

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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November 19, 2015

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HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm.
16th Fl.

B E F O R E: INEZ D. BARRON
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: James Vacca
Fernando Cabrera
Jumaane D. Williams
Laurie A. Cumbo
Ydanis A. Rodriguez
Vanessa L. Gibson

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Judy Bergtraum, Vice Chancellor
Facilities Planning, Construction and Management
City University of New York, CUNY

Frank Sanchez, Vice Chancellor
Student Affairs
City University of New York, CUNY

Esther Rodriguez-Chardavoyne, Sr. Vice President
Administration and Finance
Hostos Community College

Jose Magdaleno, Vice President
Student Affairs, Lehman College

Wendy Thornton, Dean
Student Development
The City College of New York, CCNY

Shepard McDaniel, Coordinator
Universal Zulu Nations
Guillermo Morales/Assata Shakur Center

Alyssa Soyo, Student Organizer
The City College of New York, CUNY
Former Director Guillermo Morales/Assata Shakur
Student and Community Center

James Blake, Professor and Faculty Member
Borough of Manhattan Community College

Josania Venegas
Graduate of City College of New York, CUNY

Anna Paula Wright
Student Graduate, Former President
Student Nurse Association

Rajid Mia (sp?), Student
City College of New York, CUNY
CUNY Student

Rudolf Muradov, Student
Kingsborough College
Student Ambassador
President, Campus Security Board
Representative, United University Student Senate

[sound check, pause]

[gavel]

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Quiet, please.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Good afternoon, everyone. I'm Council Member Inez Barron, the Chair of the Committee on Higher Education. Today's hearing is about student unions and non-academic spaces at CUNY campuses. The essential question we want to ask today is whether they are a luxury or a necessity. We're here because the topic of student space at CUNY made headlines when in 2013 the University closed the Morales/Assata Shakur Community and student center after 23 years of operation at City College. For those who don't know its history, the Morales/Assata Shakur Center was a space for student political organizing and advocacy that provided services including textbook lending, a farm share, know your rights training, and a soup kitchen. It came into being when in 1989, City College student including my Council Member Rodriguez, Ydanis Rodriguez protected a CUNY tuition increase of nearly 20%. Students occupied the North Academic Center closing the college for the first time 20 years. Inspiring similar occupations at 13 of the 20

colleges then in the CUNY system. In exchange for ending the protest, the CUNY administration provided students with the Morales/Assata Shakur Space. The closing of that space against the vocal protests of students called attention to the value many members of the university community placed on it. Those events highlighted the fact that unlike many private colleges, City College does not have anything that would be called a student union, and raised the question why not? To some, student unions are a luxury found on private university campuses. Indeed, the very concept of a student union was born at such elite institutions as Cambridge and Harvard. For much of the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, student unions served as social clubs for young white men to amuse and entertain themselves when they weren't studying. If that were all it were today, I would not raise the question of whether or not it was a necessity. But, in fact, student unions have become the incubators of student empowerment and social change that have produced some of the most dramatic social and political changes of the last 100 years.

When the Association of Student Unions International was founded in 1914, to bring student unions together to share best practices, they defined the purposes of a student union to unify the student body, increase college spirit and perhaps most importantly to promote democracy. More than a theory, since the Great Depression the priorities of student unions have shifted dramatically from purely social functions to economic and political ones. When the \$2.2 billion World War II veterans entered colleges on the G.I. Bill, student unions provided many of the support services that distinguished the veteran population from the regular student body. In the 1960s and throughout the 1970s, students staged sit-ins at student unions to protest the Vietnam War. Student unions increasingly became focused on volunteerism and activism. With the advent of the civil rights and women's movements and the changing demographics of student bodies, student unions re-evaluated their use of space to dedicate office space to specific identify based groups.

For most of the 20th Century, City College students were at the forefront of the type of student organizing and protests that grew out of

the Student Union Movement. In the 1930s and the 1940s City College was a major center of student activism for racial equality, social and economic justice, workers rights and against student fees. In 1949, 4,000 students protected racism in the faculty. In 1969, students affiliated with the Black and Puerto Rican Student Caucus occupied 17 buildings to demand City College about open admissions, which transformed student population from white to people of color. Knowing this history, I can't but wonder why City College students organized in the past and why it seems so much harder for them to do so now. Where do these campaigns for social change incubate? Where do students find the space to work together? Do those spaces still exist now, or have they been surrendered to other university functions? Are such spaces indeed a luxury, and is there a need for the university to provide other services or are they a necessity? I think these are important questions. Obviously, we are talking about empowering students sometimes adversely to the administration of the university. As the university asks the state to approve another tuition increase amid relatively subdued student objections, I can't help but wonder

if the lack of student organizing space is interfering with students' ability to collaborate and advance their own interests. In the almost two years that I have occupied this chair, I have said at virtually at every hearing that my hope is to restore free tuition at CUNY. But to do that, the students have got to be able to organize and make their voices heard. Students are--should be outraged by the lack of diversity in the faculty among other issues, and I believe they are. But without the space to organize around the issue, it's understandable that it's difficult to bring people together to improve the CUNY pipeline for college faculty to gain tenure and to move up the ranks. We've seen in the last few weeks with the abject failure of the University of Missouri to properly address race-based harassment of black students that an organized student body is not only a critical check on the university administration that governs it, but that it can also elevate the national discussion so that we can focus our energies on increasing equal opportunity and advancing justice.

I'd like to acknowledge my colleagues on the committee, Council Member Cabrera, Council Member

1 COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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2 Rodriguez, and Council Member Vacca, and I'd like to
3 thank my Legislative Director and CUNY liaison Indigo
4 Washington; the Committee's Policy Analyst Chloe
5 Rivera; our Financial Analyst Jessica Ackerman; and
6 our Committee Counsel Jeff Campagna for their work in
7 preparing for today's hearing. With that, we're
8 going to call the first panel. [pause] Jose
9 Magdaleno from Lehman College; Judy Bergtraum from
10 CUNY; Esther Rodriguez Chardavoyne (sp?) from Hostos;
11 and Frank Sanchez--Frank Sanchez from CUNY. I'm
12 going to ask if you would raise your right hand. Do
13 you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and
14 nothing but the truth in your testimony before this
15 committee, and to answer all Committee questions
16 honestly?

17 PANEL MEMBERS: [off mic] I do.

18 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. You may
19 begin.

20 VICE CHANCELLOR BERGTRAUM: Good
21 afternoon. My name is Judy Bergtraum, and I'm the
22 Vice Chancellor for Facilities Planning, Construction
23 and Management at CUNY. I'd like to take a moment to
24 introduce my fellow panelists, Vice Chancellor for
25 Student Affairs, Frank Sanchez; Senior Vice President

of Administration and Finance at Hostos Community College, Esther Rodriguez-Chardavoyne and Vice President of Student Affairs at Lehman College.

Thank you for this opportunity to be part of a conversation about student space at CUNY. Providing space for all of the university's needs is challenging particularly at---particularly as CUNY's largest urban public university in the nation. On top of that, we are located in area with very expensive real estate and high costs for construction. Let me begin by assuring you that every building we build and every renovation we embark on is undertaken to provide CUNY students with the safest and most suitable learning environments possible, which includes space beyond the classroom walls. We strive to create space that allows them to do their very best work. Unfortunately, it is not possible to provide all of the facilities desired at each campus. There are a number of competing forces that intensify the pressure on our facilities portfolio. First, over 40% of CUNY's 300 buildings are more than 50 years old, and many of our campuses were not built for--specifically for college use. For instance, La Guardia Community College Center 3

building was originally the Sunshine Biscuit Factory. Queens College was a reform school for boys built in the 19--in the 1930s. The Graduate Center was previously Beall's (sic) Department Store, and the 475 Grand Concourse Building at Hostos was a tire factory. These buildings have been adopted for the respective colleges, but many need mechanical upgrades and reprogramming for the 21st Century learning. A large portion of CUNY's Capital Program is focused on critical maintenance to bring all of the facilities into a state of good repair. Second, enrollment in CUNY has increased over 23% over the past decade representing an increase of more than 50,000 students. Our community college--colleges are going the fastest with more than half of these students attending one of our seven community colleges. We are pleased and proud that CUNY is serving more New Yorkers than ever before, but capital investment for additional facilities has not kept up with the increase in enrollment. During the same time period, the university has added 2.2 million square feet of new space. This additional space is only the beginning. Currently, another 1.5 gross square feet of new space is in design or

construction for projects throughout the five boroughs. Hostos Community College new Allied Health and Science Building is one of these complexes--one of these projects. We currently need \$240 million in funding for that building. Student gathering space will be incorporated into that new building and additional space for students can be accommodated in the college's other buildings once this new building comes on line. Your support has made--will make this happen. CUNY's Capital Budget Request also includes several major projects to increase space across the campuses. All of these projects require funding in other to bring them to fruition. We can only accomplish these plans with support from the State and the City, and as you know, the City must appropriate funding for the community colleges first, which is then matched by the State. We know that as a community university it is important that we provide students with space to meet and study between classes. One way we're addressing that is focusing on our libraries throughout the system. One we--one way we're addressing that is focusing on our libraries throughout the system. At Bronx Community College, the North Hall and Library Building opened

in 2012. This new facility has its classrooms on the first floor, which are a great improvement over the college's existing stock of former dorm rooms converted to classrooms, and a state-of-the-art library with information commons and study areas both for individual study and closed rooms for group space. The library at Medgar Evers was recently renovated and expanded. It, too, has additional technology resources and study areas. A number of our other library renovation projects are also in the works, including one at La Guardia College, Baruch, Lehman and Queens.

Let me share with you for a moment, more about Bronx Community College. The 44-acre campus has 36 buildings, some dating back to the 1850s. Yes, the 1850s. CUNY purchased this campus from NYU in the '70s. NYU did not invest very much in the campus for a long period of time before it was sold. Sadly, the City and the State provided little investment for decades after CUNY acquired it. We are making great headways with the campus wide utility infrastructure project, but there are still two additional phases that require funding of approximately \$70 million for which the City must

provide half. The college like all of our community colleges has many critical and ADA issues. When you receive the University's full Capital Budget Request you will see that Bronx Community College project for window replacement, new roofs, fire alarms and other things. We work closely with the colleges to understand the facilities demand on each campus. While there are many similarities, each campus has its own issue. When it comes to planning student space there are many challenges. First, many of the colleges have shortfalls in academic space, and we must prioritize addressing these. Second, many of our students are the first in their families to attend college. We have made a concerted effort to help students navigate the administrative hurdles of attending college by creating one-stop student service office at various campuses. These areas bring together the Bursar, the Registrar of Financial Aid and other student service function to make it easier for students to complete all of the forms necessary for their enrollment. These co-located areas required renovation and thoughtful designs to truly support our students. Additional one-stop plannings at Bronx Community College and at York. We

are request \$7 million for the students success--
center at Bronx Community College, which is the
project that will create the support for Bronx
Community College.

Planning space for students is not an
easy task. While we project future student
enrollment along with baseline historic trends in
high school graduation rate, it is much harder to
project how many students will participate in student
clubs. Let me give you an example. At John Jay
College, there were about two dozen student clubs in
2003 when CUNY began the design of the new building
that opened in 2012. Today, there are over 50 clubs
that bring students together for academic, cultural,
political and other activities. There was no way to
know in 2003 what the increase in student engagement
might be in 2015. We were able to accommodate 18
student club offices in the building with the idea
that student clubs would share space. CUNY is
committed to providing the best educational
experience to all of its students. That includes
both inside and outside of the classroom. As we
build new buildings and renovate existing facilities,
the students are foremost in our mind. We will

continue to work with each of the colleges to ensure that we maximize opportunity for students to study, work collaboratively and grow as a member of the college community and citizen of New York. Thank you.

[pause]

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: Good afternoon, Chairperson Barron and members of the Higher Education Committee. My name is Frank Sanchez. I'm Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs at the City University of New York. I am please to testify before this committee again, particularly on this important question that has been raised in student unions in non-academic spaces on CUNY campuses, are they a luxury or are they a necessity. I thank you again for the opportunity. Just to provide a kind of brief historical context to this question, the following statement is from the report *Role of the College Union*, written and adopted by the Association of College Unions International actually in 1956 almost 60 years ago. They define the role of the college union, and it reads: The Union is the community center of the college. It is not just a building. It is also an organization and a program.

As the living room or the heart stone of the college, the union provides for the services, conveniences and amenities the members of the college family need in their daily life on the campus, and for getting to know and understand one another through informal association outside of the classroom. The union is part of the educational program of the college. As the center of college community life, it serves as a laboratory of citizenship, training students in social responsibility, and for leadership in s democratic society. Since then, the role need and feasibility of student unions have continually evolved to stay current with student need preferences as well as college resources. The very first actually student union was established at the University of Pennsylvania in 1896. It housed a bowling alley, swimming pool, gymnasium, food court, theater, meeting space for students, and despite Penn's groundbreaking vision for higher education, the early 1900s saw very few student unions in the U.S. Then in the 1950s, the number of student unions increased dramatically throughout the nation. The quote I read I think captures the vision for student unions in the 1950s, but times changed, and so have

the function, role and fiscal feasibility of student unions on campuses across the country. In the 1970s, the function of student unions changed primarily as a result of economics. The 1970s saw declining student enrollment, which meant a decline in student fees.

