

The City University of New York



**Testimony of Chancellor Matthew Goldstein
The City University of New York
New York City Council Finance and Higher Education Committees
Mayor's 2010 Executive Budget
May 15, 2009**

Good afternoon, Chairperson Weprin, Chairperson Barron, and members of the Finance and Higher Education committees. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you this morning about the Mayor's 2010 Executive Budget and its effect on The City University of New York, especially our six community colleges: Borough of Manhattan, Bronx, Hostos, Kingsborough, LaGuardia, and Queensborough.

Chairperson Weprin and Chairperson Barron, I would like to take a moment to extend our appreciation for your longstanding support of CUNY's operating and capital budget needs. In particular, Chairperson Barron, the topics of the Higher Education Committee hearings this year—including student loans, workforce development, and opportunity programs—have been very helpful in bringing to light so many of the issues faced by our students and the need for the restorations now included in the Executive Budget. These include funding for the Vallone Scholarships and additional funding for the Accelerated Study in Associate Programs, or ASAP, initiative.

As New Yorkers grapple with the effects of a national recession, more and more of them are turning to CUNY's community colleges for educational and career preparation opportunities. In fact, our colleges are bursting at the seams. As I will detail later, this is just one reason why a lack of city funds to match a \$160 million state allocation for capital funding is of such concern. Our six community colleges are now serving more than 84,000 students, an increase of more than 7 percent since just last spring. Borough of Manhattan Community College alone experienced an enrollment increase of more than 13 percent since last spring and now serves more than 22,000 students.

To put this into context, the six community colleges have added more than 20,000 students since 1990—the equivalent of NYU's entire undergraduate program. In Queens, enrollment increases at LaGuardia and Queensborough since 1990 are the equivalent of adding half a St. John's University. In the Bronx, enough students have been added to create half a Fordham University. And in Manhattan, BMCC's increases are comparable to adding Columbia University's entire undergraduate college.

This is only one of the reasons that we continue planning discussions for a new community college in Manhattan, which would improve access for thousands of students. The new college would draw some ideas from the ASAP initiative, intended to help students graduate in a timely way with an associate degree and viable job opportunities. Our ASAP students, now completing their second year, are consistently outperforming a comparison group of similar students. They take and earn more credits, achieve higher GPAs, and re-enroll in greater numbers for a third semester. A significant number are on track to graduate after only two years in the program.

As our burgeoning enrollment indicates, our community colleges are the city's best engine of workforce development. Walk into your doctor's office and chances are that the lab technician conducting your diagnostic tests graduated from a CUNY community college. So did the medical assistant recording your vital statistics and the billing expert overseeing your insurance payments. In fact, almost 90 percent of our graduates are employed within six months of earning the associate degree, and over 94 percent are either employed or enrolled for additional education. CUNY students also stay in New York City: of those who are employed, 91 percent work in New York City, contributing to the city's economy.

While we are very grateful for the restorations in the Mayor's 2010 Executive Budget, the budget also includes continued reductions that are cause for serious concern. This includes \$25 million less in city support for the community colleges than the recommended 2009 budget. While restoring this funding is required by the Maintenance of Effort agreement, it is not the only cut. CUNY began the year with a \$7.7 million cut in operational funding, which included \$1.8 million for water payments at the community colleges, an area for which the University had not previously been responsible. The Executive Budget also eliminates funding for several crucial initiatives and areas at CUNY, including \$2.5 million for the Black Male Initiative, \$900,000 for centers and institutes, and \$400,000 for the Creative Arts Team. Taken together, these cuts total more than \$36 million. I ask for the council's assistance in restoring this much-needed funding.

I would like to note in particular the importance of the University's Black Male Initiative (BMI). At a recent hearing, the Higher Education Committee learned of the wide range of projects under way through the BMI, from mentorship programs to teacher education initiatives to graduate school preparation. Much has been accomplished since the initiative's first conference in 2006, which was inaugurated by the eminent historian Dr. John Hope Franklin, who passed away in March. As part of his distinguished career as a scholar and civic activist—for which he received the Presidential Medal of Freedom—Dr. Franklin served CUNY's Brooklyn College as chair of the history department, the first African American department chair at any university outside of historically black institutions. He wrote seminal history texts, including *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African-Americans*, and participated in the march on Selma with the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. I am very pleased that we will be able to honor Dr. Franklin's work at this fall's BMI conference, which will focus on his life and work.

