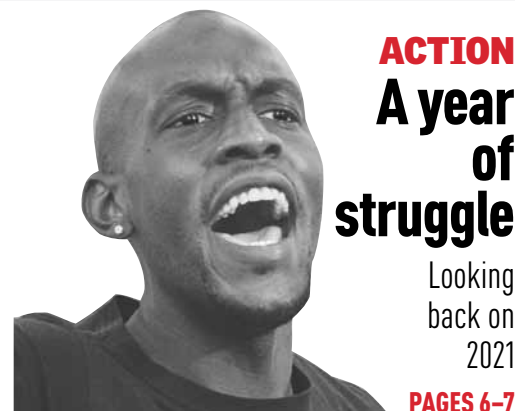


# Clarion

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



DECEMBER 2021



**ACTION**  
**A year of struggle**

Looking back on 2021

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Dave Sanders

## PSC TO ALBANY THE TIME IS NOW

Students, PSC members and elected officials unite to give Governor Kathy Hochul and state legislators a clear message: public higher education must be a priority in the 2022 budget. **PAGE 3**

### **SAFETY**

#### **Reopen CUNY, but safely**

CUNY wants 70% of classes to take place in person this Spring. It's a noble goal, but is CUNY ready? Chapters organize and members weigh in. **PAGE 4**

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A judge's ruling delays the new health plan roll out as PSC retirees continue to fight against NYC's plan to privatize retiree health benefits. **PAGE 5**

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#### **Part-timers demand equity**

Part-time instructors and union activists tell City Council that CUNY continues to exploit contingent and part-time labor. It's time for a change. **PAGES 10-11**



### **ELECTIONS**

#### **Notice for Spring elections**

The union is gearing up for Delegate Assembly and chapter leadership elections in the Spring. Read the election rules and get informed on voting procedures. **PAGE 12**





At Columbia University, PSC members rally with striking graduate student workers and other UAW Local 2110 members.

## The news in brief

By CLARION STAFF

### UC lecturers win

After voting to authorize a strike across the massive University of California system, 6,500 lecturers represented by the University Council-AFT (UC-AFT) secured a new agreement that lifts pay, adds jobs security and creates professional advancement opportunities for its members.

"It's a huge win for us as a union. It's a huge win for me personally," John Branstetter, president of UC-AFT Los Angeles, told the *Los Angeles Times*. Branstetter is currently working three jobs. "It literally means I can keep my job. In the five years at UC, I've never had to not worry about getting rehired."

The agreement establishes multi-year appointments in the first six years of teaching for lecturers, a pathway for promotion to senior continuing lecturer, a 30% average salary increase during the five-year contract, four weeks of fully paid family leave, and two additional weeks of fully paid pregnancy disability leave (to eight weeks total) for birth mothers, according to the UC-AFT's website.

At the PSC, full-time and adjunct lecturers also have job security provisions. Lecturers covered by the PSC-CUNY contract are eligible for certificates of continuous employment after five years of continuous full-time service. Full-time lecturers also have job security protections effective one year from the date of their initial appointment. After one year of work, full-time lecturers are eligible for eight consecutive weeks of paid parental leave. Both full-time and adjunct faculty lecturers are eligible for New York State Paid Family Leave after working at CUNY for a certain amount of time. Adjunct lecturers are eligible for three-year and one-year appointments.

### SUNY's Malatras resigns

After dozens of state lawmakers called for his ouster, SUNY Chancellor James Malatras resigned on December 9 after an attorney general's

probe found that he had repeatedly insulted the first of many women to accuse former Governor Andrew Cuomo of sexual harassment.

Malatras was installed as chancellor in 2020 without a national search. He previously served as state operations director under Cuomo and is widely seen by critics as a loyalist to the former governor. Cuomo resigned due to allegations of sexual misconduct this past summer.

### Columbia solidarity

PSC members joined striking Columbia graduate student workers, members of UAW Local 2110, in solidarity for better pay and benefits. UAW Local 2110, which represents graduate student workers, researchers and other staff, went on strike November 3. According to a *Newsweek* report, Columbia University sent an email to 3,000 striking graduate student workers a month after the strike began, "threatening to permanently replace them if they [did] not return to their jobs."

A tentative agreement struck between UAW Local 2110 and Columbia after a strike last Spring was rejected. The PSC urges members not to cross the picket line.

The *New York Times* noted, "Several union members said they have been pushing hard for higher wages to make it possible for more lower-income students to attend Columbia. The current pay scale, they said, shuts out potential students who cannot make a living on graduate student worker income alone." The article went on to note, "The union is asking for a \$45,000 wage floor for doctoral students

# Reviewing a personnel file

By SHOMIAL AHMAD

Raises, promotions and decisions on tenure can be made in part based on the contents of an employee's personnel file. The right to review the contents of one's personal personnel file is enshrined in the PSC-CUNY contract and, in many instances, Research Foundation contracts as well. The PSC-CUNY contract recommends that union members review their personal personnel file annually.

Sometimes reviewing a personnel file isn't as straightforward as it might sound. College human resource departments may make it difficult to see; previously unseen documents may be in the file, including rebuttals to memos; positive evaluations or complimentary letters may be missing. There have even been instances in which CUNY adjuncts have found their personnel files empty.

When requesting to review your personnel file, the PSC's contract enforcement team shares the following tips to expedite the process:

## A PSC contractual right



- Request in writing to review the personnel file.
- Schedule a time to review the file.
- Copy documents in the file that you have not reviewed before.
- Report any refusals to review your file to the PSC Contract Administration Department.

Members should also keep in mind that human resource department staff often do not know the an-

swers to specific questions regarding documents in the file, since they only place the documents there.

CUNY administration keeps two personnel files on employees, the personal personnel file that members have a right to access and the administration personnel file that is only available to committees and individuals responsible for appointment, reappointment, promotion or tenure.

Members' right to review their personal personnel files is protected by PSC contracts, which can be viewed at [psc-cuny.org/psc-contracts](http://psc-cuny.org/psc-contracts).

### RIGHTS UNDER THE PSC-CUNY CONTRACT, ARTICLE 19

- The contract suggests that members should review their personnel file annually at the end of the Fall semester.
- No materials should be placed in an employee's file without the employee reviewing or submitting comments to the contents.
- Employees can submit positive documents related to their academic and professional accomplishments.

### RIGHTS IN THE RESEARCH FOUNDATION FIELD UNITS CONTRACTS, ARTICLE 11

- Requests to review personnel files should not be unreasonably denied.
- Employees facing any disciplinary action have the right to review file contents.
- Documents pertaining to performance problems should be provided to and signed by employees.

### RIGHTS IN THE RESEARCH FOUNDATION CENTRAL OFFICE CONTRACT, ARTICLE 12

- Employees have a right to review their file upon request.
- No document can be placed in an employee's file without prior review.
- All documents pertaining to an employee's job performance shall be reviewed, initialed and commented on by the employee before being placed in the file.

on one-year contracts, with yearly increases of 3% in the second and third years," as "yearly pay is as low as \$29,000 for students at the School of Social Work, and peaks at about \$41,500 for engineering students."

### Paid family leave

Good news: the state is expanding the list of family members a worker can care for under paid family leave (PFL). Siblings will now be included under the act, starting January 1, 2023.

As a statement from the PSC explained it, "Under State law, employees on PFL are paid 67% of their average weekly wage, up to a cap of 67% of the statewide av-

erage weekly wage (SAWW). The SAWW is calculated annually by New York State. Consistent with State law, PFL benefits are paid by an insurance carrier, not CUNY. PFL provides 12 weeks of leave in any 52-week period if the PFL is taken in weeklong segments, regardless of how many days per week normally worked each week. An eligible employee may take PFL in daylong increments rather than as whole weeks."

The union considers this a major victory in terms of allowing members to take time to care for loved ones, and an especially important win during the COVID-19 pandemic. For more details on PFL, visit [www.psc-cuny.org/benefits/paid-family-leave-frequently-asked-questions](http://www.psc-cuny.org/benefits/paid-family-leave-frequently-asked-questions).

### Saluting CUNY allies

The Belle Zeller awards, named for the PSC's founding president, honored three elected officials who have supported CUNY and are also CUNY graduates. At a December 8 ceremony, Chancellor Félix Matos Rodríguez and PSC President James Davis offered greetings, and Attorney General Letitia James (Lehman College), State Senator Andrew Gounardes (Hunter College) and Assemblymember Karines Reyes (Baruch College) received the Friend of CUNY Award. Gounardes and Reyes co-authored the New Deal for CUNY (see story page 3). CUNY Law student Shilpa Jindia received the inaugural Barbara Bowen Scholarship, named after the PSC's recent past president.

