

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm.
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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)

Vita Rabinowitz, Executive Vice Chancellor & Provost
City University of New York

Deborah Morris, Chairperson
Department of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences
Bronx Community College

Valerie Taylor-Haslip, Chairperson
Department of Nursing
York College

Saba Rana, Pediatric Registered Nurse
Graduate of Queensborough Community College
Current York College Student

Anna Paola White, Graduate
Hunter Bellevue School of Nursing and CUNY

Denise Cherenfant, Associate Director
Nursing Programs
1199 SEIU Training and Employment Funds

Taisha Pagan, Vice Chair
Evening and Part-Time Affairs
University Student Senate (USS), Lehman College

Sada Akaka (sp?)
Health Sciences Major
York College

1 COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

3

2 [sound check, pause]

3 [background comments]

4 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Quiet, please.

5 [gavel]

6 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [off mic] Good

7 morning, good morning. I'm Council Member Inez

8 Barron, Chair of the Committee on Higher Education.

9 Today's oversight hearing is on the status [on mic]

10 of nursing--I think it's on now--on the status of

11 nursing programs-- [pause]

12 MALE SPEAKER: You've got it here.

13 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [off mic] Oh, okay,

14 we'll start again. [on mic] Good morning.

15 COUNCIL MEMBERS: (in unison) Good

16 morning.

17 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I'm Council Member

18 Inez Barron, Chair of the Committee on Higher

19 Education. Today's oversight hearing--it's giving a

20 lot of feedback. Could we work on that sound system

21 and see if we can improve what we're getting?

22 MALE SPEAKER: Try it now, please.

23 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Good morning, good

24 morning. Okay. Today's oversight hearing is on the

25 status of nursing programs at the City University of

New York. Witnesses invited to testify include representatives of CUNY's Nursing Programs, nursing unions and healthcare providers, but before I begin today's hearing, I would like to reflect on the Adopted State Budget. I would like to acknowledge the success of rejecting several major items in Governor Cuomo's Proposed Budget. Thanks to the efforts of students, faculty, staff, advocates and the legislative, New York City does not have to embrace a \$485 million cost for operating senior colleges. In fact, there is a modest increase in funding that has been included in the budget. Additionally, the Senate and the Assembly restored proposed cuts to ASAP, the Murphy Institute and child care. Furthermore, the Legislature expanded on the CUNY Trustees' vote to reject tuition increases at Community Colleges and the Legislature voted to freeze any tuition increases at all levels of CUNY. That is a victory. I have introduced legislation to establish a task force to explore the feasibility of restoring CUNY as a tuition free institution. And these steps at the State level are helping to pave the journey.

To return to today's topic. For over a decade the nursing profession has been one of the fastest growing occupations in the Country with the number of registered nurse positions expected to increase by 16% between 2014 and 2024. However, the number of retiring nurses, the aging of the Baby Boom generation, the dramatic increase in the number of accessing health services as a result of the Affordable Care Act, and the increasing reliance on nurses in the healthcare delivery system has led to a nationwide shortage that could become a crisis. CUNY has met this challenge by increasing the number of nursing programs it offers, and the number of students matriculating in them. CUNY offers nursing degree programs at the associates, bachelors, masters and doctoral levels across 14 schools. Since 2002, CUNY has doubled the number of students in associate degree programs, and is working to increase the number of graduates who obtain certification as registered nurses. It has also created online learning programs to help people work their way up from home health aids to more highly paid nursing positions. I look forward to hearing about the career pathways CUNY is creating for people from low

income and underprivileged backgrounds to enter the growing healthcare workforce and to gain access to opportunities for advancement in the field. I also hope to gain an understanding of the various pressures that affect the growth and quality of nursing programs at CUNY and to hear from students about the quality of the programs, and from people who work in the healthcare industry about the role CUNY can play in filling a growing need. Additionally, I would like to point out that the fact that Harriet Tubman, who has been reported to be graced on the revised \$20 bill, served as a Union nurse during the Civil War.

I would like to recognize the members of the committee. I'll do that when they come, and I'd also like to thank my CUNY liaison and Legislative Director Ndigo Washington, the committee staff, our Finance Analyst Jessica Ackerman; our Policy Analyst Chloe Rivera, and our Committee Counsel Jess Campagna for their work in putting to--together today's hearing. At this time I will call the first panel.

We will hear from Saba Reyna, CUNY York College; Deborah Morris, Chairperson of the Department of Nursing at Bronx Community College;

Valerie Taylor-Haslip, Chairperson for the Department Nursing at CUNY York College, and Vita Rabinowtiz, Executive Vice Chair at CUNY Provost. If you would be seated. [background comments, pause] We've been joined by Council Member Vacca who is here with us. If you would raise your right, please. We do swear panels in before they give testimony. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this committee today, and to answer all questions honestly?

VITA RABINOWITZ: I do.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. You may begin. Please give us your name and your testimony.

VITA RABINOWITZ: Thank you, Chair Barron, members of the Higher Education Committed of the City Council. Good morning and thank you for the opportunity to testify before you, and as always to thank you for your commitment to CUNY recently witnessed in your coordinated efforts to protect CUNY's budget, and for your--your own generous contributions to the City University of New York. I am Vita Rabinowitz, the Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost of CUNY. I am in my first year of this position after 37 years at Hunter College. While

Provost at Hunter, I became very familiar with the Hunter Bellevue School of Nursing, and their outstanding undergraduate and graduate programs. Also, aware of the delivery of expert nursing care to which our faculty and our students aspired. The same commitment to excellent I now know holds true for each of the nursing programs at CUNY. CUNY's colleges work exceptionally cohesively to prepare a sufficient number of qualified personnel to meet the healthcare needs of New York City's residents. I am pleased to say that with me this morning are representatives from some of CUNY's fine programs. Professor Valerie Taylor-Haslip, Chair of the Nursing Department at York College in Queens; Professor Deborah Morris, Chair of the Nursing Department at Bronx Community College and Ms. Saba Rana (sp?) a registered nurse and current CUNY student. We are also joined, Chair Barron, by many CUNY colleagues and supporters within and beyond the university in the audience, and we look forward to answering your questions following our testimony.

CUNY takes very seriously its responsibility to be a major presence in the city's healthcare industry, which integral to the training

and career mobility of thousands of nurses. CUNY offers more than 150 undergraduate and graduate certificate and degree programs in health and human service fields. Nursing is one of the largest, and one of the most academically competitive health majors. Nursing is offered from the associate to the doctoral degree through a network of 14 CUNY colleges, as Chair Barron stated. In academic year 2014-2015, nearly 1,600 students graduated from CUNY's Associate and Bachelor degree programs. In 2015, CUNY graduates comprised more than a third of all newly licensed--licensed RNs in New York City. Many CUNY nursing graduates have worked their way up the career ladder from jobs such as homecare worker or nurse assistant. They come from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The vast majority of CUNY's nursing students are people of color. Sixty-five percent of our Associate Degree graduates are from underrepresented groups as are more than 70% of our bachelor's degree recipients. A majority of undergraduate nursing students who attain a degree are foreign born and CUNY's nursing students are often residents of the very same urban neighborhoods as the patients they will ultimately serve. CUNY is

committed to graduating significant numbers of culturally diverse nursing students, and at the same time to increasing the academic quality of our programs. I am delighted as Provost to say that in 2015, the last year for which data are available the combined CUNY pass rates on the NCLEX Nursing Exams, and that is the National Council Licensing Exam for nursing. The combined CUNY average rate was 80% and this is of all CUNY schools, 80%, much higher than the combined average rate of 72% for all other New York City based nursing programs. Four CUNY schools represented here today, Queensborough Community College, La Guardia Community Colleges, Bronx Community College and Hunter College had higher NCLEX pass rates than both NYU and Columbia. Obviously, local elite private competitors with much higher tuitions. Graduation from the CUNY Associate Degree Nursing Programs provides aspiring students with the opportunity to enter a respected and well paid profession, and provides a road to the middle class. According to a 2013 survey of CUNY nursing graduates, nurse's earnings skyrocketed just two years after completing the degree. Median annual wages from \$10,000 to nearly \$80,000 for bachelor's degree

recipients in generic programs, and from \$20,000 to \$75,000 for associate degree graduates. This is wonderful news indeed, but it's a difficult road for our students to find their way into these jobs. Financial aid may not cover the reduced course load that students must take in order to complete their challenging and time consuming clinical classes. Students may need to pay out of pocket for required background checks or drug panel, for licensure prep courses, for the NCLEX exam, and from the New York State License itself. To make it slightly easier to bear the high costs associated with pursuing a nursing license, CUNY does support its nursing students by covering the cost of liability insurance. We regard investments in these students as investments in not only our students themselves, but their families in New York City.

Supporting students to become registered nurses is only part of our responsibility, however. CUNY's nursing programs must be responsive to the continuing impacts of healthcare reform and professional trends that affect both nursing education, and the trajectory of nursing careers. An important report from the Institute of Medicine in

2010 recommended that "Nurses should achieve higher levels of education through an improved education system that promotes seamless academic progression."

CUNY is that education system. CUNY boasts multiple points of entry for advancement through its tiered and integrated structure, a structure that is unique in the City and distinctive throughout the country.

CUNY is a unit--CUNY makes it a priority to enable our associate degree graduates to enroll in an RN to BSN program. You will hear my colleagues describe this--this issue of up-credentialing, and other national trends into how our colleges are responding.

To preview, several CUNY schools are collaborating through dual degree programs in which students are enrolled in both an associate and a baccalaureate program at the same time. CUNY's new online nursing programs to which Chair Barron alluded are--are--will soon be offered through the School of Professional Studies. The School of Professional Studies is providing many new online options for the RN to BSN as well as new masters programs, and the online format accommodates the busy lives of working nurses.

By providing multiple pathways to nursing across degree levels and formats, CUNY enables access. As

you know, CUNY also offers new doctoral programs in nursing, both the PhD and the Doctor of Nursing Practice NDP Degree at the Graduate Center, Hunter College, the College of Staten Island, and very soon Lehman College. CUNY is creating by--by offering doctoral study, CUNY--CUNY is creating the nursing leadership of the future both in primary care--primary care settings and in the professoriate. CUNY is training the nursing professoriate of tomorrow. Finally, colleagues, in it's 2015 report for New York City, the New York State Department of Labor cited healthcare and social assistance as significant industries expected to see strong job demand over the next decade as the population continues to expand and to age. The projected employment of registered nurses is expected to grow 14% by 2022. Given this demand, competitive salaries and rapidly changing technology, CUNY's nursing programs will continue explore new ways to created opportunity for the thousands of students and millions of New Yorkers who depend on them for quality care. Thank you for this opportunity, Chair Barron.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thanks. We will now hear from our next panelist.