I would also like to mention our immigration initiatives, which, in prior years, received funding of \$600,000. That funding was removed in FY09, and the city has not proposed including it in FY10. The University offers a comprehensive Citizenship and Immigration Project, which reaches thousands of immigrants every year. For example, just two weeks ago, our seventh annual Citizenship Now! call-in service with the New York Daily News offered free information and advice to 15,000 individual callers—bringing the total to 70,000 callers helped over a seven-year period. This overwhelming response surely indicates the need for immigration services in the city and the central role CUNY plays in meeting that need.

Given the series of budget reductions the University sustained over the past year, our Board of Trustees approved a tuition increase to begin in fall 2009. Such a decision is not made lightly, as we are well aware of our students' financial challenges, particularly those students at the community colleges. In fact, it has been six years since a tuition increase at the University. Ultimately, the University determined an amount—\$175 per

semester—that was less than had been authorized by the board, in order to reduce the burden on our community-college students.

Still, our first concern is to protect any students whose matriculation could be at risk because of a tuition increase. To that end, the Board of Trustees approved \$10 million to fund a Student Financial Aid Initiative.

The initiative aims to mitigate the effect of the tuition increase and assist those students at risk of maintaining matriculation due to higher tuition costs. I should note that students most in need—those receiving full Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) and Pell Grant awards—will not be affected by a tuition increase since their existing financial aid support will not be jeopardized and recent Pell increases will raise their support to a level above the new tuition levels. We will continue to advocate, as we have successfully in the past, for continued Pell increases at the federal level. We also greatly appreciate the council's help in restoring most of the state-recommended TAP cuts.

The special CUNY Student Financial Aid Initiative includes five components: partial tuition waivers, the largest component, to reduce the effective rate of the tuition increase by about one-third for approximately 25,000 students; a tuition payment plan to spread tuition over several months; a textbook initiative to reduce the cost of books; a student employment program to offer work-study opportunities to more students; and a program to focus on issues of hunger, nutrition, and homelessness for very low-income students. Our intention is to assist as many students as possible and allow them to continue to make steady progress toward a degree.

CUNY's Student Financial Aid Initiative is just one way to foster our students' success. We know that we must also work toward that goal through sustained investment in our community colleges. An investment program that builds strong curricular opportunities, a large core of full-time faculty, and modern facilities is essential to our ability to serve students and the city itself. For example, we have made the hiring of additional full-time faculty a priority at the University, knowing of the importance of long-term,

institutionally focused, peer-reviewed faculty to the advancement of our students. CUNY has made great gains, adding more than 1,200 new full-time faculty since 1999. But with enrollment growing at such a rapid pace, we still have a long way to go, especially at our community colleges, where part-timers still outnumber full-timers, comprising 63% of the total faculty. Investing in full-time faculty, who in turn invest in their home institutions, students, and communities, is vital to the future of our community colleges.

Our community-college capital program is also in need of serious investment. While CUNY's enrollment has dramatically increased, the amount spent to rehabilitate and modernize our facilities has not kept pace—and the need at our campuses has become urgent.

At the end of 2007, CUNY completed an important "State of Good Repair" analysis of all of its facilities. The study was conducted in partnership with the State University Construction Fund using a nationally recognized model. The results of the analysis indicated that the University's six community colleges have a severe backlog of deferred maintenance. This includes basic infrastructure needs, such as heating and ventilation systems, exterior walls, and electrical equipment.

As you know, education law requires that capital projects for the community colleges be funded 50% by the state and 50% by the city. With the recent restoration of senior-college status for Medgar Evers College for capital funding, it is no longer included in this formulation. Restoration of Medgar Evers' senior-college status has been a longtime priority for the University, and Chairperson Barron, we are very grateful to you and your committee for your support of this important change.

