



PUBLIC ADVOCATE FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Jumaane D. Williams

**STATEMENT OF PUBLIC ADVOCATE JUMAANE D. WILLIAMS
TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND
COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
OCTOBER 20, 2022**

Good afternoon,

My name is Jumaane D. Williams and I am the Public Advocate for the City of New York. I would like to thank Chair Dinowitz, Chair Farías, and members of the Committee on Higher Education and the Committee on Economic Development for the opportunity to provide a statement. As someone who is a proud product of the public school system and is a two-time graduate of CUNY's Brooklyn College, this topic is near and dear to my heart.

The City University of New York ("CUNY") has been the educational backbone of New York City for decades. CUNY serves as a powerhouse and engine of socioeconomic mobility for all New Yorkers, in particular, low-income students of more color. In a recent report published by the Third Way, ten CUNY colleges were ranked within the top 50 of colleges that provide students a pathway to economic mobility.¹ I can personally attest to the value of a CUNY education and its return on investment. This is further proven as approximately 80% of CUNY graduates remain in New York and pursue careers in the city.² This is by and large made possible because a CUNY education is one of the most affordable educations one can attain, with about 76% of graduating debt-free.³ This statistic is especially important to note because Black and Brown students make up the majority of CUNY's student population, and it is our Black and Brown students who on average owe the most student loan debt in the country.⁴

Additionally, I want to highlight how impressed I am to see the growth of workforce development programs throughout the years at CUNY. From the Service and Cultural Corps, the Inclusive Economy Initiative, and much more, it is clear that career readiness and access to work opportunities is a priority for CUNY, which I wholeheartedly support.

In 2019, I made several visits to CUNY campuses across the city, and remarked on the crucial need for enhanced funding across the board. Without an abundantly funded university system, these workforce development initiatives and programs may cease to exist. That same year, my office and I published a report, "[Addressing The Underfunding of CUNY, New York's Engine of](#)

¹ <https://www.thirdway.org/report/out-with-the-old-in-with-the-new-rating-higher-ed-by-economic-mobility>

² <https://www1.cuny.edu/mu/forum/2022/09/19/cuny-announces-expansion-of-successful-upskilling-program/>

³ <https://www1.cuny.edu/mu/forum/2022/01/31/governor-hochul-announces-cuny-formally-discontinues-practice-of-withholding-transcripts-from-students-and-grads-with-unpaid-balances/>

⁴ <https://educationdata.org/student-loan-debt-by-race>



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Mobility, Innovation, and Economic Support.” We understand that CUNY is an economic engine for our city, and it is an integral part of the city’s economic recovery process, especially to aid us beyond the current pandemic. I believe CUNY can become the go-to workforce hub for New Yorkers so long as both the city and the state ensure sustained funding. We will be doing a disservice to the millions of alumni, current students, and future students as well as the economic future of the City of New York if CUNY is not sufficiently funded.

At this moment, CUNY students are still facing the impact the pandemic had and continues to have on their academic trajectory and career paths. As we continue towards a post-pandemic and the City’s recovery, we need to provide CUNY with the support they need. CUNY can help with the recovery of the pandemic. Chancellor Félix V. Matos Rodríguez announced a goal to have CUNY as the go-to place for any industry when they are looking to hire employees by 2030, allowing them to have more exposure to the talent CUNY has to offer.⁵ CUNY has provided social and economic opportunities for students of marginalized communities for generations. It is crucial that we stand by our students and faculty. I will continue to urge the City to expand funding in different workforce development opportunities. I hope we can work together to ensure that CUNY receives more funding in order to continue providing a smooth transition for all New Yorkers into the workforce.

Thank you.

⁵ <https://www.amny.com/opinion/cuny-key-to-recovery-lifts-all-new-yorkers/>

Joint Hearing of the Committees on Higher Education and Economic Development
“Workforce Development at CUNY”

Testimony of
Lauren Andersen, University Associate Provost for
Careers and Industry Partnerships
The City University of New York
October 20, 2022

Good Afternoon, Honorable Chairs Dinowitz and Fariás and members of the City Council Committees on Higher Education and Economic Development. Thank you for the invitation to speak today on: Workforce Development at The City University of New York (CUNY).

My name is Lauren Andersen, and I have the honor of serving as the University Associate Provost for Careers & Industry Partnerships and Chief Workforce Officer at CUNY. In this capacity, I oversee a newly restructured office that was recently elevated to report directly to the Chancellor as well as the University Provost.

I am joined today on the panel by my esteemed colleagues Ken Adams, President of LaGuardia Community College, and Jane MacKillop, Dean of the School of Continuing and Professional Studies at Lehman College. We look forward to sharing an overview of the work underway at CUNY to support a thriving and inclusive workforce in New York City and to answer any questions you may have.