DEBORAH MORRIS: Good morning. I would like to thank all the members of the Committee on Higher Education for the opportunity to speak to you regarding the status of the nursing program at Bronx Community College. My name is Deborah Morris, and I'm the Chairperson of the Department of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences at Bronx Community College. In this role, I oversee the RN Associate Degree Program, the LPN Certificate Program and the Radiologic Technology Associate Degree Program. The RN Associate Degree--[coughs]--degree program is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing for a full eight years until February 2020, and the New York State Department of Education Office of Professions. I am extremely pleased to tell you about the Associate Degree Nursing Program at BCC. Bronx Community College is located in the South Bronx, and has a diverse student body. BCC was established in 1957 as a two-year college in response to a growing need for education and specialized training for working lower middle-income individuals in the Bronx. The RN program at Bronx Community College is one of nine associate degree nursing programs in CUNY and was established

in September 1960. There is an ongoing collegial relationship between the CUNY Nursing Programs fostered by routinely scheduled meetings and collaboratively presented professional development programs. The CUNY Nursing Council also looks at ways to achieve a unified approach to the standardization of admission, retention, grading and progression requirements and to enhance the academic mobility of CUNY nursing students. A concerted effort to increase affiliation agreements between CUNY nursing programs and to establish dual joint degree options between CUNY Associate Degree and CUNY Baccalaureate Degree programs are continuing initiatives across CUNY. BCC recently established a dual joint degree with the CUNY School of Professional Studies, which is an online program and Lehman College. Both proposals are pending approval from the New York State Education Department. Dual joint programs are an important vehicle for transfer and allow for seamless academic progression for qualified students. The establishment of the dual joint programs increases the number of bachelors prepared nursing graduates from CUNY and contributes to the workforce. With the changes in healthcare and

reimbursement being outcome based, as well as the hospitals going for Magnet status, the associate applied science can no longer be the mint--the terminal degree for nurses. The nursing programs at the community colleges play an important role in preparing their students for the next educational level, which is the BS Degree. Community Colleges have the responsibility to prepare them academically and increase the standards for progression at the associate degree level. About half of Bronx Community College graduates in nursing transfer to senior colleges in CUNY. Still, it is important to maintain associate degree education in CUNY as a gateway for potential nurses who can enhance the diversity of the profession. These associate degree graduates remain in their communities, and provide much needed health services for their communities. It is important to the mission of CUNY to provide access and promote entry into careers that offer economic stability and opportunities for advancement. Community colleges have numerous positives, which include accessibility, affordability, and a quality education, which prepares students for the next level both academically and professionally. Structured as

67-credit associate and applied science degree, the nursing program at Bronx Community College and its 35 to 50 students each fall and spring semester. Each nursing course has a laboratory component that's taught by faculty and includes the use of simulation as a teaching methodology. Currently, the nursing program has 78 students in the clinical phase of the nursing program. The nursing program at BCC is committed to providing access to a strong foundation for students from a multiplicity of backgrounds, life experiences, educational preparation and aspirations. Bronx Community College's Nursing Program serves a very diverse student body. Currently, 48% of the students self-i-dot--identify as Hispanic; 39% are Black; 9% are Asian or Pacific Island and 4% are Caucasian. Only 13% of the students attend school full time. The vast majority, 87% attend part time. BCC recent curriculum redesign streamlines student's schedules to support the student we serve, which are usually students who are employed, have family obligations and other personal commitments. Programs costs cause a hardship for students especially community college students. The assessment technology testing, which is a testing package

implemented across the curriculum, and includes a preparatory package for the NCLEX licensure exam costs \$365 per student. ATI is paid for Bronx Community College for each student registered in a nursing program at BCC, but this is not the case at ever associate degree program in CUNY. Recently, due to the requirements of our clinical affiliations for students to have criminal background checks, BCC instituted the requirement for all students to obtain and assume their \$135 cost for a criminal background check. Students in clinical coursework often can't go full time due to the time commitment for experiential class work, and this affects their financial aid status. Many students in the associate degree programs also do not attend full time due to personal obligations such as work and family responsibilities. However, many also make the personal choice to be part time once they begin the clinical portion of the nursing program as the strategy--strategy to be successful in the program. As a graduate from the CUNY educational system, I am proud to be in the position to serve as role model for the students in our nursing program, and without reservations would encourage them to continue their

affordable education and diversity that is afforded by the CUNY school. Thank you again for allowing me to address you. [bell]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you, and the next panelist, please.

Good morning. On behalf of the panel from the City University of New York, I would like to thank Chairperson Barron and all the members of the Committee on Higher Education for the opportunity to speak to you regarding the status of nursing programs at York College. My name is Valerie Taylor-Haslip, and I am the Chairperson of the Department of Nursing at York College. In this role I oversee the Baccalaureate and Science RN to BS, Generic, North Shore LIJ Forest Hills Hospital and Dual Degree RN BS Nursing programs. Our programs are accredited by the Accreditation Commission and Nursing, and the New York State Department of Education Office of Professions. I'm pleased to tell you our program received a full year ACEN Accreditation in 2014. York College is located in Jamaica, Queens, the most diverse county in the United States. York students hail from about 125 countries and speak approximately 85 languages. Student enrollment has grown by 3--

36.5% since 2006 with the growth in population from \$6,235 in 2006 to 8,511 in 2015. The full-time faculty has increased to more than 200, and the student-to-faculty ratio is 19 to 1.

The college has three schools: The School of Arts and Sciences, the School of Business and Information Systems and the School of Health Sciences and Professional Programs. The Department of Nursing is within the School of Health Sciences and Professional Programs. Prior to becoming a department Nursing was previous a program within the Health Professions Department of the School of Health and Behavioral Sciences. In August, 2014, the School of Health and Behavioral Sciences was renamed the School of Health Sciences and Professional programs, the Nursing Program was separated from the Health Professions Department to become the Department of Nursing within the School of Health Sciences and Professional Programs. York's Nursing Program is the only accredited nursing B.S. program in the Borough of Queens, which has a population of more than two million people. The department intends to add a masters in nursing program in the 2017 to 2018 academic year, which will make it the only masters in

nursing program within the Borough of Queens. The Department of Nursing is a member of the City University of New York discipline--Disciplinary Nursing Council, which is representative of all CUNY nursing graduate and undergraduate programs. The Council unifies and connects each nursing department to bring unification and standard--standardization in program outcomes and practices.

The Nursing Disciplinary Council discusses issues that affects students across the nursing programs of CUNY and researches issues that affect students across the nursing programs at CUNY and researches solutions in the form of best practices that can be applied to the--across the University system. Members of the Nursing Disciplinary Council [coughing] area also members of the New York State Council of Deans, of Baccalaureate and higher education degree nursing programs and the Council of Associate Degree nurses who partner with the National Council of State Boards of Nursing and the New York Organization of Nurse Executives and Leader to effect change in nursing from an executive level across the state. The Nursing Program at York College began in 1985 as an RS--RN to BS completion

program, created to prepare associate degree nursing, registered nurses with a strong focus in leadership, management and primary preventive care. In response to the 2010 Institute of Medicine Report, the future of nursing leading change and advancing health, York College launched the Generic Nursing Program in 2011 to increase the total number of baccalaureate prepared nurses entering the workforce. This was a major recommendation in the report to increase the total number of BS prepared nurses by 80% by the year 2020. The first cohort of generic bachelor--B.S. students graduated in December of 2013. The dual degree RN/BS program was approved by the State Education Department in 2012. This program was designed to remove barriers from RNs obtaining a BS in a seamless transfer process from an associate degree program to a bachelor's degree program. This meets another of the major recommendations of the IRN Report. There are currently 67 generic nursing students and 41 RN to BS students. Six of the off-site BS program at Forest Hills Hospital enrolled at York College. The first cohort of Queensborough Community College dual degree students entered York in the spring of 2015 semester with an enrollment of

eight students. Five of the dual degree students will graduate in May 2016. Our student population is diverse with 80% female, 20% male, 50% African-American, 30% Pacific Islander, 25% Hispanic and 15% Caucasian serving a diverse community of clients. York's Department of Nursing is transferring-- transforming the education of its nursing students through the use of simulation and our state-of-the-art Simulation Lab. Students are prepared to meet the complex needs of patients in the current healthcare system and to function in the role as future nurse leaders. Our students learned to collaborate and to lead by the examples of our faculty where seven out of ten held PhD degrees and the remaining faculty are enrolled in the PhD program. The faculty guides our students through the nursing research process on a continual basis through various research projects and through working collaboration with a number of research partners. Students protect their research at professional conferences hosted by national and international organizations in the form of panel discussions, poster presentations and explanation of how their experiential experiences teach them to become

advocates for change, better practitioners, and full partners in the healthcare team. Through these activities students in the Nursing Program are challenged to become change agents to eliminate healthcare disparities. More than 50% of the student population in the York College Nursing Programs are transfer students from other colleges in associate degree programs. Transfer students have a unique challenge in that they transfer in many cases 45 credits or more. Students must declare a major of 60 credits. However, a student cannot declare--declare the nursing major until they meet the admission requirements for the program. The dual degree programs offer a seamless transition that allows students to dually enroll in both the associate and bachelor's program decreasing the barrier of students taking unnecessary credits, spending down financial options and processing through the nursing program application process. York would like to expand the offering of this program through affiliates without--affiliation with other associate degree nursing programs. However, resources are limited, and for this reason York College is committed to growing its own nurse educators and leaders.

Students are encourage to continue their education to obtain masters and doctor's degree and to fill the vacant faulty lines as well as nurse leader roles in all of our nursing programs. Former students like myself who obtain a master degree in nursing from Lehman College, a PhD from the Graduate Center and move in rank from junior faculty in a community college to department chair at a senior college are encouraged to move through this trajectory. York College is proud to have former nursing alumni on its faculty and actively seek our former students to teach. Alumni are role models and can connect to the student experience in a way that others may not because of the shared experiences between them. It is for this reason that York College has made the decision to started a masters in nursing program leading students to doctoral programs meeting another recommendation by the Instituted of Medicine to increase the number of PhD prepared faculty by 2020. Thank you to the members of the committee for allowing me to address you this morning.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. Next panelist.

SABA RANA: Good morning.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Good morning.