On most campuses across the country and actually including CUNY specifically, Brooklyn College and Queens College student fees provided the primary financial support for student unions, and with less revenue from student fees, student unions became costly for colleges and universities to maintain. Today, the change in campus environment and changing needs of our students require institutions to be responsive to all students as it relates to spacialization, and in particular the use of multi-purpose space. Today, college unions are no longer only spaces on campuses designed to create social and intellectual engagement. In a recent report on physical space and higher education, it was noted that flexibility, adaptability, responsiveness and a sense of ownership may be more important than the architectural and tradition or permanence of most campus facilities. In the 21st Century, multi-purpose space may better meet the needs of today's

students. When a the college union may have been seen in 1956 of the community center of the college, today's campuses build community and student engagement successfully in a variety of ways. We actually see this in the way our students are engaged with each other, both the inside and outside of the campus--inside and outside the classroom as well as outside the campus. For example, students are identified in a variety of multi-purpose spaces. Those who study spacialization in higher education might note that higher education facilities designed to be multi-type functional and to meet the needs of multiple constituents are one way to engage in ongoing change and delivery of programs and services. Today, seven community colleges have either a student union or a student center. Yet, CUNY has also seen significant enrollment growth. Consequently, student interests in clubs and organizations. Outside of those campuses that have the student unions and student centers, the rest of the campuses probably have over 1,400 different clubs and organizations, most of which are at these remaining campuses. Enrollment growth, and limitation of student space speaks to a need of use of multi-purpose space for

student groups. On CUNY campuses where there is no union or center, students used room reservation systems for the campus. This system identifies available classrooms and conference rooms for student meetings and gatherings. On other campuses students reserve space through their student life or student activities offices. Space is available in academic and non-academic buildings. In addition, many campuses have lounge areas or open space areas where students can hang out between classes or studying or just socializing. A few have game rooms or recreation rooms that have multi-player games such as pool or foosball, or television and other activities. Generally, these spaces cannot be officially reserved for regular meetings as the purpose of these spaces for the general student body to use in their free time. In terms of technology, we now see that social media has turned the entire collegiate experience into a digital student union. Today, students communicate, organize, plan, meet and announce via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, blogs and more. In fact, many believe that social media has made it easier for students to connect. It's fascinating to me. When I go into a variety of CUNY student group

of Facebook pages is to see how the medium is used so effectively. In fact, for example sites like the Blackmail Initiative, the Coalition of Students with Disabilities and CUNY dreamers effectively use social media as a way of organizing and communicating and creating a sense of community with each other. Finally, the tradition--the traditional definition of student unions may no longer be feasible financially. Space designed to be multi-functional and to meet the needs of multiple constituents has become a strategy for coping with financial constraints, yet still providing students with space for co-curricular activities, meetings and events. Colleges and universities are looking at multi-purpose spaces in order to meet the needs of multiple student groups as well as the university community.

Are student unions and non-academic spaces on CUNY campuses are they a luxury or a necessity? Clearly and with no doubt in my mind non-academic and multi-purpose space on CUNY campuses is a necessity. With this said, more space is needed. I believe our colleges are working hard to meet the need of CUNY students to use the multi-space that can be shared, reconfigured and made private. And while

the robust use of social media has dramatically increased the sense of community and student engagement, the availability of new space would further facilitate many of these important student interests. In closing, again I'd like to thank Chair Barron and the Higher Education Committee for this opportunity and I'm happy to take questions when you're ready. [pause]

ESTHER RODRIGUEZ-CHARDAVOYNE: Good afternoon. Buenas tardes. My name is Esther Rodriguez-Chardavoyne, and I am the Senior Vice President of Administration and Finance at Hostos Community College. I would like to thank Chairperson Barron and the committee for giving me the opportunity to share information about Hostos Community College's physical plan and how students are able to use space on our campus. Hostos Community College is at the intersection of East 149th Street and the Grand Concourse. The college began its life in 1968 in a converted tire factory, the A Building and an abandoned insurance office building the B Building. These buildings house classrooms, labs and offices. It wasn't until 1992 that a building designed to be a community college

facility opened. The East Academic Complex included a cafeteria, theater, gymnasium, a swimming pool and student organization's offices, classrooms and academic offices as well. As in the early 1990s, in addition to the A Building it was constructed to house the library, classroom and offices. The two buildings are linked with a bridge over the Grand Concourse. This bridge has become an icon for the college, but more importantly, it has become a significant event and meeting spaces for students. A student common in this congested urban neighborhood. The Savoy, a modular building erected in the 1980s as swim space now houses students support offices and other support services. There are two main avenues by which students may obtain access to space. The first and more formal method is through our student organizations, which are granted closed office space and can reserve space on campus. All clubs established or newly formed must adhere to the rules and regulations as they are informed (sic) cooperatively by the Student Government Association or the SGA, and the Office of Student Affairs. Each year the Office of Student Activities prepares a list of clubs eligible for certification based on

completion of an application. The SGA has the final say on club certification reserving the right to withhold certifications for previous infractions or violations of the SGA Constitution or CUNY Bylaws. Clubs are certified and are assigned office space shared with one or two other clubs depending on space availability. These clubs can also apply for funding, which could be used to hold events and book campus spaces. Students who wish to reserve a space on our campus, but are not members of any student organizations have the ability to reserve these indirectly. An existing club may sponsor that student and submit space requests. All student organization requests for space are reviewed by the Collegewide Space Reservation Committee. The function of the Space Reservation Committee is to ensure whether the requested space is adequate and appropriate for the proposed activity. The second opportunity for students to gather is our open spaces. Open Spaces such as our iconic bridge between the East Academic Complex and the A-Building have been--have been maintained on campus as a way to provide areas where students can study or meet for more informal purposes providing them with a way to

keep engaged in campus life. As a higher education institutional priority has always been to provide sufficient space for instructional needs, a library, computer lab and Student Services. When square footage is limited, open spaces become a short-- become shortchanged. However, because of the opportunity afforded by the new Allied Health Building, the college has made open space an essential part of the building's design from the start through the planning process. I would like to thank this committee for the opportunity to share how Hostos Community College as part of the City University of New York has provided non-academic spaces to our students on campus. Thank you.

JOSE MAGDALENO: Good afternoon. I'd like to thank Chairperson Barron as well as all of the members of the committee for the opportunity to speak with you today on this very important matter. My name is Jose Magdaleno, the Vice President of Student Affairs at Lehman College, and I'm pleased to have an opportunity to tell you about our work with students and the student space that's available to Lehman College students. As you know, Lehman College is the only CUNY senior college in the Bronx where we

serve approximately 12,400 undergraduate and graduate students. About half of our students are of Latino descent, and an additional third are of African and African-American descent. Many are the first in their families to attend college and, of course, as you also know, we're a commuter school located in an urban area of the borough. Like many CUNY and other public colleges, our students lead very busy lives. Many have full-time jobs. They have families and other responsibilities. The Student Life Facility at Lehman College plays a key role in the college experience we offer to our students. It is an essential common space that fulfills an important need. It's a multi-purpose facility, a gathering space, and certainly a study space. It's also a programming space for lectures, films, the performing arts, and our student-run media, our student newspaper, and our radio station are housed there. As has been mentioned, students, faculty, staff and administrators need a common meeting space to personalize relations with each other and create an intellectual environment outside the classroom. To put it simply, the Student Life Building at Lehman College is the living room of our campus. In 2014,

over 20,000 students and other visitors came to the Student Life Building at Lehman, and if you will please allow me to give you some background on our Student Life facility originally built in 1980 as a temporary structure, the Student Life Building underwent a \$1.8 million renovation in 2012-2013. That transformed the facility. Students were involved in the redesign of the building and renovations at every stage, and even helped select the furniture. In addition to the new furniture, the renovation program included Internet connections in each student office, wide screen monitors in our new conference room, 20 wireless routers for high-speed access to the Internet, and a laptop computer lending program. The building now boasts eight new club rooms for a total of 32 rooms in addition to the space allocated to student government. The Student Life Building currently houses 45 student organizations, and the Offices of the Student Government Association. Now, while the renovation has provided additional space, rooms must still be shared. Each semester space allocations are made for registered Lehman College student organizations, based on the recommendation of the Campus Facilities Officer of

the Student Government Association. The Office of Campus life, which--which teaches leadership and public service skills as well as the Herbert H. Lehman Center for Student Leadership Development is also housed in the building. The Lehman Leadership Program provides training to approximately 450 students each year who participate in leadership development seminars as well community service projects. WASA which is the name of the architectural firm designed our buildings new dramatic main entrance also created the Herbert H. Lehman Leadership Lounge where students in our Leadership Program meet. The Office of Campus Life and our Alumni Affairs Office recently held a tenth anniversary reunion of student leaders, and many of--of the program's alumni return to our facility to reconnect, to network and celebrate because they are among Lehman's proudest graduates. The Herbert H. Lehman Leadership Center recently began a mentorship program in association with the White House. This program is hugely successful, and we're proud to not that they are one of our alumni, someone you may have heard of, a gentleman by the name of Elias El Cantara (sp?) now works in the White House as the Associate

Director of Intergovernmental Affairs. Indeed, Mr. El Cantara was instrumental in facilitating President Obama's visit to Lehman College in May 2015, an event that made headlines worldwide and shined a bright light on Lehman, the City University of New York, and New York City. Another example of the activities and programs conducted in the Student Life Building is the annual 24-hour Hackathon sponsored by the Association of Black Engineers where computer savvy Lehman and other CUNY students worked on solving tech problems and met representatives from major Blue Chip firms like Goldman Sachs and J.P. Morgan. The building also houses the Student Life Art Project, a student art installation that includes colorful wall murals on the lower level as well as student photography on the upper level. The student at the Student Life Building works closely not only with student government, but also with clubs and organizations and their faculty and staff advisers to assist in developing executing programs that foster the social and intellectual scales that will serve our students throughout their lives. It's important to note that the Student Life Building is not simply a gathering spot, but rather is a place where

students learn life lessons such as budget management, public speaking, how to work with diverse groups, project planning and implementation, negotiation and conflict management, and in the final analysis how to work as a team to get things done. These are life lessons that are as important as any and complement the skills and perspectives that our students develop in side our classrooms. In the final analysis, I am firmly convince that the Student Life Building at Lehman College is an essential element of our students' college going experience. Every 21st Century college needs such a facility. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you all for your testimony and for coming to take time to share with this committee your view on this topic that we're talking about today. And it's raised several questions for the end. My colleagues will also have questions that they would also like to offer to you. The first question--the first question goes back to Fiterman Hall. What was the designation for the original Fiterman Hall that was destroyed during the attack of 9/11? Was that Fiterman Hall for student

services? Was that the designation for Fiterman Hall?

VICE CHANCELLOR BERGTRAUM: Fiterman Hall the way it exists now and the way--it was a combination for students--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] No, no, I'm talking about the original, the first, the one that was established.

VICE CHANCELLOR BERGTRAUM: The one that--it--it was classrooms, offices and had student space.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

VICE CHANCELLOR BERGTRAUM: And--and the new building basically mirrored what the building that was destroyed had. So it had--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] In the say proportions?

VICE CHANCELLOR BERGTRAUM: You know what, I don't--I--I wasn't involved in the first one. Um, so I don't know, but it has--it has student space that's open, um, and it's really informal, but it has student space where students can meet in groups, and then it has an area that is, um, students can meet in

larger groups. So, it's got every type of student space.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So the same, um, requirements or the same accommodations for the original were transferred over--

VICE CHANCELLOR BERGTRAUM: [interposing]
Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --but not actually in the--Okay. And in terms of student fees that CUNY collects, what--what is the amount that student pay annually in student fees?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: In terms of student activity fees, they actually vary across the colleges. A number of our colleges have begun to increase many of our--for example John Jay I think a year and a half or two years ago they hadn't seen a change in their student fee for over 25 years. In fact, the student government to the initiative to raise the fee to provide more services. But it ranges in terms of the student activity fee. This wouldn't be inclusive of technology and all the other fees, but the student activities will range between probably 57 to 80, 85 dollars per student per semester.

2 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And how are those
3 funds allocated? What are they used for? What's the
4 purpose of those funds?

5 VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: They're--
6 they're used for a variety--it really depends because
7 they're student driven and--and a way of getting--
8 establish a fee or a fee increase. But you have to
9 do a student referendum, which means it goes to a
10 student vote. And frankly, the students will vote on
11 how the fees are used. For example, there's a brand
12 new increase in the fee at La Guardia and the
13 students said they wanted to have intercollegiate
14 athletics, and so they created a fee to support their
15 athletic infrastructure and to develop it. But it--
16 it varies, um, from campus to campus a little bit.

17 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So you said it's
18 student driven. So, if the students didn't want an
19 increase in their student fees, they could prevent an
20 increase in student fees.

21 VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: Absolutely,
22 and--and so--and so what often happens is that you,
23 in fact, you find that a lot through these
24 referendums. You may get a student government or a
25 student group proposing and trying to get a petition

or referendum going in order to get it on the ballot. And then students can vote as to whether or not they support it or don't, and every year we see a new variety of student fees either shot down or approved by students.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: The next question comes in terms of costs. Actually, Mr. Sanchez, it's in your statement. The line, which to me says it all and sort of was very stark, so I think. Finally, traditional definition of student unions may no longer be feasible financially, based as it may be designed to be multi-functional and to meet the needs of multiple constituents has become a strategy for coping with financial constraints. Yet, still providing students with space for co-curricular activities, meetings and events. In terms of these multi-functional or multi-purpose spaces that we're seeing colleges have, what does that mean in terms of an organization, a student government that has records, it has files that keep minutes and documents. How then are they to share an...an open space and maintain the integrity of their documents?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: When--I'm sorry?

2 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] I'm
3 saying differentiating student governments from
4 student organizations. I'm differentiating between
5 them.

6 VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: Sure, sure.
7 I'm sorry, ma'am, I'm not clear on what the question
8 is.

9 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right. So there's
10 no designated rule for the student government to
11 secure their documents?

12 VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: Right. So--so,
13 um, it's my understanding I think on all of our
14 campuses I believe that for student governments
15 there's designated space. I think--I think I'm
16 pretty--

17 ESTHER RODRIGUEZ-CHARDAVOYNE: [off mic]
18 Do you want me? (sic)

19 VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: Yeah, please.
20 Yeah. I'm not very certain about that.

21 ESTHER RODRIGUEZ-CHARDAVOYNE: So I'm
22 going to speak about Hostos Community College. So
23 yes there's spaces for--for student government. We
24 have offices for them--

25 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

ESTHER RODRIGUEZ-CHARDAVOYNE: --and then we have also spaces for clubs. So the clubs have file cabinets. They have a desk, and they a copy of let's say it they need to make copies for--for--for their members--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

ESTHER RODRIGUEZ-CHARDAVOYNE: We, the Student Life Coordinator works very closely with the student clubs to make sure that any documents that they have is secure. As you know, in most cases some of our clubs may only last one year--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

ESTHER RODRIGUEZ-CHARDAVOYNE: --and if they don't get refunded again--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

ESTHER RODRIGUEZ-CHARDAVOYNE: --or they don't have enough members, or in--in the year something happens so they just--they just dissolve. (sic) So we try for purposes of making sure that the accounting records are there especially when it comes to funding that we have something that has an order trail. So those records are usually kept in the Student Life area. Where we talk about students using open space, we are really talking about

students wanting to gather to have--to start a conversation. You know, as a way for them to brainstorm whatever they choose to--to--to move forward. So that's why we talk about the open space, but clearly if an organization has some information that they want to secure, then on campus they seek out the Student Life Coordinator to ensure that they have a--a safe place to keep that information.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, so, um, I think I heard you say in your testimony that they can appeal to someone who arranges for the space to be designated. So it's not like I have an office or a room where my club is and know that if I go to that room, I'll have access to that room. So arrangements have to be made in advance. I don't know how far in advance.

ESTHER RODRIGUEZ-CHARDAVOYNE: Well, when I was speaking about arrangement of space--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

ESTHER RODRIGUEZ-CHARDAVOYNE: --for these so there are two--there--there are two avenues by which we--I--I spoke to, and that was clearly the student organizations. Once they're certified, they

are then assigned an office, and that office can have two or three clubs. At Hostos we have--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing]
Sharing.

ESTHER RODRIGUEZ-CHARDAVOYNE: --sharing.
So--so they have to make some arrangements on how, you know, which top of the file cabinet, you know, Club A is going to have and so forth. When I was talking about the open spaces, is that other students who are really not student organizations, but maybe, you know, five or six students that have developed some kind of interest. And so for there, those students may want to get a space, reserve a space so that they can have a meeting, and--and usually they--they--they--they do it two ways: They either find a club that will sponsor them to have that or they themselves can--can fill out the form. Again, they get guidance and assistance through the student activity. We find that that connection helps the student, but it also answers a lot of the questions that they may have.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: How is the
determination made as to where a particular club or

organization will have their space? Who determines where their space will be located?

ESTHER RODRIGUEZ-CHARDAVOYNE: Well, right now in the--in the East Academic Building, the building that I spoke about, that was the one that is more for--the community college designed. Right now, we have 12 designated offices, club offices.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Well, who decides who gets, you know the corner space with the windows or--

ESTHER RODRIGUEZ-CHARDAVOYNE:
[interposing] Actually, the student government

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --second floor or first floor?

ESTHER RODRIGUEZ-CHARDAVOYNE: You know, we--we--as--as student government leaders, they're the ones that make those decisions. They're the ones that work with the club organizations to designate the space. I think it's--it's not a good approach for administrators to tell which club to go where. So the SGA usually is--is the one that designates that on--on Hostos.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. I have some more questions, but I'm going to ask my colleagues.

Who was first? [coughing] You're welcome. Council Member Vacca. He has some questions, and then I'll come back for more.

COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Thank you and I appreciate all your testimony. I'm basically on the same page as you. I know that it's important to have student space.

ESTHER RODRIGUEZ-CHARDAVOYNE: Uh-huh.

COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: I think that how we view student space has to be a constantly evolving process because students have different needs, and students that I know are talking about childcare issues, family issues, support issues, counseling issues. Many of them don't know where to go, how to access those type of services.

ESTHER RODRIGUEZ-CHARDAVOYNE: Uh-huh.

COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: And I also want to stress that when you allocate space, there has to be a level of confidentiality space. Many of the students want to speak to staff, and what they're talking about often relates to health and to family, and to individual problems. Do you have space available where there is counseling available to students that is for confidential isolated type

nature that they can feel comfortable talking to staff?

ESTHER RODRIGUEZ-CHARDAVOYNE: Well, I'm going to speak about Hostos, but also my colleague from the Lehman, you know, will chime in. So, yes, we have counseling areas, and--and the counselors have their own offices, and students can go to them and have a private conversation. For us that's paramount on our campus to make sure that students have-- So one that they can go to and have a confidential, um, discussion about a host of issues. As you know, we do have a childcare center on our campus. We also have a single staff process on Hostos, which usually is the, um, forefront where students may go--and--and describe their issues, and some of their concerns, and is--it is from there that they're usually recommended as to who they need to speak to with regards to their issue.

JOSE MAGDALENO: Let me say a word about Lehman's situation. We have a discrete personal counseling center with private office space where students can meet with counselors who provide confidential support, and referral services to a variety of external agencies, as well as internal

services that we provide at the college. We were delighted to inaugurate a new childcare center about three years ago, which is, of course, a critical service for our students.

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: But, I'd just add very quickly, I think the private and discrete space is incredibly important for a number of our students populations. For example, we've started several new initiatives that I think this type of space is particularly important. We're expanding foster care--support for our students in foster care, which can be a very kind of sensitive topic working with students. We're now working closely with the Food Bank of New York City to expand significantly a number of food pantries, which again is--it is a service and support for our students that ideally is in place that's more discrete, easily accessible. And it's--it's made available to students, you know, how they want to receive it, but very important to have that space available.

COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: I know that students must come to you with a variety of causes, a variety of issues, and I don't see how it's possible to allocate space to each and every core, so each and

every viewpoint. Students are entitled to voice their viewpoints and they should be encourage to speak out, but allocation of space for each and every viewpoint must be a very difficult composition. And I would prioritize health counseling, and home--I say homework, but completing assignments. I think language is also an issue with many of our students where they want to receive counseling, and sometimes they're concerned about reaching out. So, I would look on the generic level at that level of confidentiality and the fact that space is always at a premium. We take for granted that because we have many CUNY campuses with large grounds that there is so much space. I think it's much different. I--I know space is at a premium, and as was mentioned in someone's testimony, you take a college like Bronx Community with so many of the buildings are so old and--and in need of capital investment. So, I think that you have to use your judgment, and--and I think that there has to be student government involvement. And everything I've seen has been that the student governments have been involved that elections are being held on campuses and--and that's very important

to me that there be student government in all the college campuses. So, I--I appreciate your efforts.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. In terms of the childcare center, what's the status of the childcare center at City College? [pause]

VICE CHANCELLOR BERGTRAUM: The--the--as a matter of fact, the last time that, um, I came before you, we talked about that. The status of it we're in the process of design. That will be finished by some time in the spring. Then we'll bid it out and go into construction, and it should be ready by September of 2017.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And what happened to the students who were at that, the children who were at that center, the childcare center?

VICE CHANCELLOR BERGTRAUM: I understand that the children at that childcare center went into other facilities.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And is someone tracking them so that at the time the center reopens they'll be offered the opportunity to return?

VICE CHANCELLOR BERGTRAUM: You would have to ask that question to the school, but I'm sure that they are.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. I--I would love to know that, and, um, in terms of the reopening, what are the plans for who that facility would be available to? What clients now would be offered an opportunity to use that facility?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: So, um, so we actually looked at the policy that supports our childcare centers, and made modifications. I guess it's about three--three and a half years ago. The original policy really put limitations for our childcare centers in that it only allowed for childcare centers regardless of uses or even their--their physical stability only to serve students. And so, what we did in order to modify the policies, we said absolutely, students must be the very first priority for any space that's available at a childcare center. Once that need has been met, and there is no waiting list, students can then proposed to make it--make the availability broader for faculty as the second priority, and then the community as the third priority, and then the community as the third priority. But only when and after all of the student needs have been met.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So that initiative of opening it up would come from the students, opening the facility to faculty and community? Is that what I understand you to say?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: It--no, the administration of the childcare center would ensure that the marketing and promotion that the needs of students are being met first.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Yes, and then once those needs are met, how would we say--who would be the authorizing body--

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: [interposing] Right.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --to expand those services?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: So--so the request, the request can come from the director of the childcare center or often times childcare centers are under the Vice President of Student Affairs. They can make a request to say we have exhausted our options for students. There is still space available, and instead of leaving a seat unfilled, we want to now open it up to our faculty, maybe staff community.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And who would have the final decision?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: That would be through my office.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. Oh, so, we don't have to worry. If it's through your office will know that that will be something we can expect to have happen.

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: Oh, absolutely.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: There's been a number of requests from colleges.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. In terms of student space, I asked how the determination was made as to who got what areas, and you said basically you allowed the student organizations to determine that. What happens when--who determines that a space should be closed? What are the situations that would close a space?

ESTHER RODRIGUEZ-CHARDAVOYNE: So as I indicated in--in--in my testimony that if the student government, the government--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Can you speak into the mic, please?

ESTHER RODRIGUEZ-CHARDAVOYNE: That's right. If the student government themselves feel that somehow the club itself is violating some of their own constitution laws, then they're usually the ones that will bring up, you know, some--some grievance against that, but, um, they have to bring it to the Student Activity Coordinator and to the Vice President. There has to be due process before an actual club is--is--is closed. I mean that's the process that we follow at Hostos Community College.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. So, you're speaking for Hostos. Who can speak for CUNY?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: Well, I guess it would be me.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: There's-- there's processes that are slightly different depending on how--in this case we're talking about unions or student centers or Student Life buildings depending on how they vote. For example, I believe Queens College and Brooklyn College that were established by student fees, there's a--there's an association that's governed in large part by students and--and I think a couple of faculty seats and

administrators that make determinations of the use of the space. Other colleges that may not have that infrastructure have their own kind of governance and processes for making decisions about--about space. So there's--so there's a lot of--a lot of variability depending on how the college center evolved.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And would those closures happen spontaneously over night in the middle of the semester, you know, without having any kind of due process to allow the club to respond to an effort to have them closed?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: Um, I think--I think often times, um, there is a--if there is--if it's being utilized and there's a clear point of contact either the president or a club--even if--even if the organization has become not functioning, but as long as there is a recognized club and where you identify a president, a vice president absolutely that point of contact is contacted. And, you know, if there--there--if it's determined the space hasn't been utilized or isn't being utilized or there hasn't been a successful effort to make contact, I could see, you know, halfway through the year an institution say, we'll we haven't made contact yet

and we need to repurpose this to meet other student needs. Absolutely, I could see that happening.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, and to that point, the Guillermo Morales/Assata Shakur Center that operated at City College--

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: [interposing]
Uh-huh.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --what prompted that closure?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: That's a--I think we have some CCNY folks here. I--I--I couldn't tell you about that.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: You couldn't speak to that?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: No, no, in terms of that process of that.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. Well, if they--did they--when they closed, would they notify you that a space has been closed, and would they give you any kind of notice or report or--?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: Not--not--not necessarily. I mean what CUNY has really tried to do over the years and--and Judy--Judy may be able to speak to this as well, is we worked very hard to, um,

have leadership of the campuses try to in the best interest of their students and--and the campus try to make decisions independent in some ways certainly of some of the CUNY administration more autonomy and more support for decision making. So in this case, as the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, if there's a president that says we need to, you know, our students are requesting more and more to provide space for a single stop operation, that provides critical, you know, food services, tax preparation, legal and financial counseling? They may identify whether--whether it's a student club, or maybe it's an office space, or, maybe it's even a classroom space. You know, part of our testimony was--was looking at in this case student union space, but how do we repurpose and create multipurpose space across the board so that we have maximum flexibility to meet the needs of our students? And so, a president could--could say this is a high priority whether it's career services or it's a single stop operation, or in the case of John Jay, they said absolutely, we have to carve out space for students clubs and arms. It's on the building of that new structure there's significant student club space that was a top

priority by the president and the leadership. I wasn't consulted on that as the Vice Chair for Student Affairs. I absolutely supported it, but I certainly wasn't consulted for it. By the way, if I could just add, the moment that the new space at John Jay opened, while it had significant student club space, it still didn't meet all the needs that the students have.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh, right. So how do we protect the students from perhaps even an administration that is insensitive to what they feel the needs are, and that doesn't give them the opportunity to appeal the decision--the decision that has been made so that it doesn't appear to be an arbitrary or--?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: [interposing]
Right, I think--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --a dictatorial decision.

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: Absolutely, I think there's a--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] We talk about encouraging students, and empowering students and giving students the opportunity to

decide where the space is going to be. So how do we then in contradiction to that--

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: [interposing]
Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --have that?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: No absolutely and while our--our testimony, you know, talked about how the--the notion of student union has changed, I think we're in agreement that the spirit of the student union needs to be preserved where students have the opportunity to come together, to congregate and discuss whatever they want, whether it's in opposition to the administration or not. So I think there are a couple of different ways that if students don't feel like they're having due process, they certainly can contact the Central office of Student Affairs, and ask for due process. Their student government absolutely is advocating, and if they're not we've got to ask well, how are they getting voted into office. But students need to hold their student government folks accountable, but due process is out there. I'll give you an example where we saw very recently we weren't particularly happy in terms of digitally (sic), which students were involved. We

heard from the USS, the University Student Senate, and a number of out student body presidents saying that they weren't actively engaged at the level that they should be with tech fees. And we said, well, this is tech--I mean students are paying a lot of money to provide technology support across this university. They need to be involved with some of the decisions around the use of those resources. And so, what we ended up doing is we ended up sending a memo. I believe the Vice President of Student Affairs received a memo from me. I believed your presidents received a memo from our Chief Operating officer encouraging and supporting and requesting that the administration involve students in those processes, and gave--gave clear guidance.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Council Member Cabrera has a question, but just before he poses his questions, in terms of the student activity fees, I understood you to say the students can put it on a referendum, and then it comes to a vote. Is that also the process with the student technology fees?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: That, um, no. There's two processes to that.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: Uh, uh, the--
the student--this exclusive this student activity
thing I can't cite the bylaws that define it out--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay.

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: --but the
administrative fees versus the student activity fees
have different processes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. So what's the
student involvement in the tech fees that we're
talking about where they seem to express some
displeasure with how it was functioning --

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: [interposing]
For now.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --that you just
referenced?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: For now--so now
there are committees, um, that the administration
convenes, and in--there's--I don't know what the
ratio is, but there's student involvement on these
tech fees committees. And believe me, I've worked
very closely with the--the last two USS chairs and
student trustees because it's been an issue in trying
to push and make sure our campuses are responsive to
student involvement with--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Well, students are involved, but they're not in that decision making portion. They're involved. They have input but--

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: [interposing] But if--if I may?

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Yes, please.

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: Student, um, students are voting members of our Technology Advisory Committee, and--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] In what ratio?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: Um, they're about 35 to 40% of the membership on that committee, and they have a voice and vote on all of the proposals that come before the committee, and they also have the opportunity to make proposals from student government.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And is that the same across campus, each one has got--each tech committee has got about 35% students?

ESTHER RODRIGUEZ-CHARDAVOYNE: Yes. I mean as--I think what Vice Chancellor Sanchez indicated that there were two memos that were now.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Yes.

ESTHER RODRIGUEZ-CHARDAVOYNE: One

clearly was for the student--for the student vice president's area, and then there was one for the Finance area. And clearly, both memos were--they spoke of the same. They spoke about--one is that the makeup of the committee, and--and that you had to have a larger portion of students on the committee. But any--any time you establish a committee that forward it deals with dollars, they have to be a voting member. So they have the--they're empowered to vote on proposals that are moved forward as well as being their own as my colleague here indicated. So--and so I just want to take it one step forward because even though we do what's called a planned technology, which is submitted to the Central Office, there's also the opportunity for them to view that plan. They basically look to see that the student ratio--once again they double check to make sure that there were sufficient students from that particular campus. And then they look at the project that--that are being submitted, and if they are questions, usually the committee gets back questions, and then

we have to answer them and then we get a final approval. So there is always that dialogue going on.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. Thank you. Council Member Cabrera. Thank you for your patience.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Thank you. First of all, I--I appreciate your acknowledgement that Bronx Community College is in dire need of construction funding. It's something that I have pointed out from day one that I've been here, and I will continue. So thank you for that acknowledgement. At the same time, I'm really grateful to have the--the best looking library I think in the whole CUNY system. It's simply amazing. You first mentioned that we have a lot of facilities that are old. And as I heard that argument, I was thinking about Harvard. I was thinking about Yale. I was thinking about Princeton because they are much older. So the fundamental problem that I see here is not that they're old, it's that you're not being provided the funding in order to fix the problem. And I think that's the problem that all schools deal with CUNY. We come and we say CUNY, how come you're doing this? And especially at the state level, I think you should be receiving a lot more funding to

accommodate and to deal with this problem of a 23% increase. Is this 23% as of date or this was a couple of years ago?

VICE CHANCELLOR BERGTRAUM: This is as of date.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: As of date. From 23% compare us to when?

VICE CHANCELLOR BERGTRAUM: I think it's ten years. Yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Ten years ago. So I mean this is just a significant increase. What is really needed is that CUNY gets the funding that it needs in order to do the job, and that predominantly I see has to come from the state level. And so I'm going--I'm going to keep using this building pulpit to say that you guys need the funding so our students everything that they actually need, and not try and from Peter to Paul, and then get a house divided from within. Because at the end of the day, the administration of students to me have the-- the same goal, which is to me college is about knowledge and skills. Everything else is to support that, and to get the knowledge and skills so they have the preparation in order to move forward in life

with their dreams and occupation, et cetera. So, that's--that's the first thing I wanted to mention. The second thing I just want clarity, and then I'm going to go to the third question, which is that most of our campuses are you having an accommodation problem? I just wanted to have clarity. Is--is--is it a designated problem that they have permitting space for the clubs, the unions, the city government or is it more trying to accommodate when they can meet on a particular one. (sic) What--what's the-- what's the norm?

[pause]

ESTHER RODRIGUEZ-CHARDAVOYNE: Oh--okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: But I--I want it more from CUNY. I know 'cause you have the perspective of the virtual college, and I--I heard what you have. But I just want to get an overall picture citywide? What--what's--what's the great-- what's the great--? Do you understand my question? That--okay, go ahead.

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: [off mic] If you repeat it.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Okay. So basically, what I want to know is that is your

biggest problem right now that you don't have enough space on the average campus or do you also have a problem accommodating certain slots for the student government for--Well, the student government got the designated space, but for the clubs, for the unions, accommodating time for them.

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: No, no. It's-- it's space.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: It's space.

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: We--we need more space, um--

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: [interposing]
Did you have this problem ten years ago?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: A little bit, but not as bad.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Not as bad. So someone--

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: [interposing]
Over the last ten years enrollment, um, has grown at least one and a half maybe two times the size of NYU.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: So that has precipitated--

VICE CHANCELLOR BERGTRAUM: [off mic]
[interposing] Absolutely.

1 COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

63

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: --more clubs? Is
3 that--is that what I'm hearing? There's more clubs,
4 therefore--

5 VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: More clubs than
6 others.

7 VICE CHANCELLOR BERGTRAUM: If you take
8 an increase of 50,000 students and you just divide
9 that by the typical, you know, enrollment in any one
10 of our schools that could produce another five
11 schools.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: [interposing]
13 No, no, I hear problem--

14 VICE CHANCELLOR BERGTRAUM: So--so we--

15 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: You could have
16 five schools and have less clubs. You see what I'm
17 saying? So, is it--is it the amount of clubs.
18 Because you--I--I--I don't foresee this, but you
19 could have a college that say--the students say oh,
20 we don't care about clubs. We just want to get our
21 degree and get out of here and get a job--

22 VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: [interposing]
23 Right.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: --you know. So,
25 what--?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: [interposing]

No it's an important question. Let me--let me just spend just a--a minute talking about how we're beginning to see the changing demographics of our student profile. It's actually pretty fascinating what's happening at CUNY. So everyone has heard we've grown, we've grown, we've grown, but what's happened is the student profile has changed pretty dramatically in that over the last 10, 15 years--10 to 15 years ago, the average age was right about 26, 27 years of age. Today, the average is 23, and we're seeing many, many, many more students who are traditional age student coming into CUNY, 18, 19, 20 than we did the last 10 years.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: [interposing]

yeah.

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: So what's

happening as we're beginning to see that traditional age students come to CUNY looking for better quality engagement, better student activities, better student life, more club opportunities. In fact, we have students coming to our campuses creating clubs. In fact, getting the students that are here. I encourage you if there isn't a club, I--I encourage

you to propose it and get it established and, of course, it has to meet the requirements of the recognized student club kind of process. But that's what's happening.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: [interposing] I see.

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: We're seeing a younger population of students that are wanting to get more engaged. We also just over the last--really more so in the last five to seven years the growth of residents. So now we have 3,200 students that live on campus. That is also, and you can talk to anyone at Staten Island. You can talk to anyone at Queens College. They will tell you that the residents--the creation of the residents hall there transformed their student life, student club, their campus life experience. Because when you have students that live 24/7 on the campus, they're spending their time getting involved in clubs, in government, campus activities, and that has also caused the need to create more clubs. And I want to say again a greater attention with space.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: But what I hear is that you're getting more students who are actually

at an extended adolescent period because they're still living with their parents. Some of them are not working, and they have more time on their hands. And some living with residents because all their needs are basically taken care of, and they want to do life together.

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: That's absolutely right.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Okay. I got you.

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: In fact, you mentioned work--you mentioned work. Today, if it's--it's flip-flopped over the last 15 years. Today, 70% of all CUNY students work less than 20 hours a week.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: As compared to ten years ago?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: As compared to 15 years ago, it has flip-flopped.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: So you have data on that?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Okay. All right, so let me--let me just share. I mean I do know that what I hear there's only two options here on this. I'd love to hear what students have to say,

but the two options is either we build more facilities and that funding is going to come out of there. That funding has to come mainly from the state, and some from the city. So, really it falls on elected officials, or--or to do what you're doing right now, which is basically to try to account or accommodate and have just like you run classrooms and you, you know, rotate classes that you could rotate them. And what I hear is that you're--you're going with a second option. I wanted to ask you one more question because I know this is pressing here is regarding the Morales/Assata Shakur community. I had an opportunity to go there a couple of years ago I remember when we took a tour. And there was discussions back then of the possibility of--of--of moving, if I recall right even back then. According to the media (sic) info, City College offers students a former firehouse. Do you know anything about that? And if so, what's the feedback that you have received from students? Or is that just a rumor that like often happens in the media that ends up being a result or any other media.

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: I don't--I don't know about any student feedback on that.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: No? Okay. So the--the accommodations, just to be clear, that was made for them for the students for that community space they end up going where?

[pause]

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: I'm not sure where they went. The space I know--

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: No, no the space obviously is there--what's in there now?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: I believe it's Career--I believe it's Career Services.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Okay, and then the students were told they can meet where, now?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: I--I don't know.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Does anybody here from CUNY has that info?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: That's the CCNY representative in terms of students

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: To that point is there someone from CCNY--CCNY who is on the administration who can participate and address that issue?

1 COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

69

2 DEAN WENDY THORNTON: [off mic] So far
3 it's--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Okay, you have
5 to come to the mic, please--

6 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay,
7 you have to come

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: --and identify
9 yourself.

10 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And please identify
11 yourself. I'd like to swear you in, and then you can
12 offer whatever you can share with is.

13 DEAN WENDY THORNTON: My name is Wendy
14 Barton.

15 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. Would you
16 raise your right hand. Do you affirm to tell the
17 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in
18 your testimony before this committee, and to answer
19 questions truthfully?

20 DEAN WENDY THORNTON: Yes.

21 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Great. Can you give
22 us your name and your title, please?

23 DEAN WENDY THORNTON: Wendy Thornton, Dean
24 for Student Development, City College.

25 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: So--so if you could answer the question. Where--where--where did the students end up meeting at?

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: What happens is student clubs and organizations go through the reservation process through the Department of Student--Office of Student Life and Leadership Development. So they would go through an application process requesting new space on campus like any other student organization on campus, and they are granted space that way.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: So--so I have two questions related to that. One, were they noticed--I'm sure they knew, but what--since they had to be moved out, were they notified that they have to reapply?

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: That process is ongoing. So you can always apply for space that way so--

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: [interposing]
So--so how many of the groups that were meeting there re-apply?

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: I can't answer that question. I don't know--

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: [interposing]
Okay.

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: --because that
wasn't designated as club space. So all of our clubs
and organizations go through the reservation process
to request to use space on campus.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: I just want
clarity. But you knew who was meeting there?

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: Um, I know that SER
would have meetings there.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Is that--is that
the--is that the only group that--

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: [interposing] That
I'm aware of.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Okay. So for
example, Students for Education Rights, Black Student
Union, Community Vision Council, the Universal
Student Nation, [speaking Spanish], New Black Panther
Party, Radical Woman. Groups like that, where are
they meeting right now?

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: I'm not sure. They
would have to be through a reservation process? So
that goes through Student Life. So if they want to
meet on campus, they can. They just have to go

through the reservation process like any other student club or organization to request a space and to get into the space.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Were they--were they talk--were there conversations that took place with these groups that were run out of there?

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: Not that I was involved in. So I'm not aware of that, but again, I know it's confusing but I want to be clear--

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: [interposing]
Yes, it is.

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: --that the process for all student clubs and organizations to use space on campus because we don't have space to give students club space. So they don't have their own individual spaces, and like closed space.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: [interposing] I hear you and look, I'm a fan of CUNY and everybody knows I'm very public and very supportive. I'm just trying to get clarity here--

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: --because
3 they've been there since 1990s. So they're not a new
4 kid on the block. They--they have history--

5 DEAN WENDY THORNTON: [interposing] Uh-
6 huh.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: --and so I'm
8 just, you know, process matters to me and how things
9 are gone about. I'm not even--I--I'm not even
10 qualified, to be honest with you, to tell you whether
11 it's a right or wrong decision.

12 DEAN WENDY THORNTON: [interposing] Uh-
13 huh.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: I mean this is
15 internal. It's something that the student body with
16 the administration has to--but process matters to me,
17 and I'm just curious as to if there were discussions
18 because everybody knew that there were going to be,
19 you know, people knew we were going to have students
20 who were going to be dissatisfied, people who were,
21 you know, real nice and so forth. So, yes, go ahead.

22 DEAN WENDY THORNTON: The question you're
23 answer--you're asking me I can't answer because I
24 wasn't involved in the process.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: I see.

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: So I'm just giving you the process for what students can do to obtain space on campus.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: And so would all of the groups if they were to apply--

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: --all of the groups would be accommodated?

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: We try to accommodate them as best we can because there's--we have an Events Committee as well, a Reservations Committee. So as long as space is available, and they do it in a timely fashion, they're able to get into space. But as was discussed here earlier, there's not enough space on campus to accommodate everyone. We have 179 clubs--

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: [interposing] Wow.

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: --on our campus.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: You have 179 clubs?

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: How many classrooms do you have?

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: Oh, I couldn't tell you that? I don't--I don't have the answer to that--

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: [interposing] I know.

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: --but we have lots of classrooms.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: What's the rate of denial?

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: Oh, I don't know that. I think pretty much most students that ask for space as long as it's available they can get it unless something else is going on in a space.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: [interposing] Right.

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: But we try to accommodate them as best we can. So I think that we do a fairly good job at that.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: How many weeks in advance do they have to normally--

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: [interposing] We like to do it a month in advance, but we'll go up to two weeks in advance as well because sometimes

students don't know. So, they'll come to us and say they'd like to use the space, and so we accommodate them.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Okay, I--I was just curious about the--the atmosphere of the college. Has there been protests or anything related to this?

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: There were protests when, um, this first happened, but there haven't been many since then. I think there might have been another one, a small one.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Okay, have any clubs died as a result of not being able to meet there?

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: No, not that I'm aware of.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Okay. All righty, well, I--I--I thank you so much for the answer. I would love to get the answers to the questions that you could honestly say I don't have the answer to--

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: --but if you could get me that information. This process is important to me. I--I get 179 is a lot of clubs, and I know accommodations need to be made, and I know in CUNY this is an important piece--

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: --that needs to take place, you know. I'm really supportive of both camps. You know, we want the Student Life, and at the same time you have to, you know, make adjustments and accommodations. But, at the end of the day, I have to say it again, I'll make a loud, you know, sound of the trumpet here. We have to do in government, we have to do a better job in providing you the funding. We had a \$3 billion overflow of funding here last year. Now look, you know, we--we need to--we need to redirect some of the funding. We talk about vacations the most important thing. I was a college professor, you know, I--I get it. This to me this is like vital, and it's one of the things-- it's one of my biggest pet peeves that we say do this, but we don't give you the resources. We should be pouring millions and millions of dollars to make

sure that all of our campuses, which have plenty of land, some of them, not all of them, but some of them got 50 acres worth of land and so forth. On those campuses we can at least do something, and that requires money. And that has to come from government, and that's why people pay taxes. Thank you so much.

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: You're welcome.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Before you leave, Ms. Thornton.

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: Uh-huh.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you, um, thank you, Council Member for your questions, and I want to acknowledge we've been joined by Council Member Laurie Cumbo as well. Um, in--in response to the questions that my colleague has asked that we can get a response to, if you would include your understanding of how that center was established, what was the memorandum of understanding that came out of that--

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --establishment, and what were there--I believe it was some kind of legal

process involved in resolving a crisis that existed at the time. So if you could include that in your response--

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: [interposing] Okay.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --to the questions that were raised, I would appreciate that--

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: [interposing] Okay.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --because it seems like no one has that firm definitive answer for us, and we need to see how we can understand what came about--

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --what has been sometimes described as an illegal closure.

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --without having any due process, and we want to certainly not come to a situation where students now make this the issue that they want to limit what to mimic what's going on in Missouri. So we want--we certainly want to have dialogue.

DEAN WENDY THORNTON: [interposing] Okay.

2 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Because it seems it
3 has not been effective dialogue to understand what's
4 going on so that people can't ask--my colleague as he
5 said we need to know what were the facts and what is
6 the process so that we can understand that we're not
7 being disrespected or pushed to the side or
8 marginalized and not being responded to.

9 DEAN WENDY THORNTON: [interposing] Okay.

10 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And we appreciate
11 that.

12 DEAN WENDY THORNTON: Okay.

13 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And, um, just in
14 conclusion to the panel, we've--we've--we've kept you
15 for quite some time. We do appreciate your
16 presentations, and if you could answer one other
17 question. Are you a member of the Association of
18 College Unions International? Is CUNY a member or
19 are the schools individually members?

20 VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: I don't believe
21 we are centrally because not--not all of our colleges
22 have unions. Some of our individual colleges may be
23 members. I don't know if we are.

24 VICE CHANCELLOR BERGTRAUM: [off mic]
25 No, we're not.

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: We're not.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: CUNY is not a member.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. Okay, and, um, so is it my understanding that every campus does, in fact, have a dedicated office space for student government?

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: That's my understanding. I'll double check for you on that--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay, I appreciate that.

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: --but I'm fairly certain.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And childcare is underway. Well, the constructions, the plans and it's going to be open.

VICE CHANCELLOR BERGTRAUM: Right, right.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And I would like for you to please let me know what happened to those students, the children that were there--

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: [interposing]
We will.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --and if we can find a way to track them so that they don't get lost, and in terms of finally--the dedicated space that does exist, if you could some--I know that CUNY has so much to do, but CUNY has so much talent and may resources that perhaps you can get me the answer to the questions which is: What amount of space does exist at each campus for dedicated space reserved for student governments? Also, the open space that you talked about. I'd like to get an idea of what percentage of all of the footage, square footage in--in CUNY is being dedicated. We're talking about it's so crowded, it's so crowded. Okay, I understand that. I acknowledge that. What percentage of the space is actually reserved for students? So if you could somehow get that information to me. I know I won't have it, you know, tomorrow or next week or next month, but if you can get it to me when you do accumulate it, I would appreciate that.

VICE CHANCELLOR BERGTRAUM: Okay. We will dot hat for you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. great, and lastly, I don't think that social media is going to be replace the need for people to come together,

dialogue face-to-face, look at each, debate and come to some consensus and make plans long range that would affect what's going on. But thank you so much for your testimony. I do appreciate it. Thank you. And as they're leaving, we're going to call the next panel. [off mic] This is panel two, right? Okay. Shepard McDaniel from the Universal Zulu Nations of Morales/Assata Shakur Center. Professor James Blake from BMCC; Alyssa Soyo from--Huh?

ALYSSA SOYO: Esceoveo (sp?)

VICE CHANCELLOR SANCHEZ: Esceveo.

Okay. From the Morales/Assata Shakur Center, and oh, boy, I need help with this one. Zus--Jusini--oh, that's a J--Josania Venegas. Come, please.

[background comments, pause]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Yep. Good afternoon. If you would raise your right hand, please? Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this committee, and to answer all questions honestly?

PANEL MEMBERS: I do.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. You may begin. [pause]

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: Good afternoon.

First, I'd like to thank Council Member--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Can you get a little closer to the mic?

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: Oh.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you.

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: Good afternoon.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Good afternoon.

Give us your name, please.

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: My name is Shepard McDaniel. I'm here representing the Universal Zulu Nation, and also the Coordinator for the Guillermo Morales/Assata Shakur Faculty Alumni and Legal Committee. I'd like to start by thanking Council Member Inez Barron and the rest of the Council meeting--members here for conducting this hearing, and it's been long coming. I'm really glad that this has taken place. In 1969, student strikes opened up the doors for Blacks, Latinos and other oppressed people at CUNY. Those strikes not only cleared the way for those--for the people I mentioned to finally gain full interest into CUNY via the historically biased white preferred policy or free tuition and open admissions. But it also initiated the creation

of Black studies, Latino studies, Asian studies, women's studies, Jewish studies, and a security of on-campus spaces that were needed to organize and protect those academic departments in general and overall student rights in particular. Then in the mid '70s when I myself benefitted from this earlier student struggle as a student leader for the Black Student Union at Hunter College and CUNY. Not only was, um, the two largest, but I believe the top Black African and Latino studies department in the United States in both Hunter and City College. But more importantly, the Black Student Union held offices where actually we had two spaces. We had one at the Theater of Eleanor Roosevelt House, which was off campus, and we also had one on campus that was given to us by the Department of Black and Puerto Rican Studies so we would be able to function on the campus with the students. Having the largest membership, of course, we have the largest budget, so we were able to do a lot of things at Hunter during that time. We built a hospital in those in Mozambique. We saved the Schaumburg Center when it was going to be sold to West Germany. We provided clothing and supplies to the refugees in South Africa during the whole

Apartheid struggle. We shut down Ipi Tombi and the Krugerrand Campaigns, which were also related to South Africa. Dignitaries and even heads of state visited CUNY on a regular basis, and were hosted at student spaces. When Roots came out, the Alex Haley Movement ABC and the media came to Hunter College and to City College to interview the students there based on our expertise as being students of Black and Puerto Rican studies in history and particularly with the professors that we had that were teaching over there. We have prison program like Green Haven okay where families were able to go to the prisons with students and faculty and work on different issues that took place dealing with family issues. Our dances and parties were well known all throughout CUNY at this time, but the whole point is that they served the community. Any funds that were raised went into community programs such as Hale House, and other institutions in Harlem primarily. Student government elections, Hunter was the first one to have a Black slate and a Black student government. We revealed a lot of inappropriate behavior that took place back then, and since then there's been equal distribution of representation as far as student

government is concerned. Unfortunately, all those documents this is really important to me because it came up at this hearing. All those documents disappeared. So all that history except for people who held onto individual records they all disappeared from the campus at both of our offices in the early '80s. I'm going to fast forward to 1989, the student strike that took place then. As was mentioned here already, from 1990 to 2013, the Guillermo Morallas/Assata Shakur Community and Student Center at City College existed. Repeated attacked by administration during that time, there were lawsuits a number of them that took place including the illegal budgeting (sic) of the office by administration and security. Students being threatened. There is also the closing of the Community Student Center, which was building that was provided for students. That's really again important because back when I was in school, the whole second floor of Hunter College and High School was for students. That whole second floor. So students had those classrooms utilized for their clubs. As I mentioned earlier, downstairs on the first floor, the Department of Black and Puerto Rican Studies provided

Caribbean Student Union, Black Student Union, Puerto Rican and united with the spaces right there in the department offices. So there was space back then. The Messenger came out of the call center. It was a newspaper that was produced by students to deal with issues and situations that affected Black, Latino and poor communities, and different political issues that affected us throughout the world. We have full forums and speakers came to the center. We had workshops. The People's Survival Program was based in the Morales/Shakur Center providing free clothes, hot meals and emergency services to the community. It was very important that people understand this was a community and student center. It was purposely done that way because City College is in Harlem. I don't care what you want to call it. You can call it Morningside Heights or whatever you want, it's in Harlem. When Sandy hit, we were the first ones on the ground in Red Hook, in Coney Island and in Far Rockaway. We organized from that center to provide hot meals, supplies and things were brought there to be able to give out to the community. We had two large caravans that went out to those locations before FEMA, before the Red Cross and community from

City College were there to help serve the people. We had a food co-op that functioned out of the Morales/Shakur Center. The WBAI radio station, which was actually granted permission to broadcast out of CCNY recently, they also had their elections at the Morales/Shakur Center. We had a student book exchange where students could be able to trade in their books and get other books instead of paying those crazy prices that they charge you in the bookstores. We had a computer and study lab inside the center. The Gemini Make (sic) University for Youth function out of the Morales/Shakur Center on weekends where young children from the community were able to come and learn about their history and their culture and participate in trips, such as the museum of Natural History, the Museum of Art and different locations throughout the city where they were given that information and history that they normally don't get in the schools. We have free Spanish to English classes particularly in the area that's so called no-no of Washington Heights, which I still call Northwest Harlem. Okay, they were able to come into City College and learn English for free as everything else was for free right there in Morales/Shakur

Center. We functioned that program there. We were about to launch a free medical clinic in the Morales/Shakur Center on Sundays in cooperation with IFCO. If people don't know IFCO, that's the Interfaith Community Organization that sends regularly caravans to Cuba. But more importantly, they train students to go to Cuba and learn medicine for free, become doctors. Those doctors are required to bring their talents back to the community. It was all set up on Sunday. They were going to open up, you know, a clinic for, you know, for--you know, to refer and so forth at the Morales/Shakur Center. And as I mentioned with Hunter College, many dignitaries were in the Morales/Shakur Center from Cuba, Venezuela, Ghana, Angola, Zimbabwe, on and on and on. Okay, it functioned as a place to serve as a receptionist for these dignitaries that came into CUNY. Once again, giving CCNY an elevated presence in New York City. Today, after all the legal battles that I've mentioned, the bugging and the student threats and on and on and on, the Morales/Shakur Center was shut down, and like it's namesakes Guillermo Morales and Assata Shakur, who also were students at CUNY and were actually the students

decided to name the center after them because they were involved in that earlier 1969 student strike to allow more students to be able to come and attend CUNY. In conclusion, I just want to say that we will continue to get the center back, and I really hope that the Council here will be able to get the answers to the questions that I have heard today, which are very important. There was no process, and the students here will be able elaborate more on that. Thank you so much. [pause]

ALYSSA SOYO: Hi, everyone. My name is Alyssa Soyo. I'm a student organizer at the City College of New York. I was the former director of Guillermo Morales/Assata Shakur Student and Community Center, and I was also at the time the center was removed President of Students for Educational Rights and Organization that was mentioned before. We held the lease for the center, and the center was a safe space for many working class students of color working on issues the university and the community were facing. The center was taken away in October 2013 with no clear communication from the administration or the Board of Trustees about the situation. There are few who refused to even

acknowledge the space was a community center, calling it Math 3201. (sic) The school has to this day still be unclear about the location of some of the property within the center. There has been no accountability to the students and the community that City College has destroyed. Not really destroyed. We're still moving on, but without our space. Since the center has been taken away, the campus climate has changed drastically. Administration does not hold open meetings with the students any more. When they schedule meetings with concerned students, they end up skipping the meetings for other events on campus. They don't meet with us. They just go make election and go into their surer cause. (sic) Scheduling events is a nightmare, and students must be approved through a board consisting of Administration, Public Safety and/or Office of Student Life. This sometimes takes--takes weeks, often times not even happening at all. Administration takes an active role in stifling student leadership due to its constant fear of dissent. At 2:00 p.m. today, the Administration and faculty at City College will be discussing our public safety officers having arms. This is something we organized against at Morales/Shakur Center believing

the presence of guns normalizes the violence they perpetuate. Guns have no place in our educational setting especially in a setting known for actively disregarding the safety of students. Students were not invited to be part of this conversation, though this is a huge decision that would affect us. The numerous resources we have won as activists within the school are being taken away; free printing, extended lab hours, our childcare center and much more. Our professors who have been fighting for a contract for six years are also going to schools with completely crumbling infrastructure. The students need more resources not less, and we don't need excuses onto why we don't have the resources we're entitled to. The Morales/Shakur Center is a space where we could be in control of these problems. We could think, plan, strategize. The center was a space where we held discussions on issues like gender violence on campus, where we began to confront it, where we began to heal. The community organizations in the center fed people through know your rights trainings, actively reduced the harm that has been happening through--throughout many communities within the city and within our own city college. The

students in the Center One campaigns we were entitled to be leaders. We uphold resources to provide scholarships and services. We absolutely 100% need space that is completely autonomous from the college administration. City College administration has been even responsive to calls for a meeting from City Council. I sat in a room where my college president left the room after a ten-minute meeting with the chair of this committee, and I was ashamed. There have planned no space for students to organize. How can we confront this? How can we build awareness. And something I'd like to speak to a little bit is the childcare center that was aforementioned. I'm friends with some of the parents who were in the college as they have either left the college because they could not find childcare or they have spoken about how the subsidies offered to the parents were not enough to even cover basic minimum for childcare. If the City College comes up with this, I don't even want to hear it now, but if City College can come up with a track--a way of tracking the parents there will be concrete evidence as to how City College has failed student parent within the university, but thank you.

JOSANIA VENEGAS: Hello. My name is Josania Venegas and I'm a recent graduate from the City College of New York and I'm also a co-creator and co-member of the Sister Circle Collected. I'm here today because I want to tell you about my experience in college and how the Morales/Shakur Community Center is an autonomous space that impacted my experience there. In 2012, I took a transnational foundations class with Dr. Rosaldo (sic) Rodriguez and I learned about transnational funding as intersectionality. And the same here and I also became a part of the Morales/Shakur Center and I was there very often. And it was there that I was able to see the intersectionality play out. Not just in studies, but in real life. There was a variety of uses for that space, which is something that they mentioned before about multi-faceted spaces. They had book drives. They had food drives, food justice, know your rights training among other things. So that was a very multifaceted used space. All you had to do to reserve it was to check the calendar that was on the wall. If there was nobody there that day, then you could reserve it, and there was no bureaucratic process. There was no one having to

approve it. It was very, very easy unlike how it is now. This space became important to me particularly as me and a group of women created a services that were collected in response to so much sexual violence going on in our college campuses and around the communities. So we began to organize, and a lot of our organization was in this space. Because there is a complete lack of resources for those kind of issues, sexual violence and huge gender issues on our campus, we decided to begin a gender resource center campaign. Which was organized out of the Morales/Shakur Center along with SER, our Students for Education Rights. So, they need for spaces is extremely important because we as students don't just need our voices heard and ideas heard, we need a space to manifest those ideas, a space to organize. So it's not just about also being heard. It's about doing things, and spaces allow that to happen. The reason that we need for autonomy is because for example the Morales/Shakur Center it was an autonomous space. We didn't have to go through any process to reserve the space, and it was taken away without any consent or any conversation or with any process whatsoever. When that happens it shows us

that the administration had no respect, understanding or care for any of the issues, any of the work, any of the organizing going on in that space. So it makes me wonder if we have to go through any approval process for events, then why--why would they, you know, approve that. Which is what we have experienced on campus now where there is groups who were in the Morales/Shakur Center who have tried to get space on campus, and have been denied repeatedly. So, the autonomy of the space for students is extremely important because that approval process isn't necessary. So if the administration does not agree with an opinion or a political outlook or an event, then the event can go on without--without any--anyone getting in the way. And that's really important, and that's why we need autonomous space around City College. So I think the Morales/Shakur Center is a perfect example of why those autonomous spaces were needed because if it's not in the interest of the administration or the college campus or the community wide campus, then it's not going to happen. And, if there are no spaces where students can voice their ideas, and if there is not autonomous space where the colleges can give the

students, then this shows that there is no trust in the students and there is no real respect or even care for those ideas that the students themselves are bringing upon and the community that surrounds that college is bringing into the school. I think that's why it's important.

PROFESSOR JAMES BLAKE: Good afternoon, Council Member Barron and members of the Higher Education Committee. My name is Professor James Blake, and I am faculty member at the Borough of Manhattan Community College. I was here earlier on another issue, which I hope this Council will eventually take up and that's students being attacked, student leaders being attacked on campuses. However, I had to take a day off because the last time I lost a day was a close family member. And I promised the students that I would be at City Hall with them today and support them in their efforts to fight against oppression. I am so happy that this meeting was called on--on space. I don't plan to stay here that long, but I just could not walk out knowing that this was--topic was going to be discussed and how important it is, at least at the Borough of Manhattan Community College. I came to

that college in 1970. I've been there for 45 years. 1970. When I go to BMCC, we had the A-Building, the B-Building, the C-Building, the D-Building, the H-Building, the N-Building, and we had--and the D-Building was right next to a place called the Tango Palace, and some students used to go in there thinking they were going to class. We were hungry for space. We were desperate for space. We marched, we demonstrated, we wrote letters to elected officials, we--we talked to folks in the community, we mobilized, we organized. We walked from 50th Street all the way downtown to Chamber Street chanting we need a building a decent place for us to have an education for our children--our students. We finally were successful. Borough of Manhattan Community College was built, and I can tell you from my perspective and many people at that time it was a dream. We had a swimming pool. We had a gymnasium. We had theaters. I'm using 'had' now, and I'm not just saying that jut to be saying it. We had theaters. We had a student lounge, and we had spaces where students could communicate and talk to each other in what they called the open space. Shortly after the arrival of the current administration, the

Physical Education Department was closed. Students would take courses in physical--physical ed, a one-credit course, and it would enable them, especially if they were facing remedial leads (sic) they were able to get one credit plus another two credits in order to maintain their TAP and not lose their financial aid. So taking away the physical education courses not only was detrimental to the students physically, but it was also detrimental to the students financially. Because they could no longer--because of remedial leaves, pick up a non-remedial course to satisfy their financial aid. Those one-credit courses were absolutely essential. The swimming pool is no longer there. When it was there, it was being utilized and rented out to the community, and the students would walk past the swimming pool because there's a glass enclosure and you could look right down at this beautiful Olympic pool. And what they saw was people who looked--who did not look anything like them swimming and learning lessons in how swim, et cetera. They were from the community. The same thing with the gymnasium. The gymnasium was rented out. So the classes that students would take in the physical education course

in the gym, you know, aerobics and exercise and things of that nature were not longer credited. That was removed as well. The theaters, oh, boy, we were happy to have a theater because we used to have performances in Atlanta that was noisy. The theaters are now--the students have access to them, but the students have to pay so much from the student activity fee in order to utilize the theaters. They have to pay a technology fee. They have to pay--they don't rent the theaters, but all of the--the security, if they have an event they have to pay security. Security guards were already working at the college. They're paying them out of student activity fee, and--and--and it becomes very difficult for clubs and organizations to meet--the--the--that expense because it's not--it's not cheap. It's very, very expensive. Our international students. Our international students we go to Borough of Manhattan, they bring \$7 million a year to the college. \$7 million cash money. They get no financial aid or anything of that nature. They're international students. If you go to the college right now and you look for the International Students Office, the space is practically in the basement. It's dingy. It's

crowded and congested, and it really is not something that, you know, given the resources that that group brings to the college, that they should have better-- better space than that. I see this space issue for BMCC. I can't speak for the other campus, it's this tension between profit and--and--and what's good for the students, and what's good for profit. And--and from what our experience has been is that the profit mode has taken priority over student needs. And when the past panel said that every building is built for the students that just set me--I take issue with that. The buildings might be guilt for the students but they do not remain for students to utilize, and-- and to grow intellectually, et cetera. The latest thing that concerns me is that there is a proposal I understand that's fielding around the college and emanating from the president is that they want to build luxury condos over BMCC. They want to build the luxury condos over BMCC. Those are air right. You know, BMCC is in an area where it's hot real estate. It's--it's expensive, you know, and to sell the air rights would be a lot of money, a lot of profit for the college and for the university. And so, there are plans to build or at least a proposal

to build a--a condo, a luxury condo built on--not built but Trump-like. Excuse me. I didn't mean to say that. [laughter] Trump-like condos over BMCC, and you know, I--I can give you this--the latest record that comes from Tribeca where they're discussing this whole issue. If our space is being taken over, and are in a--kind of like an old building there, if we're losing all of that auxiliary space, what do you think is going to happen if they build luxury condos? They might just lose their entire college. They're talking about the possibility of moving the college up to the old Penn State Building. There is some discussion about doing that, about moving us out. You know, we are in a community where diversity is thriving, and we have people from every class, every color, everybody, you know. And they want to move a significant portion of people of color out of that area, build luxury condos and move us up closer to some other place in Manhattan. So, my--my testimony is that when it comes to space and like student space, the students at my school, the student government at my school was threatened with having their space moved, not moved but changed so that we would have no privacy. They

want just a glass enclosed--a glass enclosed space where students would hold their meetings and everybody could see what they're doing, and there was not really privacy. And they said well, we'll give you a space some place outside of student government to conduct your privacy. Well, you know, that's just not fair, and they--when they did it and the students rose up against it, and decided that they didn't want that to happen, you know, they ran into difficulty with the administration. So, as a faculty advisor for many years to student government, and being at that college I know the history, it has institutional history, I really take issue with the statement that every building is built for students.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I want to thank the panel for their testimony and I do have some questions and my colleague also will have some questions for you. In terms of you said that the Students for Educational Rights held the lease. Can you tell me what the terms of the lease were?

ALYSSA SOYO: [off mic] So-- [on mic] So the terms of the lease were that as long as students for Educational Rights is a club that we would hold space in the Center. Unfortunately, those documents

are in our files, which were seized, but when the Morales/Shakur (sic) protests happened, they made a contract with the CUNY Board and the Student Services Corporation in order for the Morales/Shakur Center to exist.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Wait, can you say that again because I'm--I'm not clear.

ALYSSA SOYO: Okay. The CUNY Board of Trustees--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right, you said that the terms of the lease were that as long as you were a club--

ALYSSA SOYO: Yes, as Students for Educational Rights was a registered club, and at the club, which we were at the time the center was seized, we had a function E-Board. We had the right amount of members. We registered to be a club and were approved, that we would be able to keep the space.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, and then you were saying something else?

ALYSSA SOYO: Yes, and that was chartered through the CUNY Board of Trustees and the Student Services Corporation.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So the signatories on that lease were the CUNY Board of Trustees and--

ALYSSA SOYO: The Student Services Corporation--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] I see.

ALYSSA SOYO: --and I think they changed names throughout the years. Um, not the Board of Trustees, but the Student Services Corporation.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And so, you don't have a copy of that agreement?

ALYSSA SOYO: I do not. No. I've been waiting for a copy of that agreement, and the school, of course, will not provide it to me because they know if I have it--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] And no one else has a copy or than--

ALYSSA SOYO: No.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Is it--is it registered some place in minutes that may have occurred at some meeting?

ALYSSA SOYO: Yes, I have a copy of the lawsuit that explains like Students for Educational Rights was in charge of the space, and then I have some of the details from the lawsuit.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And so, what's the status of the lawsuit? Is it still--

ALYSSA SOYO: [interposing] It was dropped. So, it wasn't a lawsuit about what happened in November. It was a lawsuit about the name of the space. The college was displeased with the alumni that we chose to name the space after.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So who brought the lawsuit?

ALYSSA SOYO: Um, I think it was City College.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, so they brought a lawsuit?

ALYSSA SOYO: I think.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Do you want to clarify it.

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I want to be clear.

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: Yes um--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Can you speak into the mic, please?

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: Yes, myself, you know, coming in and being appointed as the chair of the Center, I was given all that information in terms of

the history, and the whole sign issue. The sign was removed, and actually it was part of a couple of lawsuits. One was dealing with free speech. Second, students were getting with being expelled and so forth. So our counsel for our board of directors at that time they sued City College--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay.

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: --okay for that whole First Amendment Rights violation, which included the sign--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay.

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: --that was taken down by--by force. There was an additional lawsuit that went on about--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Well, before you go to the additional one, what happened with that one?

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: Um, it was lost.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, you lost.
Okay.

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: Yeah, we didn't have the money--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay.

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: --to continue the lawsuit.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: All right, and then you said there was an additional one.

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: The additional one was dealing with the bug that was put in the smoke detector in the office, which was located right below the Security Office.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And the outcome of that?

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: That one was also--it was sort of said that, you know, the school is in violation, but they were--there were no punitive actions taken at all with that. What I will say is that our attorney at that time, the lead attorney, Ron McGuire--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay.

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: --he--he should have those documents that we're looking for.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: But we did inspect our file cabinets. We did finally get around to doing that.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Since the material--
since the space has been closed--

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: [interposing] Correct.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --it's been--okay,
so you did inspect your--

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: [interposing] Yes. we
did inspect, and a number of things were missing.
Files were put in different areas. And, you know, we
did do an inventory a checklist of what we saw was
missing or it wasn't. So, just basically everything
that was organized in that office is now disorganized
in the warehouse that it's currently being held in.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, and can you
speak to the organizations that were listed as part
of the community organizations that worked out of
that space as well. You talked about some of the
services that they provided. Can you speak to where
these--the other panel didn't have any information as
to what became of these organizations. Do you know
of what happened?

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: As far as the student
organizations, I think this one would be better
suited to that. To the best of my knowledge, the
Black Student Union is still functioning on campus.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: SER is still functioning on campus.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: I don't know of the others. A lot of them are no longer able to exist because when the center left they didn't have any place to go. Like Radical Women they had to leave. You know, a lot of folks had to leave. You know, a lot of folks had to leave because there was no place to meet. So they were going to other locations. As far as the community groups are concerned, they still exist and there is no represent--the organizations I represent Universal Zulu Nations is still in existence. The Black Sergeants is still in existence, the Black Panther Party sort of is in existence. I'm not sure if the Food Co-Op is still around the CVC?

JOSANIA VENEGAS: Um, the food co-op has--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Can you speak into the mic, please?

JOSANIA VENEGAS: The food co-op had been moved to outside of City College so it's a little bit more uptown.

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: Yeah, we're going through recollection. Sort of an audio organization. At one point, we had almost 20 organizations functioning out of that center.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: Would you like me to state, which I recall?

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Well, no, that's okay. I don't want to press the point.

ALYSSA SOYO: I can speak to the student organizations that have now turned into--some of them have turned into community organizations--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay.

ALYSSA SOYO: --out of the center. So student--so a lot of the student organizations are still functioning, but at diminished capacity. So, something that has been happening is when we ask for meeting space, we won't get an email back confirming that we asked, and when we register for club--like our club budgets, we don't get approved for any budget. So you can't host an event at certain times because you have to pay for public safety to be there to have your event. Um, and for Students for Educational Rights, we are still active on campus,

and would love it if City Council or anyone from City Council would take a tour with us so we can show you what's really happening at City. Sister Circle Collective still functioning, and Black Student Union is still functioning, and the--the resident environmental group out of the campus--out of the center that is not functioning any more. So a lot of the campaign based organizing is where we lost power. So with the Gender Resource Center campaign we're trying to get our resource center for victims of sexual violence or survivors of sexual harassment. They--we have had a lot of trouble staying cohesive because we don't have a safe--like the same space to meet in, and we can't reserve or it's very, very, very difficult to reserve club space.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

ALYSSA SOYO: So we normally take empty classrooms or like meet in the cafeteria or if there's space somewhere--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay.

ALYSSA SOYO: --and often times in the student lounges, which is something I'd like to bring up is we talk about these student lounges and these libraries, they are very crowded, very, very, very

crowded and it's very difficult to even have a study group with your friends let alone a club meeting there.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, I'm going to-- just before--just before I go to my colleague, I'm going to ask one question.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Can I please have a little bit--? Okay.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I just want to ask a question.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Oh, okay.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Let me just ask my question. You--you made your second reference about sexual violence and harassment on campus. Is that what you said?

ALYSSA SOYO: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: That, as you may know, is a very serious issue and I wanted to find out do you feel--do you think that there's been any improvement or is there still an issue? How has that been handled? We talked about it.

ALYSSA SOYO: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: We went to City and we talked about it. So what can you say has happened

to address that issue, and do you feel that it has resulted in improved conditions?

ALYSSA SOYO: The City College Administration to this day has not sat down with the organizers of this campaign, which I think is unacceptable. What City College has done is they've hired two counselors to deal with the issue, which wasn't one of our demands. And on this committee they specifically found students who are not affiliated with the campaign system. It's in Veterans Affairs and a student from the Wellness who was unaffiliated with the campaign. And they will cite that as an improvement, but we have been asking for counselors who are well versed in issues of gender, race, sexuality because the counselors at City College even though they're great, they're overburdened and can also not do that research. We need someone coming in with that analysis. And they've said that they will not--Administration has said that they will absolutely not offer us an autonomous space to do the work that we are proposing. I think honestly the campus feel more unsafe to me because there has been more public safety officers on campus who are not well trained in

anti-harassment, and I see a lot of posters by Administration but the posters do not identify clear pathways the way you want to go. So if you do not want to report to the police it's not clear where you stand--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] That's not clear?

ALYSSA SOYO: That's not clear.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, well, I want to talk to you further about that because I'm--I'm sure that CUNY would say that that's not what they have adopted as their policy so--

ALYSSA SOYO: [interposing] yeah.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --I'll talk further but I do want to yield to my colleague Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. First of all, thank you for all the students who are here and to the members of the panel. You know, I can say that listening to all of you, it takes me back to those years because I was one of those students who never see the administration after we took over in 1989 in that building as one of the first--as one of the many takeovers that took place

among CUNY fighting against tuition increases and budget cuts. So, we always fight especially or compete students from City College and Hunter College or who was leading the movement, but City College always won even though in civil rights we were very close. [laughter] You know, we slam Hunter College and the Students for Educational Rights at City College and students through kick CUNY and Queens and Brooklyn. The reality is that thanks to President Halston (sic) after we took over in 1989 he agreed and the administration to allow the students to use 93201 that used to be used as a student lounge to--to convey that--to use that--that room as a--a student and community center. In the '90s, we got a \$27,000 for Senior Enterprise so we can purchase computers and other equipment as a--as a student at community center for that particular room. I run the pre-university program from that location. But I have more than 300 students every Saturday and a leadership program Fridays. Besides, I can say, I can testify that when the personal role (sic) of 1991, it was from that room that the student movement was organized. Many marched in the street, and then in the invasion also in Iraq. That room played a

major role being done in a peaceful manner, organized the students and communities. So many groups from Latinos, African-Americans, Asian, White came together in that room since 1989 to the moment when the administration changed the purpose of room. It was used mainly for the peaceful organizing support resources for the students and the community. I, as a former chairman of the is committee, that I also had the honor to chair for four year, we did a tour with the administration. We walked to the room. I asked the administration to please restore and not lead to one student and community. We cannot agree or disagree on the name, but for me it's about the purpose of the center. The center Math 3201 has a history of bringing many students, community groups used for a different purpose. Most of them again support the students to be organized a--an anti-war--they're organizing the anti-war movement. And no doubt that those two locations, the Students for Educational Rights in Math 3201 and the SLAM at Hunter College played a major role in the '90s and the 2000s. So I just hope again that especially now we understand that New York City is in, you know, had to be in alert that we need to be sure that any use

of the facility that we have in our society is in a peaceful manner. That is the purpose of the room, and I just hope that the administration and I advocated in the year that I served as the chairman, and now as a member of this committee, I still have the hope that administration at CUNY and us can come together with a plan on how to restore Math 3201 as a student and community center. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you, Council Member. So, what was your understanding then of the reason that it was closed? What did--when you--you spoke with the president, can you share what was said for the reason that it was closed, and the response that you may have gotten when you asked that it be restored?

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: [off mic]
Well, Math 3201 [on mic] Math 3201 became a target. I can say that, you know, at the age of 50, and I hope to be one of those individuals that is still if I'm allowed to leave corporate or here can say that no life is not what about what. It is to be sure that we dedicate the whole life fighting for social justice. So, I've been a witness to everything you have described. We are the ones who had started the

book exchange program. We are the ones--I was the one who run the pre-university program, and I have to thank Wendy Tergen (sp?) who was here, too, because during those years not only were we able to use the 3201, but the administration also through the Senior Enterprise provided grants to us. We were able to buy the computers. We also were running the papers, which also was run from 3201. We also got funding to open a student center in the first floor. And again, in my recollection after we ended the takeover--and there's a great article that I was looking at it. It was in the New York Times, May 2, 1989, it was--that talk about the student takeover that started at City College and continued spreading through the whole CUNY. And I got to say that without that movement because Murphy was the Chancellor there, and--and central staff, you know, they were having a hard time with the budget cut that they went through, and also the tuition increase. At that time, I believe the tuition was \$750 if I'm right in my--in my memory. And--and there was a proposal to make a big (sic) increase, and even though we did not agree with the governor because the governor wanted to come and meet with us. But today I would say I would go to the man

of the church, the Baptist Church at 142 Commerce (sic), but, you know, at that time he said no he had to come here, and, of course, he didn't come. He send like ten commissioners, and we met with them, but after we ended the takeover, there was an understanding between the administration led by Halston, the President of City College and those of us who were leading the movement that 3201 would be use as a student and community center. Later on in the process there were many occasions where we got funding from the Senior Enterprise so that we can also bring more resources to continue to use that location as a student and community center. Again, when it came to the name, it was late on that the proposal came. The room was renamed as Assata-- Assata Shakur and Guillermo Morales. For me, I know Mary with the name. I guess Mary weaved the purpose or the use of the room. But I believe it was--it was and it is in the intention of those who were there that those are today to use 3201 for a peaceful purpose to continue organizing, supporting the students, supporting members of the community because that place was an important location for New Yorkers throughout the five boroughs to use as a center to

organize. Again in the anti-war in the peaceful movement and also supporting each other for many academic plan. But it was given again from the administration as a student community. It was an agreement between the president and us to use 3201 as a center.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So did the president give you reason or rationale for terminating that agreement?

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: That's a surprise. At that time I was the Chairman of the high--of this committee. You know what happened was--

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CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: --I was--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right, do did--as a respect to you as the chair, did they give you a reason--

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: [interposing] I think--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --or information?

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: --I think that for many years--for many years unfortunately, you know, City College, and again I'm not talking about

the president--the current president. I said for many years, they look at 3201 and say a place where they wanted to get rid of us. You know, I was one of the students who also when they put the smoke device inside the smoke detector they were hoping was-- supposedly they had information that we were planning on another takeover. And--and for many months--I at that time I can say 98% of the youths at that location at that time was for the pre-university program that I used to run. However, supposedly they thought that we were planning a takeover. They put a device inside the smoke detector. Something that was completely illegal. Of course, like they were able-- CUNY was able to win because the smoke detector was broke down, and-- But I think that for again City College has been in my personal scheme very supportive of the use that we had for that location for many years. But the way that how, you know that 3201 shut down was not the best one, and again, I--I expressed before and I believe today that I hope that 3201 is restored as a student and community center.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you, Council Member. Back to the committee. I have a few other

questions. The--Professor Blake, you said there's not phys-ed department?

PROFESSOR JAMES BLAKE: No, it's closed down. It's been now closed down for more than--close to ten years now.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, and students have to pay an activity fee? In addition to whatever fees they pay, there's an additional cost to students to use space in the building?

PROFESSOR JAMES BLAKE: The--the students allocated so much for student government from the Student Activity Fund.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right.

PROFESSOR JAMES BLAKE: Their clubs are then allocated by student government--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

PROFESSOR JAMES BLAKE: --for their club activities. Um, and they--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] When they have to?

PROFESSOR JAMES BLAKE: --have to use those funds when they use the theater.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. All right, and--Oh, having been at the MCC for so long, can you

talk to the question that I posed earlier about the original Fiterman Hall and how it's being used now in terms of continuation of the purposes of the space and is it approximately the same as it was initially?

PROFESSOR JAMES BLAKE: From my--from my observation it's--its pretty much the same.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

PROFESSOR JAMES BLAKE: The only difference is that I believe the president has a presidential suite there, and one at the college also.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Oh, we could use that for student space.

PROFESSOR JAMES BLAKE: Yes. [laughter]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, well, I did ask for some--oh, I guess I need more--a larger total picture then of how spaces are on the campus. Okay, that will be a follow-up question that I'll ask.

PROFESSOR JAMES BLAKE: If you can get up there because it's a restricted area.

[background comments]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. Okay. And in terms of the--what you have said. You've heard maybe plans for the air rights over the MCC that is a part

of this move and city government to build high, build luxury and to give off or sell off our space to luxury developers. There's a plan also to do that same thing in Brooklyn where the library is located the Cadman Plaza Library. They want to sell it, allow the developer to take the library, remove the library and build luxury condos on top of that space.

PROFESSOR JAMES BLAKE: Right.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So it's a part of a large movement--

PROFESSOR JAMES BLAKE: [interposing]
Right.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --of this capitalistic move to maximize profits at all costs--

PROFESSOR JAMES BLAKE: [interposing]
Right.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --to make sure that--

PROFESSOR JAMES BLAKE: [interposing]
Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --those profits for developers are realized. I did have some other questions, [off mic] but was there something else I had, another question? [on mic] But I think that

will suffice for now, but I do want to thank you.

Yes.

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: Two things that--two things real quick.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: In the mic, please.

SHEPARD MCDANIEL: Two things real quick. You mentioned organizations and in the department, but the Malcolm X Commemoration Committee was also a member and up there. We went along with the Jericho Movement. We did political prisoner letter writings, and birthday cards. You know, all the students would come and sign the cards and be able to teach them and let them be aware that there are political prisons in the United States. Also, the Veterans Day Students Organization existed. I don't know if they're still on campus any more. And, of course, the People Power Movement, which is one of the founding groups along with SER and for Mark Torres who was also involved in that whole original takeover, and--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay.

PROFESSOR JAMES BLAKE: the El Coches (sp?). I don't know if they're around any more. Maybe Ydanis will know that if they're still doing

the classes, but I just wanted to add that in for the record.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. I want to thank the panel for coming and providing testimony, and I invite you to stay in touch, and participate in other hearings as they are announced and come up. We're going to call our third panel, the final panel. Anna Paula Wright from Hunter College, CUNY Divest; Rajid Mia from CUNY Students; and I believe this is Russell Arduolph?

RUDOLF MURADOV: [off mic]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Rudolph (sp?). Okay, I'm sorry. From Kingsborough Community College. You can pronounce your name when you come up. So I don't mash it.

RUDOLF MURADOV: You can pronounce it.
(sic)

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Well, when you pronounce it, I'm gong to see if I can't master it. It shouldn't be so much of a problem. If you would, raise your right hands, please.

[background comments, pause]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Please raise your right hands. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the

whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this committee, and to answer all questions honestly?

PANEL MEMBERS: I do.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. You may begin. Give us your name.

RUDOLF MURADOV: Ladies first.

ANNA PAULA WRIGHT: Right, the order. I'll let you go first.

RUDOLF MURADOV: No, you go first.

ANNA PAULA WRIGHT: All right. Hi, my name is Anna Paula Wright. I just graduated from Hunter College with a degree in nursing. I was also the President of the Student Nurse Association of New York State, which is a segment of the Nursing--the National Student Nurse Association, which feeds into the American Nursing Association. I wasn't planning on speaking today. So I don't actually have my testimony typed up, but when I heard some of the things that other administrator had to say about their campuses, I felt compelled to speak. As the vice president of my Undergraduate Student Government at Hunter College for about six months, I was on the University Student Senate at CUNY for six months as a

delegate and then the next six months I spent on the Committee for Academic Policy Programs and Research. After that, I was--after learning the entire system and how it works for students and their clubs, I was additionally an advocate for CUNY Divest, which was an environmental group at the time. The things I'd like to point out that I was unsatisfied with was the de-emphasis of how difficult it is for students to get spaces. My first example is when we tried to have an Earth Day press event that we planned for over a month by students on different campuses. Because it's not a club that's associated with one campus, and it's actually an entire student movement at the University Student Senate, graciously acknowledged and supported over the past 2-1/2 years. The MCC not only gave us such a difficult time getting space just to speak, after having planned with us, they tried to not let us have a microphone for our press event. At this point we had already invited a finance director from the new school who had just divested. We also had one of the Council Member Steve Levin come. We invited these people, and they almost didn't let us even have it outside the campus. Example 1. Example 2: The childcare

center that they were talking about at City College, I was very disappointed to have Marina Massaro was the main organizer for this group of parents who were devastated to have the childcare center taken away. It came to the University Student Senate students because they had not been able to get the administration to hear their case. And I remember going to a hearing with Marina Massaro, and I also testified in another public hearing in Queens about this issue. But when Frank Sanchez, I had to call him over to even address this issue. I have the-- what I consider to be the unsatisfactory response to these parents. I have their testimonies if you would like to have them. And the response was that, you know, under these very stringent regulations, parents can have their students here, but they had to already have been students with students enrolled in this program, which was increasingly difficult to do. And secondly, the number of parents who would qualify under the--the regulations that they created, or the policy that they created for these parents at City College, I estimate to be less than 13 parents are allowed to have--will have sub--will qualify for the subsidies that City University of New York created as

a response to the taking away of the Childcare Center at City College. Thirdly, the McCaulay Honors College students had recently come to the University Student Center again because they were promised space at the MCC by Mr.--by the trustee member Frank Sanchez. At the beginning of the negotiations, my impression is that they were promised space at the MCC, and then when they by Frank Sanchez who helped them get the licensing for the Ted Talks. I believe they're actually happening maybe tomorrow or the 20th. And, when they came to us nearly two weeks--when they came to the University Student Senate nearly two weeks before the event was happening, it was because they were denied space based on the fact that they were a student group that they were a student group that didn't belong to the MCC, and then they also didn't have the funding for it. But their understanding from the beginning was that they were promised the space by a trustee member. That's my impression, and by the time they came to us, it was an already planned event that had to be re--that had to be moved somewhere else. Fourthly, I--I will be forever grateful to Hostos Community College for allowing me to take an e-Permitted class because at

Hunter College there was not space for me as pre-nursing student to take anatomy and physiology, which is required to become a nursing student to move on with my career. And what I was very sad to hear from Hostos Community College is that I think there is not a distinction being made by the administration about spaces where students can be versus spaces where students can gather. And I think that it should be noted that even in Hunter College we do have these beautiful bridges, but you are not allowed to post posters. You are not allowed to congregate. You are not allowed privacy, and I think that the Hostos Community College space that they're referring to is a place where you can sit, not a place where you can gather. And I want that distinction to be made because I think that I've seen consistently since I've been at the City University of New York and Hunter College, and also a student at Hostos that these spaces are not being made for students. Additionally, I was embarrassed--embarrassed that as the president of the Nursing Students Association of New York State when I asked for space at our own health professions location--we have this beautiful space, and we have to have our meetings on Sundays.

And that's because we have students come from all over New York to come to our college, and I invited them because that's where we wanted to have our meeting, and we take turns at different campuses for this board. And I was so embarrassed that the week before everyone was coming, I still didn't know the room number of where we were going to have our meeting. And I was even more embarrassed that security was not informed of the room that we--we did have our reservation on. And I was even more embarrassed that the room that we got was on the sixth floor of our Health Sciences Center, and I was not helped by my administration. And so, we sat in these tiny little desks having invited people. These are future nursing leaders from the entire state that sat in tiny little desks, and I was embarrassed for my school. And not only that, I was embarrassed I represented them. And so, I'd also like to point out--this is the last thing I'm going to point out--is that I have watched the administration deter students from these types of activities that used to make students very proud to be at the City University of New York. (crying) And recently, when we had a 1009 hearing about equal education, the

administration was asked a very difficult question about who our public security officers now are at Hunter. I fear that because our new Director of Public Safety at Hunter College is a former FBI agent or administrator or wherever he came from, this was asked by administration and they did not answer the question. My classmates are not criminals. The students that continue to be at Hunter College who--I mean recently we had a million student march, and the point of it was supposed to be gathering to make tuition hikes a primary issue for students. And I left that protest to go another protest because they're living with the structure for natural gas and that's an entire different issue. But what I found online after this was that students were--like the media had taken this issue and made it completely not about tuition hikes. I spent an hour talking to students on Facebook about what the actual purpose of the that protest was, and it was not portrayed. So when the trustee brought about the fact that we have this digital (sic) area, and students are able to congregate, I would like to point out that that is not adequate. Students get misinformation online. They are not given the correct information. It's

very difficult as a former student having just graduated to even communicate with these new students what these are online because you have to type it, and there's no face-to-face. And I fear that this growing pushing out of students who do have very pertinent issues at our universities and very serious issues, are being quieted in very disturbing ways. And I urge the Council to really take a good look at what they're doing and how they're doing it, and please advocate for my classmates because I know they're not criminals. They might not know everything. They might be learning. They might be 19 years old, but those students have thing to say, and when they voice their issues I watch them quietly be shut down. Sorry.

RAJID MIA: Hi, my name is Rajid. I'm part of the Revolutionary Coordinating Committee and also part of Students Without Borders, an organization throughout CUNY and outside of CUNY. And there's a lot of concerns within CUNY of oppressions, repressing students and not just students, but also some community members. And one of the things that they want to talk about is also about divestments of CUNY and what has CUNY been

investing into. And we are aware that CUNY is predominantly made up of working class students and also Black and Brown youth and oppressed nationalities and oppressed genders. Now, throughout the years, though--throughout the years we have noticed that there's back--background of people coming into CUNY. We see that it's gentrification taking in our communities, right. From City College for example. You've got gentrification hitting Harlem. City College is in the heart of Harlem, right. How does gentrification actually plays a role in actually affecting students to be able to be blocked from actually attending school--being attend--being able to be attending--to go to--Black and Brown students be attending to go to CUNY schools and take advantage of the resources. With that being said, CUNY's investments actually have been investing \$275,000--\$275--\$200,000. Pardon me. \$275,000 plus companies like G-Force (sic) that creates what you call prisons--retention centers. Also are part of the--also helping out. That is happening. These are amongst--genocide is happening amongst Power Student People. And CUNY likes to--how do I say it--likes to avoid the topics of Zionism. And when they talk

about Zionism, they think we're being anti-semetic.

Now for CUNY to say such a thing for that is very

anti-semetic because Zionism is not Judaism. Zionism

is a political ideology of actually colonized in a

group of people like Brazilian (sic) people. And

what's going on is also like now we also--there's--

what's happening is CUNY is investing into--into

Israel check points, but also CUNY is investing into

private prisons and also detention centers. Now, if

CUNY is so about the students and about the people in

my community, why is that--why is it that CUNY is

working with that idea of--why is CUNY working with

NYPD who are harassing our community members, the

working-class students who come and attend these CUNY

schools? Why is it that this is happening? Now, I'm

also part of the CUNY Prison Divest Campaign, and

we've been facing a lot of repression amongst the

administration from the Offices of Student Activities

like Mr. Mars and the Dean, too, who are here, too.

We've been racing repression from not being able to

again have our freedom of speech being put out from

talking about what--what's happening and throughout--

throughout the awareness of what's happening at CUNY,

and what are the policies that are being made? We

spoke about passing out flyers. We're being stopped and harassed by the Securities of CUNY, Securities and BMCC, Securities and CCNY, Hunter College, where we're not even able to pass out a flyer that's actually telling the truth about what is CUNY actually investing into. So like they talk about like there's not money for--for space. Well, stop wasting so much money on--on things that are harming the people who attend these schools to be able to get the knowledge that they want to seek. To get the practical practice that they need to apply in society. Now, CUNY like I--I wish a lot of the people who were here earlier, the panelists who were here, I wish they were able to hear this because I don't know if they are aware of--aware of this 'cause it's a shame. It's a shame. These are the same people who are supposed to be looking out for us, but they're really not looking out for us. They have their own--they serve their own interests. And it is also very surprising that CUNY does not even let the students on their own campuses know about this today. So there's not even that many students who came out today. So it's kind of--it's also a shame. And the oppressions that we have been facing is not only that

we're not able to flyer, but it's also these bureaucratic measurements where it's slowing down progress for us to even be able to have events like Know Your Right training for students to know how to be able to defend themselves in a legal way in a sense when NYPD does stop you what do you do? What do you do when an immigration customs enforcement tries to take you away from your family, what do you do? What is the--what are these lessons that you should be able to learn? But CUNY and the administration as well, and as well as Professors because there really are very racist professors, too, involved into--the faculty also are also racist, too, at the same time. And there's been a lot of repression and sexual harassment done by actually--by the professors by the administration, right. And like a lot of Title 9 violations at Hunter College what happened over the summer. And a lot of these things are not being put out for the students to know about. And it's like yeah like how this connects with space. It connects in the space in the sense that if we want to talk about building space, they don't want us to talk about building space because they know that like the Morales/Shakur Community Center was a

space where people were having progressive ideas and sharing different ideas to be able to build a movement that was actually happening since the 1960s. And a lot of these--a lot of this thinking like also the daycare centers that are being taken away. I'm hear that Queens College's daycare center might be taken away in two semesters from now. I don't know if this is true or not, but this is what I'm hearing, and I wish someone was here to actually answer that question. I hope that you guys can speak with CUNY to figure out more about that, and we--we--we have--we have also got a repression from the Student's Justice and Power--the administration was giving repression towards the Students for Justice and Power stand in Hunter College where, um, their room was their club and their clubroom was illegally like suspended. The club was suspended with no type of what I call evidence to say like hey. Because apparently there was a student who--If you would like me to say the person's name I will--I'd be willing to say the person's name, too, because what he's doing for the--is very, very harmful to other student members where they choose--CUNY chooses to attack the people who are actually doing good for the people,

but should be actually attacking the--the students, the faculty and also the administration who is not really doing good for the people. Because if--if we're having--if we're having progressive ideas being shared out, that's not going to benefiting our community and benefitting the student, why is it that CUNY is not repressing the people who are stopping us from doing that, right. And the administration is also involved in this. The security is all involved in this, and like CUNY spent \$30,000 on weaponry--on wire weapons on hollow bullets that apparently the NYPD don't even have hollow bullets. So it's like why is it that the reason why they're spending this much money on weaponries and all these things. We're students, right? Why is it that they're afraid of, right? There is--there's also been issues of once again security guards and CUNY was--and the inside (sic) of CUNY was not always around, too, at the same time. And I believe it was the--it was the tuition hikes that was happening during--I could be wrong. Maybe 1989 was it? You can correct me if I'm-- during--when securities were enforced into CUNY Offices of Enforcement throughout CUNY. And I mean like we're just getting repression. Like clubs can't

even be formed because professors are afraid of becoming--their faculty advisors because they're afraid of losing their jobs because they know that the administration will be on top of them. And like this is how the same thing like a lot of repression that has been facing Students Without Borders--throughout CUNY it has been facing repression. Social Justice in Palestine, Revolution of the Student Coordinating Committee, Social Justice (sic) from John Jay all these different types of organizations and clubs facing repression. And now, earlier one of the panelists was saying that hey we can make votes and, you know, students can vote on this and that. But I just found out a few days ago at the Student Government meeting, we are only able to take care of actually the Student Government members amongst decisions, and not actually decisions amongst the students. Like if there's a violation that's happening--that happens, the Student Government is not allowed to do the investigation. It's the security officers that do the investigation, the security officers of the NYPD. But at the same time it's the--these are the same people who portrayed these actions, these ideologies, these

sharp (sic) ideologies into the systems. So how do you have someone who's already portraying these ideologies, and trying also like push it down and not worry about it too much, but this is actually the real dynamitized(sic) issues that people are getting harassed--seriously harassed, and basic content is being put out everywhere. Someone mentioned something about online, on Facebook, social not working that there is this--there is a Facebook like page known as CCNY Secrets that was actually multiple times people put out their secrets saying that they were getting raped and harassed in City College in the library. And guess what, the security guys was putting a thumbs up. Now, what does that mean. Like is this a--this is--this is--it's very, very--it's very, very difficult to see and hear this at the same time because I'd like to--like at this very point I thought we had some hope for CUNY, and CUNY has not really been-- Throughout history since the 1960s working--working-class students, oppressed nationalities, oppressed genders are trying to fight for something that belongs to them, but at the same time they're been repressed. So, I hope you guys can figure out more details about what's going on with

1 COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION 145
2 CUNY. The Board of Trustees in large are oppressing
3 students for--for--for activism. I hope you guys can
4 find out more. I hope you guys can contact us. I
5 will give you my contact for sure.
6 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. Thank you.
7 Next.
8 RUDOLF MURADOV: Oh, sorry.
9 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And would you
10 pronounce your name?
11 RUDOLF MURADOV: Rudolph, ma'am--
12 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.
13 RUDOLF MURADOV: --but people call me
14 Rudy.
15 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, Rudolph.
16 RUDOLF MURADOV: I have a lot of words,
17 but it's--people misspell my name. It's--
18 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] And
19 for the record, would you please give us your full
20 name.
21 RUDOLF MURADOV: Yeah, Rudolf Muradov.
22 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Muradov. Okay.
23 RUDOLF MURADOV: You want I spell?
24 Because people put in P-H except that--
25

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: You can spell it for us, yes.

RUDOLF MURADOV: M-U-R-A-D-O-V.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

RUDOLF MURADOV: R-U-D-O-L-F.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you.

RUDOLF MURADOV: Okay. I feel a little bit over--I'd like to say good evening and I--I feel like I'm coming from the--from the college from Kingsborough Community College are very small, and we are from Brooklyn and--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [off mic] Can you get a little closer to the mic, please.

RUDOLF MURADOV: Oh, sorry, ma'am. Sorry.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [on mic] A little closer to the mic.

RUDOLF MURADOV: It's like a-- Kingsborough Community College is small and we are in Brooklyn, and actually say I never hear about this situation and what's happened with you guys. And that's why I took the notes to make sure that my students will be know about that. My name is Rudy. I'm a--I'm currently a student at Kingsborough

Community College. I'm the President of the Campus Security Board. I'm also representing Kingsborough USS, United University Student Senate, and I'm also the Student Ambassador. Kingsborough College has a unique student government, but we have four different councils which are Liberal Arts Council, Math and Science, Business as well as Health and--Health and Education, and also we have 105 clubs, which I'm a member of 31--35 of them. We a very diverse student population reflecting the outer boroughs. We have 142 national representatives and also many of them-- many languages are spoken on our campus. For many of our students, Kingsborough--Kings College became a second home as well as for me. I love my college. I love my community. Like a--like many other--aca--aca can--sorry for my language.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [off mic] Academic.

RUDOLF MURADOV: Academic--thank you.

It's my fourth language. Academic institution Kingsborough Community College faces many challenges and one of them unfortunately is space for our students. But under the new President of the--Farley Herzek, a Special Presidential Committee was created to--to solve this problem. This committee was

considered the faculty staff and student representative who will work collaboratively to try to resolve this issue. A plan in creating and developing the new student union and multicultural center, which will be transformed the way many students come together planning events, studying and just to relax for--for--for long hardworking student. We have everything--we have everything in place except the funding. They administration understands that having dedicated space for students to socialize is important and are working to find private resources to support the--the center. Any help they provide we'll be very grateful. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you very much. I want to thank the panel for their testimony, and I understand and sympathize what you said have been some of the conditions that you have faced. And I once again want to encourage people to look to the activities of the students in Missouri, the University of Missouri how they came together and organized, and how they forced a response to the issues that they saw existing on their campus. And I would encourage you to attend hearings such as these as the Board of Trustees from CUNY has meetings and

hearings. You are allowed to present testimony. It's limited. You won't have as much time as you have here, but if you're very focused on what your issues are your concerns are, I would invite you to submit your testimony or go and give your testimony so that they are aware. Often times we complain to each other internally, and we don't address to the issue to those that have the ability to analyze it and make a difference. So I would encourage you to continue to raise your voice. To continue to organize students, and students have to be able to stand up as well as faculty and take a position on those things that they think are important. And sometimes that does mean you become a target because when everybody is in the same level, and no one is taking any leadership, no one's a target. But when someone has the integrity to comment on the audacity or whatever adjective you want to put to that to stand up and say no this is not right, or I see a deficit here or this is something that needs to be addressed, that person often times becomes a target. And we know looking back talking about the 1960s, late '60s, Dr. Martin Luther King is a perfect example. It was fine as long as you talked about

civil rights, but when you talked about the war issue, you became a target of this nation and of individuals. And when he came in 19--early 1968, he couldn't find a church other than one that would allow him to come. So there is a price that comes with being bold, but if you're committed to the cause, and if you can rally people around you, perhaps later in history when the story is told, people will be able to acknowledge that. At that time, he was the most feared man in America. The FBI was after him. Now, everybody loves that Dr. King. Oh, he was so great. Oh, I was with him, but at the moment, at the contemporary time it was happening, he didn't have those adulations. So, if it's important to you, and you feel that it's something that you want to keep your voice on, I would encourage you to do that. I do have to end this session. My Council does have another meeting that they have to go to. I want to thank all of you for coming, and we will follow up with you, and invite you to come again to our next hearing. Thank you. This hearing is adjourned. [gavel]

1 COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date November 29, 2015