The CUNY Office of Careers & Industry Partnerships has two goals. The first is to ensure that more graduates of CUNY’s degree *and non-degree* programs can successfully launch and advance in careers of their choosing, more quickly, and at competitive salaries. The second is that NYC businesses and organizations can find the talent, expertise, and services they need to grow and create more job opportunities for New Yorkers.

The elevation of this office to sit within the Chancellor’s Cabinet is a reflection of the role that CUNY plays as a leading engine of inclusive economic recovery in New York City.

New York’s recovery must be equitable. It has to lift all New Yorkers, particularly communities of color and residents who were underrepresented in careers long before the pandemic. No other institution is better positioned to lift up all New Yorkers than CUNY.

Advancing economic mobility at scale is in our DNA. It was instilled 175 years ago with the founding of CUNY’s progenitor - a school called the Free Academy. It was created to educate and provide access, equity and opportunity to people from families of modest backgrounds and qualify them for “usefulness hereafter”.

Through decades and generations, CUNY has shaped and transformed the city’s professional and middle class. It has gained a national reputation for propelling more graduates up the economic ladder than all Ivys, Stanford, Carnegie Mellon, and MIT combined.

And now CUNY is committed to transforming itself into the higher education system our city needs **today** *and in the decades to come*.

Central to this transformation is ensuring that even more CUNY students have the exposure, preparation, experience, and connections needed to fuel an inclusive and thriving workforce.

As members of your two committees know, there is no silver bullet to transforming talent pipelines across this city. Together, CUNY is working with public, private, and non-profit sector partners to advance a constellation of BIG, ambitious aspirations that aim to transform the way we do business at our core, not just around the margins where it is easy.

Guiding Principles

Before diving into these ambitious initiatives, it's worth sharing the four key principles that drive CUNY's approach to workforce development – **equity, partnership, sustainability, and modernization.**

- First, when it comes to **Equity** – CUNY is committed to meeting New Yorkers where they are. CUNY's 25 campuses support 2,806 academic (for credit) program. This includes 670 programs in STEM fields which constitute many critical sectors of the City's economy.

Over the past five years, CUNY has deliberately invested in growing the number of degrees awarded in these areas. For example, CUNY has successfully doubled the number of TECH bachelors degrees awarded – one year ahead of our five-year goal.

Additionally, CUNY serves over 160,000 students through non-credit-bearing certificate programs, including industry-recognized certifications and microcredentials designed and delivered in partnership with employers.

Whether a New Yorker is just starting off on a career path, or looking to gain a specific skill to advance in their chosen line of work, CUNY has solutions to meet their needs.

Beyond meeting students where they are, CUNY is also committed to identifying and working to close disparities in career outcomes among our graduates. This includes not just disparities observed by race, gender, and ethnicity, but also other key factors such as socio-economic and transfer status.

- **Partnership** is also essential. Ensuring New Yorkers have the skills needed to thrive and drive a healthy economy can't be achieved by any one entity alone. At CUNY we know we must partner with industry, government, non-profits, and employers of all sizes and sectors, in all boroughs, to move the needle.

As part of this effort, CUNY is thrilled to work closely with the NYC Economic Development Corporation and numerous City and State agencies to achieve this mission. For example, CUNY has a long history of collaborating with EDC on Cybersecurity including launching a new degree program at CCNY.

- Even the most successful interventions will not make a dent if they aren't **sustainable**. Ensuring CUNY students are prepared for the workforce is not a one-time project, it is

core to our mission. That's why we are pursuing investments and policies that are not only short-term programs to meet the needs of employers today, but also the long-term infrastructure CUNY needs to evolve as jobs evolve over time.

Additionally, CUNY's philanthropic partners have provided tremendous financial support to pilot effective and scalable workforce interventions. Philanthropy's role in workforce development to support experimentation, and successful experiments is becoming embedded practice at CUNY so that New York City can maintain its place at the forefront of industry and innovation.

We're also working with industry to ensure that taxpayers are not carrying the costs of building a talent pipeline alone. For example, 8 CUNY campuses have partnered with Amazon to provide access to degrees for 30,000 workers, with Amazon footing the bill.

- Lastly, **deploying modern tools** will be necessary if CUNY is to equip and connect New Yorkers to careers *at scale*. With over 245,000 degree-seeking and 160,000 non-degree seeking students, CUNY needs modern technology to amplify the effect of our faculty, staff and employer partners in preparing students for the workforce.

Moreover, given that 50% of CUNY students work while they are in school and have other demands on their time, career preparation services and connections to employers must be accessible on demand. We must ensure that CUNY has the modern systems needed to make this a reality.

CUNY's Approach to Strengthening Workforce Outcomes

Driven by these key principles, CUNY is pursuing a holistic approach to preparing students for the workforce:

First, CUNY is focused on increasing EXPOSURE to - and PREPARATION for - potential careers from day one.