SABA RANA: I would like to thank all the members of the Higher Education Committee for the opportunity to share my experience this afternoon. My name is Saba Rana, and I work as Pediatric Registered Nurse in the Upper East Side of Manhattan. I graduated with my Associates Degree from Queensborough Community College, and I am now obtaining my Bachelor's Degree from York College through a dual degree program. To me, obtaining my nursing degree was one of the hardest tasks I ever wished to accomplish. Queensborough has one of the toughest nursing programs that requires vigorous discipline and hard work. During the program, I often contemplated why do they want such high grades for every medication calculation exam, or why are their exams so rigorous? But now, I can honestly say that I am so grateful for that difficulty. Because it is through that rigorous and challenging course work that has made me such a knowledgeable nurse today. Queensborough helped form a solid foundation that not only aided me in keeping my patients safe, but it allowed me to build more on that base of

knowledge. Working as a new pediatric nurse can be very terrifying. You have frightened parents with very sick children who heavily rely on medical professionals for reassurance and support. At work, I sometimes perform triage over the phone for when patient explain a medical scenario to me in which I must quickly assess the situation and get further instructions. One day I had a frantic mother who called me. She stated that her six-month baby had been experiencing vomiting and diarrhea for the past three days. She was frightened and explained to me she didn't know what to do. I thought to myself, I don't even feel like a real nurse. Where is my professor for guidance? But then I took back and I thought, what was that same question on that pediatric exam at QCC? That test question was, "When a child is experience loss like vomiting and diarrhea, what should the nurse assess for?" The answer was, "How many wet diapers is the baby having a day?" And just like that and a snap of the finger, I knew the appropriate assessments questions to ask. So I went on, "When was the baby's last wet diaper? Is he drinking fluids? Is he making tears? Check his mouth. Are his mucous membranes intact? Are

they dry? And just like that, I finally felt like a real nurse. I took all that hard work that I conquered, all those hours of studying, and I used it exactly for what it was needed for. I felt like I had such an amazing foundation from Queensborough. Entering the dual degree program at York College helped me to enforce that foundation. York College helped me gain confidence in my skills by giving me professors that helped guided me and reassured me of my proficiencies. I often turn to them for professional advice on certain medical situations. For instance, one day at work I experienced a nurse who would often tell me that I shouldn't label my injections before going into the patient's room because it wastes too much time. After consulting with the doctor, she told me that I was completely right in my way of practice, and that I was appropriately following the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health court--Healthcare Organization Guidelines. This not only reassured me, but it also helped me to gain self-reliance. Moreover, during my time here I took a class called Nursing Leadership and Role Management. This course not only taught me of how to gain confidence in my

nursing skills, but it helped me to serve and have better understanding of how to become a leader and role model. York College also appropriately prepped me into learning how to write a well-written academic APA style paper. And as we all know, knowing how to efficiently write a well-written APA paper is a major advantage for when you're trying to achieve your master's degree. From this entire experience I can honestly say I feel invincible. I have realized that through my CUNY journey that once that associate degree was earned, I have set myself up for future success. The hardest part has been completed, and now it's time to keep moving forward while I conquer bigger endeavors that come my wife. Queensborough helps create that great level of foundation for me in nursing, and York College helped me utilize that foundation with confidence and prepare for obtaining my master degree. I an honestly say I officially feel head strong about both my career and achieving my masters in nursing. Because of this extraordinary journey, I am confident enough to say that one day I do feel I will achieve even great accomplishments in medicine. Than you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. I want to thank all of the panelists for sharing their information, their stories and their journeys. It's very inspirational and I want to just present a few questions. We were momentarily--briefly joined by Council Member Ydanis Rodriguez. He will be returning in a little while. What is the total number--you may have indicated in your testimony what the total number of students is that are enrolled now in the CUNY programs currently?

VITA RABINOWITZ: [off mic] I think our pro--[on mic] Excuse me.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

VITA RABINOWITZ: Chair Barron, I don't have current enrollment figures, but I--I did testify that nearly 1,600 students graduated from our Associate and Bachelor Degree programs in 2015.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: 2015?

VITA RABINOWITZ: Right, yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

VITA RABINOWITZ: So, 1,600 in 2015.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And do you have a breakdown of how many were associates and how many were bachelors?

VITA RABINOWITZ: I do and I will get that to you for that year to give you some sense of-- there were a total of 734 graduates in CUNY AAS Nursing Programs. So in 2014-2015 734 in AAS programs. Now in bachelor's degree programs in the CUNY RN to BS Nursing Completion Programs in 2014-2015, 658. In CUNY BS Generic Nursing Programs. So Bachelor's Generic Nursing Programs, 2014-2015, 250.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. So those were three categories that you--

VITA RABINOWITZ: [interposing] Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --gave me?

VITA RABINOWITZ: That's right.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: The Associates-- okay, you said RN to BS. Is that different from the BA?

VITA RABINOWITZ: Yes, that is the completer or transfer program taking students who have associate degrees and helping them to get there with their--their bachelor's.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And, of course, is that--might that be the type of program that--

VITA RABINOWITZ: [interposing] Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

VITA RABINOWITZ: Yes, exactly.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: All right thank you.

And 250--and can--can you explain the Generic BS.

VITA RABINOWITZ: Okay, actually--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] How is that different from the RN going to BS completion? How is that different?

VITA RABINOWITZ: I would like to turn to my department chairs to do that, but Chair Barron, what I will give--what I will give to the Council so that you can have the demographics, the number is the--the Nursing Degree Program's Data Report of December 2015.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay.

VITA RABINOWITZ: So very recently. We'll make sure you have that. May I ask before--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] If you can explain a difference.

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: The Generic Nursing Programs are students who have no nursing background and are learning to be at the basic level of learning nursing. The RN to BS programs are nurses who have already obtained their associate

degree and have already passed the State Licensure Exam--Exam, and are actually practicing nursing.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, okay, that's very helpful. Do we have any information as to how many students? I think one of the schools indicate the number of students who moved on to go to the Bachelor's Program. Do we have any way of tracking how many students complete their AA and then move onto a Bachelor's Program.

VITA RABINOWITZ: Yes, and that will be in the--in the Data Report and, of course, CUNY take--CUNY's completed programs takes both CUNY AA students and students from other colleges as well, Chair Barron. So we'll get you the complete report of the number of students who made that transition, and I believe that--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Thank you. That would be helpful.

VITA RABINOWITZ: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: If we can find a way to identify or if we could perhaps look to see what it is that students don't continue? Is it financial? Are there social issues or--?

VITA RABINOWITZ: That's right. No, it's--that's an excellent question, and I don't if the data--well, I mean if--if these data will--will give you that. I might, if I may turn to the Department Chairs to ask them in their experience to what extent difficulty with course work, financial burdens affect students' progress toward their, their BS degrees?

DEBORAH MORRIS: Well, my experience with Bronx Community students has been that most of them have--I'm going to say 50 to 60% have gone on to get their Baccalaureate, and usually it is within a CUNY school for financial reasons. Some of them--right now we're in the process of establishing dual (sic) with this. So many of them deal with our affiliation agreements, which let's say if they transfer to Lehman College, they can transfer up to 60 credits or they might go to Mercy or they may choose SUNY Empire State. As far as--and most of them I'm happy to report do complete their bachelor's degree and go on to higher positions in nursing such as nurse manager. In a lot of the schools, I mean the hospitals in the Bronx, they've assumed very high administrative roles within the hospitals. Most of them usually have gone

beyond the bachelor's. They've went as far as the master's. Most of them tend to stay within CUNY schools as much as possible. They feel that that is more affordable.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So you have an agreement with the schools that you named? You said Mercy and Lehman?

DEBORAH MORRIS: Mercy, Lehman--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing]
Lehman.

DEBORAH MORRIS: --and SUNY and Empire State.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Is that a formal agreement that you have or is that just where students tend to go?

DEBORAH MORRIS: No, that's a formal agreement.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, okay, and in terms of the students that are in the program, can you explain to me or describe when it is that students would go into the clinical phase and are there other kinds of demands? I thought I read some place that said that there's a reduced course load because they're now involved in the clinical? So at

what point do they do the clinical, and what's the impact that that has on them in their whole step at taking classes? D

DEBORAH MORRIS: [interposing] Generally speaking and in complying with State requirements the student has to have at least 30 credits in nursing. The rest of the credits are made up by general education courses. Most programs the student usually has a certain grade requirement that they would need and gen ed course, and I'm going to give examples. Bio 23, which is Anatomy and Physiology 1, Psychology 11, English Composition, Introduction to Dosage Calculations and a communications course, and they would get an overall GPA of let's say--at our college it has to be 2.7 or better. In getting--doing that, what some students tend to do is to take their liberal art courses--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

DEBORAH MORRIS: --prior to applying to go into the clinical phase of the program. So when they enter the clinical phase of the program, they may be taking just a nursing course that may be five credits. And they have either completed all their

Gen Ed, or if they do have Gen Ed courses, there maybe--maybe something like sociology, which is a three credit course. Well, if you're taking a five credit nursing course, and then you have a three credit--you're really not in terms of what defines financial aid you would not be eligible for receive financial aid. You have less than 12 credits. And although the program itself may be laid out to show the student how that can be done--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

DEBORAH MORRIS: --many students do choose not to put--they want to be able to focus on that nursing and not deal with the other courses. So most of them may--may decide to take those courses before they enter the clinical component in addition to the courses that may be required or considered core admission.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

DEBORAH MORRIS: Sometimes--a lot of times--at least I can speak from the college, which I represent--a lot of times it has to do with the fact that once they get into the clinical component in

terms of working, in terms of family obligations, the nursing course by itself would be as much as they could handle. And the other thing is a lot of them feel that it increases their chances of success in the program because they can focus on nursing by itself.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

DEBORAH MORRIS: So, it puts them in a position where they're no longer eligible for financial aid because even if--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

DEBORAH MORRIS: --if it's greater than five credits it still doesn't meet the 12 credits per week requirements.

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: At York College we have a different process.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Oh.

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: The students are required to complete all prerequisite nursing courses, all of the science courses before they can enter the clinical phase.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: Once they've finished all of those--that coursework, they then can apply to come into the clinical phase of the program. Our program is a full-time program. So the students are--have at least 15 credits throughout their remaining two semesters. So when they enter nursing, they don't have any other courses to take. They have a full course load of nursing courses, and they just progress through the program.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [off mic] Okay, so [on mic] it's then up to each school to decide how they want to structure that?

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And do you have any information as to how many other different templates or manifestations are there? I heard two.

VITA RABINOWITZ: Yes, right. Chair Barron, I don't know how many there are. I know I have colleagues here from La Guardia Community College and Queensborough or other large and successful programs who could help give you a sense of the scope of structure. Now, the nursing requirements are the nursing requirements, but it is true that our colleges--we think of them as 24

different laboratories. We, you know, we satisfy our requirements and we get good results, but the colleges have been nimble and responsive to their student bodies and their partners, and they have different--you know, they have different pads. But I do know that we have representatives if you wanted to ask more--you know, if you wanted to get a sense of what other models look like.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I think it might be good then for CUNY to be able to have centralized some type of report--

VITA RABINOWITZ: [interposing] Very good.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --which identifies what are the various structures that are used, and perhaps then to be able to identify. I heard that there was a high percentage of students who were passed. I think it was 80% passing--

VITA RABINOWITZ: Yes, the NCLEX exams.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right. It might be interesting to see if there's any correlation between the different structures that exist at the schools--

VITA RABINOWITZ: [interposing] Right, we can--yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --and the pass rate of the--from the exam for certification. It might be interesting--

VITA RABINOWITZ: [interposing] Yeah, we could do a thing--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --not--not cor-- correlization but correlation--

VITA RABINOWITZ: [interposing] That's-- that's right.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --for how we can hope to see how that might happen.

VITA RABINOWITZ: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: What is the tuition that--is it just a standard tuition that students are paying in the program? And I know that there are additional costs that you do have.

VITA RABINOWITZ: There are additional costs--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

VITA RABINOWITZ: --right that you've heard about and I'm sure there are others. Yes, there are no--CUNY's tuition does not differ for nursing students and English majors even though

obviously, Chair Barron, they--those students--those student groups cost very different amounts to educate them.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So I heard that it's borne by--BCC bears that cost for the \$395?

DEBORAH MORRIS: As a means of assisting or helping the students who achieve the expectation of passing the NCLEX exam and to identify areas of difficulty while they are in the program, and to try to provide some sort of remediation, we have something that's--it's a testing package and it starts in the first semester of nursing where when a student completes a certain--for example completes the fundamentals portion of a course, they take an exam that is offered. And this exam comes--it's--it's structured through an Assessment Technologies Institute Group. The students test, and if they--they score a certain level to let us know about where they are with content. Where--the way--and so, they take it, and it carries them through the entire program, and at the end there is what's called an NCLEX review that's given to them. They have what's called a virtual tutor, and the package itself costs \$360 something dollars per student. At Bronx

Community that was paid by through a Perkins Grant, and it continues to be paid for for each student that is registered in the program. It is now being picked up by Job Linkage. So that the students assume no costs for that--that testing package.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Is it one exam that's given at one sitting or are there phases to the exam?