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Editor: Ari Paul / Associate Editor: Shomial Ahmad / Designer: Margarita Aguilar / Copy Editors: Teri Duerr, Matthew Schlecht  
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# United for a New Deal for CUNY

By ARI PAUL

Governor Kathy Hochul and lawmakers, hear the call.

Nearly 1,000 PSC members, CUNY students, allies and elected officials were joined by musicians and artists in a December 11 march from LaGuardia Community College to the CUNY School of Law that ended at Court Square. They had clear demands for the governor and the state legislature: pass the New Deal for CUNY and fully fund the university in the next state budget.

The boisterous and joyful Long Island City demonstration brought to a close a busy Fall semester of PSC organizing to improve state and city funding and support the New Deal for CUNY, which aims to make CUNY tuition-free and increase the number of full-time faculty and staff, especially advisors and mental health counselors. It also marked the beginning of the union's push for increased public investment in CUNY during the coming budget process, which is expected to conclude by April 1 for the state and late June for the city.

## LAWMAKER SUPPORT

The rally, organized in partnership with CUNY Rising Alliance, included the New Deal for CUNY's lead sponsors, Senator Andrew Gounardes and Assemblymember Karines Reyes. Also marching and speaking in support were state Attorney General Letitia James, Public Advocate Jumaane Williams, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, Senate Higher Education Committee Chair Toby Stavisky, NYC Comptroller-elect Brad Lander, Senator John Liu, Senator Jabari Brisport, Assemblymember Jessica González-Rojas and many others. The march included performances from members of the Rude Mechanical Orchestra and several other performance artists.

Three vibrantly painted panels depicting the New Deal for CUNY were also on display. The panels were the work of a small group of artists and over a dozen PSC members who collectively wrote a script and created an art concept to tell the story of CUNY's fiscal drought and the revitalizing "waters" that are the promise of a New Deal for CUNY. The final performance, which included PSC members, their families and students, will also be presented again on the road in the coming months.

Lawmakers vowed to rally their colleagues to pass the New Deal for CUNY.

"This is the year we win [the] New Deal for CUNY," Gounardes told the crowd. "This turnout is amazing."

"In 2022, we are making CUNY free again," said Brisport over applause from the crowd, "and so much more."

Youngmin Seo, the PSC's part-time liaison at LaGuardia Community College, said after the march, "The rally was beyond my imagination: 1,000 strong in the middle of a pandemic. Students, staff and faculty

## Urging Albany to take action



Public Advocate Jumaane Williams, who is running for governor next year, said a CUNY education is what prepared him for his life today.

were all gathered together to fight for the future of our students and their children."

"Because I know how exhausted everyone is, exhausted from almost two years of pushing on during a pandemic, I was a little amazed," said Lara Beaty, the LaGuardia PSC chapter chair. "People's exhaustion with more than 20 years of austerity budgets is clearly greater."

"The rally was very successful with massive support from all spaces," said Remysell Salas, an adjunct lecturer in ethnic and race studies at the Borough of Manhattan Community College and campaign director of the CUNY Rising Alliance.

"This demonstrates the strength of our people and our union and how many New Yorkers support this legislation. I live for moments like this." PSC First Vice President Andrea Vásquez said, "In this glorious display of students, community organizations, unions and alumni – sprinkled with music and visually astounding street theater – we saw clearly that all of NYC and so many key state legislators agree that this must be the year to adequately fund CUNY."

## BUILDING POWER

The march added to the momentum the PSC has been steadily building for years. The union seeks to use that energy in the weeks ahead to push for a New Deal for CUNY and for fair funding. In an op-ed in the *Albany Times-Union*, PSC President James Davis and United University Professions President Fred Kowal (who represents faculty and staff at SUNY) noted, "With increased investment from the state, we envision a future where every student can engage with full-time, job-secure

year and progressive lawmakers will want to be able to say they passed a budget that invests in needed services and education as the campaign season shifts into high gear. At the top of this list is Governor Hochul, who stepped into the governor's seat last year following Andrew Cuomo's resignation and is now looking to retain her position in the next election. A Buffalo native, Hochul faces a well-known challenger from New York City, Public Advocate Jumaane Williams.

In order to succeed, she will need to win Downstate voters and prove her progressive bona fides in order to distance herself from her predecessor and sway voters who lean toward Williams.

"Kathy Hochul has a unique opportunity during budget season to demonstrate her vision for New York in the post-Cuomo era," said Susan Kang, a PSC Executive Council member and an associate professor of political science at John Jay College. "Fully funding CUNY, to ensure student support and success, will be an important part of our state's recovery."

Luke Elliott-Negri, the union's legislative representative, said, "In 2022, there is a political opening for CUNY funding that has not existed in decades. We have strong Democratic majorities in both chambers, and the lines will be redrawn by the majority party. We finally have an executive who is not hostile to CUNY."

## CUNY FUNDING

State lawmakers are redoubling their commitment to CUNY and the PSC by pushing the PSC's hallmark legislation, the New Deal for CUNY, and calling for more state investment in next year's budget agreement.

Reyes, Assembly sponsor of the New Deal for CUNY, noted in a *Daily News* op-ed that New York's public colleges with high percentages of minority students tend to have fewer full-time faculty than SUNY, citing a CUNY University Faculty Senate study. This difference, she said, was a wake-up call for more state investment to close this racial equity gap.

"To start, Governor Hochul should fully fund both university systems' budget requests for more professors in her first executive budget. The governor and the legislature should ensure that the budget prioritizes equal access to full-time faculty for all students – across SUNY and CUNY, and across senior colleges and community colleges."

Reyes added, "We should also pass the New Deal for CUNY, which would in its first year mandate a ratio of 45 full-time faculty for every 1,000 full-time equivalent students. CUNY has requested funding to hire 1,075 new full-time faculty, which would make substantial headway on this vital priority."

Assemblymember Emily Gallagher, who led a delegation of supporters from her Brooklyn district at the December 11 protest, said that the New Deal for CUNY "will lift thousands of adjuncts out of poverty, hire more unionized faculty and invest in the safety, efficiency and maintenance of CUNY buildings." She added that it is "exactly the kind of transformative legislation we desperately need in this moment of halting recovery and I will fight with everything I've got for its passage this coming year."

Liu, the chair of the State Senate Committee on New York City Education, also noted that the board's approval of the latest CUNY budget request is a sign that the state has a chance to move in the right direction in terms of fully funding CUNY.

He said in an article in the *Gotham Gazette*, "The board's request for \$313 million more from Albany in the upcoming budget represents a 16% increase over the current state budget. The request for an increase of \$103 million from New York City amounts to a 20% bump."

What comes next? The next few months will include alumni and student engagement, lobbying, further PSC member mobilizations and meetings with lawmakers to ensure that public higher education is a priority in the 2022 budget process in Albany and City Hall.



Nearly 1,000 people marched through Queens on December 11, demanding a New Deal for CUNY and fair funding of public higher education.

**A political moment for better CUNY funding**

Desiree Rios

Dave Sanders



# Concerns about CUNY's Spring plan

By ARI PAUL

CUNY Central is aiming for 70% on-campus work for the Spring 2022 semester, with a minimum of 70% of courses offered in person and professional staff working seven of ten work days on campus. The PSC, along with other faculty and staff advocates, have objected to this “one-size-fits-all” approach, which ignores disparities in safety conditions among CUNY campuses and fails to take into consideration individual faculty, staff and student needs.

Faculty members are eager to return to pre-pandemic “normal” and conduct face-to-face classroom teaching, but many have questions and concerns about the safety protocols on their campuses.

PSC members at Hostos Community College held a rally on November 10 to protest what they believed was the administration’s sluggish response to ensuring a safe campus reopening this Fall. A chapter statement said that the campus administration exhibited a “lack of transparency and clear communication in the reopening process” and “disorganization concerning vaccination policies and modalities of learning.”

## CAMPUS MISMANAGEMENT

Craig Bernardini, the PSC chapter chair at Hostos, said that the college had mismanaged the Fall 2021 reopening, lowering confidence that it could handle 70% in-person classes next year.

“Now, instead of learning from their mistakes, they’re gearing up to make an even bigger mess of the Spring,” he said. “We want to be back in the classrooms, here in these buildings with our students, but a series of one-size-fits-all, top-down mandates is not the way to accomplish that.”

The PSC Hostos chapter issued a list of demands for its administration, which included the need “to poll current students to determine their [in-person or online] preferences for Spring and plan accordingly” and assurances “that expectations for in-person, hybrid and ‘HyFlex’ attendance are clearly communicated to students through multiple platforms,” among other demands.

Joan Beckerman, an adjunct lecturer in behavioral and social science at Hostos, said the 70% in-person plan failed to address faculty and student needs not just at Hostos, but elsewhere. “I think these problems are CUNY-wide and will take a CUNY-wide solution,” she said.

At the other end of town, more than 150 faculty members at the Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC) signed an open letter, organized in part by the college’s PSC chapter, to demand more remote and flexible work options for the Spring. The letter also reiterated that some PSC members’ requests for accommodations have been “on hold.”

“We ask that vulnerable faculty, staff and students have online op-

## Inadequate details on safety measures



PSC members at Hostos Community College spoke out at a rally, raising doubts on their college's readiness to reopen safely.

tions as needed. Yet, chairs have been told that every faculty member must teach at least one class in person in the Spring,” the letter said. “Staff are currently required to come in person, even though they cannot see students in their individual offices because it’s not safe.”

John Verzani, the chair of the College Council at the College of Staten Island and an Executive Committee member of CUNY’s University Faculty Senate, noted that there is wide variation among CUNY campuses regarding physical readiness and staffing when it comes to returning to a 70% in-person teaching schedule.

For example, Verzani said, some campuses like his own have open areas and space to spread out, while some campuses, like Baruch College, are urban, vertical buildings where students and PSC members have often complained about a lack of ventilation and an inability to maintain social distance.

“These decisions should be made locally and not centrally, and each campus deserves the respect to make these decisions on their own,” said Verzani. “Department chairs should be driving it, based on some data.”

## A ‘SMART’ RETURN

Verzani added that different schools and departments have different enrollment needs, which may shift throughout the semester. “The schools should have some flexibility,” he said.

A PSC petition on reopening stated that, “the guidance to date unilaterally establishes arbitrary standards

that prevent the local exercise of academic judgment and undermine shared governance. The PSC supports a smart and gradual return to work for faculty and staff because we believe CUNY students are generally well served by in-person instruction, advising and counseling.”

## REMOTE WORK

The PSC urged “college HR officers to honor remote work requests from employees who live with some-

one who is immune-compromised, and urge[d] supervisors to extend remote work agreements to staff who would primarily be working remotely (via computer or telephone) despite reporting in person,” and allow departments to use their judgment when it comes to how many classes should be in-person.

The letter added that CUNY should “Count hybrid classes toward the in-person category for Spring 2022, as they were in Fall 2021, and

define what qualifies a course as hybrid,” as well as “preserve in-person classes with lower-than-expected enrollments if demand for hybrid or remote sections exceeds demand for in-person sections.” CUNY should also “refrain from offering HyFlex courses absent an agreement with the PSC about the terms and conditions under which instructors undertake HyFlex teaching.”

## VENTILATION REPORTS

Resistance to uniform mandates comes in part from members’ unresolved concerns about proper ventilation. According to a union statement, the PSC requested ventilation reports prepared by the engineering consultant firm Ramboll, but many “colleges have failed to provide the data, which is essential to minimizing the risk of COVID transmission.” The union is circulating petitions for the release of this data.

Jean Grassman, the co-chair of the PSC Health & Safety Watchdogs, said this information is important because “CUNY is dilapidated in a lot of ways and HVAC [heating, ventilation and air conditioning] systems don’t often get repaired. They’re kind of invisible. People don’t want to spend money on them, so they tend to be neglected. Because of energy efficiency, they tend to recirculate a lot of air, but it also means that in terms of airborne viruses it’s not a great thing. You can use the filters, but that hasn’t always been the case.”

At City Tech, for example, chapter activists alerted the administration to the existence of mold and raised worries that there are underlying ventilation and plumbing problems in City Tech buildings.

“We’re dealing with a respiratory pandemic,” said George Guida, a

Continued on page 8



John Verzani, an Executive Committee member of the CUNY University Faculty Senate, says that decisions about in-person teaching are best handled locally, rather than by CUNY Central.



# Judge's ruling delays MA+

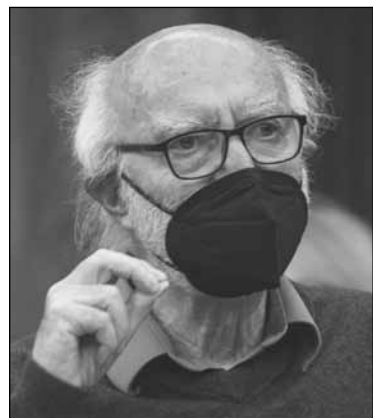
By ARI PAUL

In a reprieve for retirees, on November 29 a state judge declined to lift his injunction suspending the “opt-out” deadline and temporarily preventing New York City from moving retirees into the privately administered NYC Medicare Advantage Plus (MA+) health benefits plan imposed by New York City and the Municipal Labor Committee (MLC). On December 3, the city, the “Alliance” of health insurers that will provide the new plan, and the MLC issued a joint statement effectively conceding that the city may be unable to implement the plan in January as planned. The court held another hearing on December 8.

## POSSIBLE DELAY

The joint December 3 statement read, in part:

● Until there is a court decision, no retirees will be moved into the new Medicare Advantage plan. Retirees will remain in the plan they were in for 2021 unless they utilized the once-in-a-lifetime option to change plans



Bill Friedheim

## City still pushing the plan



Dave Sanders

Retirees continue to protest the city's plan to privatize their health care.

or transferred plans during the annual transfer period. Retirees do not have to take any action at this time.

● The EmblemHealth and Empire BlueCross BlueShield Senior Care plan will remain premium-free until the new Medicare Advantage plan is implemented.

● Once the court announces an implementation date, we will notify retirees of the period of time they will have to opt out of the Medicare Advantage plan.

## MOVING DATE

On December 7, the city's corporation counsel submitted an 87-page proposed implementation plan to the judge. The city proposed to move the implementation date of the MA+ plan from January 1 to February 1, 2022, and to extend the opt-out deadline to January 31, 2022. The city also

proposed that every retiree be able to switch once in either direction between Senior Care and MA+, between February 1 and June 30, 2022. The city's plan also proposed minor changes to the enrollment guide, which it said it would not re-mail, and a stepped-up informational campaign to providers. Counsel for the retirees challenging the MA+ plan filed objections to the city's new plan on December 8.

The judge did not issue an immediate ruling on the city's proposal at the hearing on December 8.

The PSC retirees chapter has joined with other municipal retirees groups over the past year to fight the plan. These groups have argued that it is not just a privatization of retiree health benefits that save the city money at the expense of retirees,

but that it puts retirees between a rock and a hard place: either join the privatized plan or stay with the current plan but at an extra annual cost.

## PSC POSITION

The PSC, a member union of the MLC, voted against the plan early this summer, in part on the grounds that participating unions needed more time and information to make an informed decision. Retiree advocates at the PSC protested the implementation of the MA+ plan, arguing that privatized coverage would ultimately lead to higher medical expenses for seniors and more restrictive health-care coverage.

PSC President James Davis informed members in a November 29 email that “The city had asked the judge to lift his injunction by December 1 to allow them to transfer the data for retirees who do not opt out by November 30 to the Center for Medicare Services, a federal agency. Through this action, the city would have effectively enrolled into the

MA+ plan those who have not yet opted out. Since the judge has declined to modify his October 21 injunction, the city is unlikely to transfer retiree data by December 1, thus making a January rollout of the privatized plan unlikely.”

This is significant because Eric Adams will be sworn in as mayor on January 1, and he “will have the ability to pause or alter any potential de Blasio proposal that gets the green light from Frank, [the judge], before then,” as he has been critical of the deal, the *Daily News* reported.

Bill Friedheim, the PSC retirees chapter chair, still believes that the

city and the new privatized provider, the Alliance, “seem hell-bent” on enrolling all retirees into the new plan.

“Retirees are pawns in this process, objects of contempt by the city and Alliance,” Friedheim said. “The confusion generated by the city has only exacerbated the angst of retirees about this whole rotten scenario moving them from traditional Medicare to a privatized, for-profit Medicare Advantage plan.”

Davis joined retirees in calling for voiding the contract between the city and the Alliance in testimony prepared for a hearing on the issue before the NYC Office of Labor Relations on November 10.

## REJECT THE CONTRACT

“PSC urges the elected officials of the city to reject the contract because it is significantly flawed,” Davis said in his written testimony. “Simply put, the draft contract contains no accountability [with] no requirement for periodic reporting beyond standard financial and claims auditing. The draft contract permits the ‘Alliance’ to unilaterally change the coverage terms – plan design, rates and benefit provisions – of the Medicare Advantage Plus plan, based on federal rule changes, without any consultation with the city or the MLC. And the draft contract does not cure the central defect identified by the judge: the fact that a large number of health-care providers that retirees currently use have not committed to accept the MA+ plan, which will force retirees to choose between paying \$2,400 more per year to ensure they can keep their current provider or potentially suffering a disruption in their continuity of care.”

# Accountability concerns at CUNY

By CLARION STAFF

A report by the *Chronicle of Higher Education* alleging CUNY administrators did not initially properly respond to allegations of workplace sexual harassment and mistreatment of staff at Hunter College reflect a lack of managerial accountability throughout the university, PSC activists said.

Jen Gaboury, Hunter College PSC chapter chair, told *Clarion* that it was important to note that many of the workers mentioned in the *Chronicle* piece were Graduate Center students and many were “contingent workers and...CUNY Research Foundation [RF] workers who were not unionized.”

## PRIVATE-SECTOR WORKERS

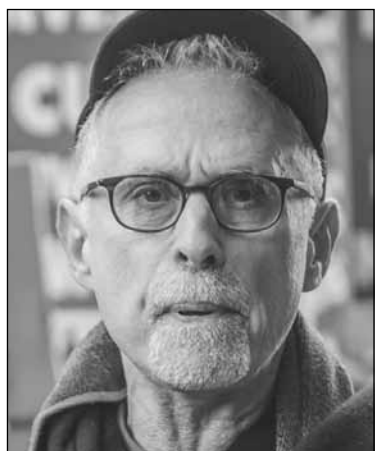
The CUNY Research Foundation is a private-sector nonprofit institution that is closely linked to CUNY, and while the PSC represents many RF workers, it doesn't repre-

## The need for PSC organizing

sent them all, and non-unionized workers often don't have the same strong protections unionized workers do. From the PSC's perspective, CUNY skirts accountability as an

employer when RF employees work within CUNY.

As Naomi Zauderer, the associate executive director of the PSC explained, “CUNY hides behind the



Erik McGregor



Erik McGregor

Hunter College faculty members Mike Fabricant (left) and Jen Gaboury (right) demand accountability.

RF.... The RF exists to provide cover” for CUNY, because if an RF employee experiences a workplace problem at a CUNY campus, they have to report it to their direct employer, which is the RF, not CUNY. “They really have no authority” over CUNY colleges, Zauderer said of the RF.

Gaboury said she hoped to see more RF workers being unionized.

## LACK OF TRANSPARENCY

Michael Fabricant, former PSC first vice president and a professor of social work at Hunter College, said that he hoped the Hunter administration would be more open about how it has handled claims of worker mistreatment at the college. “This is about transparency,” Fabricant said.

Hunter administration has had a spotty record regarding transparency in such cases. In late 2016, *Clarion* reported that “Hunter College and CUNY...agreed to revise

and reexamine how they handle sexual harassment and assault allegations after a US Department of Education investigation found violations or concerns in the more than a dozen complaints emanating from the Upper East Side campus.” The re-

## Will CUNY admin protect workers?

port added, “The investigation found that Hunter did not make sufficiently clear where to file complaints, did not promptly and equitably address some complaints and at times failed to provide interim measures to address possible hostile environments.”

“I think there's a structural issue,” said Michelle Fine, a distinguished professor of critical psychology, women's studies, American Studies and urban education at the Graduate Center. “The RF, the [Graduate Center] and Hunter are separate institutions that aren't well coordinated around this,” she said.

Fine believed that CUNY officials haven't shown that they're taking steps to provide more accountability when it comes to allegations of worker mistreatment.

“I fear that CUNY is circling the wagons,” she said.



# Year of struggle: PSC fought

It was a busy year for the PSC. The union fought cuts and pushed legislation. *Clarion* looks back on a year of action. (All photos by Dave Sanders unless otherwise noted.)

## New Deal for CUNY, freeing funds, ensu



**JANUARY**

Members caravan against adjunct layoffs.



**MARCH**

PSC blasts CUNY's pay raise delay.



**MARCH**

Students march for the New Deal for CUNY.



**APRIL**

PSC to CUNY: release the federal stimulus funds for CUNY now.



**MAY**

Brooklyn College PSC members and students march against austerity at college "free the funds."



## Ensuring safety



## PSC protests cuts and bigotry at Borough of Manhattan Community College.



## CUNY Rising rallies against city cuts to the University.



## Union activists meet HEOs returning to work to check on office safety at LaGuardia Community College.



## CUNY Rising pushes lawmakers for ND4C.

**PSC President James Davis talks to reporters about the need for a safe reopening.**

## PSC affirms CUNY's ambitious budget proposal.

## ty and demand the



# Recalling the man who saved Hostos

By ARI PAUL

Gerald Meyer, who died this past November, was more than just a scholar of New York City radical activism. He lived the values he researched and taught.

Meyer, a historian who became the first PSC chapter chair at Hostos Community College in 1973, is often remembered for his scholarship on left-wing Harlem Congressman Vito Marcantonio and the Italian-American radical community from which he came. But for many in the Hostos community, Meyer is remembered for leading a resistance to CUNY's plan to shutter Hostos and merge it with Bronx Community College, a plan that was widely seen as an austerity attack on an institution serving the city's Puerto Rican and Latino communities.

## PROGRESSIVE ROOTS

"When in 1975 and 1976, during New York's fiscal crisis, CUNY administrators repeatedly tried to shut down Hostos Community College, Gerald Meyer took the lead in the fight to save it," recalled Joshua Freeman, a retired distinguished professor of history at Queens College, who has written extensively about the 1975 financial crisis. "As head of the Faculty Senate's Save Hostos Committee, Gerry built alliances with students and community groups and helped orchestrate a flood of letters, petitions, demonstrations and lobbying that, along with a campus occupation, ultimately forced CUNY to reverse its decision, a rare victory in a very difficult time."

An August 2012 *Clarion* profile of Meyer noted that he "grew up in a poor, working-class family who lived in a series of small towns

## Gerald Meyer, PSC hero



Gerald Meyer (left) received an award for his commitment to Hostos Community College several years ago.

around Hoboken, New Jersey," and that "his first act of political protest occurred when he was 15" while attending Catholic school, when he was "confronted by a nun who caught him with a copy of a book by an anti-McCarthy writer and warned the rest of her homeroom class not to speak with Meyer. He threw his books on

the floor and walked out of the room, never again to return."

It went on to say that "Meyer volunteered with the 1956 Adlai Stevenson presidential campaign, spoke out against McCarthyism and collected petition signatures from his fellow students calling for the racial integration of their all-white school."

"He will indeed be remembered as an incredible organizer, brilliant scholar, dedicated and caring educator and incredible mentor and colleague," said Lizette Colón, a counselor and former PSC chapter chair at Hostos. "As a historian he was always looking for creative ways to expose his students – and so many of us – to different cultures and countries afar. He ran an international film festival for many years in a small auditorium that we had at the time at our college. He selected every film with so much care and pride, as he knew the kind of impact that he was having in the college community. Hostos exists today in great part thanks to the incredible fight that he led in the 1970s along with so many student and community leaders in the South Bronx community. He became our first PSC chapter chair and he was my beloved mentor. He taught me the importance of building coalitions and relating to all unions and all titles on campus."

## ACTIVIST ACADEMIC

The Gerald J. Meyer Transfer Scholarship at Hostos was established in 2014. He retired from Hostos in 2002, returning in 2004 as an adjunct, and later donated "\$25,000 to the college, money that can be used for everything from funding student travel abroad to the school's lobbying in Albany," *Clarion* reported.

Marcella Bencivenni, a professor of history at Hostos, said that Meyer's

legacy goes beyond his successful leadership in the movement to save the institution. "As a dedicated teacher, he spent a large part of his career to advance education for bilingual and poorer, nontraditional students, developing over the years important instructional material and booklets to meet their educational needs," she

## An academic who built coalitions and a college

said. "He helped establish new college-wide entities such as the Gay and Lesbian Club and the Hostos Solidarity Coalition. After retiring, he cofounded and chaired The Circle of 100

Scholarship and Emergency Fund, which provides emergency grants of up to \$500 to students in need and \$1,000 scholarships to those transferring to four-year colleges."

## COMMUNITY SOLIDARITY

Anthony Gronowicz, an adjunct professor of history at Borough of Manhattan Community College, said, "Jerry assumed the political persona of Vito Marcantonio, but instead of the East Harlem community, he made the South Bronx's Hostos Community College with its majority Black and Brown students his educational constituents. When the college was threatened with closure in the 1970s fiscal crisis, there was no one who fought harder on a day-to-day basis to preserve and expand Hostos than Jerry. His biography of Marcantonio stands as a literary legacy for inspiring workers of different ethnic backgrounds to work as one in service to their community."

# Chair accounts paid

By ARI PAUL

On December 3, the CUNY Research Foundation (RF) informed the PSC leadership that CUNY department chair accounts had been activated, making \$3,000 in funds available to chairs in each department. Chair accounts are a feature of the union contract ratified with PSC-CUNY in late 2019. It was considered a major contract victory for department chairs at the time.

Sounds like good news, right? The problem, according to union sources, is that activation of the funds came three months late, underscoring how the PSC must continually pressure CUNY administration to abide by the contract terms it agreed to.

## SUPPORTING DEPARTMENTS

In a January 2020 letter to department chairs then-PSC President Barbara Bowen explained the new contract feature: "Think of the account as a source to draw on for research support when, as a chair, you don't have time to apply for outside grants or even internal grants such as PSC-CUNY Awards.

Is there something that would support your own work while you are giving so much of your time to advance the careers of others? Use the funds to buy books, travel to an archive, hire a research assistant, buy a laptop for fieldwork, conduct qualitative research or provide other support."

## CUNY finally acts after delays

Her note also said that "\$3,000 annually will be set aside in a CUNY Research Foundation account for your use on expenses allowable under the guidelines."

While the eventual compliance by CUNY and the RF is welcome, union activists said management's reluctance and chronic delays are indicative of a disappointing trend of CUNY falling behind schedule on its contractual obligations. In December 2020, *Clarion* reported that CUNY administration told the union it would delay across-the-board 2% raises to bargaining unit members, even though they were contractually mandated to go into effect November 15. This Spring, the union successfully defeated an attempt by the administration to delay contractually mandated equity raises for assistants to Higher Education Officers and lecturers.

# Concerns about CUNY's Spring plan

Continued from page 4

professor of English at City Tech, noting that the mold only raised the anxiety levels members already have around COVID.

## UNSANITARY CAMPUSES

Karen Weingarten, an associate professor of English at Queens College, told *Clarion* she was happy to teach in person, but noted that "the number one concern for most people [on her campus] is ventilation, especially since Queens hasn't given ventilation reports for buildings and classrooms."

She noted that her and other faculty members believe that cleaning staff is shorthanded, resulting in overflowing trash baskets and dirty bathrooms. "There are so few people around it makes me wonder when the paper towel dispenser was last checked," Weingarten said.

Scott Cally, the PSC chapter chair at Kingsborough Community College,

noted that his campus administration has worked well with his chapter to ensure safety on campus, such as closing off unsafe areas. But even with such measures in place, Cally believes that a 70% in-person teaching rate next semester is impractical.

"The data released thus far on building ventilation is insufficient to determine if our campus is safe for occupancy," he told *Clarion*. "The only report provided to the union lists two buildings as Tier 1, but one is completely offline and the other has only limited access to one floor due to the upgrade and replacement of the buildings' HVAC systems."

## CUNY CENTRAL PROBLEM

For Cally, the flaws in the Spring return plan flow from CUNY Central, not his local administration. "We will continue to stress to our local administration that while CUNY Central's poor leadership and communication is not [the college's] fault, it is indeed

their problem and it is [our local administration that] the PSC holds responsible for the safety of all members of the campus community," said Cally.

CUNY Central's inconsistent messaging about student vaccine mandates have also contributed to doubts that an increase of in-person classes next semester will be smooth.

"I was told three different dates by three different supervisors and/or administrators for the vaccine mandate deadline," Ian Ross Singleton, an adjunct assistant professor of English at Baruch College, said in recent testimony to the City Council. "There was also little to no messaging about the options faculty had in changing from in-person teaching back to remote."

All of this underscores the union's problem with the 70/30 mandate: it lacks any consultation with campus governance or department chairs, resulting in an impractical reopening plan.



# HEO advisors advocate locally

By ARI PAUL

When Rulisa Galloway-Perry, the academic advising director and senior cocurricular administrator for Africana Studies at John Jay College, was serving as a PSC grievance counselor for Higher Education Officers (HEOs), she believed she was providing a needed service to members. Spending one day a week at the union's downtown office, she helped HEOs from around CUNY with their Step 1 grievances.

But she felt there was even more she could do for her fellow HEOs.

## CAMPUS ADVOCATES

Galloway-Perry is one of 13 HEO advisors who provide expanded services to professional staff. One difference between a HEO advisor, a union role launched early 2021, and a HEO grievance counselor is that an advisor only serves HEOs on the campus at which they work. Grievance counselors serve HEOs across all campuses with the exception of John Jay. Advisors are also trained only in Step 1 grievances.

Cindy Bink, the PSC chapter chair for HEOs, told *Clarion* that the pro-

## Role launched this year



Rulisa Galloway-Perry said being a HEO advisor is a great way to build the union.

gram was improving representation for HEOs.

Bink, who serves as the director of counseling at City Tech, added that the local role of a HEO ad-

sor was important because "A HEO who works on a campus understands the culture, dynamics and players of that campus" and "this is crucial to resolving grievances

and understanding campus HEO needs."

For Galloway-Perry, the union's creation of the HEO advisor position comes as a much-needed expansion of the union's contract enforcement efforts. She notes that HEOs often require an advocate on their campus who knows the management structure.

## UNION TRAINED

"The benefit is that you know the parties, so you can work through it easier because you know both parties," Galloway-Perry told *Clarion*. "I've been at John Jay for a very long time, so I pretty much know everyone. I have the respect of the people I need to work with in order to advocate for HEOs."

Faye Moore, the PSC's interim director of contract administration, recently held several HEO advisor trainings for advisors that covered topics such as how to best serve members, interpret the contract and work with management.

"What I say to my fellow HEOs is [being an advisor] is a good way to understand what your benefits are and what your contract really

means," Galloway-Perry said. "People don't have a good sense of what the contract means, and they don't see that process. Being a HEO advisor, you get to engage with fellow HEOs."

She believes that grievance counseling is often viewed by HEOs as a service to members rather than a form of organizing. But advisors, she said, fuse the role of contract enforcer and local organizer. Galloway-Perry said that she strives to "bring in the organizing component."

In launching the HEO advisor network this year, the union expanded its advocacy for HEOs, who unlike faculty members, belong to a cross-campus chapter rather than a campus-based chapter.

## An advocate who understands college power dynamics

"The Contract Enforcement Department is very excited about the entire HEO advisor initiative and looking forward to the day every campus is covered," Moore said. "The current advisors are all committed union activists who will help us educate and energize the rank-and-file." For a list of campus HEO advisors, go to [psc-cuny.org/about-us/house-grievance-counselors](http://psc-cuny.org/about-us/house-grievance-counselors).

# A vision for a bully-free CUNY

By MAURIZIO GUERRERO

Building on the legacy of PSC anti-bullying advocate Graciano Matos (1948–2021), who worked as a laboratory hygiene officer at City College, PSC members are pushing CUNY to adopt more stringent measures targeting bullying in the workplace, a scourge prevalent in academia that has been exasperated by the pandemic. PSC advocates against bullying honored Matos by rededicating themselves to the fight to end workplace bullying at CUNY.

One key goal of the PSC Anti-Bullying Committee is to establish labor-relations policies that ensure employees are supported and fairly represented when raising complaints about workplace bullying, which is defined as the repetitive, unwarranted, and harmful mistreatment of a colleague.

## NO PROCEDURE

Presently at CUNY, there are no institutional mechanisms to deal with these grievances. "Members are telling us that is unfair, unjust. HR is not impartial. They are not on the employee side. They are there to protect management," Amy Jeu, a member of the PSC Anti-Bullying Committee and a College Laboratory Technician at Hunter College, told *Clarion*.

"From the membership's perspective, if we want to address workplace bullying, we need processes that are just and equitable, transparent [and] accountable," added Jeu.

## Honoring the efforts of Matos



Graciano Matos spoke about the harmful effects of workplace bullying at a PSC event in the Fall of 2019. The anti-bullying efforts of Matos, who passed away this summer, will be honored through the work of the PSC Anti-Bullying Committee.

The PSC has fought for anti-bullying legislation and contract language, including proposing anti-bullying procedures during bargaining for the 2017–2023 PSC-CUNY contract. Although the language was ultimately rejected, Matos and other anti-bullying advocates continued to work to reform CUNY.

"We are pushing the union to push the chancellor to do something about this. We are pushing for anti-bullying language to be included in the next contract," Matos said in a pre-recorded presentation on workplace bullying shown during the tribute organized by PSC members on October 18, Matos's birthday.

Tackling bullying at CUNY is urgent. Bullying and mobbing – when groups target a person for ridicule, humiliation and removal from the workplace – are prevalent

## Effort to combat workplace bullying

in academia. According to a survey conducted by the Workplace Bullying Institute, 23% of those who work in education experience bullying. Although those in health care reported the highest rates of bullying at 27%, incidences of mobbing and the duration of bullying were reported to be greater in higher education than in any other industry, the survey found.

The PSC's own findings are similar: 22% of respondents to the PSC's 2017

membership survey (1,637 people) reported having experienced bullying or harassment on the job. More than 70% of these respondents reported a hostile work environment, and a third of those respondents said they encountered "threatening behavior."

## CUNY'S MISSION

Workplace harassment undermines CUNY's mission to provide a first-rate public education to all, regardless of means or background, according to Nichole McDaniel, an associate professor of biological sciences at Bronx Community College who wrote a report on the topic. Since bullying targets otherness, said McDaniel, it thwarts efforts to increase diversity, affecting productivity and innovation and ultimately harms students.

For workers, the consequences of workplace bullying are often devastating. According to a fact sheet on bullying put out by the New York State United Teachers, the PSC's state-level affiliate, research found that workers exhibit symptoms similar to those of soldiers returning from combat. Bullied workers often end up leaving their jobs involuntarily because the situation is so demoralizing and stressful.

The pandemic has multiplied these problems. "Conditions of austerity and institutional poverty are likely to increase the incidence of workplace harassment and bullying, as supervisors are put under increasing pressure to do more with less and colleagues are put in the position of competing for scarce resources," noted the District Assembly resolution that established the PSC Anti-Bullying Committee in December 2020.

"We certainly feel that the stress and the bullying have gone up," said Jeu, "exacerbated by the pandemic."

In July, the PSC Executive Council approved a community norms and practices statement to promote "a work environment that is respectful and free from discrimination, harassment or bullying of any individual regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, gender or gender expression, age, sexual orientation, disability, ancestry, class or any other salient identity, protected or otherwise."

The document stresses the importance of becoming an "upstander" as opposed to being a bystander. An upstander is ready for "speaking, intervening, or acting on behalf of a person being attacked or bullied." The committee also made resources about bullying available for employees to learn how to identify and act against it.

## RAISE AWARENESS

After Matos's passing on June 13, the PSC Delegate Assembly agreed to hold the Freedom From Workplace Bullies Week annually to raise awareness about the problem. It is often the case that the target of bullying behavior does not even know that they are being bullied and may tend to blame themselves.

"I didn't know I was a target of bullying until I heard someone speaking about this," Matos said in the pre-recorded presentation, adding that hearing someone else talk about their own experience was an inspiration to stand up and to do the right thing. "To know that you are a target is liberating. You start saying you are not afraid."



# CUNY must address part-time crisis

By CLARION STAFF

On November 12, PSC activists told the City Council's Committee on Higher Education that layoffs of part-time faculty and staff, as well as cuts to critical continuing education programs, continue to plague the university's part-time workforce nearly two years after the start of the pandemic. Cuts have harmed students' learning conditions, PSC activists said, and made it harder for the university to bounce back from enrollment declines associated with the pandemic.

While achieving more state funding for CUNY is a key component of the PSC's strategic action plan, another critical component is to increase the city's recurring funding.

Last year, Mayor Bill de Blasio proposed \$77 million in cuts to CUNY, but thanks to intense PSC efforts with union allies on the New York City Council, the enacted budget restored \$10 million for CUNY's Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP). The PSC says that the city, the primary funder of CUNY's two-year colleges, must do even more.

## LAYOFFS CONTINUE

Winning justice for adjunct instructors and other part-time CUNY workers has long been a PSC priority. The last contract campaign aimed to lift teaching adjunct pay dramatically, and now, the PSC is pushing back hard against pandemic-induced course cancellations and the non-reappointments of adjunct faculty. Last year, hundreds of adjunct instructors were effectively laid off. The union is fighting these jobs cuts through various avenues.

College administrations have cited enrollment declines as a reason for

## CETs and adjuncts face continued layoffs



Linda Pelc, an instructor in The English Language Center at LaGuardia Community College, testified about the plight of Continuing Education Teachers.

downsizing. This Fall, for example, Continuing Education Teachers at Baruch College learned they would be out of a job in a terse email from their administration announcing the year-end closing of the college's Division of Continuing and Professional Studies. The PSC fought similar cuts to the part-time workforce at The English Language Center (TELC) at LaGuardia Community College.

Increased city and state funding and progress on the New Deal for CUNY is vital to winning better

protections and wage increases for part-time instructors, along with opportunities to secure full-time CUNY appointments.

What follows are excerpts from testimonials by PSC leaders and faculty activists before the Committee on Higher Education.

## THE GIG ACADEMY

This year's CUNY budget request, approved at the last trustees meeting, finally puts the University on

a promising path after many years of accommodating to austerity and disinvestment. The CUNY administration has made a budget request worthy of the needs of students, faculty and staff.

This hearing allows us to highlight a feature of CUNY's budget request: the intention to "provide a defined career pathway for part-time teaching faculty" by creating 500 new

full-time lecturer positions, an opportunity to offer conversion lines to CUNY teaching adjuncts.

CUNY relies heavily on adjunct labor to meet its instructional needs. In this respect, it resembles other public colleges and universities, where contingent appointments without job security have become the norm rather than the exception. But CUNY is a particularly stark instance of the problem. People talk about the "gig economy." We have the "gig academy."

As public resources for CUNY have diminished, the overreliance on adjunct labor has increased. The university effectively balances its budget on the backs of a large, underpaid, contingent workforce. In 2019-20, according to the [CUNY] Performance Management Process report, just 41% of undergraduate instruction per full-time equivalent (FTE) student was delivered by full-time faculty.

That means nearly 59% of instruction was delivered by adjuncts. This is the lowest rate of full-time instruction in at least five years. At the community colleges, full-time faculty teach a slightly higher percentage of courses than at the four-year colleges, but community colleges, too, rely heavily on underpaid adjuncts.

## JOB SECURITY

We are hopeful that this budget request is a step in the right direction and look forward to working with the new mayoral administration and City Council to ensure the city por-

Continued on page 11

# CUNY cutting CETs

By ARI PAUL

The PSC has fought against adjunct layoffs at CUNY throughout the pandemic and, before that, to provide more job security. Continuing Education Teachers (CETs), or those working in certificate programs at colleges, are some of the part-time workers whose jobs have come under attack during the pandemic. Certificate programs often provide vital services to English language learners and mid-career workers looking to advance professionally. But as the push for austerity continues, the PSC members teaching such classes have been under the axe.

As PSC activists told a New York City Council panel (see above story), members at The English Language Center (TELC) at LaGuardia Community College have had to fight back against draconian cuts.

PSC LaGuardia Chapter Vice Chair Laura Tanenbaum told *Clarion* that members saw "their hours cut as the

## Possible unemployment for CETs who lack job security

program suffered during the pandemic. The program has also seen a shift toward more hours being given to lower-paid CETs who do not receive benefits. LaGuardia's chapter fought back, using petitions, media coverage, and outreach to local elected officials. While there is still work to be done to restore the balance of adjuncts and CETs and to improve the working conditions of CETs, this Fall, all affected adjuncts who sought a course were given one."

This Fall, at Baruch College's Continuing and Professional Studies (CAPS), CETs received a terse, perfunctory email from the administration, informing them that the program was being shuttered. While some Higher Education Officers in the program would be reassigned, this meant dozens of layoffs for CETs, sources said.

## CUNY VETERANS

One CET, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told *Clarion* that she was "shocked that we were informed

in such an impersonal, dismissive way in a one paragraph email citing fiscal issues, but not containing a word of thanks for our long service. So, along with my feelings of sadness was a strong feeling of not being respected or valued."

She added that Baruch should advise CETs on how to get other jobs within the college. "English and communications [departments] might be able to provide some help or some contacts. I am not talking about the CUNY job site here, but something more personal," she said.

Vincent DiGirolamo, the PSC chapter chair at Baruch College, explained that while many of the Higher Education Officers in that division may be reassigned, many of the CETs, who are hired on a per-course basis and thus do not have the job security of regular full-time faculty, could be unemployed next year.

This includes "many 20-plus year vets, teaching everything from [English as a second language] to finance [who] all help to serve CUNY's mission of helping New Yorkers achieve their aspirations," he said in an email. He added that he hoped that some CETs would "be rehired if they are teaching in certificate programs that need to run to completion."



Rosa Squillacote, PSC vice president of part-time personnel (right), with PSC President James Davis (left), spoke at a protest this Fall.



# CUNY's part-time crisis

Continued from page 10

tion is realized. We also look forward to working with CUNY on a method to implement the conversion lines that could move many of our members into permanent full-time work with benefits, while also protecting the jobs of our adjunct members who are not seeking full-time work.

This past June, you heard my testimony about the devastating impact COVID had on our members and the University. The difficulty of those times was sharpened when CUNY laid off approximately 2,800 adjunct teaching faculty. Thankfully, about 1,000 have been rehired. However, attrition also led to the loss of more than 500 full-time faculty and professional staff over the last 18 months. Many of those who remain face larger rosters in their virtual classes, a problematic result, as remote instruction benefits from smaller class size. To meet this demand for more and smaller classes, all of our laid-off colleagues should be able to return to work.

**James Davis**  
PSC President

## ATTACK ON PART-TIME

There are still several hundred adjuncts who were laid off at the start of the pandemic and haven't yet been rehired. Many of those adjuncts lost not only their jobs, but their health insurance as well, while in the middle of a pandemic. It is simply shameful that CUNY has treated employees this way, particularly when those employees are the backbone of the CUNY educational system, many of whom have been working at CUNY for decades and effectively teach a full-time load.

Adjunct teachers and Continuing Education Teachers (CETs) in The English Language Center (TELC) at LaGuardia Community College faced similar cuts. Adjuncts were laid off and lost health insurance at the beginning of COVID and CET workers faced larger class sizes. After a very difficult fight, those adjunct workers were rehired and given health insurance, but now we are learning that they are being denied their contractually guaranteed office hour pay.

### CONTINUING EDUCATION

Continuing education programs, which many part-timers work in, seem to have come under special attack from a CUNY administration [which seems to try and] make sense of low enrollment with laid-off workers and increased class sizes. Some programs have outright been canceled. The CET workers of the Baruch Continuing and Professional Studies program (CAPS) had classes with 37 to 41 students this semester – far larger than normal. And then, in the middle of this semester, without warning, they are being told that the program is ending and will not continue into the Spring, leaving workers without a job and students without a program.

When I walk around my neighborhood in the South Bronx and people see me wearing a CUNY sweater, every block someone new stops me to say they got a certificate at Bronx Community College, or they're taking English language classes at Hostos Community College. We need to ensure that CUNY's community colleges are fully staffed and ready for students to return after the pandemic is really over. They are essential to lift up students of color and low-income students, who most rely on CUNY's community colleges. There is some decline in enrollment at community colleges, but how does that explain class sizes increasing while laid-off workers aren't being rehired? Students are going to be coming back, and if these programs are gutted, what are they coming back to?

Our members who make these programs run deserve to be respected. They deserve a fair wage, reduced class sizes and better working conditions. In short, they need to be invested in.

I thank CUNY administration for requesting \$103 million dollars [over last year's budget] from the city budget. I urge CUNY to fight for more and to use these funds to support the part-time workers who need support in order to make CUNY what it is – a People's University.

**Rosa Squillacote**  
PSC Vice President for  
Part-Time Personnel

## IMPORTANCE OF TELC

My passion motivated me to pursue two higher degrees, namely a second master's and a PhD, and to keep a constant and consistent connection to my students both in the classroom



Mojúbàolú Olúfúnké Okome, an Executive Committee member of the CUNY University Faculty Senate, spoke about the importance of adjunct instructors.

– before, during and after class and through email.

To further my professional development, I have taught in teacher-training programs at New York University and The New School and I have worked as a teacher trainer/staff developer at the New York City Department of Education.

### EXPERIENCED FACULTY

Given my status as one of the most senior faculty members at TELC, one who has contributed to the development of the program and has mentored junior faculty throughout the years, I was stunned to learn that in Fall 2020, for the first time in three and a half decades at LaGuardia, I was not given any classes to teach in TELC.

In Fall 2019, 35 adjuncts were teaching two classes each at TELC. Then in Fall 2020, 14 adjuncts were teaching only one class each. TELC

was still a program, but not many adjuncts were teaching in TELC. Instead, new non-adjunct teachers were given classes previously taught by adjuncts.

In Fall 2021, enrollment went up considerably and most adjuncts who requested classes were teaching again. We, adjuncts, are asking that our experience, expertise and continual commitment to the program be granted their due. If classes are available, we are asking to be given priority in the distribution of these classes.

**Linda Pelc**  
Adjunct Associate Professor,  
The English Language Center  
LaGuardia Community College

## MAKE TEACHING A PRIORITY

If CUNY values all its professors, how is this demonstrated in how CUNY policy priorities are rolled out? According to CUNY's testimony before this committee, part-time instructors' employment is very much dependent on enrollment. Difficult decisions are made due to budget realities. Eighty-one percent of laid off [workers] had health insurance restored. In July 2020, a grant of \$500,000 from a private foundation and \$500,000 from CUNY's operating budget was used for adjunct reappointments and 913 adjunct instructors were appointed. People who were let go were given priority. Online teaching training was also provided [to] 12,000 part-time or adjunct instructors. This year, 1,600 were not reappointed. What happens to those adjunct instructors? How do they pay their bills? How do they access health care? We must not lose sight of the plight of individuals who struggle to do their work under very difficult conditions that are now intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Mojúbàolú Olúfúnké Okome**  
Executive Committee Member  
CUNY University Faculty Senate

## PART-TIME PLIGHT

I urge CUNY to end adjunctification, to invite currently serving adjuncts into full-time positions and ensure that full timers teach at least 75% of all classes at CUNY.

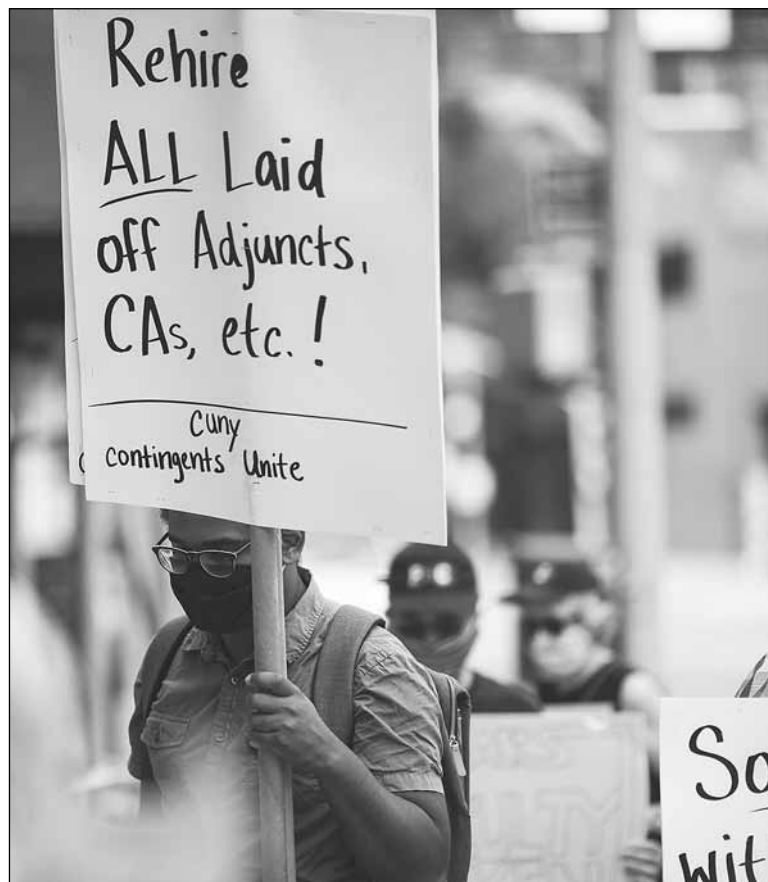
It is very hard to turn a C student into a statesperson when you are living in your car or commuting five hours between campuses to earn enough to barely pay your bills. When you can never take a vacation, and in my case, rarely find time to read a book, the pain is visceral. Students need professors who are not too stressed to keep up with their disciplines, who have time to read student papers over and over, and who are paid to be available outside the strict one-hour-per-class office hour.

### BRUSHED ASIDE

I've been scoffed at by full-time faculty for suggesting adjuncts do the same job they do. Yet we undertake scholarly research, serve the university and create works of art despite an almost complete lack of institutional support for our work. We are told our degrees are not good enough, even though there are many full-timers with the exact same qualifications.

I believe in public education. I believe that its purpose is to ensure that every New Yorker can reach their full potential through education. By running down our great public institutions, we are failing ourselves and our own future as well as our students' [futures]. Education based on the whims and fashions of individuals and foundations will not provide this city with the knowledge and skills it needs to thrive. Actions speak louder than words. CUNY talks a good game on adjuncts, telling us that they value us, then paying us less than [what] full-time McDonald's workers earn when the hours we must actually put in are added up.

**Jillian Abbott**  
Adjunct Lecturer, English  
York College



Members protesting the layoffs of adjuncts during the pandemic.





## 15-MINUTE ACTIVIST

### Support Columbia workers

At press time, graduate student workers and other unionized workers at the university were continuing their strike at Columbia University. The university administration has threatened to permanently replace workers who do not immediately return to work (see news briefs, page 2).

PSC members are in solidarity with UAW strikers on the picket line as they fight for living wages, expanded medical coverage, childcare benefits and protections against sexual harassment. In the spirit of the season, please consider donating to the union's strike fund.

Checks can be made out to "International Union UAW," noting, "Special Strike Benefits for Local 2110 – GWC" in the memo field and mailed to the Region 9A office at 111 South Road, Farmington, CT 06032 or visit [www.studentworkersofcolumbia.com](http://www.studentworkersofcolumbia.com) to donate online.

Professional Staff Congress/CUNY  
61 Broadway, 15th Floor  
New York, New York 10006  
Return Service Requested

NonProfit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
New York, N.Y.  
Permit No. 8049

# PROFESSIONAL STAFF CONGRESS-CUNY NOTICE OF NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS – SPRING 2022

Chapter Officers, Delegates and Alternates to the PSC Delegate Assembly and PSC-CUNY Welfare Fund Advisory Council

Term of Office: three (3) years

#### OFFICERS TO BE ELECTED

In each of the Chapters listed below, voters will elect the Chapter Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, four Officers-at-Large, Delegates to the Delegate Assembly (in addition to the Chapter Chair, who shall automatically be the initial Delegate to the Delegate Assembly) and Alternates to the Delegate Assembly according to the listing in the table on this page.

**DECLARATION OF CANDIDACY:** Signed declaration of candidacies must be received by the PSC office by January 14, 2022. The declaration must specify the office(s) being sought, the candidate's name, college and department, and, if the candidate intends to run as part of a slate or caucus, the name of the slate or caucus. Slate or caucus declarations should be submitted through the slate or caucus designee. A declaration form is available at [tinyurl.com/2022-declaration-of-candidacy](http://tinyurl.com/2022-declaration-of-candidacy). Slate or caucus designees and individuals should submit the form to [elections@pscmail.org](mailto:elections@pscmail.org). Forms may also be mailed to the PSC at 61 Broadway– Ste. 1500, New York, NY 10006.

**ELIGIBILITY FOR HOLDING OFFICE:** Members shall be permitted to hold chapter-level office who have been members in good standing of the appropriate chapter for at least one (1) year prior to the close of nominations, March 4, 2022.

**VOTING ELIGIBILITY:** Members shall be permitted to participate in the nomination process and to vote who have been members in good standing of the appropriate chapter for at least four (4) months prior to the mailing of the ballots on April 4, 2022 (i.e., they must have been a member as of December 4, 2021).

**NOMINATING PROCEDURES:** Nominations of an individual or of a slate *must* be by official nominating petition signed by no fewer than twenty-five (25) members of the chapter in good standing or by no fewer than twenty-five percent (25%) of the members of the chapter in good standing, whichever is less. For chapter elections, members may only sign nominating petitions of the chapter to which they belong.

**SLATE REGULATIONS:** A slate of candidates will be recognized if it consists of candidates for twenty-five percent (25%) or more of the officers to be elected in the applicable chapter, and if it submits, prior to the close of nominations: (1) a listing of caucus officers, all of whom must be members in good standing, including the person designated to authorize nominees for that caucus' slate; and (2) a nominating petition including the printed name, signature, department and college of each petitioner, and the signature for each candidate running on the slate. **A candidate's signature on a Slate's Declaration**

**of Candidacy shall constitute that candidate's acceptance of the slate designation.**

**BALLOTING:** All voting must be on the official PSC ballot. Write-in votes are permitted. A write-in vote shall be valid if the intent of the voter is clear; written, printed and typed names are acceptable. A write-in candidate must meet the same eligibility requirements as a regular candidate. In chapter elections, any nominated or write-in candidate must receive at least ten (10) votes or ten percent (10%) of the votes cast for that office, whichever is less, in order to be elected. Write-in candidates who are elected must submit written acceptance of office to the Elections Committee within ten (10) calendar days of notification that their election has been certified.

**CAMPAIGNING:** All candidates may mail literature at their own expense through the PSC's mailing house, Century Direct. To request a list, email the membership department at [membership@pscmail.org](mailto:membership@pscmail.org). The Request for

List and Labels Form will also be posted on the PSC website. The PSC will provide Century Direct with electronic downloads of home addresses of members eligible to vote for the seat for which the candidate is running, after receiving payment of \$60.00 from the candidate. PSC must have three (3) working days of advance notice to generate and provide these downloads. Contact Century Direct at (212) 763-0607 or email Bill Abrams at [abramsb@centurydirect.net](mailto:abramsb@centurydirect.net).

**ELECTION TALLY:** Each candidate, or a representative of the candidate, is entitled to be present at the counting of the ballots. Candidates who are part of a slate may have a slate representative present at the counting of the ballots.

#### PSC-CUNY WELFARE FUND ADVISORY COUNCIL

At each of the colleges listed below, voters will elect the designated number of members of the PSC-CUNY Welfare Fund Advisory Council, in accordance with the above schedule

and rules and the by-laws of the PSC-CUNY Welfare Fund.

#### ELECTION SCHEDULE

- 1. JANUARY 14, 2022** – Deadline for filing a signed Candidate Declaration. The form is available online at [tinyurl.com/2022-declaration-of-candidacy](http://tinyurl.com/2022-declaration-of-candidacy) and should be submitted to the slate/caucus designee or [elections@pscmail.org](mailto:elections@pscmail.org) for those running individually. Forms may also be mailed to the PSC Office at 61 Broadway – Ste. 1500, New York, NY 10006. Forms must be received by January 14, 2022.
- 2. FEBRUARY 1, 2022** – Pre-printed nominating petitions will be available upon request by emailing [elections@pscmail.org](mailto:elections@pscmail.org).
- 3. MARCH 4, 2022, 5:00 PM** – Deadline for completed nominating petitions to be received at [elections@pscmail.org](mailto:elections@pscmail.org) or at the PSC Office, Attn: Elections Committee, 61 Broadway – Ste. 1500, New York, NY 10006.
- 4. APRIL 4, 2022** – Ballots will be mailed to members' home addresses.
- 5. APRIL 29, 2022, 5:00 PM** – Ballots in an uncontested election must be received at the PSC Office.
- 6. APRIL 29, 2022, 5:00 PM** – Ballots for contested elections must be received at American Arbitration Assoc. via mail or internet.
- 7. MAY 2, 2022** – Ballots will be counted at 10:00 am.

#### ELECTION RULES

The complete Election Rules and PSC Constitution may be obtained from the PSC website at [tinyurl.com/PSC-election-rules](http://tinyurl.com/PSC-election-rules) and [www.psc-cuny.org/about-us/constitution](http://www.psc-cuny.org/about-us/constitution).

Any questions regarding election procedures or materials can be addressed to [elections@pscmail.org](mailto:elections@pscmail.org). All mailed correspondence to the PSC Office regarding elections should be put to the attn. of PSC Elections Committee. For updated information on the PSC elections process, go to the PSC Elections Committee webpage at [psc-cuny.org/about-us/elections-committee](http://psc-cuny.org/about-us/elections-committee).

CHAPTER	GRAND TOTAL	Delegates	Alternates	Petition Signatures Required	WF Advisory Council
Brooklyn EOC	33	Chair	1	8	1
Bronx EOC	14	Chair	1	4	1
College of Staten Island	724	Chair+6	5	25	2
Hunter Campus Schools	102	Chair	1	25	1
Higher Education Officers	4,674	Chair+46	8	25	
Kingsborough Community College	638	Chair+5	4	25	2
Lehman College	771	Chair+7	5	25	2
Borough of Manhattan Community College	1,126	Chair+10	6	25	2
Medgar Evers College	288	Chair+2	3	25	2
Manhattan EOC	39	Chair	1	10	1
City Tech	1,093	Chair+10	6	25	2
Queensborough Community College	696	Chair+6	5	25	2
Queens EOC	17	Chair	1	4	1
Retirees	2,888	Chair+6	5	25	1
Research Foundation Central	98	Chair	1	25	
Research Foundation Field Units	107	Chair	1	25	

**PSC Spring 2022 Elections will be held for several PSC chapters (listed above). This chart outlines the positions up for election and the number of petition signatures required for candidates to run at their chapters. The grand total column reflects the number of members in each chapter.**