- Before students reach CUNY's doors, we're partnering with NYC Public Schools – through initiatives like *Future Ready* - to increase awareness of potential pathways to careers through **career-connected learning**.
- Once at CUNY students benefit from faculty-led initiatives like the *Career Success Fellows*, which aim to **integrate career aspirations into the classroom** to help students connect their coursework to the future they desire.
- We're also ensuring programs deliver skills aligned with industry needs by investing in an **industry-campus backbone** through initiatives like:
 - *CUNY Futures in Finance* – created in partnership with Bloomberg LP, Centerbridge Partners, and Goldman Sachs and

- the *CUNY Inclusive Economy Initiative*, which this year will embed industry specialists and hybrid academic/career advisors in 17 departments focused on tech, healthcare, and climate resiliency with support from Mayor Adams.
- Through programs like *Tech-in-Residence Corps*, industry is also recruited and trained to *teach* for-credit courses on rapidly evolving in-demand topics like Blockchain and cybersecurity. Over 3,000 students across 10 campuses have been taught by adjuncts from companies including *LinkedIn*, *Google*, and *Etsy*.
- And this work is not only focused on degree-seeking students.
 - CUNY just launched a second round of the *CUNY Upskilling Initiative*, which will provide over \$2M dollars to CUNY **adult and continuing education departments** to equip over 2,000 New Yorkers with in-demand skills at low or no cost to students. This new round included specific funds to support employer engagement and developing credit articulations for selected courses.

Second, awareness and skills are not enough - students also need EXPERIENCE to be competitive for high-potential jobs.

- As many have heard him say, our Chancellor hopes to be known as the Patron Saint of Internships. We know that CUNY computer science majors who participated in an internship at 3x more likely to have a job at graduation, but currently only 9% of students participate in a PAID internship. More must be done to expand these opportunities.
 - This summer CUNY *Career Launch* – a university-wide internship program supported by Mayor Adams – to connect 2,000 students to \$20/hr jobs – received 11,000 student applications.
 - 88% of enrolled students had never had an paid internship related to their career goals.
 - 274 employers participated.
- Thanks to a new \$4M investment from Governor Hochul in the FY23 budget, we will be expanding these internship opportunities university-wide this coming spring through a new *Spring Forward* program.
- Internships aren't the only solution. Through partnership with the NY Jobs CEO Council, five CUNY colleges have also launch paid apprenticeship programs within their Applied Associates of Science degrees. Thanks to these collaborations with *EY*, *Mastercard* and other leading companies, students begin to work and earn as *part of their degree path*.
- But more needs to be done to meet the scale of demand for these opportunities.

Finally, CUNY must work to create proactive CONNECTIONS to career opportunities.

Over 40% of CUNY students identify as first in their families to go to college. Many lack the professional networks or family connections needed to understand and break into high-growth sectors.

CUNY must, therefore, make these proactive connections to employers for our students.

- We doing this by making it easier for employers to navigate to the right destination within the CUNY system, by expanding the “front door” for industry through a new Industry Support Hub, located within the Office of Careers and Industry Partnerships.
- We’re partnering directly with the NY Jobs CEO Council which has pledged to hire 25,000 CUNY students by 2030.
- And we’re working closely with City Agencies to meet the demands of the public workforce. For instance, nearly 1/3 of the City’s teachers are CUNY graduates – a pipeline we are actively growing in partnership with NYC DOE to meet the needs of our Public School system.

Measuring Success

Ultimately, the success of these initiatives will be measured not just by how many students are served, but by **how many students are consistently employed at market-rate salaries following graduation, in careers that they aspire to.**

We look forward to working with the City Council to bolster these workforce development outcomes for CUNY Students and thank you for your interest and support on this critical topic. I now will yield the floor to my colleague President Adams.

The New York City Council
Committee on Economic Development
Jointly with the Committee on Higher Education
Testimony for Oversight: Workforce Development Opportunities at CUNY

Gerarda M. Shields
Dean, School of Technology and Design
NYC College of Technology, CUNY
October 20, 2022

Hearing link: <https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/MeetingDetail.aspx?ID=999506&GUID=FFED46DC-F424-4F4D-ADE3-98F25D853BEA&Options=info%7C&Search=>

Testimony

Good afternoon members of the Committee on Economic Development, my fellow CUNY colleagues and engaged community stakeholders.

My name is Gerarda Shields. I serve as Dean of the School of Technology and Design at New York City College of Technology, part of the City University of New York (CUNY) – likely better known to many of you as City Tech.