DEBORAH MORRIS: Well, it's given, of course, at the different levels. As they progress--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay.

DEBORAH MORRIS: --there's a different test. As they go through there'll be a Med--one on med surg. They'll be one that would incorporate mental health, one that might incorporate med surg and pediatrics. It tests them on the content as they progress through the program.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, thank you. I do want to acknowledge we've been joined by Council Member Laurie Cumbo, a member of our committee, and do you have any questions, Council Member?

COUNCIL MEMBER CUMBO: No, I don't.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, So I wanted to ask then about the Nursing Discipline Council. If a

student has issues as their school, is this a council that they would go to? Because if there was a student--there were like several students that came and they addressed an issue where there was an opportunity for some students to have their grades increase after a review process. But other students we reviewed and not given the opportunity to have the grades. I'm talking about a course that was offered at that school, not have that opportunity, and may complain that it seemed to be arbitrary as to which students were able to have their scores elevated, and which ones were not allowed to do that. So, is that a case where students would be able to go to another level to get a decision reviewed that had been granted at that school?

VITA RABINOWITZ: Chair Barron, I'd like to begin to answer your question. I--I am familiar with the--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay.

VITA RABINOWITZ: --the general case you were discussing and my understanding is that that is not the kind of issue that comes to the Nurse Discipline Council.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

VITA RABINOWITZ: This is handled--these kinds of--of student appeals are generally handed-- handled at the program level within a college. If it is appropriate and if the Council wishes, we have representatives of the college. Again, I--I--I am aware of the case, and we may be able to inform the panel to--today about--about some of the issues.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. So what are some of the issues that do come before this council.

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: The Nursing Disciplinary Council is an consortium of all of the 14 nursing program.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: --across CUNY, and we come and we really discuss higher levels, certification, background checks. Things that will affect all of the colleges in the same way, and we try to problem solve issues that are related to program development. We are all members of the State--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: --organizations, the Baccalaureate Council, the AD Council and we try

to solve issues at a much higher level that affect all of the programs, and not individual students.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. What is the relationship then between--what is the relationship that CUNY has in its nursing schools, the nursing programs that they have and the Department of Education? In my district there is a Watch school, high school. It's located at the Thomas Jefferson Campus, and those are students that want to go into the nursing field. Part of the problem has been in terms of having nurses actually participate in that program. In terms of a career technical school, they don't have the certification as teachers or such, some of them so that they can bring their skills and experience to that high school. Is there a relationship that exists between CUNY's Nursing Programs and the DOE, specifically the high schools?

VITA RABINOWITZ: It's a great question because we know how very many students come to CUNY, wanting, knowing that they're going to be nurses. When I was Provost at Hunter College, I learned that 10% of all incoming freshmen, and 20% of all graduate students, and Hunter has nearly 23,000 students who

wanted to be nurses. But, Chair Barron, to--to get to your question, I do not know of any specific relationships between the DOE and the profession of nursing. Colleagues do--if you would fill in?

DEBORAH MORRIS: I know that there has been programs at Bronx Community, for example, where students who are interested in nursing are brought onto the campus, and they can take courses or be a part of a liberal arts course. The State Education Department of the Department of Education that regulates nursing has said that those students cannot be a part of let's say a nursing course because they are, in fact, not considered to be nursing students. But as far as someone going into a school, it would be my understanding from the State Ed Department that they--they would have to be somehow licensed in order to do that, and I mean more than a--a nursing license--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

DEBORAH MORRIS: --to be educated--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

DEBORAH MORRIS: --on that level. So when I've seen it in let's say a school that educates--this is years ago, and I may be dating

myself--in Brooklyn, for example, they used to have nursing programs that actually started in the high schools--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

DEBORAH MORRIS: --and you had people actually nurses that actually--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

DEBORAH MORRIS: --taught them and then they took their license exam, and they were working. And that is my only knowledge of the limitations was--it would be if they came into a college setting.

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: Chairperson, Barron, I'm a graduate from Hillcrest High School from their LPN Program.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: High school?

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: Yes.

COMMISSIONER GARCIA: Okay.

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: It was way back in the '70s, but--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I remember. I remembers the courses, yes, yes, yes. [laughter]

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: --but the programs are registered by the same Board of Regents that were--served their curriculum program of any

educational program. They are not degree programs.
They are certificate--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: --completion
programs, and typically--typically they are only
practical nursing programs. For a student to
continue on as a registered nurse, they have to enter
a degree program that has a curriculum that has been
approved by the State Education Department. The
State Education Department regulates the curriculum
and the requirements for all pro--programs that are
related to nursing be it a practical nurse, be it a
registered nurse, master's degree. So there is some
relationship in terms of approval of the course
curriculum at the high school level, but it is not a
degree program. It is a certificate completion
program, and they regulate who and what can teach in
that program.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I have to confer
with my colleagues to find out if the--if, in fact,
there is within New York City that program,
certificate completion program for--for nursing.
That would be interesting to know. And certainly
understanding that it doesn't qualify them to be a

nurse, but it would certainly give them an advantage moving on to college to have some familiarity with what it is that they'll be doing. And--and then you raised the question of what--what LPNs, Licensed Practical Nurses. Does that title still exist or has it gone away? I know that years ago, to date myself, there were LPNs and that they, in fact, could work in hospitals. Does that license still exist or has it transitioned or are people moving from that to other licenses?

DEBORAH MORRIS: The Licensed Practical Nurse still exists. They are being used more or less in long-term care facilities such as nursing homes. At Bronx Community we do have an LPN program that is [coughing] a certificate program that--and--and a few years ago became a certificate with credit bearing courses. And it was done to allow for the transition of the LPNs that graduate from the program at Bronx Community to be able to seamless transition into our RN program. What we have noticed, though, is that there has been a decrease in the number of applicants that let's say may go into the LPN program, and then transition into our program. It's more or less that they are applying directly in, but that the--it does

still exist, and they are--I know over the last few years, they have tried to develop a statewide curriculum--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [off mic]
[interposing] Right.

DEBORAH MORRIS: --that enables those LPNs to transition, but they are still in the workforce.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. What--but how--how convenient or how easy is it for students to transfer? I know that CUNY has their Pathways Programs. How easy is it for students to transfer within nursing programs within the CUNY system?

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: Well, half of our students are transfer students, and we accept students from within CUNY and without--from outside of CUNY. The students need to have on record pass with a C or better the prerequisite courses. Those courses are then evaluated by the Registrar and the Registrar will apply a transfer credit to that student. For York College, it's a pretty seamless process. If the students meet the requirements, they are given credit for the course, and they progress

through based on the number of courses that meet our requirements. If the student does not have a course that meets the requirement, they must take that course in order to continue, and then once they've completed everything then they apply to the program. Because of the sheer number of students that apply, we cannot accommodate all students. So we have a system where we evaluate the student's GPA. The minimum GPA to apply at York Nursing Program is a 3.0. So any student who has a 3.0 who's completed all of those prerequisite courses are eligible to apply to the program. And then we are allocated based on space how many students we can take into the program.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And how many students do you normally take in each year?

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: We can take anywhere from 25 to 30, but we can't take more than 30.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: As transfer students or into the prior program?

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: Well, we have-- our program is separated. So RN to BSN students, 25

to 30 are generic students, 25 to 30. So they're in different categories. We don't mix the categories.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So it's a total of about 60?

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: For the entire year?

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Each year?

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: Yeah, it is.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Very, very select, and very competitive.

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: It's competitive. Yes, very competitive.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: In terms of the online courses that are being offered, how is there-- are they just the classes that are the Gen Ed classes, or is there also the capacity for the specific nursing course that are--

DEBORAH MORRIS: [interposing] Okay, the theoretical components is what the--would be on the online portion and then the clinical aspect would have to be in actual practice. But like for example at SPS, the clinical arrangement is done in conjunction with the student to fulfill that clinical

requirement piece. But of the on--the theoretical aspects that they take at that level are the only ones that are done online.

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: So the School of Professional Studies has an online program at the RN to BS completion rate. So the students that are obtaining the bachelor's degree they already have the primary degree and--and are practicing as registered nurses already. So the coursework in nursing can be offered on line because they are not psychomotor clinical requirement courses. At York College not all of our courses are online, but we have applied to put many of our RN to BSN courses online for our students because the students actually requested in--because we held meetings with the students, more accessibility because they have jobs. They have children, and sometimes they cannot come at specific times, and can we offer more online programs to make it more accessible to them. So we have applied to the Curriculum Committee to put more of those courses online, but they are courses that are--do not have a clinical component. So the students can very easily take the philosophical courses and how many courses

that they need or the nursing courses that are clinically based.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. In terms of the time that it takes to complete the course work and be certified as a nurse having passed the exam, I understood you to say that at York, you arranged the classes so that they take the classes first, and then they have the clinical separate as a time dedicated just for that. So if a student were going full time at York how long would it take them to complete the program?

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: In our RN to BS program it takes the students four semesters to complete the entire nursing program curriculum exclusive of the prerequisites. In the generic program it takes the students five semesters to complete all of the nursing program requirements, and then the Dual Degree Program with Queensborough it takes the students three semesters to complete.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And can you continue--

DEBORAH MORRIS: And at Bronx Community exclusive of the pre--pre-semester where they take their required it would be four semesters of nursing.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: The clinical?

DEBORAH MORRIS: The clinical is four
semesters.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, all right.

VITA RABINOWITZ: Chair Barron, if I may
add--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Yes.

VITA RABINOWITZ: --the graduation rates
of our AAS students and bachelor students in nursing
are higher than an our average rates because we have
such a motivated group, a motivated capable group
that moves forward in a cohort. So our nursing
students do well, and take their degrees in a timely
fashion in general.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. And I had a
question about the--you said when the ATI is taken
that there has to be a background check that's done
as well, and do the students bear that--bear the cost
for the background checks?

DEBORAH MORRIS: No, the background check
and ATI are two different things.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

DEBORAH MORRIS: Yeah, ATI is a--is a testing package that they do while they're in the program--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay.

DEBORAH MORRIS: --to help them--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] That's different from the--?

DEBORAH MORRIS: The criminal background check--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

DEBORAH MORRIS: --came about because of the clinical affiliations requiring them of students. For a long time at least for the affiliations that we used in the Bronx such as Lincoln Hospital--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

DEBORAH MORRIS: --Montefiore, they were assuming Health and Hospitals Corporations would assume the cost for the student. In other words, the student would be told that they were going to let's say Lincoln Hospital. They would go to the hospital. The hospital would do the check--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

DEBORAH MORRIS: --they would do the urine toxicology et cetera. Last year a--the decision was made that they were no longer going to assume that cost. So that most of the clinical agencies have put in place a requirement that any student coming to their facility as well as faculty [coughs] would need a criminal background check done.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

DEBORAH MORRIS: So [coughs] each program had to handle that as to how it should be instituted. The way that our curriculum is set up all of our students were required to do what they were told the semester before about the cost, and how to go about getting it done, but they do assume the cost. Right now there is an initiative going on that is trying-- that is trying to come up with a process in CUNY--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

DEBORAH MORRIS: --by which this can be done on a CUNY level I guess would be the best way to say so, but somehow this cost would not become the student's cost, but would become a part of a standardization across CUNY because it's affecting all of the CUNY--any school that has to take students into a clinical setting.

2 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right.

3 DEBORAH MORRIS: So we are looking at how
4 that might be dealt with from a CUNY level. So that
5 that way all the students that are in the clinical
6 programs would be able to benefit and possibly not
7 incur the cost for that.

8 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I would like to know
9 what that amount would be. So if you could have
10 someone at CUNY calculate that and give that give
11 that to us. [background comments] So what--the ATI
12 then gets back to the assessment, which is done
13 periodically--

14 DEBORAH MORRIS: [interposing] Yeah.

15 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --through the--Okay,
16 very good. Then I did have one last question.
17 What's the relationship between the nursing programs
18 and the other related fields such as the School of
19 Social Work and Public Health and Medicine? Is there
20 any correlation or interaction between those schools
21 and the CUNY Consortium of Nursing Programs?

22 VITA RABINOWITZ: I would like to start
23 answering that question although I--there's--there's
24 significant independent activity going on, but Chair
25 Barron, one of the--we are encouraging like programs

to offer dual degree or joint degree options because more and more students are finding those options appealing and workplaces honor them. For example, Master's of Public Health degrees are very attractive to medical doctors and to nurses to have those dual degrees. You mentioned social work, which is and-- and--and that's a good call because the fact is social workers are experts in care coordination---

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

VITA RABINOWITZ: --and, of course, so are nurses. So, social workers can sometimes help to coordinate the mental health, physical health, and social and financial needs of patients. So given that we have so many fine graduating professional programs now at CUNY including in nursing and we're going on master's programs, and our doctoral programs. Just a few years ago, Hunter was the only school to have a doctor of nursing practice, and Staten Island joined a year ago and Lehman College is in the pipeline. So we will be looking for strategic growth in dual and joint degree programs mostly at the master's level, but also with the bachelor's

level or the doctoral levels so thank you. And I--
if--if yes I do York and Bronx, too.

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: At York College
we are housing the same schools through both health
sciences and professional programs. So we are
separate programs underneath one umbrella in that
school. However, we do collaborate on projects,
social work students, OT students, PA students. We
all do simulation work together. We present
conferences together. So we collaborate so that that
the students get a sense that they belong to a
healthcare team. Because when they leave us, and
they go into practical clinical practice they are
going to be working with people of other professions.
And so they need to get the sense and the idea of
what their role is in relationship to their
healthcare team. So for that reason, we collaborate
with the other professional programs within our
school.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Yes.

DEBORAH MORRIS: I just would like to
speak to that because we don't have like within Bronx
like schools. However, we do have collaborative
efforts with other departments within the college.

For example, Nursing and Biology Department have done presentations together. When it came to trying to help to facilitate--facilitate the easy transferability of our students, we collaborated with the Math Department regarding the Probability and Statistics Course. We collaborated with the Art and Music Department to put into our curriculum art and music that would allow the students to meet that creative expression requirement when they transfer. Radiologic technology, which is part of our department collab--we did a collaboration with our nursing students because they do run into rad tech people in the healthcare field. They were give an exposure. It was something called Voice Spread where they were wrote it. It was a Title 5 Grant and they did a collaboration to--that worked on the communication that occurs. So that the students in nursing and rad tech were together in some sort of a scenario where they would come in to do a portable X-ray, let's say and the nurse is in there with a patient that's got 1,000 tubes going from here to there. So, we--we do collaboration on that level.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Great, and as you may know, I'm a Hunter grad--a proud Hunter grade and

was a physiology major at the time that I went to Hunter, and my first job when I graduated was in the radioisotope lab at the Jewish Hospital in Brooklyn, Brooklyn Jewish Hospital. So, that's--that's my formal training many, many, many, many years ago. So I've always had an interest and a love in science. And finally to talk about the faculty, what's being done to recruit more faculty because as I--as I understand, it's a very selective process, competitive to getting into the program. And then I would imagine that the clinical studies portion is a much lower ratio in terms of making sure that the students are getting the supervision that they need at that very critical point. And what's being done to improve more--what are the obstacles to getting more staff to come in and faculty, and what could we do about that?

VITA RABINOWITZ: Chair Barron, that's a great question and as Provost at Hunter, I dealt with this all the time. In many fields when Hunter put out an ad for a profession in psychology or English, Hunter would get 200, 300 applications for one position. In nursing, even in the venerable Hunter Bellevue School of Nursing could put out three ads

for nurses and get seven applicants in total. Okay, what are the issues? Salary. Nurses have terrific job options, and many nurses would need to take pay cuts in order to be part of the professoriate. Now, we offer--I mean nurses obviously can practice as well--at the same time they teach, but salary is a major issue. Also, there are not always enough doctorally prepared nurses in the relevant areas, and so CUNY--you asked what is CUNY's solution and I--I do want to hear my other colleagues. But one of our solutions is we're trying to grow our--grow our own. Through our--through our doctoral program at the Graduate Center, it used to be a Doctor of Nursing Science. Now, it is a PhD program in nursing with even higher standards and--but we are trying to grow that program. We are producing doctorally prepared nurses in nursing practice, but we do need to grow the professoriate if we're going to train more nurses. And frankly we need to train more nurses because we've been in a bit of a stagnant period because of the closing of hospitals and other things--

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CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

VITA RABINOWITZ: --but you and I know we're going to see--we're going to see a growth period, and we're not--and--and online courses will be useful, but that won't solve our problems. We need to grow the professoriate. Colleagues, do you want to--you hire nurses?

DEBORAH MORRIS: Recently, we hired--put an ad out. We advertised in a lot of the professional journals, journals that were targeting a--like minority groups. We advertised in the hospitals. We--and we were looking for--for a faculty, and I--and just from being a part of the interview process, the first question that's always asked of them is what is my--well, what would be the range of my salary. And I think for a lot of nurses when they come into education, even though we say well, you worked 27 hours, contact hours per hours, if you're coming from an environment where you were getting \$125,000--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

DEBORAH MORRIS: --and now I'm telling you that you're going to make \$50 to \$60,000, it takes a lot to--to absorb that. Even though you can work, there are limits in CUNY as to how many hours

you could work with a multiple position restriction that you can only work a certain number of hours over and beyond your full-time load. Because the expectation of your job is also that in addition to teaching, if you don't teach classes on Tuesday, there is nothing that says that you could not be needed professionally at the college for something. So they try to commit to having another job and doing the job that you are hired to do, which would include attending meetings of that. For a lot of educators it's the salary. It's the salary and--and for some people I noticed at least in this interview cycle the restrictions. But basically the main thing I think is the salary. We've been lucky enough in a sense and still it doesn't, but it shows something our administration has tried to work along with me. Like might say to me what is your feeling about would--do you think that this would be a fair offer to make.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

DEBORAH MORRIS: However, taking into consideration what the other people that are already there are making. You know, it's no such thing as well, I'm going to give you this amount, but you can't tell anybody.

2 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right.

3 DEBORAH MORRIS: You know, so it's--the
4 salary is a very, very big issue.

5 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

6 DEBORAH MORRIS: And finally--

7 VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: [interposing] In
8 addition--

9 DEBORAH MORRIS: Oh, I'm sorry. I'm
10 sorry, Chair Barron.

11 VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: In addition to
12 the full-time faculty, we need to hire adjuncts to
13 take us to the sort of clinical placement areas
14 because we don't have enough full-time faculty to go
15 to all of those sites. The affiliate sites dictate
16 how many students we can send to their particular
17 area, and in most cases now they want less than seven
18 students in any one particular area, which multiplies
19 the number of adjuncts we now have to assemble along
20 with the students because our students don't go into
21 the clinical area alone. They go with a teacher to
22 show them how to do the clinical skills, to validate
23 those skills, and to evaluate the students in terms
24 of progression. It's a big component of that, and our
25 budgets are very limited in terms of the amount of

monies that we have to hire adjuncts for that particular portion of the program. So in--in that regard it limits the number of students we can take in because we can't take in more students than we have students to govern and supervise them. And our number of students that we need per instructor is--is dictated to us by our creditors.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

VALERIE-TAYLOR HASLIP: Our creditors determine how many students per faculty member and the affiliates determine how many students they want in any particular area. So, if I have, you know, a large group of students and let's say I have 40 students in a class, I really need like maybe ten affiliates with ten adjuncts, and to find that many adjuncts and then to have compensation and funds available to them is a very different and challenging problem for us.

DEBORAH MORRIS: The other thing is that most of our nursing programs are accredited, national accreditation, and there is a need for more full-time because in the accreditation, there is a limit as to how many of your faculty can be part-time--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Yes.

DEBORAH MORRIS: --versus full time, and that becomes even a bigger issue, and then the other issue is to get adjuncts that are committed in the same way in which a full-timer can be also challenging. And, therefore, while most adjuncts who worked, they were only going to work certain days, and if you bring them in for any additional activities that may be, you know, as part of your curriculum that they should be well versed on, now you have to talk about paying them 60% of whatever their hourly rate is. And it can really affect your budget, but trying to limit the number of adjuncts is--is I think a goal of most--most of the programs. However, in the reality that can be hard to do if you have a limit on the number of full-time faculty.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh. Okay, thank you very much. I want to thank you for your testimony and to Ms. Rana, I wanted to ask you, what do you see yourself doing after you acquire your bachelor's? You're in that program now for Naches (sic) and what are your aspirations after that?

SABA RANA: Well, I definitely want to go into the emergency room, and I want to be trauma certified, and once I get a good nursing experience,

and I want to know-- Because for master's it's a little different. You have to kind of specialize if you want to do acute care setting. If you want to do family nurse practitioner. If you want to do children. If you want to do both, there's--there's a lot of variety for your master's program, and I feel like I kind of want to get a good nursing, you know, experience to really figure out where I want to take my career course, and where I want to specialize in. So I definitely want to start off, you know, finding a job in the emergency department being trauma certified. Seeing if I like that kind of environment, and hopefully from there after working about a few years, going and obtaining my master's.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, all the best to you.

SABA RANA: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you so much. I want to thank all of the panelists for coming, and we--we--we will send the questions to you--

VITA RABINOWITZ: [interposing]
Excellent.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --that we wanted to have followed up, but thank you so much for your testimony.

VITA RABINOWITZ: [off mic] And thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [coughs] [background comments] And we're going to call our next panel. We'll have Anna White, Nursing Student Association of New York State; Tasha Pagan, USS; and Denise Cherenfant.

DENISE CHERENFANT: [interposing] [off mic] Cherenfant (sic)

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, from 1199, and is there anyone else who came to present testimony because this will be our final panel. [background comments] Those are the names I called. Would you please come to the table? [background comments] [off mic] Thank you. [background comments, pause] If you would raise your right hand, please. Do you affirm to tell the truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this committee today, and to answer all questions honestly?

ANNA PAOLA WHITE: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. You may begin.

ANNA PAOLA WHITE: [background noise] A quick question. Is there a--is there a time limit, or--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [off mic] Well, we--

ANNA PAOLA WHITE: --I'll try to keep it.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [on mic] If you can present your testimony within five minutes--

ANNA PAOLA WHITE: [interposing] Oh, great.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --that would be great.

ANNA PAOLA WHITE: Okay, thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: You're welcome.

ANNA PAOLA WHITE: Good morning, Council and thank you so much for holding this hearing. My name is Anna Paola White. I'm a graduate of Hunter Bellevue School of Nursing and CUNY, and I'm honored to have been asked to speak here today on the status of nursing programs at the City University of New York. I had the opportunity to serve as the President of the Nursing Student Association in New

York State as well as the Student Representative in CUNY Board of Trustees Standing Committee and Academic Policy Programs Research where changes in nursing programs were being considered as well as several student and university wide governing bodies. So in 2014, it was 83.7%, that's 103 of the 123 Hunter students that sat for the State Nursing Licensure Exam passed, and compared to the State average of 78%, according to the New York State Office for--of Professions. So we're doing pretty well. As well, in 2015 as part of the Nursing Student Association in New York State, 300 students offered an NSA Resolution No. 50 in support of increased awareness and assessment of environmental health hazards in nursing education with information about health hazards and natural gas and high volume, hydraulic fracturing or fracking. Just four months after the Governor banned fracking in the State of New York, and while the controversy continues about natural gas, CUNY students passed this resolution with equal controversy at the National Convention for Students aimed at providing relevant assessment tools to more than 400 future nursing leaders in the United States. We have a truly strong program at the school

in large part due to the caliber of the students and the nursing faculty and staff, and we thank the--the committee especially the Committee Council Chair Barron for standing with the Professional Staff Congress urging the Governor to provide adequate funding for the faculty and staff as well as the programs at CUNY. So in a national context given the opportunity our students make an excellent impression, and I urge the Council to encourage grants and school support for these conferences like the one that we took the resolution because they offer job networking opportunities with nursing employers that could put students of low income on an equal footing with those that can afford the cost of these types of trips. Additionally, during my stay at Hunter, about 10 out of 75 students in my class did not get a preceptorship. This is a nursing student internship where students work with a registered nurse one-to-one as a part of the final year of the program. And I just heard that this--that preceptorships, which is a nursing internship during your school year has been completely removed from Hunter this year. So the current students at Hunter College will not getting a preceptorship.

This is typically a clinical component of the--the school year that keeps us competitive with other private institutions--other private institutions in nursing. And not having this opportunity really puts our students at a disadvantage. And if there are ways for the city to hospitals to work with our students to coordinate this type of opportunity it could better prepare our students for the nursing workforce. Lastly, post-graduate preparation for nursing exams comes at a high cost for students. Some programs amount to more than \$350 to--to review just to sit for--I think it's about 2--it could be up to like \$400 for the--the nursing--the State Nursing Board, which is the National Licensure Exam, and Hunter did provide some NCLEX preparation, which is the name of the exam. But I'm not sure about all the colleges that CUNY is providing this kind of help, and it might be worth looking into.

And then lastly, there is--the Hunter Bellevue Student Nurse Association brought a resolution on bullying in the nursing professional to the national state, and worked together with another school from Florida. This is a national and not merely a CUNY problem. However, the resolution

brought to light some of the unique situations that nursing students at CUNY face, and especially in this type of profession where vertical--they call it vertical balance tends to be an issue for nurses. And I believe that there needs to be more support for--support for nurses who have already--who are already underrepresented nationally in a profession that is 83% White and non-Hispanic according the HRSA in 2008. Especially when the hallmark of our program is about promoting diversity and accessibility to students of low income and minority backgrounds. I had two other quick things. When I was applying for nursing school at Hunter after my prerequisites were completed, there were eight--I heard that it was up to 800 students were applying for 75 spots from within the college. And there was a pre-medical, but not a pre-nursing counselor when I applied, and there was only one admissions advisor within the school to counsel these student applicants. This competitive ratio may be due in larger part to the affordability of our programs, but my other concern is that some of the programs taking the associate may be as long as six years to complete and four-year BSN degree. For example, some programs may require 1.5 years in

prerequisites before even applying to the two-year nursing school at a community college, which results in a two-year associate degree. Still, in our registered nurse degree taking 3.5 years and requiring another 1.5 sometimes 1.5 years to achieve a BSN, which is technically only a four-year degree. So this could be a total of around five years with difficult transitions between programs, and a bottleneck when it comes to registered nurse to BFN programs, and as you heard earlier there were a significantly smaller number of students in the RN to BSN programs. I would like to thank the Council for hearing my testimony, and also the CUNY Board of Trustees for providing nursing textbooks in the library for every course and helping students who are unable to afford the expensive book costs. I'm a proud graduate of Hunter College, and I thank the Council for supporting these programs and keeping watch over the opportunities that students from all backgrounds can access.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. Next panelist.

DENISE CHERENFANT: [off mic] Hi, my name is Denise Cherenfant.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Can you pull the mic a little closer?

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: [off mic] Yeah, I was just helping her. Is that better?

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Is her mic on?

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: [off mic] Is your mic on?

DENISE CHERENFANT: [off mic] Yes.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. When the light's on, the mic's on.

DENISE CHERENFANT: Okay, it's on now.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Yes, great.

DENISE CHERENFANT: Good morning. Thank you for hearing my testimony this morning. I want to thank the City Council on Higher Education for this opportunity. My name is Denise Cherenfant, and I'm the Associate Director of Nursing Program for 1199 SEIU Training and Employment Funds. The Training and Employment Funds also known as TEF are--is a joint effort between 1199 SEIU and contributing employers with the mission of providing opportunity for healthcare workers through high quality training, placement and labor management initiatives. I am

here to testify about the importance of the partnership between CUNY and TEF in delivering critical support for nursing education in New York City, and to offer insight on how all partners must adapt to the future of nursing education. I should also note that I am registered nurse with 25 years of experience in the healthcare, and I have obtained my BSN as Lehman College. This long career would not be possible without the critical CUNY and TEF partnership. The--the TEF nursing team that I direct supports members who wish to become nurses and those seeking to complete their BSN and other advanced degrees including LPN, RN associate level, RN to BSN and Nurse Practitioners and other advanced degrees. In 2015, TEF supports--TEF supported over 800 members who were enrolled in nursing programs. Approximately 40% of them were attending a nursing degree program in the CUNY system, which includes the AAS, the--Generic BSN as--as you heard earlier, the RN to BSN, NP and we have I think two doctoral nursing students as well. 1199 members also represent a sizeable percentage of the students in CUNY nursing programs. Between 2001 and 2014 school years, CUNY had a total of 200--2,563 1199 SEIU nursing graduates. At BCC

the 1199 students represented 24% of its nursing graduates. At Lehman, 1199 students represented 30% of all BSN degrees awarded. Throughout the system, 1199 members represented 14% of all LPN graduates, 30% of all AAS graduates and 6% of all generic bachelor degree graduates. 14% of all RN to BSN graduates and 16% of all MSN graduates totaling the 2,563 members graduating from nursing programs in the 14-year period.

It's clear that TEF and CUNY partnership is critical to the development of a diverse--a diverse--I'm sorry [laughs]--and quality healthcare workforce. Here in the city order for this partnership to thrive, we must ensure that we are addressing some of the current challenges in the healthcare system. For example, a critical problem in New York is a lack of primary care providers. Increasing the supply of nurse practitioners is one of the industry's preferred solutions to this problem, and TEF has been working with CUNY to help achieve this by enrolling cohorts of nurse practitioner students in CUNY programs. However, our efforts to be successful--in order--in order for our efforts to be successful, we must ensure that there

are enough clinical sites and qualified preceptors to support these cohorts. In addition, there is currently a national mandate for--from the Institute of Medicine for a larger percentage of nursing--nurses to have their bachelor's degree or higher by 2020. Many healthcare facilities, in fact, are now requiring BSN for employment. TEF is working with CUNY to address this issue. However, CUNY entrance requirements sometimes presents a challenge for incumbent nurses with many years of experience. Currently, we offer a bridge to support practicing nurses who are transitioning back to the academic setting. But for many RNs, particularly those who have--who are--are not served by TEF, the entrance requirements and the transfer of credit presents an insurmountable obstacle. As a result, many talent RNs do not return to school for their BSN, or they got to their--to other schools at a much higher cost. A potential solution would be to review the requirements particularly for nurses with associate degrees in nursing or bachelor degrees in other areas. We have also heard from many employers in New York State that there is a gap between the skills

that nurses graduate with, and what is required at the bedside.

We recommend forming a committee of faculty and nurse educators from healthcare facilities to ensure that the curriculum reflects the current skills of--the industry requires, including emerging issues such as population health, care coordination and working in interdisciplinary teams. Together, TEF and CUNY have tried to create the Nurse Res--Residency Program, but we were unsuccessful due to factors outside of CUNY's control. We recommend revisiting this idea of a transition to practice, and are ready to partner again with CUNY on this initiative.

In conclusion, TEF partnership, TEF--TEF-CUNY partnership is one with a long rich history. We look forward to continuing the partnership, and--and as the industry changes and the future of nursing becomes more flexible--complex and requires a deeper level of education. Once again, I would like to thank the committee for this opportunity to share my testimony.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. Just before next panelist, if there's another space, I'm

going to invite Sada Akaka (sp?) to come forward and join this panel so that we'll have an additional person. Great, and we'll now hear from our third panelist with testimony on this topic. Thank you.

TAISHA PAGAN: Good morning. My name is Taisha. I am part of USS. I'm the Vice Chair of Evening and Part-Time Affairs. I am here just to give my testimony and to advocate on behalf of myself and the students. Because as nurses we're supposed to advocate for patients. So if we can't advocate for ourselves and we can't--we can't say what's wrong with something without fear like without having to worry we're going to get backlashed or some kind of repercussion is going to happen for it, then how can we even begin to advocate for anyone. So we have to start with ourselves. So good morning, Council. Thank you for allowing me to speak today. My name Taisha Pagan. I am a nursing major in Lehman College and I'm Vice Chair of Lehman Part-Time Affairs for USS. I am currently in--I am not currently in the nursing program at Lehman although I did apply this year. As an aspiring like the program on my campus could be better. We have a large population of nurse--nursing majors, but the amount

of classes and space are limited forcing students to take unnecessary classes while they wait to get into the classes that they need. Getting permission for a class is--class or getting advisement is like waiting to speak to Financial Aid. Student miss classes, are told to come back the next day after hours of waiting or are told that the classes are full after days of waiting to seeing an advisor. (sic) When students go to the office for assistance on how to sign up for the program or ask for requirements, they're said--or told it is on the--it is on the website. As a student coming into the nursing program, I've gone to website. It is not easy to navigate. After clicking through a few links that lead to other pages, and not finding the information sought after, it gets frustrating. Help needs to be provided for incoming students so that they are provided with the information needed to successfully meet the criteria for the program. If a student cannot get basic questions answered--when coming into the office, the department is deterring the students from seeking guidance or further pursuing a degree at that campus. Another issue is that the program does not alert students when classes--class spaces are available.

Many times students find out about these classes through the pre-trips to the office and from person to person. If students declare a major in nursing, information on classes and requirements should be sent--sent out to the students to keep them apprised of what needs--what the needs are and what classes they are currently able to take. This would help reduce the lines, waiting periods and the frustration. Additionally, being informed at the start of a student's nursing studies about how do you take the HESI Nursing Exam--Entrance Exam, would allow students to start studying earlier and not come--and not come to them as a surprise later on. Besides being told to study a book, no prep classes are offered for this exam. The Seek Program offers HESI prep, but only for the students within that program. So while some students--some students study from a book with no guidance, another population of students are being provided assistance. To help all students a test prep--a test prep class should be offered to better prepare and assist all students who are taking the entrance exam so that everyone is provided with equal opportunity. There were a few students who could not be here today, but wished to

have their concerns heard, but not by me because they were scared of like--because some of them are--one is in the nursing program currently, and another one just applied. So she thought that if she came today and somebody was to hear her testify, they wouldn't allow her into the nursing program. And the other gentleman he's in the nursing program, and he feared that if he came today and said--and they saw him, that he would mad--bad marks. So I believe that--the students aces. (sic) I believe that a benefit at least at Lehman is that from the beginning they are testing us in the NCLEX form, and are all--and are--and all of it is computerized. I also like how they pressure us to know a lot of the information and make us critically think within a short period of time. My main concerns are the lacking on funding to our nursing program. Because of this, there is a lack of opportunity in preparing and bettering us within a limited resource--within the limited resources. Also, the scheduling for us to come in and work in a lab is limited for the seniors as opposed to the juniors who have more time to get their lab work done. Student B. says the nursing program is very unorganized. That--that is--that is what I have been

hearing every time I speak to the nursing students here. They are helpful at all. In order to get information from them, it's like pulling teeth. They are being paid to be here for us, the students to help us excel in our academic endeavors. But it seems like they are hindering us from doing so. Why must we have--why must we have long waits in order to get a mere permission for a class? Why the cat and mouse chase. Come today, come tomorrow. I feel like I spend hours in the Nursing Department Office without getting what I came to get. I am not the only person who feels this way because the other students are also in the same boat. So I cannot say my experience is unique. I firmly believe that a reform has to be made. Meetings should be held and ideas need to be thrown around to better serve the students. We are not looking for perfection, just improvements, more information, better communication, better services. After all, we the students are the--are the sole reason the office exists. I thank you for your time, and I thank you for letting give my testimony today. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. To the panelist, 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.

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. You may begin.

SADA AKAKA: Good afternoon, members of the Higher Education Committee, Chair and distinguish--distinguished guests. My name is Sada Akaka. I am currently in my third year at York College of the City University of New York majoring in Health Sciences with plans of becoming a registered nurse in the nearest future. I am one of the many people that came into CUNY without prior knowledge of what to expect from the school system. CUNY was the best choice for me not only because of its relative (sic) ACT for the tuition, but also because of the diversity that exists in the university. After taking required college interest exams, I was accepted into the City University of New York, York College. I was delighted I would be studying to become a registered nurse. However, after--after a few months--however, a few months later I realized that in order to become a declared

nursing major I needed to take all the prerequisites, and then to go take the nursing entrance exam. As an immigrant I had hoped to get in--into the nursing program immediately. From the onset I had--as soon--as soon I was admitted into the college, I free to choose any major. With more prerequisites than I had hoped the mental time I spent without being in my major or choice increased. I'm sharing this story--I'm sharing this story because of the last six weeks at CUNY's nursing programs. I had believe that the intense wait of CUNY nursing programs are directly responsible for the low retention rate as well as the local additional waits of some CUNY colleges. The majority of nursing program administrative--administratives have actually been inside (sic) the law as intense wait to the poor funding of their nursing programs. They are willing to expand these programs but have been handicapped by lack of adequate funding. Therefore, the sometimes wait is not expected to improve. Therefore the assistance rate is not expected to improve. I would like this committee to look into further--into further increasing funding for this program as it is a way for people to most assure economic status to get the

required education and fulfill their life--lifelong dreams. Thank you so much for listening.

FEMALE SPEAKER: Just making sure it's closed.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. I want to thank all the panelists for coming and presenting your testimony, and I just have a few questions. You did raise some issues and topics that I was not aware in the first panel's presentation. You talked about the preceptorship, and that Hunter will no longer have that, which is a one-to-one internship.

ANNA PAOLA WHITE: Right. So having been a part of the Nursing Student Association of New York State, I was able to speak with other students who were part of different programs. A preceptorship is typically in the--the last year, and it's really important because it--I--I was fortunate enough in my class to be able to have one, but not everyone in my class--graduating class did and--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] So, how is it determined as to who participates in that and who doesn't? What? Is there a cap on the number based on what criteria?

ANNA PAOLA WHITE: There--we weren't given a criteria and we weren't really sure who was going to get it and who was not.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And had it existed since the time of the Nursing Program or was it something that came about perhaps in special funding or affiliations with--with the hospital or a healthcare facility?

ANNA PAOLA WHITE: My impression is that it has been part of the program. I know that the class in front of--that had graduated before us, the year before us had had difficulty getting them because I--my impression is that they're--the nurse themselves has to take under their license the liability of having a nursing student.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Oh, no.

ANNA PAOLA WHITE: And that they're not actually getting paid to have a student with them. So it's an additional burden on that particular nurse, one. Two, the--the healthcare facilities take--are kind of taking on any waste that the student has or--and so to find facilities that are willing to take students kind of the burden--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

ANNA PAOLA WHITE: --is I think increasingly difficult, but I think it's an essential part of that learning process that when you get to the hospital, and they ask you what experience you've had had, if you don't have that, it's a very large part of like the confidence that you would have in treating patients.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

ANNA PAOLA WHITE: They like you--like medication administration kind of one-to-one supervised. And so at Hunter I was actually informed by some of our students that are here today that they are not going to have it at all, and I know that other nursing schools do.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Well, we'll follow up with that, and ask CUNY what it is that had them come to that conclusion, and you talked about the preparation for the NCLEX that you received at Hunter. Was that free?

ANNA PAOLA WHITE: So at Hunt--so at Hunter they--they--I think they got a--a grant or there was some funding. I'm not sure where they fund

it for--components of it. So they have a lab where they can do--we can do questions, but the--typically to finish the preparation, a lot of students get an additional outside of school preparation coursework. Our year--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] So what you did at Hunter, in fact, was at--at no cost to you?

ANNA PAOLA WHITE: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, all right, and I'm surprised that--that Hunter didn't--that CUNY rather didn't tell the fact that they provide nursing textbooks in the library for every course helping students that are unable to afford the expensive book costs. I thought that might have been at the top of their list of accomplishments, but I'll certainly ask them is that a program--is that a function that they goes to every CUNY school, but that's--I think that's great--

ANNA PAOLA WHITE: [interposing] I think--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --because I'm sure that the textbooks are.

2 ANNA PAOLA WHITE: It was brought up in
3 meeting--

4 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] And
5 very thoughtful.

6 ANNA PAOLA WHITE: ---with Matthew
7 Sapienza where they noted that they put a copy--one
8 copy of the textbook for every class. So I think
9 it's not just the nursing programs.

10 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Well, we'll find
11 out. We'll ask them do they supply that every class,
12 textbooks. And the other class now for--for
13 questions about the TES program--TEF. I'm sorry. So
14 the affiliation that you have with CUNY, how is that
15 operating at this point?

16 DENISE CHERENFANT: In terms of
17 registering cohorts with CUNY so we work together
18 with CUNY. We identify areas of need and then we
19 enroll cohorts of students. We look to ensure that
20 we are removing some of the challenges and the
21 obstacles that our students may be facing such as
22 having cohorts who go through the prerequisites
23 courses to get it through a program we have called
24 the Healthcare Core Curriculum. So prior--pretty
25 much all of the prerequisite courses that are

required for any health major is done together in a group, and then we enroll cohorts into different CUNY schools. Right now we have expected to graduate is a cohort of 20 MPs at Lehman who are expected to graduate next month. We also have a cohort of RN to BSN students who are getting ready to graduate. We are able with our infrastructure to provide wraparound support that helps our members to overcome some of the challenges that have been--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Yes.

DENISE CHERENFANT: --described here. In terms of we provide an NCLEX review at no cost to our members. We also as described in the testimony provide a bridge program which is very, very helpful for many of the incumbent nurses who are returning to school to their BSN some of whom have been practicing at times for 10 to 25 years--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

DENISE CHERENFANT: --and then they're returning to school, and they're faced with the challenges of being a student again. They are faced with navigating through systems that they're not

familiar with. So we provide case management and other support.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

DENISE CHERENFANT: We also have a liaison appointed at the different CUNY schools where we have--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Oh.

DENISE CHERENFANT: --cohorts so that our staff can work directly with that person. In nursing, you know, one of the unique issues that we feel that if you go into a program and you are not prepared, and you fail in some--most programs at least two courses, you cannot then enroll in another nursing program.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

DENISE CHERENFANT: You have to consider another profession.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Yes.

DENISE CHERENFANT: So one of the things that we try to do with my staff is to identify early--and I'm saying maturation for my regular nursing--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

DENISE CHERENFANT: --but just identify when students are having difficulty--

2 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Yes,
3 uh-huh.

4 DENISE CHERENFANT: --and addressing
5 those issues before it becomes a huge problem. For
6 instanced with the NP class that I just mentioned,
7 when they needed to do advanced class of physiology,
8 they were faced with some challenges even though they
9 were nurse in many cases with many, many years of
10 experience. But, so we had to get someone who was
11 practicing--a practicing doctor whose area is
12 practice of physiology, and we had him come to the
13 class on the same day that the students are meeting,
14 and--and be there available to provide support at
15 least one hour before the class for a number of
16 weeks. So that helped the students and they all were
17 able to pass that course.

18 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

19 DENISE CHERENFANT: But students who
20 don't have that opportunity, would be faced with a
21 challenge of dealing with that on their own, and that
22 can be challenging and, you know, having gone through
23 a nursing program myself, even with the wraparound
24 support I find some challenges that some of my other
25 panelists are describing here. So we--

2 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Well,
3 that program sound fantastic. Are there other unions
4 that you know of that offer this kind of support?

5 DENISE CHERENFANT: I know that DC37 has
6 a smaller group, but I know that they do some work,
7 and the New York State does it--Association have been
8 primarily an individual access program for tuition
9 reimbursement--

10 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Yes.

11 DENISE CHERENFANT: --with employers, but
12 they have recently negotiated to have the opportunity
13 to create a fund similar to ours. So we've been
14 sharing our best practices with them hoping to help
15 them to set up a program that will work similarly for
16 their nurses who needs to do their bachelor's degree
17 in nursing and advanced degrees.

18 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And did you say that
19 if you failed two classes within this nursing course
20 you--

21 DENISE CHERENFANT: [interposing] Right.

22 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --you're no longer a
23 part of that.

