,063,605

In 2013 and 2012, PSC/CUNY has recorded a gain of \$449,102 and a loss of \$231,317, respectively, to its net assets for the additional change in accrued pension payable beyond the current-year pension expense.

NOTE 7 - FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

PSC/CUNY provides collective bargaining and other union-related services to its members. Expenses related to these programs are:

	2013	2012
Union activities	\$ 14,725,165	\$ 12,890,748
Management and general	<u>3,174,735</u>	<u>2,987,993</u>
Total expenses	<u>\$ 17,899,900</u>	<u>\$ 15,878,741</u>

NOTE 8 - CONCENTRATIONS

Financial instruments which potentially subject PSC/CUNY to a concentration of credit risk are cash and cash equivalents with major financial institutions in excess of FDIC insurance limits. Management believes that credit risk related to these accounts is minimal.

EXHIBIT A  
PROFESSIONAL STAFF CONGRESS/CUNY  
BALANCE SHEET  
AUGUST 31, 2013

	2013
ASSETS	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 263,281
Certificates of deposit	199,000
Investments (Note 3)	4,952,855
Accounts receivable	717,000
Dues receivable	828,000
Prepaid expenses	-
Total current assets	6,960,136
Certificates of deposit	793,000
Fixed assets - net (Note 4)	<u>563,507</u>
Total assets	\$ 8,316,643
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
Liabilities	
Due to the NYS United Teachers, Inc. and American Federation of Teachers	\$ 1,148,000
Accounts payable	293,407
Accrued expenses	59,478
Accrued compensated absences	505,130
Accrued pension payable (Note 6)	220,000
Total current liabilities	2,226,015
Accrued pension payable (Note 6)	1,080,549
Deferred rent	<u>791,500</u>
Total liabilities	4,098,064
Net assets (Exhibit B)	
Unrestricted	<u>4,218,579</u>
Total liabilities and net assets	<u>\$ 8,316,643</u>

EXHIBIT B  
PROFESSIONAL STAFF CONGRESS/CUNY  
STATEMENT OF REVENUES, EXPENSES AND CHANGE IN NET ASSETS  
AUGUST 31, 2013

	2013
Revenues	
Membership dues and agency fees	\$ 13,203,749
Subsidies from affiliates - NYS United Teachers, Inc. and American Federation of Teachers	3,167,249
Interest and dividends (net of investment fees of \$16,259 and \$15,833 in 2013 and 2012, respectively)	131,388
Gain on investments	50,070
Rental income (Note 5)	<u>200,573</u>
Total revenues	16,753,029
Expenses	
Salaries	2,941,208
Fringe benefits	1,746,278
Depreciation and amortization	79,867
Dues to affiliated organizations	9,278,647
Conferences and meetings	182,606
Occupancy (Note 5)	1,202,544
Repairs and maintenance	146,152
Office supplies, printing and publishing	327,501
Postage and delivery	54,252
Professional fees	554,244
Contract and budget campaigns	364,828
Insurance	34,033
Stipends and reassigned time	683,536
Mobilization and outreach	146,226
Community relations	40,928
Elections	20,688
Committees	15,293
Cultural activities	8,136
Other expenses	<u>56,674</u>
Total expenses	17,883,641
Change in unrestricted net assets before other changes	(1,130,612)
Pension adjustment (Note 6)	<u>449,102</u>
Change in unrestricted net assets (Exhibit C)	(681,510)
Net assets - unrestricted - beginning of year, restated	<u>4,900,089</u>
Net assets - unrestricted - end of year (Exhibit A)	<u>\$ 4,218,579</u>

EXHIBIT C  
PROFESSIONAL STAFF CONGRESS/CUNY  
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS  
AUGUST 31, 2013

	2013
Cash flows from operating activities	
Change in net assets (Exhibit B)	\$ (681,510)
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash used by operating activities	
Depreciation and amortization	79,867
Gain on investments	(50,070)
Decrease (increase) in assets	
Accounts receivable	(226,192)
Dues receivable	(39,000)
Prepaid expenses	10,165
Increase (decrease) in liabilities	
Due to NYS United Teachers, Inc. and American Federation of Teachers	328,172
Accounts payable	54,680
Accrued expenses	(1,681)
Accrued compensated absences	98,483
Accrued pension payable	(137,635)
Deferred rent	<u>71,643</u>
Net cash used by operating activities	(493,078)
Cash flows from investing activities	
Purchase of fixed assets	(261,957)
Purchase of certificates of deposit	(198,000)
Liquidation of certificates of deposit	198,000
Proceeds from sale of investments	800,000
Purchase of investments	<u>(103,178)</u>
Net cash provided (used) by investing activities	434,865
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents	(58,213)
Cash and cash equivalents – beginning of year	<u>321,494</u>
Cash and cash equivalents – end of year	<u>\$ 263,281</u>



## LOVING OUR WORK TO DEATH

## In search of lost time

By PHILIP NEL

As I am writing this article, I should be writing something else: an email to an editor, an email to an author, a letter of recommendation, notes for tomorrow's classes, comments on students' papers, comments on manuscripts, an abstract for an upcoming conference, notes for one of the books I'm working on. I cannot remember the last time I ended a day having crossed everything off my to-do list.

Why do academics work so much?

1) Part of it is habit. When we're just starting out, we learn to say "yes" to everything. Join this panel? Yes. Send an article in to a special issue? Yes. Write a book review? Yes. Join committee in professional organization? Yes. Indeed, we learn to look for things to say yes to. This is how you build your C.V. Go to conferences, publish, get involved. If you don't do it, you won't get that elusive tenure-track job. Then, should you become one of the few who get the job, you'll need to maintain a level of production in order to get tenure. Should you get tenure, you'll want one day to get promoted. If that happens, and you reach full professor, well, best to keep publishing ... just in case. What if your university falls on hard times? Or you need to move? Tenure is good, but portable tenure is better. So you just get on that treadmill and never get off.

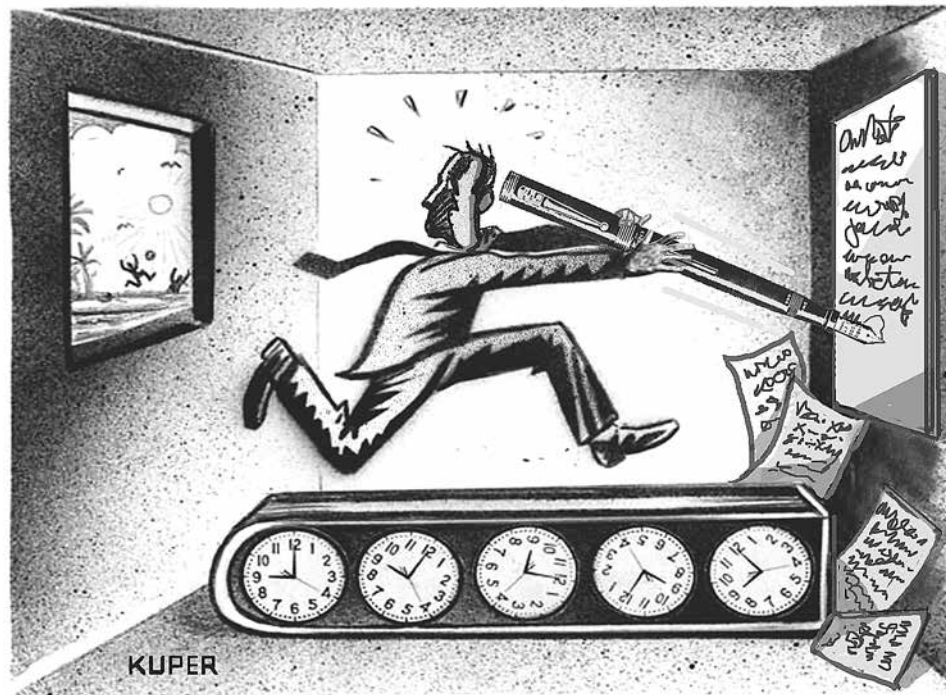
2) Part of it is economics. At my university [Kansas State University], we have no "cost of living" raises. We have "merit" raises, but only when the state budget allows. So you always want to be in the top tier – the "Highest Merit" group – just in case there's money for a raise. And I'm speaking here as one of the lucky, tenured few. For adjuncts, the situation is more dire. Everywhere, they teach more classes and for less money just to make ends meet, and may not even manage to do that. Employed at the whim of the academic labor market, adjuncts are increasingly joining the ranks of the working poor.

## WORK THAT NEVER ENDS

3) Busy-ness is also built into the structure of academic work. The more you do and the longer you're in the profession, the more opportunities and obligations accrue. Writing letters for colleagues and students, getting onto committees, contributing to a book edited by a contributor to the book you edited, giving invited talks, writing grant proposals, and so on. Some of this work is interesting (I enjoy traveling and giving talks, for example), but it's still work.

4) Work that is "fun" is often not perceived as real work. Academics may be busy, but, hey, we're doing what we love, so we can't really complain, right? We can and we should. As Miya Tokumitsu recently wrote, the "Do What You Love" mantra "may be the most elegant anti-worker ideology around," and it's particularly pervasive in academe:

*Few other professions fuse the personal identity of their workers so intimately with the work output. This intense identification partly explains why so many proudly left-leaning faculty remain oddly silent about the working conditions*



*of their peers. Because academic research should be done out of pure love, the actual conditions of and compensation for this labor become afterthoughts, if they are considered at all.*

As she says, "Nothing makes exploitation go down easier than convincing workers that they are doing what they love." Indeed, the "Do What You Love" philosophy's ability to refashion academic labor as a form of leisure contributes to the unrelenting sense of busy-ness. We work because we love it. Or because we think we should love it.

## ALWAYS ON

5) Technology is both help and hindrance. Email, accessing databases from your laptop, and Skyping with collaborators in distant cities all help us be more productive. We respond by doing more work, and foregoing leisure. Social media informs us not just about friends and family, but about new articles and ideas, upcoming conferences, planned essay collections...and can be an unrelenting time-suck. You can be selective about technology (attending to emails and social media only

during certain hours), but can you turn it off? If you do, you may miss an important conversation. One result (for me, at least) is that I am too often online.

6) The volume and nature of academic work erases the boundary between work and not-work. Because we have too much to do and because much of what we do is genuinely interesting, work always spills into the rest of our lives. This is both boon and bane. As Kate Bowles writes:

*We tell ourselves that the boundarylessness of our time and service is a privilege and even a practice of freedom. Over and over I have heard academics say that they couldn't bear to punch the electronic time clock as our professional colleagues do. But the alternative is the culture of deemed time: by flattering us with what looks like trust in the disposal of our modest obligations, the university displaces all responsibility onto us for the decisions we make about how much to give. There is the problem of imposing limits on ourselves.*

This limitlessness is a big problem. For

Bowles, postponed checkups (too busy!) meant that she did not discover her breast cancer until it was fairly advanced. (She's had surgery, is undergoing chemo, and is taking things one treatment at a time.)

My 60-plus-hour weeks have not led me to so precarious a place. But I can see how it could happen. As Bowles points out, "we don't yet understand this as behavior that is harmful to others, not just to ourselves. We overwork like cyclists dope: because everyone does it, because it's what you do to get by, because in the moment we argue to ourselves that it feels like health and freedom. But it isn't." To work long hours because everyone does it or because that's how you get by is to live under stress. That's not healthy. I often joke that I'm just barely keeping my head below water. ("And not waving but drowning," as Stevie Smith wrote.)

I should point out that I'm writing about academe because I am an academic. I'm aware that many jobs encroach on what was once "private time," that fewer and fewer people have a boundary between office and home, and that many of us feel the pressures of our thin-boundaried lives. I expect people in other careers could write a similar diagnosis of their busy lives. If they could find the time.

And that is one of my points: time is all we have. One day, we'll reach the last page of the calendar, the clock will stop, and our time will cease. While it is a privilege to pursue interesting work, we also need to make time to live.

## IDLE SPACE... IN WHICH TO THINK

My other point is that we need time to think. I mean this quite literally: thought requires time. Ideas need some idle, nonproductive space in which to thrive. This kind of sustained thinking is an important part of being human, but it's also vital for good academic work. Peter Higgs, who won the Nobel Prize in physics for his work on the Higgs boson, recently said that the imperative to publish all the time would disqualify him from contemporary academe. "Today I wouldn't get an academic job. It's as simple as that. I don't think I would be regarded as productive enough," he observed. "It's difficult to imagine how I would ever have enough peace and quiet in the present sort of climate to do what I did in 1964."

Though university administrators may not want to hear me say it, we need to encourage people to become less productive. Make time to not work. Make time to think. Make time simply to be.

*Philip Nel is University Distinguished Professor of English and director of the graduate program in children's literature at Kansas State University. This article was first published at Inside Higher Ed (insidehighered.com).*

## 'We can't complain, right? We can.'

## LABOR IN BRIEF

## Golden Arch blues

McDonald's confessed that its latest business plan could founder on "The impact of campaigns by labor organizations and activists... to promote adverse perceptions of the quick-service category... or our brand, management, suppliers or franchisees, or to promote or threaten boycotts, strikes or other actions..."

The company made this fear public in a report filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission in early March. They also cited the negative impact of a "long-term trend toward higher wages and social expenses... which may intensify with increasing public focus on matters of income inequality..."

Recent protests against the chain includ-

ed a wave of one-day strikes that began in New York and spread to a hundred cities.

Isabel Vazquez, 16, a McDonald's worker in Chicago, spoke for the group Low Pay is Not OK: "The company should be worried about continued worker protests, because we are not going to stop taking action until we win \$15 [hourly wage] and the right to form a union without retaliation." The average hourly wage for cashiers and crew members at McDonald's is \$7.66.

## Kellogg's lockout in Memphis

A five-month labor dispute has dragged on at Kellogg's Memphis cereal plant, where 226 employees have been locked out after a breakdown in labor negotiations. Union leaders have accused the breakfast food gi-

ant of illegally operating outside of a more than 50-year-old master agreement.

"The company's trying to get cheaper labor, just because they want it, not because they need it," said Kevin Bradshaw, president of the Bakery, Confectionary, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union Local 252G in Memphis. Bradshaw said his members have lost their health insurance and are now without coverage. The union has set up a "hardship fund" to help affected employees with their mortgages and other costs.

Union employees at Kellogg's competitor Post Foods in Battle Creek, Michigan, donated more than 40 boxes of cereal to the strikers. "They're our union brothers," said Local 374 United Cereal Bakery & Food Workers President Mark Banaszak.



## PUBLIC WORKERS &amp; THE PUBLIC INTEREST

# ‘Tax the Rich’ is a winning message, ‘Shared Sacrifice’ is a path to defeat

By MARK BRENNER

Washington’s December federal budget deal offered little relief for public employees – or the rest of us who drive on city streets, send our kids to school, or rely on any of a thousand other public services.

Congress is forcing federal workers to pay more toward their pensions while allocating almost nothing for cash-strapped cities and states. Mayors and governors are gearing up for their own rounds of budget wrangling over cuts versus taxes – the fifth since the financial meltdown.

More than 700,000 city and state jobs have been cut since 2008, and politicians have more bitter medicine in store.

Most public sector unions have failed to counter the conservative message that public workers’ pensions and pay are to blame for yawning budget gaps. Too many have offered preemptive concessions, hoping to fend off more severe cuts. Too few have been willing to defend their job standards or the services they provide, much less tackle the third rail of US politics – raising taxes.

But unions and allies who have called for raising taxes – on the rich, not on their fellow workers – have won public support. More often than not, they’ve succeeded at raising revenue.

## SPARE THE 99%

Unions willing to push for new taxes are learning the hard way that calls for “shared sacrifice” get no traction with today’s voters.

Colorado is the most recent example. A \$1 billion-per-year education funding package on the November ballot – backed by teachers unions, school districts, the state Democratic establishment and most pro-corporate education “reform” organizations – was defeated two-to-one.

Amendment 66 would have raised the state’s income tax from a flat 4.6% to 5% for individuals earning less than \$75,000 and 5.9% for those earning more, earmarking the new money for schools.

In other words, everyone would have paid more, not just the well-to-do. And the measure’s implicit definition of “the well-to-do” started painfully low.

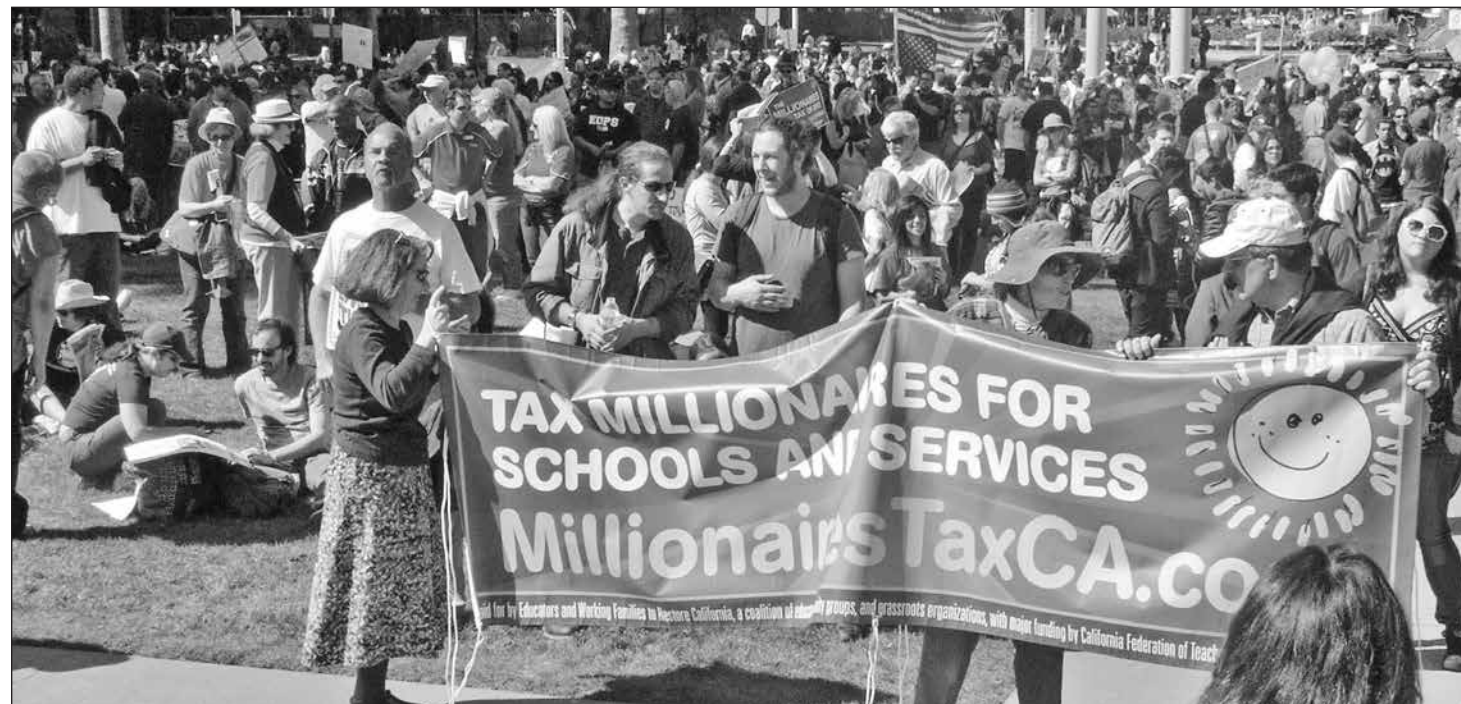
Even in more liberal Los Angeles, residents rejected a half-cent sales tax hike in March 2013. The proposal was supported by outgoing Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and most city unions.

It was pitched as a way to spare police and fire service from further cuts. But voters had already had their fill of regressive sales taxes, which fall disproportionately on poor and working class people.

## TAX THE TOP

The L.A. rejection contrasts sharply with California voters’ 55% approval, just four months before, of Proposition 30, a \$6 billion annual tax increase proposed by Governor Jerry Brown.

This was in no small part thanks to the California Federation of Teachers (CFT), which put a competing measure for a “mil-



A March 2012 rally in Sacramento in support of a “millionaires’ tax” referendum that was initiated by the California Federation of Teachers.

lionaires tax” on the ballot. Brown was forced to prune back Prop 30’s original “shared sacrifice” sales tax component to a relatively tiny amount, as the price for CFT to withdraw its initiative.

What remained was an income tax increase on anyone making more than \$250,000 – comprising 90% of the measure’s total revenue.

CFT’s research had shown that “tax the rich” had much broader appeal among California voters than a sales tax. The union emphasized that message in its campaign.

Lawmakers in Minnesota followed the California example in May 2013 – thanks to a big push from union and community allies, who mixed traditional lobbying with the direct action of the Occupy Movement. They passed a tax increase requiring households earning over \$250,000 to pay an additional 2%.

In both states, unions and their allies stressed that those who had benefited from the policies that sparked the financial meltdown – corporations and the rich – must pay for the public deficits it produced.

The Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) has taken the same tack. CTU spent two years before its 2012 strike highlighting the city’s tax giveaways to big business. According

to the union’s calculations, these subsidies were draining schools of \$250 million a year.

Through direct actions – such as holding a “grade-in” in a bank lobby and occupying a subsidized Cadillac dealership – teachers challenged the city’s spending priorities. They offered the obvious answer to the question of where to find money for new books, art supplies and teacher pay.

## FAST FOOD, QUICK CHANGE

In New York City, unions and grassroots groups staged a week of action in December, highlighting how the city could save more than \$750 million by renegotiating the fees and high interest rates Wall Street charges to manage billions of public dollars.

The protests were designed to reinforce new Mayor Bill de Blasio’s campaign commitment to fighting inequality. De Blasio has pledged to raise taxes on those making over \$500,000 to pay for universal prekindergarten. But much more revenue will be required if city workers intend to press him to settle their long-expired contracts with back pay or raises.

When it comes to taxes, public sector unions should take a page from the recent fast-food strikes. With their twin demands

for an hourly wage of \$15 and a union, fast-food workers leapfrogged nearly two decades of patient organizing intended to raise the minimum wage in steady increments.

Instead of taking the traditional approach of calculating a politically feasible goal, fast-food workers aimed high. With direct action and a lot of publicity, they shattered the parameters imposed by simple legislative maneuvering – and shifted what’s possible.

Their boldness has already produced its first win: a successful ballot initiative for a \$15 minimum wage at the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. Copycat measures are sprouting up across the country.

## WORTH THE RISK

Could public employees do the same for raising state and local taxes? It would mean head-to-head confrontations with both Republicans and Democrats – an approach that contradicts the way most unions have operated for generations.

But the ones willing to cut against the political grain and defy union tradition are finding the politicians aren’t unbeatable... and in fact, the public leans our way.

*Mark Brenner is director of Labor Notes. A version of this article appeared in its January 2014 issue.*

# Lessons from Colorado & California

**Clarion** APRIL 2014

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## DEAR PSC MEMBERS...

## Getting a new contract

When are we getting a new contract? That's the first question I am asked whenever I am with CUNY faculty and staff. Of course it's everyone's question: we have waited for a raise since 2010, when our last contract expired. State labor law mandates that the provisions of that contract – including, crucially, step increases in salary – remain in effect until a new one is negotiated, but those of us no longer eligible for step increases haven't had a raise in four years. And as we all know, the cost of housing, food, childcare and transportation in this expensive city did not slow down while contract negotiations were on hold.

## WHAT WE FACE

The answer to the question about our next contract isn't simple because our contract isn't simple. We are not at a private university where we would face only university management across the bargaining table. Nor are we even at a state university, whose contract would need approval by its trustees and the state. We are at a hybrid city/state university, an institution funded jointly by New York City and New York State – and we are one of a handful of unions in this position. We are also in a city whose last mayor stripped the budget for employee raises while handing out billions of dollars in tax give-

aways to private corporations, and in a state whose governor mailed pink-slips to State employees to threaten layoffs if concessionary contracts were not ratified.

## FIGHTING AUSTERITY

As public employees in a period when global capital has relentlessly targeted the public sector, we have come face-to-face with the politics of austerity. That's why this round of bargaining has been so hard.

But the good news for the PSC is that we have a record of making a difference when we act together – and that the election of a new mayor with roots in the labor movement has shifted the conversation. Although the results are yet to be seen, Mayor de Blasio has done more in three months to settle the 152 unresolved labor contracts than Mayor Bloomberg did in three years. De Blasio announced that he plans to settle a good number of the unresolved City contracts by the end of 2014. As of this writing, no major contracts have been settled, and we have yet to see whether the contracts that are negotiated will break with the austerity policies of the past. That depends in part on whether the de Blasio administration extends the agenda of reducing inequality to its own employees. It depends above all on the political will of the

unions to mobilize their members. But one thing is clear: contract negotiations for the City's public employees are under way after years of stalemate.

Where does that put the PSC? Our bargaining team has begun discussions with management about both economic and non-economic contract issues. We are at the table with CUNY and in meetings with the City. Given the mix of State and City funding required for our contract, though, ours is not likely to be among the first contracts resolved. The PSC collective bargaining agreement – complex in itself because of the many different positions we represent and the ambitiousness of our demands – will involve approvals by the CUNY Board of Trustees, probably by a new CUNY chancellor, and by New York City and State. The work at the bargaining table is formidable.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

But the most important work occurs away from the bargaining table. The PSC has achieved remarkable things in our past contracts, even when the CUNY administration asserted they would never be possible: paid office hours for adjuncts, paid parental leave, 24 hours of paid research time for junior faculty, sabbaticals at 80% pay, higher salary increases

on the top salary steps, equity increases for the lowest-paid positions. All of these were the result of taking action together. And even while we were not officially in negotiations, the union has won a reduction to 21 hours of the teaching load at City Tech; a phased retirement program; new funding for research awards; and a permanent addition in State funding for adjunct health insurance.

## ACTING TOGETHER

In the past four years thousands of CUNY faculty and staff – probably including you – have acted together to achieve what we could never do individually. No other academic union in the country has sustained a campaign against an austerity curriculum as long and deep as the PSC's. We've seen 4,322 people participate in the Pathways referendum; 5,676 sign the Pathways moratorium petition, and hundreds more have voted for resolutions and delivered testimony. This winter 2,515 professional staff have signed a petition demanding negotiations on the CUNY administration's new timesheet system. Behind each signature, as behind each Pathways vote, was a conversation between members about power. We have spent these years building the networks and power we will need for a new contract.

Getting to a contract settlement will not be easy. We do not want just any settlement, especially after so many years of delay and denial. We want a fair contract and a progressive contract – one that allows us to do our best work. The news is that discussions citywide have begun; the challenge is that, with our complex contract, we will have to draw on every bit of power we have developed in order to succeed.

– Barbara Bowen, PSC President

## PUBLIC FUNDING

## Keep New York a state of mind

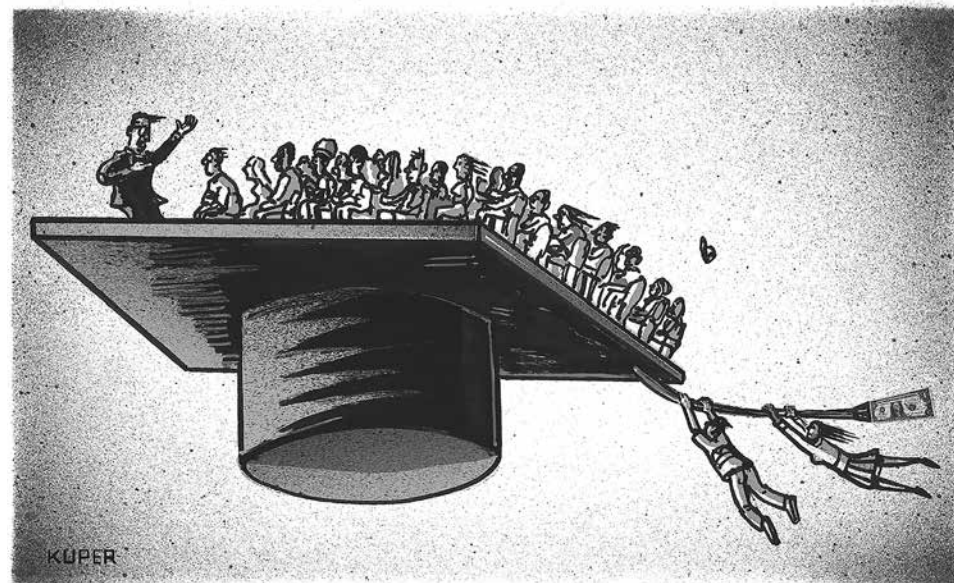
By BARBARA BOWEN

PSC President

Imagine this: You are the oldest of three children in a family living in New York City on \$30,000 a year. Your dream of going to college is coming true at the City University of New York. But after one year, you wonder if you will make it to graduation. Tuition is increasing, and even with financial aid, you are struggling to pay for school. You work two part-time jobs to help pay for books, subway fare and your family's expenses. You love your introductory biology class, but there are only 20 lab stations for 30 students. You feel you are slipping behind. Your professor tries to spend time with you individually, but she teaches part-time at two CUNY campuses and has to run out right after class. You dreamed of helping your whole family by earning a college degree, but you're afraid you will have to drop out if tuition keeps going up and you can't get the academic support you need.

Or imagine this scenario:

You are the first-generation child of parents who came to this country to escape poverty, civil war or genocide in their homeland. Your admission to the State University of New York symbolizes hope and achievement for your family and vindicates the sacrifices your parents made to give you a better future. But to pay for college, you need the financial aid and special academic support that comes with the state university's Educational Opportunity Program



(EOP). Then you find out that, against all expectations, you cannot be an EOP student because budget cuts in the SUNY system have eliminated thousands of EOP slots. About 2,500 undergraduate students will be admitted to EOP this year – fewer than one in three of all those who are eligible.

Heartbreaking examples like these abound in our public higher education system. New York's public community colleges, four-year colleges and universities have historically been a source of

hope and inspiration for students and families for whom a college education was otherwise out of reach. That hope is fading. With years of budget cuts, overcrowded classes and a declining number of full-time faculty, we cannot avoid the question: How much does our state government value its public higher education system? Against great odds, faculty and staff have done a tremendous job defending and providing quality – but the system is at a crisis point.

This is why NYSUT – the statewide union for teachers, school-related professionals and the faculty and staff at New York's public colleges, universities and community colleges – is calling on our elected leaders to support the Quality Public Higher Education Initiative. We are asking Governor Andrew Cuomo and the Legislature to support the initiative's three main tenets: the establishment of a publicly funded endowment to increase full-time faculty and professional staff; an increase in State funding this year, after years of flat or nearly flat budgets; and significant new investment in student financial aid and opportunity programs at a level that reflects actual need.

## 'OUR BIGGEST ASSET'

New York State needs to recommit itself to investing in our public colleges and universities. The new economy is based on knowledge, and the greatest resource this state has is its intellectual capital. New York cannot afford to lose a whole generation of aspiring students. When a CUNY student drops out or a SUNY student cannot get into an opportunity program, whole families lose their hope of a better life. We are asking our lawmakers – many of whom are graduates of SUNY and CUNY – to unite to end the state's five-year trend of disinvestment in our future. To keep New York a state of mind, we need to act now to invest in our biggest asset, one that undergirds every industry, artistic endeavor and social enterprise: public higher education.

Originally published as an advertisement in the March 10 City & State.

## Support the Quality Public Higher Education Initiative





## 15-MINUTE ACTIVIST

### Weigh in on Pathways

With a new chancellor about to take office, it is all the more essential that evaluation of Pathways reflect the concrete experiences of those “on the front lines” – the faculty and staff who work with CUNY students every day.

Your firsthand testimony is critical. This week, take the

time to share how Pathways has changed the courses you teach and the programs at your school. How is Pathways affecting your students? It's an important time to speak out on the impact of Pathways on your work and your students' education. Please go to [tinyurl.com/Pathways-Experience](http://tinyurl.com/Pathways-Experience) and add your voice.

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LIFE / WORK

Clarion | April 2014

# Artist, teacher and activist

By CHRISTOPHER CARBONE

## Bonnie Lucas gets 40-year retrospective

Bonnie Lucas is an artist, and it's a career she's built with stubborn persistence. “I've been making art for 40 years,” she says, “but making a living as an artist is very difficult.”

It hasn't been lucrative, but Lucas has stuck with it. “When I was young I went to an artist talk in grad school,” she recalls. “She said, ‘Develop a set of habits to attain your dreams.’ I love that. You make it part of your life, you have to make art a practice in your life.” And Lucas has done exactly that for the past four decades.

Her sublime, provocative assemblages, collages and paintings are intricately composed. Whimsical and beautiful, they're complex but have a broad appeal. Her art is consistent in its use of cultural ephemera – children's toys, throwaway doodads, old gadgets and dolls, among other items – and executed with meticulous technique. Some of her work asks questions about the treatment of girls in our patriarchal culture and juxtaposes the beautiful with the cheap, the sinister with the silly.

“Bonnie has a natural, almost fervent affinity for her subjects and her materials,” says Jeffrey Wechsler,



Bonnie Lucas, an artist for 40 years & a CCNY adjunct for 18, while installing her current exhibition.

curator at Sylvia Wald + Po Kim Art Gallery, where a retrospective of Lucas's work is currently on view. “I think she understands that significant topics may best be illustrated by combining direct and oblique approaches, the latter including humor and personal symbolism.”

Bonnie Lucas is an artist and a teacher. An adjunct faculty member at City College for the past 18 years, she teaches in City College of New York's (CCNY) Art Education program, where prospective K-12 teachers make art themselves as part of learning how to teach about it.

### A CALL TO ACTIVISM

“My biggest reward is seeing students who have never thought that they could make art go forward with confidence and understanding to a place where they love art and discover it is something they enjoy doing and do well,” said Lucas, who has taught at CCNY since 2006. “That means that they will have the confidence to teach others.”

Lucas is acutely aware of the forces working against art education in the public schools. “The cutbacks in art

education [over] the last few years are terrible,” Lucas told *Clarion*. “It's related to austerity budgets and the obsession with test taking.” In today's environment, she says, “art for art's sake” is not really on the agenda. To include art in the curriculum, she explains, “you have to justify its relevance to other subjects.”

Lucas herself has been teaching in the public school system since 1998. She currently teaches an after-school art class at P.S. 110 for first through fourth graders. She relishes sharing insights with her younger pupils: “It's incredibly hard work but very deeply rewarding.”

Bonnie Lucas is an artist and a teacher and a union activist. She first had contact with the union about 12 years ago, when she suddenly lost a class she'd been teaching and sought advice on how to handle the situation. Her involvement dramatically expanded in the recent campaign to defend adjunct health insurance.

“My first rally ever in my life was my first PSC rally. I marched in front of the building at Baruch Col-

lege that houses the Board of Trustees meeting room,” Lucas says. “It was incredibly exhilarating to me to be part of something bigger, more powerful.”

The experience stayed with her. “I liked being part of something I really believe in; I liked the energy and commitment of everyone there,” Lucas explains. “There was a lot of diversity in the crowd, which I loved because that's New York.”

At that first protest, she said, she ended up sitting near a group of PSC leaders and activists. “I overheard them talking, strategizing about how to win. I was just blown away by their devotion to the union, by their passion and their smarts.” She's been impressed with adjunct and chapter leaders in the PSC, too, she says: “I'd never felt such commitment to having people get what they deserve and to do the right thing.”

Lucas went on to testify in defense of adjunct health care in front of CUNY's Board of Trustees in November 2011. Since then, she has attended about four rallies, including this past

December's rally against economic insecurity in Foley Square, where academics, fast-food workers, health care workers and *carwasheros* all made common cause.

“The low pay for adjunct work is unbelievable,” she told *Clarion*. “It's incredibly detailed, exacting work, but you're paid a pittance.” She sees similarities with the working lives of students who are paid even less. “Many of my students work minimum wage jobs. And often their schedules can be changed without warning,” she explains – just as an adjunct can suddenly lose a class.

### BEAUTY IN STRANGE PLACES

Bonnie Lucas is an artist and a teacher and a union activist and a New Yorker.

“The PSC and New York City's rent stabilization laws have made my life as an artist and teacher in NYC possible,” she says. “And I have ‘given back’ by teaching art with thousands of CUNY students and children in our public schools.”

She has had a room of her own since 1979 – a small rent-stabilized apartment in Soho – and it's been a critical part of Lucas's career. “I live and work there,” she says. “My whole life takes place in 400 square feet.” It's a one-bedroom that's also a studio. Lucas covers her bathtub with a piece of metal and uses that space to build her detailed pieces.

Lucas's current retrospective at the Sylvia Wald + Po Kim gallery on Lafayette Street fills all of its 2,400 square feet. It features 48 works from Lucas's 40 years of art, each one a multifaceted, colorful phantasmagoria made from things like skeins of thread and yarn, toys, scattered beads and even a full wedding dress. “I find great beauty in what our culture considers cheap and tawdry,” she adds. “Much more beauty than in what's considered higher-end.”

“I'm inspired by a deep need to tell a story. My story is unique. I want to show that very inexpensive items can be made powerful and beautiful,” says Lucas. “It gives me pleasure to transform material. It feels incredibly exciting to try to make something powerful from what our culture discards.”

For more info, see [bonnie-lucas-artist.com](http://bonnie-lucas-artist.com) or [waldandkimgallery.org](http://waldandkimgallery.org). The retrospective runs through April 26.



At an economic justice rally: “The low pay for adjunct work is unbelievable.”