To share a tagline that my Communications Design colleague, Prof. Douglas Davis coined, City Tech is the “Public Path to Possible”. “Possible” takes on many meanings for our students. For some, it is the opportunity to experience upward economic mobility for themselves and their families. For others, it is the path entrepreneurship or creating a minority, woman or veteran owned business. CUNY is a national engine of economic mobility according to a 2020 Brookings “Middle Class Mobility” report, and City Tech ranked 10th of 1,600 colleges nationwide. This is a testament to City Tech's mission of providing broad access to high quality technological and professional education for a diverse urban population. We are currently celebrating our 25th year as a Hispanic Serving Institution with a third of our students being of Hispanic heritage. In addition, over a quarter of our students are Black and 21% are of Asian decent. Our industry partners and employers celebrate our diverse student population and seek to mirror this composition in their own organizations.

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) Brooklyn featured our first graduating class of Architecture students in their fall 2022 publication of Pylon (show the feature on the students). The diversity speaks for itself.

For over a decade now, we have worked in partnership with the Brooklyn Navy Yard to support their 500+ businesses in the technology and industry sectors. For example, nearly 200 of our

students engage in short-term experiential learning opportunities, internships or are employed at the Navy Yard annually. The Navy Yard has, and we expect it to continue to be, a source of thriving employment for our 3000+ yearly graduates. On behalf of City Tech, please allow me to express our gratitude to the Council for their most recent financial support to strengthen the collaboration with the Navy Yard to engage our students and faculty more directly with the talent there.

New York City's Department of Buildings, in concert with City Tech, created DOB Scholars over 4 years ago. Housed at City Tech, DOB Scholars trains and provides professional development for cohorts of 40 CUNY students each spring with priority hiring the following summer. After the first cohort (which had zero attrition in the 10-week program), the DOB created part-time positions specifically for our students because of their unique credentials (ex: OSHA 30) coupled with their associate degree in construction management technology. NYC Local Law 196 Training Requirements for NYC Construction requires the OSHA 30 hour safety certification for anyone on an active construction site. This certification is conducted in partnership with City Tech's School of Continuing Education.

Since 2010, NYS Department of Transportation has hired over a dozen City Tech students each year for their Transportation Construction Inspectors (TCI) internship program. Last year 35 City Tech interns were hired (out of 76 total) and 17 of these interns were hired full-time. (This year is 30 interns hired.) TCI's assist in monitoring and inspecting construction projects during the construction season that begins in April, typically lasts 18 months and pays above the minimum wage. City Tech has greatest number of interns because they possess the American Concrete Industry (ACI) certification to inspect concrete pours that other institutions do not offer.

Our reach goes beyond the built environment and into the digital experience. City Tech's programs answer the call of Industry 4.0 with our coursework, credentials and 2- to 4-year programs in cyber security, cloud computing, additive manufacturing, augmented reality, big data and analytics, autonomous robots, and simulation.

Last year, EY sought out our computer information systems students to hire them upon completion of their associate (2 year) degree with the benefit offering flexibility in their work schedules to encourage the completion of their bachelor degrees in either data science or computer systems at City Tech.

EY is just one example, but we all need to reframe how we view digital technology because it permeates all industries and professions. Our technology can do the work faster, more efficiently and precisely, retains a wealth of knowledge (just ask Alexa or Siri) and doesn't need a lunchbreak. So, what is it that we as humans still bring to the table?

Creativity. Critical Thinking. Craft.

City Tech is proud of its technical and vocational roots, and we continue to instruct and train our students on how to think differently, find solutions and work with our own hands to better appreciate and understand the technology that makes our designs more precise, more efficient and faster to build. Workforce development at City Tech and our sibling institutions at CUNY takes on many shapes and sizes whether it is microcredentials or certifications through Continuing Education or degree programs in the academic departments to instill the creativity, critical thinking and craft needed for Industry 4.0.

To bring this full-circle, Wednesday evening City Tech's department of Construction Management & Civil Engineering Technology hosted their annual jobs fair. There was no shortage of full-time or part-time jobs among the 30 employers representing both the public and private sectors. City Tech's ties to the local economy are strong, and we want to ensure that we continue to serve its workforce development needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to address you today and for your continued support in making City Tech, and all CUNY, The Public Path to Possible.

Testimony of Eli Dvorkin
Editorial & Policy Director, Center for an Urban Future

**Before the NYC Council Committee on Economic Development &
Committee on Higher Education**

Strengthening CUNY's Vital Role as a Launchpad into Tech Careers

October 20, 2022

Good afternoon.

My name is Eli Dvorkin and I'm the editorial and policy director at the Center for an Urban Future, an independent research organization focused on building a stronger and more equitable economy in New York.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

I know much of today's hearing is focused on CUNY's offerings for adult and continuing education students. These programs provide an important set of opportunities for working New Yorkers to gain new skills, earn credentials aligned with real labor market needs, access promising career pathways, and boost their earnings. CUNY's continuing education programs also face challenges with declining enrollment due to the pandemic, as well as the unique financial barriers that affect prospective continuing education students who have few options for financial aid—and which could be addressed with new scholarship programs specifically designed for short-term career training programs at CUNY.

However, I'm here today to talk about another aspect of CUNY's role in New York City's talent development ecosystem: as a launchpad into the city's fast-growing technology sector.

Over the past decade, New York City's tech sector has added 114,000 jobs, becoming the city's most consistent source of new middle- and high-wage jobs. But even as demand surges, New Yorkers of color and women remain strikingly underrepresented among the city's tech workforce. To create a more equitable economy, this will have to change.

Fortunately, no institution better positioned to accelerate efforts to expand access to tech careers than CUNY. CUNY graduates more than 9,000 students annually with science, technology, engineering, and math degrees, including nearly 4,000 students with technology degrees. Approximately half of these students are Black and/or Hispanic, and roughly 71 percent of all CUNY students come from households earning less than \$40,000 per year.

However, New York has only just begun to harness CUNY's remarkable potential to serve as the city's largest and most equitable springboard into technology careers.

Today, most tech companies in the city employ few if any CUNY grads. In fact, just half of all CUNY computer science graduates from 2017 to 2021 were employed in their field of study one year after graduation—and these graduates earn 31 percent less than the average entry-level worker in a computing occupation.

Our research suggests that one of the main drivers of these uneven outcomes is CUNY's internship gap. Even as more students are earning undergraduate computer science degrees at CUNY than at any other university in New York City, they find themselves in fierce competition for a limited supply of internships. Just 10 percent of all CUNY students report participating in a paid internship during their college careers—an especially serious problem for students aspiring to jobs in tech, where internships are practically essential.

To seize on these opportunities and address these persistent barriers to career success, city leaders will need to double down on what's already working. Fortunately, New York City has launched several successful programs that are helping CUNY students pursue technology degrees and break into careers, but these initiatives still serve only a fraction of the students who could benefit from them. For example, 75 percent of participants in CUNY's Tech Prep program report landing a job or internship within five months of completion. But Tech Prep serves just 170 students annually—less than 1 percent of all CUNY students pursuing technology degrees. The \$20 million CUNY 2X Tech initiative has only reached 7 of 25 colleges so far, with no community colleges served to date, and is now up for renewal, or at risk of ending. And while CUNY students who participate in the city's Tech Talent Pipeline Residency internship program are more than three times as likely to secure a full-time job after graduation compared to their peers, the program has only served about 750 students over the past five years. Compounding these capacity challenges, our research finds that most CUNY colleges have no more than two or three career counselors per 10,000 students.

Creating a more equitable economy in New York City will require bold new efforts to expand access to the well-paying jobs in the city's ever-growing tech sector—and CUNY is the institution best positioned to help city leaders realize these goals at scale.

In the coming days, the Center for an Urban Future will be publishing a new report entirely focused on seizing this opportunity, including more than a dozen concrete recommendations for fully harnessing CUNY as a launchpad into tech careers.

For now, please allow me to mention three specific recommendations:

1. **Build on the track record of CUNY 2X Tech by launching a new CUNY Tech Success initiative to sustain and scale these efforts, including CUNY Tech Prep, the Tech-in-Residence Corps, and the Tech Talent Pipeline Residency internship program.** The most successful of these programs should be baselined in the city's annual budget, with additional funding allocated to expand these initiatives to the colleges that lack them today, including City Tech and most of CUNY's community colleges.
2. **Support a major expansion of career services and employer relations staff at every CUNY college.** There is a lot more that CUNY needs to do to strengthen career services and employer engagement across every college in the system, but CUNY cannot do this alone. City leaders should work together to specifically support a major expansion of career services and employer relations professionals on campus with the goal of bringing down the sky-high ratios of career counselors to students and making CUNY much more accessible to employers.

3. **Partner with tech industry leaders to launch 2,500 new paid tech industry internships by 2025, with a focus on recruiting from CUNY.** The City Council can help spearhead a major new expansion of paid internships in tech—including by helping to scale existing models like Break Through Tech’s innovative Sprinternship program and Company Ventures’ CUNY summer internship; investing in youth apprenticeship programs aligned with tech careers; and partnering on expanded participation from the tech sector in SYEP, among other opportunities.

For much more on these and other ideas, please check out our website at nycfuture.org, and thank you for the opportunity to testify today.



DARE TO DO MORE

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**Joint Hearing of the Committees on Higher Education and Economic Development
"Workforce Development at CUNY"
New York City Council**

**Testimony of
Kenneth Adams, President of LaGuardia Community College
The City University of New York**

Good afternoon, Honorable Chairs Dinowitz and Fariás and members of the City Council Committees on Higher Education and Economic Development. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today about Workforce Development at The City University of New York (CUNY).

My name is Kenneth Adams, and I am the President of LaGuardia Community College, located in Long Island City, Queens.

LaGuardia's Adult & Continuing Education Division is the largest workforce development organization in CUNY. We serve a diverse group of students from across Queens and beyond through more than 140 adult education courses and workforce training programs.

In FY 22, our Adult & Continuing Education Division served 9,434 students, most of them low-income Queens residents, many of them immigrants. These individuals come to LaGuardia seeking to improve their English, earn their GED, or learn new technical skills in order to get a living-wage job and support their families. Of this total for the prior fiscal year, about 2,600 were young people enrolled in LaGuardia's Summer Youth Employment program.

Our workforce training programs are designed in collaboration with employer partners who serve on our advisory boards; our training is developed to teach high-demand skills and competencies needed by NYC employers. Most of LaGuardia's workforce training programs are in Healthcare, Technology, and Construction.

Before taking a workforce training course, many of our students begin with an Adult Education program. Given that 47% of the residents of Queens were born outside the US, one of our most popular programs is the TELC – The English Language Center – where we teach several levels of ESL (English as a Second Language). The TELC at LaGuardia is the largest English language program in New York City. Since 1971, we have served over 275,000 students from over 80 countries.

Let me take a moment to briefly mention some examples of workforce development programs that we are currently running:

1. LaGuardia, along with Hostos Community College in the Bronx, recently launched an initiative to help low-income communities in Queens and The Bronx that were impacted by the COVID-19

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pandemic. The NYC Accelerated Workforce Recovery Hub will provide workforce training for high-demand jobs for at least 400 New Yorkers over an initial 18-month pilot period. By helping our colleges expand support services to connect graduates to jobs and higher education, the initiative is expected to ultimately impact over 3,000 students. The Hub is funded by a seed grant of \$1.65 million from the New York Community Trust.

2. LaGuardia's new ACE scholarship program is a model at CUNY. Using funds provided by the LaGuardia Foundation we provide scholarships to low-income New Yorkers that seek workforce training. This is essential since government student financial aid (Federal Pell and NYS TAP) has historically been limited to college students in degree programs. Students in non-credit workforce training programs have to pay cash tuition. Not anymore at LaGuardia, where we have provided over \$1 million in scholarships to students in ESL, GED and workforce training programs, such as Pharm Tech, Plumbing, and Electronic Medical Records.
3. LaGuardia is excited about Speaker Adams strong support for CUNY Reconnect. CUNY Reconnect is in alignment with our Credits for Success Initiative. We launched this initiative in February 2022 to encourage working-age New Yorkers with some college but no degree to return to CUNY and continue their educations. Think about this for a moment: Nearly 700,000 working-age New Yorkers, most of them Hispanic and Black, started college and earned some credits, but did not complete the requirements for a degree. Through the Credits for Success initiative students with prior college experience enrolling at LaGuardia will be able to receive academic credit for knowledge and skills acquired outside the classroom while they have been working, or serving in the armed forces. Former CUNY students also may be eligible to have their outstanding tuition balances forgiven. The program is supported by a \$1 million grant from the Robin Hood Foundation. Funding for student debt relief is provided by the LaGuardia Foundation.
4. The Cyber Analyst Certificate Program is a newly created program at LaGuardia. It is designed to meet the growing demand for cyber security professionals. The program is taught by experts who work in the field. It trains students interested in computer networking and repair to a vital role in protecting organizations from breaches in cyber security, and helps them launch their careers as a cyber analysts.

Thank you for your interest in CUNY and our workforce development programs. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you.

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**Joint Hearing of the Committees on Higher Education
and Economic Development**

Workforce Development at CUNY

**Testimony of Jane MacKillop, Ph.D.
Dean of the School of Continuing & Professional Studies
Lehman College, CUNY**

October 20, 2022

Good Afternoon, Honorable Chairs Dinowitz and Farías and members of the City Council Committees on Higher Education and Economic Development. Thank you for the invitation to speak today on Workforce Development at The City University of New York (CUNY).

My name is Jane MacKillop, and I have the honor of serving as Dean of the School of Continuing and Professional Studies at Lehman College, the only senior CUNY College in the Bronx and a Hispanic and Minority Serving Institution. Lehman College is a recognized driver of economic mobility, and its success has most recently been lauded by Degree Choices, which ranked Lehman No. 1 nationwide among 300 **“Best Hispanic-Serving Institutions”** for 2022. U.S. News & World Report named Lehman No. 6 among nearly 200 regional colleges in the North on the magazine's list of **Top Performers on Social Mobility**, and ranked in the top 25 on its list of **Top Public Schools**.

It is my great pleasure to tell you about the Lehman College School of Continuing and Professional Studies. Our mission is to create educational and training opportunities, as well as entrepreneurship and business development, that will enhance the economic security and expansion of our community. The Bronx is one of the poorest counties in New York State, whose health and economic outcomes need all of us working together to remedy.