24 DENISE CHERENFANT: This is--yeah, this
25 is generally not just CUNY, by the way. This is

nursing as a profession, and not just in New York and, you know, in most cases if you fail two of the core courses within nursing, then you are not allowed to re-register and then get a degree in nursing at another school. And so, you know, having support services to be--to ensure that students get the support they need while in the program, and repeat--and--and decreasing things like my co-panelist here was talking about where you're spending additional time going back and forth to the offices and other things, and you can really focus on your study. It helps because you don't have that opportunity of say, okay, I failed this and now I'm going to do that.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

DENISE CHERENFANT: And if then students, as I said in my testimony, can't choose CUNY. We're faced with the issue of a higher cost, and so for many people they--they're not able to achieve that goal. We provide tuition assistance for our members, but this is not available to the average person--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

DENISE CHERENFANT: --in the community.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, thank you.

And in terms--yes.

TAISHA PAGAN: I--I just wanted to mention that I have actually have a few friends. One of them she was in the Nursing Program. She failed two of the classes, and yeah, so she wasn't able to finish, and another one she--she didn't complete. She failed two of the prerequisites, and because she didn't have the grades, she couldn't be a nurse. She couldn't enter the Nursing Program. So they actually left to a different school. One of them actually decided to become a dietitian, and the other one actually went to another school where she paid more, but she was able to enter the nursing program there.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Hmm, interesting. Okay, well, we--thank you for your testimony, and we do want to encourage you those of you who are still students to not be discouraged and--and, in fact, hold CUNY accountable. If you have a scheduled appointment time with someone who is supposed to meet with you and give you some direction, you should perhaps send them a little written email and document well I came at the assigned time, and you weren't there. Maybe send a copy to someone else. [coughs] But the other thing is that you've got to stand up for your own selves and for your rights and not be

intimidated and not be afraid to bring to light issues that are broad scale, and affecting large people--large numbers of people so that they can be corrected. And any way in which my office might be of assistance, we'd be glad to do that. In fact, that's one of the reason that we're having this hearing today on nursing because someone--a group of people reached out to us with the concern that they had, which they felt was not just limited to the two, three or four of them, and wanted to bring some light onto the situation. So in any way that my office can be helpful, we would be glad to look out there, and see what we can do to coordinate getting resolution to that. Thank you so much.

DENISE CHERENFANT: So if I could add--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Yes.

DENISE CHERENFANT: --two things before I leave just to echo what was said about the preceptorship--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Yes.

DENISE CHERENFANT: --especially when-- for the nurse practitioner students. This is an area in which we, you know, thinking about the funding requests and what was said by the earlier panel--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

DENISE CHERENFANT: --is very, very vital because if you don't have enough clinical placement for the nurse practitioners, we can't produce the nurse practitioners that the industry needs. And so, you know, sending out a nurse practitioner into the field without that one-on-one preceptorship is actually putting--would be putting patients' lives at risk. So, it's required and so we need to consider how much funding is there for that actual support for the students to be able to have this available. And with the NP program, at least it's not a paid practitioner like was being described in the clinical rotation for a BSN or an associate student. [coughing] But maybe there's other ways to consider how we could recognize the nurse practitioners and others who take time to, you know, support the nurse practitioners in--be--becoming ready for their field.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: But now the preceptorship is not a part of the clinical, but it's on top of it. So--

DENISE CHERENFANT: [interposing] So, for a--a--nurse practitioner students, at least the ones that I've been dealing with, they are required to

have these clinical internships, but at times the-- the placements are not available because as been described by this panel and an earlier panel, that at times the burden on the healthcare institutions themselves and also not having any recognition or support for the--the nurses who even take the time to bring--take someone under their license to support them this process. So it's something that we need to think about how we can look at policy and other things to address that.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: My question is in terms of the clinical phase as it was presented to me in the first panel, it's an opportunity for students to the affiliate and have that clinical experience. Is the preceptorship, which is described as one-on-one, is that on top of--

DENISE CHERENFANT: [interposing] So--so it's two different programs.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

DENISE CHERENFANT: So if you were doing your associate level or your BSN, Generic BSN, then you have from the school a clinical instructor that goes with a number of students and provides that support.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

DENISE CHERENFANT: For you to graduate from an NP program, there is this one and one preceptorship that that must happen at different clinical sites for each class, and it's a challenge that we're dealing with and, you know, CUNY has been working as well. But, you know, funding is something that needs to be considered in how that issue is addressed.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So the NP program requires a one-on-one.

DENISE CHERENFANT: Yes, so--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

DENISE CHERENFANT: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. Yes.

SADA AKAKA: I actually just want to agree with what's she's saying. Funding is a very crucial part of this. Like it's the root of this problem. With what she was talking about the NCLEX review.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

SADA AKAKA: If there is enough funding, then most people are not afraid to take the exams, and most people would like get the required to train

they need as well getting accepted into the program.

The reason why we go through this regimen of the prerequisites, it's not--like you're failing--if you fail two other grades. So that you can't apply into the programs because they're trying to thin out the amount of people that get into the program. Not just because they don't want people to come into the program because they are not adequately funded.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

SADA AKAKA: Most times they do not have the supervisors to take the nurses to events during the clinical period. Like she actually said like the MPs need one-on-one, but the--the bachelor students need like at least three, four students that are under one supervisor. So if they can only afford five supervisors--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

SADA AKAKA: --then they get the amount--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] The make the number.

SADA AKAKA: --get the amount of students that can get into the program. So if we have more funding then we could pay more supervisors--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

SADA AKAKA: --and more students can get into the program. So I'm hoping we can address this issue of funding. This is very, very important. Thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you, and Ms. Pagan, one final question. Your testimony talks about the HESI Nursing entrance exam, and can you explain what that is, because the first panel didn't reference that. They referenced the NCLEX, but not this HESI.

TAISHA PAGAN: Okay, so the HESI, I guess that would be--I'm not sure how it is at every other school, but I know this is like--this is supposed to be like an entrance exam. Entrance actually for it. So after you've completed all of your prerequisites now you're told, oh, by the way, you have to take an exam to get into the program, and you're talking about--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] That's throughout CUNY? You have to take the exam?

TAISHA PAGAN: I'm sure you do. I'm guessing that you do.

FEMALE SPEAKER: [off mic] Yes, it's a different exam. (sic)

TAISHA PAGAN: Yeah, a different exam, but, you know, at different colleges. So then you're told, hey, you got to take an exam, and you're like, wait, I took all those classes. I thought that's all I needed to get into the--into the program, and then you--you sit there, and you're looking through this book. So now, let's say you took your A&P, the first year you were here, and you--and on top of all of the requirements the school wants you to do, and on top of all the other prerequisites, now you're sitting there studying this book and you have to open up your textbook and you're studying everything that you studied before just to prepare to take this exam. So you have to do math, reading, critical thinking, which they don't tell you that critical thinking is on the exam, and critical thinking is not even in the book. And you have to--A&P. So you're sitting there and you're studying all this stuff, and you're--by the time you go there, you're kind of--you're--you're overwhelmed because you feel like you've already taken all your classes a while ago, and you're not sure if you're prepared to take the exam now that they're trying to make you take.

2 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Is this an exam
3 that's general education knowledge, or is this an
4 exam that relates to the nursing field?

5 TAISHA PAGAN: Well, it's usually math,
6 which is generally--

7 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

8 TAISHA PAGAN: --just general math, and
9 you know, your basic reading, but then you have your
10 A&P, which you have to reviewed and then you have do
11 your critical thinking.

12 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: What's A&P?

13 PANELISTS: (in unison) Anatomy and
14 physiology.

15 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Oh. Okay.

16 TAISHA PAGAN: [laughs] So if you don't--
17 if you don't pass--let's say you pass all your
18 classes, but then you don't do well on the HESI, you
19 don't get into the program. So you--let's--you could
20 have gotten As across the board in all your classes,
21 but you don't pass the HESI, you don't get into the
22 program, but what this--the program doesn't tell you
23 that, hey, you can take the--the test over next year,
24 and try to get in again. So a lot of students get
25 discouraged, and they end up going to other fields

instead or they leave that school. They go somewhere else.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Is there a specific time when you take the HESI or can you take it any point--

TAISHA PAGAN: [interposing] No.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --within you career?

TAISHA PAGAN: No, no. It's during the spring semester. It's usually like that February to like March period that you have to take the exam.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Can you take it in freshman year, junior year?

TAISHA PAGAN: No.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I mean sophomore year?

TAISHA PAGAN: After you finish all your prerequisites, and you're registering for the program.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Oh, okay.

DENISE CHERENFANT: [interposing] So if only--

TAISHA PAGAN: That's the only time you can do it.

DENISE CHERENFANT: If I can come and explain the process a little bit of how it works is that a student will take all of their prerequisites.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

DENISE CHERENFANT: After they have completed their prerequisites, they will apply to the Nursing Department--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

DENISE CHERENFANT: --to be accepted. Once accepted, each nursing department have some type of entrance exam. Sometimes if they need a HESI the MLN. There's ATI. There's a whole bunch of different exams.

TAISHA PAGAN: Yeah.

DENISE CHERENFANT: And whichever one the school has chosen is the one that you must then pass after you've been accepted to--to then be able--or once you're contending--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

DENISE CHERENFANT: --for acceptance to then be able to be accepted into the program. And those are given at a certain time period to correlate with the entrance into that--those departments.

SADA AKAKA: And I will say something, and there's a problem with this exam. This exam is not transferrable. So if you wanted to apply to three different nursing programs at the same time, you cannot because you have to take the HESI in Lehman, and you come and the MLN even if you were-- even at two colleges were taking MLN together, you--- the results you get for one college cannot use for another college. I feel this is very confusing because if that is spent, money is spent, and I don't know. It creates a lot of barriers into getting into this program. Thank you.

DENISE CHERENFANT: I think the point you raised earlier about having some general information when you were speaking to the first panel--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

DENISE CHERENFANT: --well, what's happening across CUNY--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Yes.

DENISE CHERENFANT: --is something that's to be consider--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

DENISE CHERENFANT: --as it relates to this issue in terms of the entrance exams and the-- the point that was just raised in terms of making sure that, you know, all of the schools don't have a different exam.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Uh-huh.

DENISE CHERENFANT: That if a student passed the exam one place, they can then be--use it--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

DENISE CHERENFANT: --for another program. So yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Especially if it's within CUNY.

DENISE CHERENFANT: So, yes. So coordination and also I think the other issue that may have been buried a little bit here is the fact that also notifying the students early, ahead of time that this exam will be coming--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Uh-huh.

DENISE CHERENFANT: --so people are prepared. I think it's one of things--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

TAISHA PAGAN: [interposing] Uh-huh.

DENISE CHERENFANT: --that it shouldn't just be told at the end. So if I come in and I say nursing is my intended major, maybe while I'm in my prerequisites I understand the need for this, and I can start prepping--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Right.

DENISE CHERENFANT: --ahead of time.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: But we certainly want to reach out to CUNY and they have representative here who will be--

DENISE CHERENFANT: [interposing] Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --able to tell them, and we will put it in writing as well especially in light of the fact that CUNY has established what they say is Pathways, which is supposed make everything seamless, and make it easy to move about within CUNY. So we certainly want to ask them to look at that in that regard, and we see now why it's so important that we have the general population and have those people interested in the issues to come and testify. Because had we not had this testimony from your panel, I would not have been aware of that issue. So we thank you so much for coming, and at this point seeing that there are no others who are

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2 offering testimony, this hearing is adjourned. Thank

3 you. [gavel]

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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 May 14, 2016