Currently, CUNY cannot access approximately \$160 million in state funding allocated to the community colleges due to a lack of matching city funds. In addition, the state has indicated that it will not allocate additional funds to CUNY due to the lack of a city match.

We continue to discuss this important issue with the mayor and his staff, and we ask for the council's assistance, as well. Your support was critical in enabling CUNY to finalize the funding for Fiterman Hall at Borough of Manhattan Community College, and we are deeply grateful for that help.

Let me give you a brief update on Fiterman Hall. With the exception of a few small areas, remediation is complete. The remaining areas are expected to be cleaned and ready for inspection by the regulatory agencies, including the EPA, by next week, and we expect to have all regulatory approvals in connection with the remediation within two weeks.

Deconstruction of the building will immediately follow the completion of remediation. Deconstruction is expected to take four to six months, putting the completion date somewhere between September and November of this year. By early next month, in June, we expect to finalize foundation construction contracts for the new Fiterman Hall. This will enable us to begin the first phase of the new building immediately following deconstruction. Construction of the new building is expected to take 27 months.

The University would like to move forward on several other much-needed facilities projects at the community colleges. The \$160 million allocated by the state covers critical maintenance projects, including health and safety projects; our highest priority. Each of the six community colleges has maintenance issues that need immediate attention, including the replacement of all major utilities at Bronx Community College, the replacement and upgrade of the electrical system at Queensborough Community College, the rehabilitation of 199 Chambers Street at Borough of Manhattan Community College, and the replacement of roofs and the renovation of two buildings at Kingsborough Community College.

Funding for these projects is not only essential for the colleges but has logical benefits for the city. For every dollar put in by the city, a dollar of state money is available. We simply cannot afford to leave state dollars on the table. Maintenance and construction

contracts spur the local economy during this critical time, and the city reaps the tax benefit, thereby offsetting some of its contribution. Construction is a central part of the city's economic plan, and the availability of state capital funds offers a well-timed opportunity to enhance the city's efforts. We will continue to work with both the mayor's office and the council to address the lack of matching funds. In this time of enormous growth at our community colleges, a unified city approach to leveraging state funding is essential to meeting urgent health, safety, and plant maintenance issues at our campuses.

Chairperson Weprin, Chairperson Barron, and members of the committees, we have always appreciated your support in ensuring that our community-college students receive the best education possible and that our colleges remain the principal workforce engine of this city—indeed, its very best stimulus package. In these difficult times, we again look to your leadership to champion the needs of our community colleges and their students. Thank you for your valued partnership.

Public **THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Francisca Villar

Address: 2363 Valentine Ave apt 18 10458

I represent: Bronx Community College

Address: 2015 University Ave. Bx Ny 10453

Public **THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Stephan melvin

Address: 61 Harrison

I represent: CUNY

Address: _____

Public **THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sandra May Flowers

Address: 500

I represent: Hostos college

Address: 300 Grand Concourse

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

PUBLIC

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☒ in opposition

Date: 5-15-09

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Cristian Garcia

Address: 107 AVE-D apt #2-A NY NY 10009

I represent: HOTOS C.C.

Address: 5000 BROADWAY 500 BRAD 10018

PUBLIC

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ferdinand Almodovar

Address: _____

I represent: NYPERG

Address: _____

PUBLIC

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: MAY 15, 2009

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Steve London

Address: _____

I represent: Professional Staff Congress

Address: 61 Broadway, Ste 1500, NYC 10006

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

Public

THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: May 15, 2009

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Barbara Bowen

Address: _____

I represent: Professional Staff Congress-UNNY

Address: 61 Broadway, Ste 1500, NYC 1006

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: CHANCELLOR MATTHEW

Address: GOLDSTEIN

I represent: CITY UNIVERSITY OF

Address: NEW YORK

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

Public

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 5/15/09

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Monique Lewis

Address: 380 2nd 143rd St. # 2A

I represent: Bronx Comm College / USS

Address: 2015 University Ave Bx. NY 10153

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

Public

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

☐ in favor ☒ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Viola Burgess

Address: 1150 Eastern Park Way

I represent: Hostos Community College

Address: 500 Grand Concourse

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms