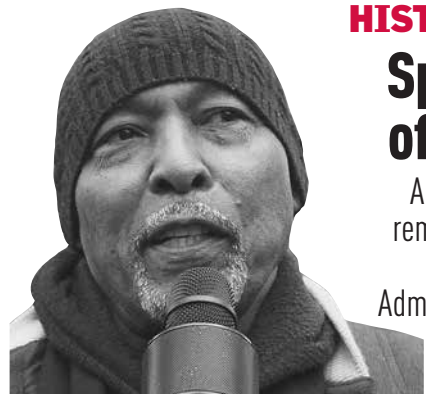


Clarion

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



MAY 2019



HISTORY

Spirit of '69

Activists remember Open Admissions strike.

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Erik McGregor

CUNY SPRING

PSC members dropped banners on campuses as they rallied and picketed across all five boroughs. Faculty, staff and students (like the ones at Baruch, above) coordinated actions university-wide to make clear it was time to support the PSC contract and end underfunding of CUNY.

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STUDENT LOANS

Survey for AFT loan lawsuit

The union's national affiliate is looking for members who may have been wronged when applying for loan forgiveness. PSC members may qualify.

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'Red for Ed' at CUNY

With the new chancellor officially in his position, the union sees an important opportunity to push forward talks for a new contract.

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Forcing BCC to address mold

Persistent pressure by union activists forced the Bronx Community College administration to take proper health and safety action.

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ACADEMIA

A chilling Trump order

President Trump issued an executive order that says it will preserve 'free speech' on campus, but CUNY faculty see a right-wing political agenda.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR | WRITE TO: CLARION/PSC, 61 BROADWAY, 15TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10006. EMAIL: APAUL@PSCMAIL.ORG.

Hurting adjuncts

● I am one of the many doctoral students at CUNY who was accepted but not offered a reliable funding package. I have financed my studies with a combination of adjunct teaching, one-off fellowships, borrowing and other waged work.

In conversations with senior faculty, I occasionally hear the argument that because they worked briefly as adjuncts in the 1970s and '80s, they have firsthand experience with the conditions adjuncts face today. A judicious historical comparison reveals this is not the case.

I recently saw an adjunct appointment letter from 1981 that showed a starting salary of \$1,487.70. This may not sound like a lot, but when we adjust for inflation, it comes out to over four thousand in today's dollars, anywhere between a fifth and a quarter higher than the present starting salaries for adjuncts. Moreover, the cost of living in New York City today drastically outstrips anything our colleagues knew in the 1970s and '80s. I recently conducted an oral history with someone who told me that in 1970 he rented a four-room apartment in Greenpoint for \$83 a month, or around \$550 in today's dollars. Today, the average rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Greenpoint is \$2,600.

In other words, the financial pressures on CUNY adjuncts have worsened dramatically over the last several decades, both inside the workplace (in terms of pay) and outside it (in terms of the cost of living).

Andy Battle
The Graduate Center

The real problem

● John Krinsky's op-ed [Clarion, April 2019, "In Defense of Fusion Voting"] conveniently omits the real role fusion voting has played historically in undermining attempts to build an authentic working-class party. In the 1930s and 1940s, following the Communist Party's turn to its "popular front" strategy, the American Labor Party provided its line to the Democratic presidential candidate, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. At the time, particularly during the mass strike wave of 1934-1937, there was immense support and momentum for a democratically controlled party of workers. The same forces that undermined the drive for a Labor Party in the unions also did so in the electoral arena by providing a way for workers to vote for the thoroughly capitalist-controlled, and then Jim Crow, Democratic Party.

Likewise, the so-called Working Families Party (WFP), of which the PSC is an organizational member, uses fusion voting to shuttle votes to an even more discredited Democratic Party while appearing not to. In reality, those checking the WFP box end up providing support for the Cuomos and other capitalist politicians who have carried out a social counter-

revolution over the last four decades, reversing the minimalist reforms of their predecessors.

The WFP and PSC's fusing with the Democrats has not produced politics that can push back against austerity and inequality. Instead, the ruling class becomes further emboldened as WFP's partnership politics undermines efforts to build a real movement, including forging its own political arm that could mount a serious challenge to the class war from above. The utter failure of WFP/PSC politics is particularly evident at CUNY in the form of the decades-long expansion of sweatshop academic labor, skyrocketing tuition and collapsing facilities.

Finally, Krinsky attributes the emergence of the WFP and its politics to the "union movement" and "organizations based in working class communities of color" in New York. Well-compensated, strike-phobic union officials, often decades removed from the shop floor, and foundation-funded nonprofit operatives, are somehow coterminous with a "movement" and organic voices of the multiracial working class. Indeed, a real movement is emerging among the working class, but it is one that aims to upend the failed, top-down, anti-democratic, class-conciliation politics pursued by the PSC at the negotiating table and by the WFP in the electoral arena.

Jay Arena
College of Staten Island

John Krinsky responds: Jay Arena raises key strategic questions for the left: about the centrality of electoral

politics; the structural possibilities open to electoral third parties, absent fusion; and the relationship of reforms to more revolutionary politics. I have neither the space nor the desire to debate either his historical or contemporary analysis point-by-point. In any case, it's usually good to listen, rather than dismiss, voices to one's left. At the same time, I made no representations for the WFP's radicalism or effectiveness, though I also do not dismiss it, our union, or many nonprofit groups as hopelessly and only compromised; they are all contradictory. Yet, what a democratic movement of the working class looks like today – and how to best to build it and a world in which it will not be stillborn – is critical, and Arena does a service by raising these questions with such vigor.

Combating bias

● There is much discussion among the Brooklyn College faculty of the weak transfer students that are perceived to increasingly populate the college. Undoubtedly, this has a racial aspect, as black students disproportionately comprise students with low GPAs. Rather than falling into the trap of "blaming the victims" and perpetuating white supremacy, we should see these racial disparities as a sign of implicit bias, which was the approach of the Obama administration.

We must take more seriously the recent direction of the college's Center for Teaching to incorporate social justice curricula, including notions of intersectionality. When Mitchell Langbert, a Brooklyn College associate professor of business, wrote a piece that trivialized sexual assault, Brooklyn College Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Anne Lopes noted that it was not only offensive but caused harm

to Brooklyn College students. If this harm comes from pronouncements online, think how much worse they are if they are made in class.

Provost Lopes has also provided leadership in another important way: requiring faculty on appointments committees to have an implicit bias workshop before beginning the hiring process. Without controlling these impulses, many otherwise qualified black candidates would not be hired. Given the dearth of hirings and the need to combat disparate grading, the provost should extend the requirement for implicit bias training to the entire faculty.

We should embrace another national trend: requiring faculty coming up for reappointment or tenure to annually submit a statement that indicates what actions they have undertaken to further diversity, equity and social justice. According to UCLA guidelines, the extent to which a professor promotes equity, diversity and inclusion is a key factor in making progress on the tenure track. This statement is part of the faculty review process at four other California universities, University of Washington, University of Pennsylvania and others.

Robert Cherry
Brooklyn College

Corrections: The March/April 2019 issue of Clarion identified Queens College union delegate Arthur Chitty as a participant in the Winter Soldier investigation. While Chitty was a veteran who protested the Vietnam War, he did not take part in this particular investigation. Also, an op-ed by John Krinsky identified him as an "associate professor" of political science at City College. Despite what the college's records stated at press time, he has been promoted to full professor.

Urgent loan forgiveness lawsuit

By CLARION STAFF

You may be a victim when it comes to your student loans, and your union's national affiliate may be able to help you if you act soon. Your first step is taking a brief online survey.

Last year, when 11 American Federation of Teachers (AFT) members filed a class-action lawsuit against student loan provider Navient for deceiving public service workers about their eligibility options for loan forgiveness, it was only the beginning.

"As of the end of December 2018, 53,749 unique borrowers had submitted 65,500 applications for public service loan forgiveness, and only 610 applications had been approved by the Department of Education," AFT President Randi Weingarten said in a letter to members. "Those who work in public service are being denied the forgiveness they are entitled to at alarmingly high rates, and it's time to put a stop to it."

She added, "That's why the AFT is exploring further legal action on behalf of our members who have been denied public service loan forgiveness. Specifically, we are looking for AFT members whose applications for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program have been denied."

DETAILS

CUNY faculty and staff, as employees of a public university system, may be eligible to participate in the AFT's legal action. You may qualify if you have made 120 payments on federal student loans and have applied for and been denied public service loan forgiveness.

To qualify, you must also have worked at a public school or college, for the government or for a nonprofit organization for the last 10 years.

Members can check their eligibility by participating in the following survey: tinyurl.com/AFT-lawsuit.

The survey asks if you have loans and can share examples of how the loans affect your life, how family and career plans have been altered by loans, what you would change about your loan plan, what type of work you do, as well as age and contact information.

Members working together



Members packed the PSC's office for a day of discussion for the union's junior faculty professional development day.

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A critical moment for the contract

By ARI PAUL

It's crunch time.

The Spring 2019 semester has been an intense one for the budget process and the union's bargaining committee. The final weeks of this semester may be critical in terms of reaching a settlement with CUNY management – with the Albany budget settled and the city budget process coming to a close in the summer, union leaders and rank-and-file members around CUNY are doing all they can to reach a fair contract.

CUNY management's first economic offer fell far short of the PSC's demands, prompting the union to put forward a counterproposal maintaining that the city and state need to invest more money into CUNY. Management has yet to issue an official response to that proposal.

PSC members have been applying pressure wherever they can through demonstrations, banner drops and “work-ins” for full funding for CUNY and a fair PSC contract at various CUNY campuses in April (see pages 6-7). And on May 1, International Workers' Day, thousands of PSC members on all campuses wore red, in conjunction with the national “Red for Ed” teachers union movement. May 1 was also the first workday for the new chancellor, Félix V. Matos Rodríguez, and more than 1,000 members welcomed him to the top post with an email urging him to make two vital commitments.

PUBLIC CALL

“I call on you to take a public stand against continued austerity for CUNY,” the email said. “Demand without apology the massive increased investment CUNY needs. The CUNY administration must stop seeing its job as managing scarcity and presiding over institutional poverty... There is enough wealth in this rich state to fund a great college education for the people who rely on CUNY.”

Pressuring govt., chancellor to take action



Graduate Assistant Ivana Đurović speaking during a May Day rally at City College.

The email continued, “My second – and equally urgent – request is that you make it a priority early in your term as chancellor to reach agreement with the PSC on a contract that raises our salaries and enables us to do our work.”

Union members are hopeful that the new chancellor will work quickly to turn around the disappointing state and city budget outcomes to date. The state budget, which was finalized by the April 1 deadline, does little to change the systematic underfunding of CUNY despite the many months PSC members spent meeting with lawmakers.

PSC President Barbara Bowen

State budget doesn't do enough for CUNY.

said in a statement, “The enacted budget contains no state funding for the PSC's priority: closing the TAP gap – a shortfall of millions of dollars at each CUNY senior college caused by the tuition colleges must waive for students receiving TAP awards. The gap at CUNY is already \$74 million and will grow to

\$86 million next year.” The lack of new funding for the senior college operating budgets (the TAP gap or otherwise), affects the size of the

economic offer CUNY management will be willing to make.

PSC members confronted two state senators – John Liu, chair of the New York City Education Committee, and Toby Ann Stavisky, chair of Committee on Higher Education – during a town hall meeting at Queens College about the budget deal. Both members expressed disappointment with the budget's meager allocation for public higher education, citing the reluctance of Governor Andrew Cuomo when it comes to ending the underfunding of CUNY.

“I was very disappointed, pure and simple,” Stavisky told PSC members. “Did I vote for it? You bet I did, because every Democrat voted for it, because there were many other good things in the budget. I just felt this was not a good budget for higher education.”

But such answers didn't persuade all PSC members in attendance, as many said state lawmakers should fight for state funding for public higher education more forcefully.

“You guys want more money for CUNY and SUNY? Put it in the budget,” York College PSC Chapter Chair Scott Sheidlower said. “The governor says no? You say, ‘Forget it.’”

In addition, State Senator Alessandra Biaggi, who like Senator Liu is a freshman senator who defeated a Democratic incumbent who caucused with Republicans, spoke in favor of PSC demands at a press conference at Lehman College in the Bronx on May 3.

CITY ABSENT

Mayor de Blasio's proposed executive budget for New York City offered little relief for CUNY as well. In fact, several programs were cut modestly. PSC members and leaders are currently lobbying City Council members to restore cuts and increase funding for both community colleges – which are primarily the city's funding responsibility – and senior colleges to help achieve a contract.

These actions, and more to come, are all about building momentum in the final days of the Spring semester to help push negotiations forward, union leaders said.

Ellen Moynihan contributed reporting.



State Senator Alessandra Biaggi speaking in support of PSC demands during a press conference at Lehman College.



PSC adjunct activist Lynne Turner speaking at a May Day rally of city unions near Central Park.

Recalling 50 years since the CCNY strike

By STEVEN WISHNIA

"It was pouring rain," Reverend Afiya Dawson recalled.

Dawson, now a retired guidance counselor, was one of more than 200 black and Puerto Rican students who padlocked the gates of City College of New York's south campus on April 22, 1969.

The students gathered in the lobby of a nearby building in the predawn darkness before moving out to the gates, she told a 50th-anniversary commemoration at CCNY on April 18. The movement a half-century ago made five demands: that the university establish departments of Black and Puerto Rican studies; that education majors be required to take classes in Spanish and in black and Puerto Rican history; that there be special orientations for new black and Puerto Rican students; that students have a voice in the SEEK (Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge) tutoring and financial-aid program; and most important, that CCNY's student body, then more than 90 percent white, reflect the demographics of the city's high schools, then 40 percent black and Latino.

DEADLY ERA

"We expected the police to kill us," Dawson told the crowd of about 75 people gathered at the commemoration, a mix of mostly '60s-era protest veterans and current students. Dawson's statement might sound melodramatic at first, but it wasn't that far-fetched: a year earlier, highway patrol police had killed three students and wounded 28 during protests at a historically black state college in Orangeburg, South Carolina. And a year later, four students were killed by the Ohio National Guard at Kent State in Ohio during protests against the bombing of Cambodia.

"We came without a toothbrush or a change of underwear," she said.

Instead, they set off a student strike that spread to several other CUNY campuses over the next two weeks. It won the establishment of CUNY's open-admissions program, which guaranteed a place in the system's senior colleges to any graduate of a city high school with at least a B average or in the top half of their graduating class. By 1972 the number of black students at CUNY had more than doubled to about 44,000, almost a quarter of the student body, and the number of Puerto Rican students had almost tripled, to 13,500.

The strike was "the greatest effort to increase educational opportunity in the history of American higher education," said Larry Rushing, a retired LaGuardia Community College psychology professor.

Yet the participants also mourned the erosion of what they won. "You've got to know the things that were lost in the 1990s," said Ron

Open Admissions and racial justice



Strikers remembered the movement while decrying ongoing racial imbalance throughout the University.

McGuire, a white participant in the strike. "It's not as diverse as it was 30 years ago."

The number of black students at CCNY has fallen from 40 percent in 1990 to 18 percent today, the biggest decline of any CUNY campus, he told the crowd. The departments of black and Latino studies have been reduced to programs. The requirement that education majors study Spanish is also gone, he said.

Speakers blamed the decline on the imposition of tuition in 1976, the tighter academic requirements of the 1990s, working-class people's loss of income in the Great Recession, and the multiple tuition increases of the last decade. The university's mission to educate the city's working class, "gets eroded with every \$200 tuition increase," said Haris Khan, the student member of CUNY's Board of Trustees and the chair of CUNY's University Student Senate.

BLACK FACULTY DECLINE

Equally troubling, rally participants said, is the minimal number of black faculty members. At City College, L'Heureux Lewis-McCoy, a sociologist who recently moved from CCNY to New York University, told the audience that only two of the 40 new faculty members hired last year were black or Latino. The reduction of minority faculty members, many say, is part of a general decline in full-time hiring. CUNY has lost 4,000 full-time faculty lines since the 1970s, PSC President Barbara Bowen told

Clarion last fall. The austerity policies that imposed those cuts emerged just as the number of people of color earning PhDs was increasing.

NOT KEEPING UP

"CUNY has not done what they need to do in terms of bringing black faculty to campuses," said City Councilmember Inez Barron (D-Brooklyn), who has pushed for free tuition at CUNY. "CUNY needs to be a tuition-free institution. That's

the only reason I was able to go."

Restoring free tuition is also a demand of current student activists, senior Bryan Wigfall told Clarion.

"The important takeaway is that the student strike was the power of ordinary people – students and progressive faculty – and confronting CUNY and not settling for half measures," said Stephen Brier, a Graduate Center professor of urban education who also served on a panel that developed Councilwoman Barron's tuition-free CUNY plan.

For the future, Brier said that CUNY can only really make race and class progressive if the state stops its austerity funding regime for public higher education. "Unless institutions like CUNY are properly supported as public goods, the problems that Open Admissions was intended to address go unaddressed and get worse over time," Brier said. "The savage underfunding of CUNY has led to division across class and race lines. Activism is critical, it's only the first step. The lesson 50 years later is that those gains were not institutionalized and that CUNY was undercut a mere six years after the student strike by the 1975 financial crisis."

HISTORICAL MOMENT

Steve Leberstein, a retired CCNY historian who currently serves on the PSC executive council, attended the commemoration and told Clarion it was the 1969 uprising that had originally inspired him to teach at the college, where he started in the 1970s.

"It was militant students who were willing to take a stand by occupying the South Campus that opened those doors, just as militant students in Paris the year before had occupied their campuses demanding radical change," he said, adding that the participants in the commemoration "spoke movingly of their experience which enriched the lives not only of those who would have been denied admission if not for the uprising," and they spoke "of the urgent need to continue that struggle today to reverse years of measures to close those doors both by policy changes and by chronic defunding of CUNY."

Ari Paul contributed reporting.

Medicare Part B reimbursement update

By CLARION STAFF

The New York City Health Benefits Program has announced that it paid Medicare Part B reimbursements for the 2018 calendar year in April 2019 for Medicare-eligible retirees and Medicare-eligible retiree dependents. The reimbursement is either direct-deposited into your checking account, for those on TRS pensions, or a check is mailed, for those in TIAA. If you did not receive your reimbursement, contact Hollace Humphrey in the University Benefits Office at 646-664-3409 or send a letter (including your social security number and phone number) to the NYC Health Benefits Program at 40 Rector St, 3rd floor, NY, NY 10006.

Those eligible retirees who retired before 2016 and do not also

receive a reimbursement under IRMAA (Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount) can apply for an additional reimbursement of up to \$300 by filing a Medicare Part B Differential Form along with their Social Security 1099 income report form for 2018. The differential payment will be issued in Spring 2020. To download and print out the Differential Form, go to tinyurl.com/differential-form.

PAYING MORE

Many PSC retirees pay more for Medicare Part B (the standard Medicare Part B deduction is \$134 per month from the monthly social security benefit), which is called IRMAA. The monthly Medicare Part B deduction is more because those retirees' income is above a speci-

fied level, and they are entitled to a larger reimbursement since they pay more. While the basic Medicare

Health-care coverage for CUNY retirees

Part B reimbursement is paid automatically, those retirees who pay more under IRMAA must apply each year for the IRMAA portion of their reimbursement because income levels vary from year to year. (You can apply for up to three years of IRMAA reimbursements retrospectively at the same time.) For more information, go to the NYC Health Benefits Program website, nyc.gov/hbp, and click on Retiree.

IRMAA reimbursements for calendar year 2018 will be paid in October 2019. Those pre-2016 retirees eligible for the differential of up to \$300 (above) do not have to submit a Differential Form; they will receive their differential in November 2019.

Union forces safety about-face by BCC admin

By SHOMIAL AHMAD

At first, the Bronx Community College (BCC) administration said there was no mold in Colston Hall, which had been shuttered for six weeks after dozens of pipes burst and flooded the seven-floor building in January. But a leading national mold inspector found otherwise.

Sharon Utakis, the campus PSC chapter chair, pressed the administration to do detailed mold assessments in the rooms affected by the flood. The university and college administration said no – until recently.

“The months of pressure from departments, faculty council, the PSC Health and Safety Watchdogs, PSC leadership and the BCC PSC chapter worked,” wrote BCC Chapter Chair Sharon Utakis in a May 2 email update to chapter members. She explained that BCC and the CUNY central administration had agreed to replace the drywall in water-damaged rooms in Colston – exactly what had been recommended months ago by Microecologies, a mold inspector the union had hired.

“We can’t let them completely off the hook now,” Utakis added. “We need to follow up and make sure they do what they say they’re going to do.”

CONSTANT PRESSURE

The administration’s about-face did not occur by accident – it was the result of escalating union pressure. When the BCC administration was adamant that there was

Burst pipes caused chaos in the Bronx.

BCC agrees to remove mold

no mold, Utakis was insistent that a thorough evaluation be done. The administration then agreed to allow the union to bring in Microecologies, a nationally recognized mold consultant, to inspect the building. But in the end, the administration ignored the inspector’s full recommendations.

Microecologies found mold or the suggestion of mold in half of the eight rooms they inspected. They recommended that drywall be replaced in rooms where the pipes had burst and in the rooms below. They also asked for additional air sampling once the work was complete.

The BCC administration stuck to their position and own methods. They “cleaned and sanitized” the areas identified by Microecologies, a February 28 administration email stated. Management’s position seemed to be that the mold issue had been addressed.

But the PSC persisted. “Mold could be hiding behind soaked drywall, impossible to see with painted drywall, or developing in porous materials that remained wet after the flood,” Jean Grassman, an associate professor at CUNY Graduate School of Public Health and the PSC Health and Safety Watchdogs cochair, told *Clarion* in March.

PSC members at BCC voiced their frustration with the administration by talking to the press and

politicians. They gathered petition signatures while wearing respirator masks.

In April, PSC leadership wrote to BCC President Thomas Isekenegbe, asking again for a thorough inspection of the more than 40 rooms that were impacted by the January flood. As a result, a conference call was scheduled with PSC leaders and BCC and CUNY administrators on April 30. On the call, administrators agreed to change the drywall in more than a dozen rooms where water had soaked through it.

WORK AHEAD

The PSC said the reversal was a big victory for the chapter and for every student and worker who uses Colston Hall.

There is still a lot of work to be done to make BCC a safe working and learning environment, Utakis said. In late March, several pipes burst in another BCC building, Guggenheim Hall, which was temporarily closed. Changes at Colston are a step in the right direction.

“We were successful because we were persistent and because we were right. This was a situation where the problem was apparent – permeable drywall was wet for over 48 hours and therefore subject to mold growth,” Grassman said. “In the end, the easiest action for the administration was to do the right thing.”

See *Clarion’s April 2019 issue for the full story on Colston Hall.*

Matos taps new chiefs

By SHOMIAL AHMAD

He didn’t waste any time.

On his first day as CUNY chancellor, May 1, Félix Matos Rodríguez, the former Queens College president, made five top-level appointments, many of them internal CUNY promotions.

Lehman College President José Luis Cruz will become executive vice chancellor and university provost. An electrical engineer, Cruz began his career as a faculty member at the University of Puerto Rico and served as provost at California State University, Fullerton. PSC Lehman Chapter Chair Robert Farrell said that Cruz has been supportive of union issues and has called on increasing adjunct pay significantly.

“He’s a believer that you have to have a seat at the table to make positive change,” Farrell said. “Now that he’s at the table, we hope he can work with the new chancellor and the government to realize some of his ideals.”

MORE PROMOTIONS

Glenda Grace, who worked closely with Matos Rodríguez at Queens College as general counsel and chief of staff, and had worked with him when he was president of Hostos Community College, will become senior vice chancellor for institutional affairs, strategic advancement and special counsel. PSC Queens College Chapter Chair David Gerwin, currently on leave, said Grace was “cordial and constructive,” but added that making progress on campus labor-management issues was “slow” and “intractable” because of CUNY’s bureaucracy.

The other appointments include:

- Maite Junco, appointed vice



Ellen Moynihan

CUNY Chancellor Félix Matos Rodríguez made big appointments on his first day on the job.

chancellor for communications and marketing, has been a journalist for more than 20 years and taught for a year at the CUNY’s journalism school.

- William Tramontano, appointed interim president of Queens College, is a cellular biologist who served as an academic administrator at Hunter, Brooklyn and Lehman Colleges.

New CUNY chancellor puts together his team.

- James Muyskens, appointed interim president of the Graduate Center, is a philosopher who was president of Queens College for 12 years and has taught at Hunter College and the Graduate Center.

All appointments will need to be approved by the CUNY Board of Trustees at their May and June meetings.

Two wins for adjunct multiyear appts.

By SHOMIAL AHMAD

The PSC recently secured important victories in two cases that expand eligibility for adjunct three-year appointments. The two settlements expand eligibility for three-year appointments to adjuncts who receive additional workload credit for teaching oversize or “jumbo” courses, and who teach in programs with links to an academic department. Both settlement agreements went into effect this Spring semester. Newly eligible adjuncts should be considered for appointments for the 2019-2020 academic year.

“Both settlements increase the number of adjuncts eligible for the appointments, and while they are not perfect, together they represent an increase in the fairness of the contractual provision,” PSC President Barbara Bowen said in an email to department chairs, involved in the comprehensive review

Settlements with CUNY

process to determine three-year appointments.

The college human resources office or the provost’s office is responsible for determining eligibility (not department chairs), and they should be applying these recent settlement agreements when determining eligibility for consideration this spring.

CONTRACT WIN

The pilot program for three-year adjunct appointments was one of the major improvements secured in the last contract. The appointments give eligible long-serving adjuncts increased job security, because adjuncts with three-year appointments have guaranteed assignments and income and cannot be dismissed without just cause.

The settlement involving jumbo courses is in effect only at colleges

that have the existing practice of paying adjuncts for more hours for teaching especially large courses. Under the new settlement agreement, if a college pays six contact hours for a three-hour jumbo course, the adjunct will now be credited with six contact teaching hours that can count toward their eligibility for a three-year appointment. A number of CUNY colleges do not have an established practice of paying adjuncts extra or giving full-time faculty extra workload credits for teaching unusually large courses, so an adjunct teaching an unusually large course should inquire at the college provost’s office about the college’s compensation policy for “jumbo” classes taught by part-time and full-time faculty. Contact an ad-

adjunct grievance counselor at PSC if you are concerned you are not being compensated in a way that is consistent with the college’s practice.

The settlement agreement covering adjuncts who teach courses offered by “programs” with links to academic departments, such as – at some colleges – “First Year Initiative” or College Now, affects every CUNY college. Adjuncts’ workload credits for teaching in specified programs with links to academic departments will be counted toward eligibility for a three-year appointment by that department. Each college handles the relationship between programs and departments differently, so refer to Appendix B in the Programs Settlement Agreement to identify them. The agreement can be found at this link: tinyurl.com/Programs-settlement-agreement. Adjunct appointments

Building off the gains made for adjuncts

to certain programs are handled by administrators, such as provosts, not academic departments, and the University was unwilling to count teaching credits in those programs for eligibility.

To date, more than 2,200 adjuncts have received three-year appointments. These settlement agreements are the result of class-action grievances at the university level that the PSC filed in 2017 when certain adjuncts were improperly excluded from consideration for multiyear appointments.

Stan Wine, the PSC adjunct grievance counselor who worked on both class-action grievances, said the cases represent CUNY trying to “maximize its advantage and minimize any pay or benefits afforded to adjuncts.” The union prevailed in both cases, he said, because members across titles – adjuncts, a PSC chapter chair and department chairs – were ready to testify. If you have questions about the settlements, contact the PSC at (212) 354-1252 and ask to speak to an adjunct grievance counselor.

CUNY Spring: members citywide p

By ARI PAUL

The message hung over the streets of Manhattan and on campus buildings in the outer boroughs. It fluttered in the wind by the East River. It rang out in chants citywide and on sidewalk pickets as trucks honked their horns in solidarity.

PSC rank-and-file members have spent the spring voicing their outrage and calling on the state and city to provide adequate funding for CUNY, and for CUNY to reach a fair contract with the union. In the month of April different chapters held informational pickets, and on April 11 members around the city engaged in a variety of actions to bring attention to CUNY's plight.

BANNER DROP

The City Tech chapter held a banner drop on the Manhattan Bridge and Baruch held one in the atrium of the vertical campus building. The Graduate Center chapter dropped a banner at their campus in late March. The Brooklyn College chapter hosted a faculty kickball game in the main quad while banners dropped from several buildings, and members at LaGuardia Community College formed a midday informational picket outside one of the college's main entrances.

These actions came after chapters at Hostos Community College,

Using various actions and tactics



Members from City Tech dropped a banner off the Brooklyn side of the Manhattan Bridge.

College of Staten Island and Borough of Manhattan Community College also held contract rallies and "grade-ins," where members grade papers and do other work in public, outside administrative offices, in order to call attention to the amount of work members do outside of classroom instruction and office hours. And on May 1 members marked International

Workers' Day by wearing red on campus for the nationwide "Red for Ed" educational workers' movement.

Actions on campuses and on the city streets

James Davis, PSC chapter chair at Brooklyn College and PSC Executive Council member, said of the campus's kickball game, "Contract campaigns can be a grind," adding, "it was a fun, collaborative way

to spread the union's message on campus and revitalize for the struggle ahead."

OVER TROUBLED WATER

Ben Shepard, the PSC chapter chair at City Tech, himself no stranger to transgressive direct action, commented on the banner drop on the Manhattan Bridge, "It felt so good to get that message out to the larger community of City

Tech and CUNY graduates. As soon as the banner drop was done and tweeted out, we started getting supportive tweets from graduates and students."

Maya Harakawa of the Graduate Center chapter said of her campus's banner drop, "We wanted to leverage our central and highly visible location and have an action that was public-facing. Ultimately, if we are going to win full funding for CUNY, the people of New York City must see the fight for CUNY as their fight."

STUDENT SUPPORT

The actions drew student support, too. At Baruch, as PSC members unfurled two banners over the main atrium in the 55 Lexington Avenue building, students joined the union protest, with one shouting, "fix the elevators!"

"I personally think that these teachers have to put up with a lot," Andres Aguirre, a freshman studying finance at Baruch, told *Clarion*. "There needs to be more incentive for them to stay at the job."

And Navjot Kaur, a senior studying political science, added, "The union is fighting for me. If professors are paid well, they can give students their undivided attention. Students need to stand in solidarity with faculty."

Shomial Ahmad contributed reporting.



Students at Baruch College joined PSC members for a rally and banner drop at one of the business-focused school's main buildings.

Erik McGregor

Protest for fair contract and funding



Dave Sanders

The Borough of Manhattan Community College chapter was one of many PSC chapters that held public "grade-ins" to showcase the work that faculty do.



Ellen Moynihan

LaGuardia Community College members staged a midday informational picket outside the Queens college campus's main entrance.



Dave Sanders

Members at the Graduate Center pulled off a successful banner drop at their campus in Midtown Manhattan.



Dave Sanders

Brooklyn College members held a kickball game for a fair contract on the college's main yard. Campus security officers later shut down the game.

New AFT endorsement process

By ARI PAUL

As the labor movement gets ready for the 2020 presidential election effort, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) has revamped its endorsement process to allow for more member participation and input, a move AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka hailed as putting “the power exactly where it should be – in the hands of the members.”

The AFT announced this spring that the new endorsement process will have increased member engagement (including the use of town halls and Facebook Live), direct engagement with candidates for AFT members (having candidates come to workplaces and meet with members face-to-face) and give affiliates and local members access to the candidates and their campaigns well before the endorsement date. The resolution encourages AFT members to run as Democratic convention delegates for their preferred candidates, sources said.

MEETING MEMBERS

Central to this new process is every Democratic presidential candidate to “walk in the shoes” of AFT members. PSC President Barbara Bowen said, “We are working to get some of them to walk in the shoes of PSC members,” noting that the plight of adjuncts nationwide has been recently written about in the mainstream press, including the *Atlantic* and the *New York Daily News*. The candidates are, indeed, competing for teacher votes. Vermont Senator and presidential candidate Bernie Sanders recently met

More member participation for 2020



PSC volunteers played a big role in the 2018 state and national elections, and the union will build on that energy in 2020.

with K-12 teachers in Ohio. The AFT also praised California Senator and presidential candidate Kamala Harris for her support for raising teacher pay.

In announcing the changes, AFT President Randi Weingarten said in a message to members, “We must elect a president who believes in livable wages; public education; higher education; healthcare as a right, not a privilege... And, we must have a process that our members believe in, that is credible, au-

thentic and transparent.”

Weingarten also said members interested in the presidential endorsement process should look at aftvotes.org/.

Presidential hopefuls will meet the nation's teachers.

“The AFT and a number of other major unions – CWA and SEIU, for instance – have signaled that they will not endorse any presidential candidate early. Instead, they’ll encourage individual members or local and state affiliates to develop independent relationships with candidates’ campaigns,” said

Geoff Kurtz, a Borough of Manhattan Community College political scientist, who also serves as the campus’s PSC chapter chair.

The Democratic primary field is a crowded one, numbering 21 candidates at press time. To date none of the candidates have spoken to the issue of adjunct pay. A few candidates have pointed to austerity in higher education and have promoted ideas for free college and student-loan forgiveness. Clearly, accessibility of higher education is very much on the minds of presidential voters.

The question of investment in and quality of public higher education must be pressed during encounters with presidential candidates by union members.

Kurtz, who is active in the PSC’s political action work, sees this work as offering a big opportunity for unions like the AFT and its affiliates. The PSC, for example, used its muscle to help win key State Senate races to flip it to the Democrats. The union helped to flip a US congressional seat in Staten Island to the Democratic candidate Max Rose, whose mother is a BMCC professor.

THE PSC ROLE

It’s time, PSC political activists said, to harness that power in the race for the White House. “In the next year we will begin to see a narrowing of the field of presidential candidates. It is incumbent that the PSC play a role in advancing a candidate who is most likely to create policies that invest in both access to and the quality of public higher education,” said Mike Fabricant, the union’s legislative chair.

“Unions are not strong enough to pick a winner, to play kingmaker, within a major party’s presidential primaries,” Kurtz said. “But they are strong enough and savvy enough that quite a few Democratic candidates want to compete for their support. The AFT’s approach this year is a creative and pragmatic way of leveraging the union’s modest strength. Let the candidates compete. We’ll see how pro-union they become as they do so.”

Health coverage for new hires

By CLARION STAFF

Effective July 1, 2019, all newly hired employees at CUNY will be covered for health insurance by the HIP HMO Preferred Plan for the first 365 days of employment. After the first 365 days of employment, eligible employees will be able to stay with HIP HMO or choose another health insurance provider from among the providers available to current employees.

This constraint on newly hired employees’ health insurance choices affects all new employees covered by the NYC Health Benefits Program, not only CUNY employees, and was part of the Health Savings Agreement negotiated by the Municipal Labor Committee (MLC – the coalition of more than 90 municipal unions) with the City of New York in June 2018. The savings generated by that agreement set the stage for New York City to settle agreements for wage increases with a number of municipal unions, most notably DC 37 and UFT. The savings also impact what

MLC bargained deal

the City of New York is willing to contribute to a contract settlement for PSC with CUNY.

“PSC is not happy that new employees will not have a choice of health insurance providers when they start working at CUNY,” said PSC President Barbara Bowen, who also serves as a vice president of the MLC, “but the City of New York was not willing to discuss wage increases with municipal unions until they had an agreement on additional health savings over the next three years, and this change is a major element of that agreement.”

OPTING OUT

Newly hired employees will be able to “opt out” of the mandatory coverage under the HIP HMO Preferred Plan if they live outside HIP’s service area and cannot access primary care with one of HIP’s HMO providers or if the new employee or eligible dependent is being treated by a non-network provider for a life-

threatening or disabling disease or condition. Opt Out Request Forms will be available on the NYC Employee Benefits Program website, the HIP HMO website or from the college Benefits Office.

CUNY has also stated that University Benefits will monitor adjunct health insurance eligibility so that adjuncts’ current coverage will continue and so that newly “eligible” adjuncts (who have worked for two semesters at CUNY) will not be treated as newly “hired” for the purpose of constrained provider choice.

For its part, the HIP HMO Preferred Plan has improved its standard of care for participants, including significant improvements to customer service. “Our commitment to the city and its unions is to deliver the highest-quality care for the hardworking men and women of New York,” EmblemHealth President and CEO Karen Ignagni said

in a press release announcing the plan. HIP HMO is a subsidiary of EmblemHealth.

Members in the new HIP HMO plan (also called the “Gold Standard”) will pay \$0 copays if they go to a preferred doctor within the plan’s Prime Network of more than 100,000 doctors across the tri-state area, including if they are referred to a specialist within the network by the preferred doctor. With non-preferred primary-care doctors in the network, members will pay

A one-year mandate for new CUNY hires

a \$10 copay for most services, including seeing a specialist in the network. Since the plan is an HMO, a visit outside the network is not covered unless it is an emergency.

When plan participants call the HIP HMO Gold Line they will speak directly with a live person rather than going through a maze of telephone prompts. To date, participants have expressed satisfaction with this improvement. Other aspects of HIP’s commitment to supporting improved health outcomes for participants include voluntary personalized coaching with one-on-one goal setting at no charge, and guided advice concerning fitness, nutrition and

stress management. Participants with chronic conditions, including asthma, diabetes and heart disease, will be able to work with a health professional on managing these conditions. Incentives will be offered to encourage participants to get flu shots and age-appropriate checkups and generally maintain a healthy lifestyle.

BENEFITS AHEAD

EmblemHealth is working with two Centers of Excellence – Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center for oncology and Hospital for Special Surgery for orthopedics and musculoskeletal issues – to offer certain procedures at no cost to plan participants starting in the coming years.

“With the improvements HIP is making in its HMO, newly hired employees may find that this health plan meets their and their family’s needs and choose to remain enrolled after 365 days,” said Bowen. “If not, they will be able to enroll in another health insurance plan under the NYC Employee Benefits Program.”

For more information about the HIP HMO Gold Standard Preferred Plan, go to emblemhealth.com or call 1-800-447-6929.

'Free speech' or chilling effect?

By ARI PAUL

In March, President Donald Trump signed an executive order defending what he called “free speech” on college and university campuses – the “order requires that schools ensure they allow students to express themselves in order to receive funds from 12 federal agencies that help fund universities and colleges,” according to Reuters.

What does this mean, specifically? No one, including the president himself, can really say. “The president’s [signing] remarks didn’t offer more clarity about how the program would work,” reported *USA Today*, which said, “the order doesn’t make clear...what criteria would bar a university from getting federal money – and how many colleges risk violating those criteria,” and that “the order doesn’t make clear how it differs from the protections already demanded of public universities by the First Amendment.”

The *New York Times* noted that it “was unclear what mechanisms would be used to enforce the order” and that an administration “official could not answer questions about how the order might relate to some of the more contentious areas of discussion on college campuses in recent years, such as the movement to boycott or divest from Israel.”

TARGETING THE LEFT

The order still raised eyebrows within American academia. Its vagueness caused alarm, because it could be invoked in a discriminatory fashion. Vita Rabinowitz, CUNY’s executive vice chancellor, said in her role as interim chancellor through the end of April that “CUNY is concerned...with the partisan rhetoric used by the president of the United States when issuing this executive order. At the signing, the president railed against ‘ideological intolerance on campus,’ which he characterized as ‘rigid’ and ‘far left.’”

And for many academics at CUNY, the order is a direct affront to institutions that serve the working class. Brooklyn College political scientist Immanuel Ness feared that the order could lead to “self-censorship” among academics with controversial ideas, saying, “Those who are at risk are faculty challenging the narrative that the United States is the font of global democracy and human rights. CUNY faculty are particularly at risk as we rely on public funds, determined by opportunistic government officials reacting to politically powerful corporations as well as organizations advocating national chauvinism.”

Likewise, Gunja SenGupta, the chair of the history department at Brooklyn College, told *Clarion*, “The threat of losing federal research dollars is likely to weigh more heavily on public institutions without hefty endowments, which rely on public funding to create knowledge and

CUNY profs react to Trump’s order on colleges



Gunja SenGupta, the chair of Brooklyn College’s history department, fears Trump’s order could acutely target public colleges.

promote civic education through research and intellectual debate.”

And Julie Schmid, the executive director of the American Association of University Professors, speaking more generally, said in a statement, “Like the president’s attacks on other perceived enemies, whether they be journalists, scientists or academic institutions...the order seems largely designed to undermine the public trust. It is also troubling that in his remarks the president sought to drive a wedge between students and faculty, casting his executive order as a ‘clear message to the professors’ that their funding was now at risk while also raising the specters of ‘political indoctrination’ and ‘coercion.’”

The US Constitution already grants university students free speech. By issuing the order, the president implies to the public that somehow American universities are already in violation of this hallmark American right. The claim that free speech is being violated on campuses is making the rounds from the fringe right in places like Alex Jones’s Infowars to more reputable venues like the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page. Reece Peck, an assistant professor of media culture at College of Staten Island, who studies American right-wing media, noted that Trump’s order serves as a perfect piece of public relations for a conservative president trying to rile his base.

“Educated elites have been a class enemy since William F. Buckley – the conservative movement has centered their campaign against academics,” Peck said, invoking the *National Review* founder’s book *God and Man at Yale*, in which Buckley accused Yale professors of forcing secularism onto religious students.

Buckley’s narrative about the Ivy League school, Peck explained, greatly influenced the Cold War-era conservative movement, which

characterized academia in general as a sort of fifth column against traditional American society.

“Joe McCarthy’s conspiracies focused on intellectuals, George Wallace talked about ‘pseudo-intellectuals,’” said Peck, whose book, *Fox Populism: Branding Conservatism as Working Class*, was published by Cambridge University Press this year. “Rush Limbaugh and right-wing talk radio centered the populist narrative on educated elites. Academics are a recurrent villain in Fox News. Even today with Tucker Carlson, he has a segment called ‘Campus Craziness’ where he debates academics and paints them as irrational and unpatriotic. Trump is a creature of media, and his view of politics is formed by the media he watches – with Fox and *Breitbart* – so this doesn’t surprise me.”

HITTING HOME

The effects of this kind of populist rabble-rousing against academics, supported by the commander-in-chief through an executive order, can have perilous consequences for academia. For example, Jessie Daniels, a Hunter College professor of sociology, has faced a barrage of right-wing harassment and intimidation because she has published commentary and scholarship on racist movements in the United States. She said that the president’s order was like throwing a bone to the fringe white nationalists and so-called “alt-right” communities that have supported the administration.

“President Trump’s executive order does nothing to protect academic freedom, but will embolden far-right activists,” she said. “These bad actors on the far right are not interested in the exchange of ideas, debating philosophies or delving into social science data. Rather,

they are committed to spreading a hateful ideology about the superiority of the white race by demanding access on college campuses under the guise of academic freedom. The president’s executive order will provide more cover for those on the far right and their destructive beliefs.”

Academics have been the right’s ‘class enemy.’

Daniels isn’t alone among CUNY faculty who have faced harassment for voicing political opinions. This academic year, Anthony Alessandrini, a professor of English at Kingsborough Community College, reported getting threatening messages after right-wing groups and websites like the Canary Mission and the *Daily Caller* started highlighting his views on the Middle East – the former group, as *Clarion* reported in November of 2017, also harassed and targeted two professors at Brooklyn College, Samir Chopra of the philosophy department and Corey Robin of political science.

And Brooklyn College in particular has received a fair amount of this kind of meddling in its academic freedom. Kristofer Petersen-Overtton, at the time a graduate student, had his appointment as an instructor in the Brooklyn College political science department revoked after pressure from State Assembly member Dov Hikind in the Spring of 2011 – the college reversed that decision after pressure from the union and faculty members. In 2013 City Council members threatened CUNY funding after the college played host to a conference about the BDS movement (the campaign to boycott, divest from and put sanctions on Israel), although then-Mayor Michael Bloomberg came to CUNY’s defense on grounds of academic freedom. “If you want to go to a university where the government decides what kind of subjects

are fit for discussion, I suggest you apply to a school in North Korea,” Bloomberg said at the time.

Bloomberg may not have been considered the most progressive mayor, but his words on the subject of government interference in campus freedom resonated with those who believe academic activity should be separated from the government and political parties.

Peter Bratsis, a political theorist at Borough of Manhattan Community College, noted that the Trump administration order rings hollow when, in actual fact, outside of CUNY it has been left-wing professors – he cited the cases of George Ciccariello-Maher, formerly of Drexel University, and other academics who have voiced strong views against white supremacy and were thus forced out of their academic positions by pressure from alt-right activists on their respective administrations – who need more academic freedom protections, not academics or students on the political right.

But he also painted a more harrowing picture for academia, where academic freedom is constrained not by government forces, but by a system where more concern is placed on job training and selling the “employability” of graduates than teaching how to discuss controversial topics.

“I think the real danger of the Trump order is not the hysteria over an imaginary threat to free speech but the continuation and intensification of anti-intellectual metrics for higher education and the concurrent devaluation of intellectual life,” Bratsis said.

ATTACKING THE RESISTANCE

Karen Miller, a professor of history at LaGuardia Community College, explained the Orwellian features of a government order mandating free speech on college campuses inherent to Trump’s recent executive order.

“It is intended to weaken struggles against racism and fascism,” she said. “But Trump and his right-wing cronies rightfully see that universities can foster the kind of critical thinking, intellectual production and activism that service alternate visions and possibilities. Universities can help us imagine and describe different worlds – where equality and mutuality are priorities, where exploitation, discrimination and capitalism are called into question for their moral and material failings, and where the voices of people of color, women, genderqueers, young people, the disabled and non-elites generally are valued.”

Miller, a PSC delegate, added, “The federal government should ensure that public universities are well-funded, that faculty, students and staff are fairly compensated and supported, and that everyone is safe on campus. This executive order moves us in the wrong direction.”

PROFESSIONAL STAFF CONGRESS/CUNY
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS with SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION
AUGUST 31, 2018 and 2017

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Independent Auditor's Report
To the Executive Board of Professional Staff Congress of the City University of New York
We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the Professional Staff Congress of the City University of New York (PSC/CUNY), which comprise the statements of financial position as of August 31, 2018 and 2017, and the related statements of activities and of 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.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the PSC/CUNY's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the PSC/CUNY's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion: In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Professional Staff Congress of the City University of New York as of August 31, 2018 and 2017, and the changes in its net assets and cash flows for the years then ended, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Report on Supplemental Information: Our audits were conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statements as a whole. The supplemental Schedules of Expenses by Category are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the financial statements. Supplemental information is the responsibility of the PSC/CUNY's management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audits of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the information is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the financial statements as a whole.

NOVAK FRANCELLE, LLC
New York, New York, March 13, 2019

PROFESSIONAL STAFF CONGRESS/CUNY STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION AUGUST 31, 2018 AND 2017			PROFESSIONAL STAFF CONGRESS/CUNY STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES YEARS ENDED AUGUST 31, 2018 AND 2017			PROFESSIONAL STAFF CONGRESS/CUNY STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS YEARS ENDED AUGUST 31, 2018 AND 2017		
	2018	2017		2018	2017		2018	2017
Assets			Revenue			Cash flows from operating activities		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 2,667,313	\$ 2,184,873	Membership dues and agency fees	\$ 16,257,484	\$ 18,595,041	Change in net assets	\$ 653,201	2,958,052
Investments – at fair value			Organizing assistance	4,035,091	4,072,166	Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities		
Certificates of deposit	992,000	992,000	Investment income			Depreciation	69,670	92,831
Mutual funds	9,071,114	7,850,374	Net realized and unrealized gains (losses)	27,265	110,071	Net realized and unrealized (gains) losses	(27,265)	(110,071)
Total investments	10,063,114	8,842,374	Interest and dividends	235,797	188,363	Pension liability funded status	271,743	932,795
Receivables			Less investment fees	(21,651)	(19,395)	(Increase) decrease in assets:		
Dues	357,000	724,000	Rental income	238,914	237,402	Dues receivable	367,000	343,000
Due from related entities	338,000	527,884	Total revenue	20,772,900	23,183,648	Due from related entities	189,884	185,765
Total receivables	695,000	1,251,884				Increase (decrease) in liabilities:		
Property and equipment			Expenses			Accrued expenses	(7,187)	(8,485)
Equipment	684,544	683,028	Affiliation fees	11,036,031	11,140,665	Accrued compensated absences	(29,803)	121,824
Leasehold improvements	529,641	529,641	Salaries, employee benefits, and payroll taxes	5,477,311	5,755,598	Due to related entities	355,467	114,475
Furniture and fixtures	340,407	340,407	Representational and governance	192,898	165,474	Unfunded pension liability	(60,784)	(639,935)
	1,554,592	1,553,076	Public relations	167,447	184,846	Deferred rent	(104,495)	(80,488)
Less: accumulated depreciation	(1,366,771)	(1,297,101)	Building expenses	1,404,396	1,389,890	Net cash provided by (used for) operating activities	1,677,431	3,909,763
Net property and equipment	187,821	255,975	Administrative, office and general	430,749	448,355			
Total assets	\$ 13,613,248	\$ 12,535,106	Professional fees	610,768	403,478	Cash flows from investing activities		
Liabilities and Net Assets			Contract & budget campaigns	112,855	180,293	Purchase of property and equipment	(1,516)	(9,896)
Current liabilities			Stipends and reassigned time	511,272	464,166	Purchase of certificates of deposit	(198,000)	(199,000)
Accrued expenses	\$ 321,803	\$ 328,990	Depreciation expense	69,670	92,831	Liquidation of certificates of deposit	198,000	199,000
Accrued compensated balances	602,033	631,836	Membership campaign	106,302	-	Sale of investments	21,651	19,395
Due to related entities	2,140,517	1,785,050	Total expenses	20,119,699	20,225,596	Purchase of investments	(1,215,126)	(1,869,344)
Total current liabilities	3,064,353	2,745,876	Net increase (decrease) in net assets	653,201	2,958,052	Net cash used for investing activities	(1,194,991)	(1,859,845)
Long-term liabilities						Net increase (decrease) in cash	482,440	2,049,918
Deferred rent	\$ 696,220	\$ 800,715	Net assets, unrestricted					
Unfunded projected pension benefit obligation	3,103,465	3,164,249	Beginning of year	5,824,266	1,933,419	Cash and cash equivalents		
Total long-term liabilities	3,799,685	3,964,964	Adjustment to pension liability funded status	271,743	932,795	Beginning of year	2,184,873	134,955
Total liabilities	6,864,038	6,710,840	End of year	\$ 6,749,210	\$ 5,824,266	End of year	\$ 2,667,313	2,184,873
Unrestricted net assets	6,749,210	5,824,266						
Total liabilities and net assets	\$ 13,613,248	\$ 12,535,106	See accompanying notes to financial statements.			See accompanying notes to financial statements.		

At August 31, 2018 and 2017, the Plan's net assets available for benefits were allocated as follows:

	2018	2017
Mutual funds	21.64%	21.10%
Common stock	44.71%	44.85%
United States Government and Government Agency obligations	27.87%	25.00%
Cash and cash equivalents	5.78%	9.05%

The major classes of Plan investments at August 31, 2018 and 2017 are:

	2018 Fair Value	2017 Fair Value
Mutual funds	\$ 932,746	\$ 809,141
Common stock	1,926,828	1,719,991
United States Government and Government Agency obligations	1,201,126	958,480
Cash and cash equivalents	<u>294,143</u>	<u>347,193</u>
	<u>\$ 4,309,843</u>	<u>\$ 3,834,805</u>

For the years ended August 31, 2018 and 2017, there were no transfers in or out of levels 1, 2 and 3.

Fair Value Measurements at August 31, 2018				
	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 249,143	\$ 249,143	\$ -	\$ -
Common stock:				
Basic materials	178,299	178,299	-	-
Consumer goods	234,280	234,280	-	-
Financial	257,038	257,038	-	-
Healthcare	542,042	542,042	-	-
Industrial goods	28,125	28,125	-	-
Services	302,703	302,703	-	-
Technology	384,341	384,341	-	-
U.S. Government and Government Agency obligations:				
United States Treasury	1,106,839	1,106,839	-	-
Government agencies	94,287	-	94,287	-
Mutual funds:				
Fixed income	833,116	833,116	-	-
Equity	<u>99,630</u>	<u>99,630</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>\$ 4,309,843</u>	<u>\$ 4,215,556</u>	<u>\$ 94,287</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

Fair Value Measurements at August 31, 2017				
	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 347,193	\$ 347,193	\$ -	\$ -
Common stock:				
Basic materials	180,210	180,210	-	-
Consumer goods	146,818	146,818	-	-
Financial	117,163	117,163	-	-
Healthcare	447,216	447,216	-	-
Industrial goods	66,733	66,733	-	-
Services	215,683	215,683	-	-
Technology	546,168	546,168	-	-
U.S. Government and Government Agency obligations:				
United States Treasury	815,014	815,014	-	-
Government agencies	143,466	-	143,466	-
Mutual funds:				
Fixed income	688,635	688,635	-	-
Equity	<u>120,506</u>	<u>120,506</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>\$ 3,834,805</u>	<u>\$ 3,691,339</u>	<u>\$ 143,466</u>	<u>\$ -</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.

Future Cash Flows

The projected contribution for next fiscal year is \$420,000. The following benefit payments, which reflect expected future service, are expected to be paid as follows:

2019	\$ 2,006,111
2020	57,238
2021	860,446
2022	56,203
2023	55,619
2024 - 2028	1,268,004

NOTE 6. MULTIEMPLOYER DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLAN

PSC/CUNY participates in the Office and Professional Employees International Union, Local 153 Pension Fund, a multiemployer defined benefit pension plan, under the terms of a collective bargaining agreement that covers its union-represented employees who meet age and service requirements. The risks of participating in multiemployer defined benefit pension plans are different from single-employer plans in the following aspects:

- a. Assets contributed to the multiemployer defined benefit pension plan by one employer may be used

to provide benefits to employees of other participating employers.

- b. If a participating employer stops contributing to the multiemployer defined benefit pension plan, the unfunded obligations of the multiemployer defined benefit pension plan may be borne by the remaining participating employers.
- c. If the Plan chooses to stop participating in the multiemployer defined benefit pension plan, the Plan may be required to pay the multiemployer defined benefit pension plan an amount based on the underfunded status of the multiemployer defined benefit pension plan, referred to as a withdrawal liability.

PSC/CUNY's participation in the multiemployer defined benefit pension plan for the annual periods ended August 31, 2018 and 2017, is outlined in the table below. The zone status is based on information that PSC/CUNY received from the multiemployer defined benefit pension plan and is certified by the multiemployer defined benefit pension plan's actuary. Among other factors, pension plans in the red zone are generally less than 65 percent funded, pension plans in the yellow zone are less than 80 percent funded, and pension plans in the green zone are at least 80 percent funded.

SEE TABLE 2

* PSC/CUNY participates in the Local 153 Pension Fund through a collective bargaining agreement between PSC/CUNY and the Office & Professional Employees International Union, Local 153AFL-CIO (Local 153). The collective bargaining agreement has a three-year term of October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2018.

SEE TABLE 3

* The employer contribution rate of the Pension Plan was \$260 per week per employee effective June 1, 2018, and \$236 effective June 1, 2017.

SEE TABLE 4

NOTE 7. MULTIEMPLOYER PLAN THAT PROVIDES POSTRETIREMENT BENEFITS OTHER THAN PENSIONS

PSC/CUNY contributed to one multiemployer defined benefit health and welfare plan during the years ended August 31, 2018 and 2017 that provides postretirement benefits for its full-time support staff employees. PSC/CUNY's contributions to the welfare plan on behalf of its full-time support staff employees, contribution rates, and number of employees covered were as follows:

SEE TABLE 5

*Under a collective bargaining agreement between Local 153 and PSC/CUNY, PSC/CUNY established coverage through an insured Preferred Provider Organization Plan to provide medical, dental and prescription benefits. PSC/CUNY contributed \$66 per month to Local 153 Health Fund per active employee and \$8 per month per retiree under a collective bargaining agreement between Local 153 and PSC/CUNY to provide supplement benefits for life insurance coverage and vision benefits.

NOTE 8. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Identification of Related Organizations

PSC/CUNY has the following related entities:

- American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
- New York State United Teachers (NYSUT)
- Professional Staff Congress of the City University of New York Welfare Fund
- The American Association of University Professors (AAUP)

The entities listed above share common trustees, officers or affiliation with PSC/CUNY.

PSC/CUNY is affiliated with New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) through arrangements whereby PSC/CUNY pays dues to each entity in order for its members to participate in affiliated programs and, in turn, is reimbursed for various expenses, including reimbursements for meetings, organizing, legislative representation, training programs, and arbitration.

Dues paid to NYSUT for the years ended August 31, 2018 and 2017 were \$7,177,294 and \$7,267,213, respectively. As of August 31, 2018 and 2017, PSC/CUNY owed NYSUT \$1,407,543 and \$1,169,000, respectively for dues. Dues paid to AFT for the years ended August 31, 2018 and 2017 were \$3,528,480 and \$3,588,825, respectively. As of August 31, 2018 and 2017, PSC/CUNY owed AFT \$724,924 and \$603,000, respectively for dues.

Reimbursements from NYSUT for the years ended August 31, 2018 and 2017 were \$3,749,590 and \$3,766,775, respectively. As of August 31, 2018 and 2017, NYSUT owed PSC/CUNY \$303,000 and \$416,000, respectively. Reimbursements from AFT for the years ended August 31, 2018 and 2017 were \$285,501 and \$305,391, respectively. As of August 31, 2018 and 2017, AFT owed PSC/CUNY \$35,000 and \$111,844, respectively.

PSC/CUNY pays NYSUT a monthly fee for dues processing. Dues processing fees totaled \$72,600 for the years ended August 31, 2018 and 2017. As of August 31, 2018 and 2017, PSC/CUNY owed NYSUT \$6,050 for dues processing.

PSC/CUNY reimburses the Welfare Fund for shared computer services. PSC/CUNY's portion of shared computer expenses totaled \$34,575 and \$38,108 for the years ended August 31, 2018 and 2017, respectively. As of August 31,

2018 and 2017, PSC/CUNY owed the Welfare Fund \$2,000 and \$7,000, respectively for shared computer services.

Office Space Leases

PSC/CUNY leases office space from 61 Broadway Owner, LLC (the Realty Corp). On September 30, 2005, PSC/CUNY entered into a sixteen year lease with the Realty Corp for Suites 1500 and 1615 of the 61 Broadway building. The lease was amended on August 4, 2009 and May 17, 2012 to include Suites 1630 and 1610, respectively. The leases, all of which expire on August 31, 2022, are classified as operating leases and provide for minimum annual rentals, plus certain additional expense escalations and utility charges. Per the agreement, PSC/CUNY is also responsible for its portion of real estate taxes.

The minimum annual future rental payments under the three leases are summarized as follows:

Year ending August 31,		
2019	\$	1,219,899
2020		1,247,967
2021		1,282,830
2022		<u>1,309,149</u>
Total	\$	<u>5,059,845</u>

Rent including utilities and maintenance was \$1,182,644 for the year ended August 31, 2018 and \$1,191,945 for 2017.

PSC/CUNY subleases office space to the Professional Staff Congress of the City University of New York Welfare Fund, a related party. The Welfare Fund pays PSC/CUNY a sum equal to 23.90% of the lease of Suite 1500. The sublease expires on August 31, 2022.

The minimum annual future rental income under the sublease with the related party is summarized as follows:

Year ending August 31,		
2019	\$	208,137
2020		212,300
2021		216,546
2022		<u>220,877</u>
Total	\$	<u>857,860</u>

Total rental income for the years ended August 31, 2018 and 2017 was \$238,914 and \$237,402, respectively.

NOTE 9. FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

PSC/CUNY expended \$20,119,699 for the year ended August 31, 2018 and \$20,225,596 for 2017. PSC/CUNY has estimated that on a functional classification basis these expenses would be allocated as follows:

	2018	2017
Union activities	78%	78%
Management & administrative	<u>22%</u>	<u>22%</u>
Total	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>

NOTE 10. LITIGATION

Certain claims, suits, and complaints arising in the ordinary course of business have been filed or are pending against PSC/CUNY.

On October 24, 2018, a non-member filed a lawsuit against PSC/CUNY along with several of its affiliates, as a class-action suit. The claim arises from PSC/CUNY's collection of agency fees of which the non-member is seeking an order from the court directing a refund, along with interest, damages, and reasonable attorney fees and costs. The complaint does not specify a dollar amount sought. PSC/CUNY and its affiliates in the suit are parties to a joint defense agreement and are working on a motion to dismiss the claim. The motion papers are due on March 22, 2019.

NOTE 11. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

PSC/CUNY has evaluated subsequent events through March 13, 2019, the date the financial statements were available to be issued, and they have been evaluated in accordance with relevant accounting standards.

TABLE 2

Legal Name of Pension Plan	Pension Plan's Employer Identification Number	Pension Plan's Plan Number	Pension Protection Act Zone Status				Expiration Date of Collective Bargaining Agreement
			Zone Status	Extended Amortization Provisions Used?	Zone Status	Extended Amortization Provisions Used?	
Local 153 Pension Fund	13-2864289	001	Red as of 01/01/18	No	Red as of 01/01/17	No	*

TABLE 3

Legal Name of Pension Plan	Contributions paid by the Plan directly to the Pension Plan		Contributions to the Pension Plan greater than 5% of total Pension Plan contributions (Plan year ending)		Employer Contribution Rate of the Pension Plan		Number of Employees Covered by the Pension Plan for which the Plan contributes directly to the Pension Plan	
	8/31/2018	8/31/2017			8/31/2018	8/31/2017	8/31/2018	8/31/2017
Local 153 Pension Fund	\$ 128,412	\$ 128,024	No, Plan year ending 8/31/18.	No, Plan year ending 8/31/17.	*	*	10	13

TABLE 4

Legal Name of Pension Plan	Funding Improvement Plan or Rehabilitation Plan Implemented or Pending?	Surcharge paid to Pension Plan by the Benefit Funds?	Minimum contributions required in future by CBA, statutory requirements, or other contractual requirements?	
			No?	If yes, description
Local 153 Pension Fund	Rehabilitation Plan Implemented	Yes	No	N/A

TABLE 5

Legal Name of Plan providing postretirement benefits other than pension	Contributions to Plan		Employer contribution rates		Number of employees covered by Plan	
	8/31/2018	8/31/2017	8/31/2018	8/31/2017	8/31/2018	8/31/2017
Local 153 Health Fund	\$ 10,246	\$ 11,845	*	*	17	19

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION
SCHEDULES OF EXPENSES BY CATEGORY
YEARS ENDED AUGUST 31, 2018 AND 2017

	2018	2017
Affiliation fees		
New York State United Teachers	\$ 7,177,294	\$ 7,267,213
American Federation of Teachers	3,528,480	3,588,825
The American Association of University Professors	260,500	232,167
Municipal Labor Committee	33,220	20,835
Other	<u>36,537</u>	<u>31,625</u>
	<u>11,036,031</u>	<u>11,140,665</u>
Salaries, employee benefits, and payroll taxes		
Salaries	3,586,257	3,685,874
Payroll taxes	279,832	275,780
Health benefit expense	845,657	792,142
Pension benefit expense	727,371	961,374
Other	<u>38,194</u>	<u>40,428</u>
	<u>5,477,311</u>	<u>5,755,598</u>
Representational and governance		
Conferences and conventions	105,773	133,206
Elections	82,723	12,104
Committees	<u>4,402</u>	<u>20,164</u>
	<u>192,898</u>	<u>165,474</u>
Public relations		
Mobilization and outreach	129,589	139,152
Community relations	32,306	41,342
Cultural activities	<u>5,552</u>	<u>4,352</u>
	<u>167,447</u>	<u>184,846</u>
Building expenses		
Rent and services	1,182,644	1,191,945
Real estate taxes	120,935	99,982
Repairs and maintenance	<u>100,817</u>	<u>97,963</u>
	<u>1,404,396</u>	<u>1,389,890</u>
Administrative, office and general		
Office	\$ 264,331	\$ 286,349
Postage	31,498	41,836
Insurance	55,585	39,399
Dues processing	72,600	72,6000
Other	<u>6,735</u>	<u>8,171</u>
	<u>430,749</u>	<u>448,355</u>
Professional fees		
Legal	246,036	128,915
Consulting	237,312	141,813
Accounting and auditing	37,100	40,000
Computer	<u>90,320</u>	<u>92,750</u>
	<u>610,768</u>	<u>403,478</u>
Contract and budget campaigns	112,855	180,293
Stipends and reassigned time	511,272	464,166
Depreciation expense	69,670	92,831
Membership campaign	106,302	-
Total expenses	<u>\$20,119,699</u>	<u>\$ 20,225,596</u>
See accompanying notes to financial statements.		



15-MINUTE ACTIVIST

Welcoming the new chancellor

The new CUNY Chancellor Félix Matos Rodríguez received more than a thousand PSC letters during his first days in office. If you haven't already sent him a message about your vision for CUNY, the people who make it work and the students who learn there, it's not too late. Tell the new chancellor that settling the new PSC-CUNY contract

should be a priority and that the contract should contain raises for all and end poverty-level wages for adjuncts. He should take a stand against austerity and demand from lawmakers the funding CUNY needs in order to live up to its ideal of being the great "people's university." To send a letter, go to tinyurl.com/Matos-letter.

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LGCC chief to leave, faculty respond

By ARI PAUL

In the summer of 2018 LaGuardia Community College (LGCC) President Gail Mellow, considered one of the nation's most outspoken champions of community colleges, was reported to be among the finalists in CUNY's chancellor search. At the close of 2018, she stepped into the media spotlight with CUNY's top administrators to welcome Amazon's new headquarters to Long Island City, Queens, a stone's throw from her campus. The choice of the East River waterfront for the tech giant's next corporate home was considered a major victory for the CUNY administration, Governor Andrew Cuomo and Mayor Bill de Blasio.

THINGS FALL APART

In February of 2019 fate intervened. Amazon – under fire from labor groups unhappy with the company's anti-worker record and community activists worried about rising housing prices and the public subsidies associated with the deal – pulled out of Long Island City, shocking the political establishment. Mellow would not get the nod for CUNY's top job – the appointment went to another CUNY president in the borough, Félix V. Matos Rodríguez of Queens College. By the end of the month, Mellow announced her resignation as LaGuardia president, a post she had held since 2000, effective in August. She did not give a reason for her departure and did not disclose what her future plans would be.

It is not clear whether either Amazon's reversal or her not being selected for the chancellor position played deciding roles in her choice to leave LaGuardia.

Mellow is distinguished as a national advocate for community colleges – author of the pro-community college book *Minding the Dream*, she received an associate degree from Jamestown Community College before continuing to University at Albany (SUNY), and later earned a PhD from the George Washington

A voice for two-year schools

University. Her official biography boasts a 2006 MetLife Foundation Community College Excellence Award for Service to Underserved Students as well as a First in the World grant from the US Department of Education in 2014, and a NASPA President's Award in 2016. When it comes to news stories about the state of community colleges in the United States, Mellow stands out as a go-to source for newspapers, television and radio. CUNY Chancellor Matos Rodríguez called her "an architect and innovator, a builder, a nurturer and a visionary."

In an interview with National Public Radio after announcing her resignation, she cited LaGuardia's growth during her tenure, both in size and diversity, and in enabling more students to transfer to four-year institutions. *Inside Higher Ed* reported that LaGuardia "has grown enrollment by about 40 per-

cent to more than 57,000 students [since 2000]. The number of faculty members also more than doubled to nearly 1,100 full- and part-time instructors, and the percentage of faculty of color climbed from 31 percent to 44 percent."

MAKING PROGRESS

PSC members had various responses to her time at the college. The campus's PSC department representative for libraries, Chris McHale, said Mellow spearheaded a positive expansion of the campus's library.

"She maintained this vision for the library space that ensured it would be a traditional study space for students and not one of those modern cafés," he said. "She wanted students to have something that was like an Ivy League library."

PSC activists also noted that she was a vocal advocate for communi-

ty colleges and that she succeeded in drawing public attention to LaGuardia's achievements. She was a vocal booster of Governor Cuomo's Excelsior Scholarship, which aims to lessen tuition for SUNY and CUNY full-time students below a certain household income threshold, however, groups like the PSC and a variety of newspapers have shown concerns that the program only serves a tiny portion of the state's students.

Sigmund Shen, the PSC chapter chair, currently on sabbatical, told *Clarion*, "At labor management meetings, we expressed our belief that she could use her national profile and respected voice more to speak out for pay parity for adjuncts and for the course-load reduction for full-time faculty and staff. On these issues, and on the issues of corporations and foundations seeking to influence pedagogy, she was more tentative when she could have been more assertive. For example, only years later was she willing to acknowledge that Pathways was an 'aberration' but by then it was too late to support faculty resistance against its top-down conception and implementation."

Shen, an associate professor of English, continued, "Mellow was always very supportive of our faculty, staff and students in broad generalities, but I would hope that her departure would mean an opportunity for a new president to support the more specific and concrete concerns of faculty, staff and students in a way that is more independent from the Board of Trustees."

PART OF THE SYSTEM

Like all CUNY presidents, Mellow oversaw a system that, over time, has become more reliant on low-wage, part-time instructors. "We really have limited access to the president, and most of us see her as a public figure," said Youngmin Seo, an adjunct lecturer in LaGuardia's social sciences department. "Outside, she'd say, 'I'm

the biggest champion of adjunct faculty,'" Seo said, but when asked if she ever implemented changes that improved conditions for the campus's part-time instructors, he replied, "I really don't think so." Seo, who is also the campus's PSC liaison for part-timers, added, "She's a politician."

Some PSC observers felt that the clash between campus priorities and those of the CUNY administration revealed that Mellow's first loyalty was to the central administration.

"She implemented CUNY central priorities even when faculty were opposed, such as the Pathways Initiative," said Lorraine Cohen, the PSC vice president for community colleges and a professor of sociology at LaGuardia. "She was committed to prioritizing raising of retention and graduation rates. At times faculty felt that the educational goals of the college were being sacrificed and that consultation with faculty and respect for [faculty] governance was not enough of a priority."

MIXED RECORD

Cohen continued, "Her relationship with the union was mixed. There were many grievances based on non-reappointment and promotion issues that were won by the union. President Mellow could be highly combative. At other times she was more amenable to listening and compromise. Overall, I would say that her love of the college and identification with our students is part of her positive legacy."

Union activists are nervous about the future, in part because many CUNY presidential searches have been shrouded in secrecy.

"Most of us are simply concerned about what will happen next," said Lara Beaty, the acting PSC chapter chair and an associate professor of psychology. "How can we assure that the union and all the faculty, staff and students have a meaningful part in selecting someone new?"



Ellen Moynihan

Acting PSC Chapter Chair Lara Beaty ponders the future of LGCC.