Lehman College's School of Continuing and Professional Studies is committed to our diverse Bronx community and to working with all our partner agencies, colleges, community-based organizations, unions, economic development organizations and businesses. We are the bridge between the college (and by extension CUNY) and the Bronx. We fulfill Lehman College's fourth strategic plan goal, that is, commitment to community, a goal which undergirds the college's strategic direction on workforce development and upward mobility.

Lehman College's School of Continuing and Professional Studies comprises four interconnected programs and an offsite location: CUNY on the Concourse. The focus of our education and workforce development programs is in three main areas: health, business and IT. Before the pandemic lockdown we served around 13,000 community residents per year, about half of the total number attending the college. The Continuing Education programs provide tuition-based preparation for certificates and licenses. In 2021 (Jan 1 – Dec 31) 3,406 people completed training to take and pass certificates in the CE program, 151 in Workforce, and 107 in

Upskilling, totaling 3,557. Workforce Education manages the grant and contract funded training programs; the SBA-funded Small Business Development Center supports start-ups and small businesses with access to capital and business support, and the Adult Degree Program enables adults who have some college but no degree to get across the finish line and complete what they have started. Our programs are set up in such a way that they each serve an existing particular need, but are able to expand to meet emerging needs. For example, an entrepreneur seeking help from the Small Business Development Center will get access to capital and advice on how to grow the business, but if they then realize that they need to upgrade their technology skills they may take a Continuing Education course or two. They may see that a degree would enhance the job prospects of their child or another family member and can then complete their degree through the Adult Degree Program. A world of opportunities opens up.

Located in the old Alexander's department store building, CUNY on the Concourse is a business development center, which has served the Bronx for over 20 years. It supports economic development in the Bronx with 11 classrooms, computer and health labs, offices, conference rooms, a testing center and a weekly newsletter, which is emailed to a list of 45,000 businesses and individuals. The college recently upgraded the space by creating HyFlex classrooms, which make hybrid (in-person and remote) instruction possible. Since 2015 the Bronx Business Tech Center at CUNY on the Concourse has been funded through an allocation from the City Council. Providing training in AR/VR technology, other IT training and

supporting the Bronx Business Tech Incubator clients. The City Council allocation has also supported an innovative program, the Small Business Internship Program, in which students are trained in practical skills such as social media marketing, creating a web site, Excel and PPT (4 credits) and partner with a local small business (which is also supported by the SBDC), where they do a four-week paid internship. This is a virtuous circle of support and learning which may result in employment for the students, but always provides work experience. As you heard from Associate Provost Anderson this is an example of CUNY students having the exposure, preparation, experience, and connections needed to fuel an inclusive and thriving workforce.

Another example of this virtuous circle is the Tech Talent Pipeline/CUNY2X which trained and placed in internships over 160 students; **61%** of students landed job offers between graduation and three months after, the average starting salary was **\$89K**, and students have been employed at Apple, Amex, Home Depot and Zillow at annual salaries of over \$100K.

COTC hosts a number of grants and contracts including the **Verizon Community Grant of \$100,000 in 2020-21**. The Tech Center supported the Tech Incubator clients and other NYC small businesses by offering a free Business Technology Mentorship program in emerging technologies. The program was offered to 10 cohorts of small businesses (comprising 2 cohorts each at a CUNY college in each of the boroughs). The training was delivered remotely over 8 weeks.

From its launch in October 2020 to the successful completion on 11/3/2021 the mentorship program served 214 businesses. During the training participants learned to use technology to shift their business model to meet the needs of clients while finding new sources of revenue. To complement this knowledge, businesses were matched with a mentor in an organized mentorship group, where they were coached through the selection and implementation of these valuable technologies over a period of three to six months.

Another grant we received to assist businesses was the SBS funded **NY Means Business**, funded at **\$450,000** from **2020** to **2022**. At the onset of the pandemic, it was apparent that many NYC small businesses and their employees needed technical training, such as digital literacy and safety training to adapt and survive during the COVID-19 global pandemic. The focus was on businesses in communities hardest hit by COVID19 pandemic such as MWBEs. The funding enabled us to provide digital skills training for 149 small businesses and 348 employees affected by the pandemic.

Lehman has multiple contracts with agencies and community-based organizations, which result in training at least 200 students annually in medical fields (mostly out-of-school youth, high school students and home health aide upgrades). For example, contracts with **New Jewish Home and East Side House**, totaled **\$300,000** in **2021-22**.

Beginning summer 2022, Lehman, in partnership with the SBS and NYACH, launched the **NCLEX-RN ELL Training Program**, with a grant of **\$970,965** to enable internationally trained nurses to improve their English language skills and obtain licensure and employment as Registered Nurses in New York City. The goals of the training program are to improve English language communication skills for internationally trained nurses and support preparedness for the NCLEX examination; to improve access to job opportunities for underemployed and unemployed New Yorkers, and to strengthen a pipeline of trained Registered Nurses to address New York City's nurse shortage.

The **Upskilling Initiative (\$302,633)** at Lehman College was created through a grant from private and public funders administered by CUNY Central Office. It is aimed at supporting community members and students by providing relevant, short-duration, skills-based training to meet NYC's employment demand for qualified workers in industry's high growth areas. The scholarship is open to individuals who seek to advance their careers through education and training, especially those who are unemployed, or those seeking a career change, including alumni, recent graduates and rising seniors as well as community residents. Undergraduates are eligible to receive credit for the courses. The Upskilling Program to date has served a total of **680** participants, **350** Lehman College students, and **330** community residents. Upskilling has run 34 courses, such as Introduction to "R" Programming, Introduction To Social Media, Introduction to Cryptocurrency & Crypto Assets, and Practical Application of Human Resources

Management. Community residents and undergraduates learn together in the same classroom, which provides a model for how credit and non-credit courses can be offered jointly.

The **Bronx Regional Small Business Development Center**, annually funded by the Small Business Administration (currently at **\$340,000**), has served the Bronx since 1988. Between October 1, 2021, and September 30, 2022, the Bronx SBDC served 743 businesses, saved 659 jobs and created 47 jobs for a total of 706 jobs and accessed **\$17,754,962** in economic impact.

Early in 2022 it became clear that the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act, passed in March 2021, was going to affect NYS by opening up a previously illegal and prohibited agricultural and retail business sector. In January, Lehman offered a Science of Cannabis certificate course in partnership with McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, an internationally recognized center of expertise in the study of marijuana. Following a short course on Cannabis in New York, seven people enrolled in the Science of Cannabis course in Canada in September.

In spring 2022, Borough of Manhattan Community College and Lehman applied for funding from DOL (\$2 million over 3 years) for the first Cannabis Workforce and Business Development training program. This is for all interested, but specifically for justice-involved people planning to take advantage of social equity licenses. CUNY's Cannabis Workforce and Business Development Training

Program includes training in customer service, becoming harvester/cultivator, and security in three job titles:

- Security Guard
- Dispensary Associate
- Advanced Manufacturing Agent

provided by BMCC, with follow-up job readiness training and career advisement services.

Lehman College will work with entrepreneurs who wish to start and manage cannabis-related businesses and the program will be housed at CUNY on the Concourse. To date 30 legacy entrepreneurs have applied for licenses through the Bronx Defenders and the successful license recipients (likely 10-12) will be assisted by staff at COTC in setting up and managing their businesses. This is the first round of licenses and we anticipate that more will be forthcoming in other areas (such as delivery and coops) beside dispensaries. Approximately 200 licenses have already been granted by NY State for agriculture. This is indeed a brave new world and one where the restitution goals and mission are laudable.

These are some examples of the four key principles that drive CUNY's approach to workforce development – **equity, partnership, sustainability, and modernization**. I would like to add another key principle, which is **innovation**. We are nimble in addressing emerging opportunities in economic and professional development. We think outside of the box, as was shown in our response to the

COVID lockdown by offering free, grant-funded training for small businesses and the virtuous circles of internships for students linked to employers.

Thank you for the opportunity to describe Lehman's workforce development programs.

Hello, my name is Arthur Samuels and I am the Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director of MESA Charter High School in Bushwick.

Last , the Mayor's office put out a report indicating that up to a quarter of New Yorkers ages 18-24 are neither working, nor in school. 80% of these so-called "disconnected youth" are young people of color, like the students we serve at MESA. The financial cost to the city is hundreds of millions of dollars. The social and emotional cost of this lost potential is, of course, incalculable.

But 75% of disconnected youth have a high school diploma. That means there's an institution they're tied to. Schools spend four years developing relationships with kids and building trust with families. We can leverage these relationships to develop a gradual, warm handoff from schools to post-secondary institutions, either colleges or workforce training programs. But the system tosses this relationship aside. Schools are neither funded to do this work nor evaluated on our outcomes. In other words, your high school is the most important institution in your life for four years, but once you get your diploma, you're someone else's problem. This is an inefficient, ineffective setup, and it's hurting our youth.

At MESA, we're working with our alumni who have struggled to help them enter high-quality workforce development programs. For example, one young man dropped out of college to stock shelves at CVS for \$15/hour. We helped him become a fellow at the Marcy Lab School. This is a free coding bootcamp for low-income students. Think of the Flatiron School but for our kids. When he graduates this fall, he'll be placed in a six-figure tech job. Another one never made it to college and was unemployed. We helped him enter an IT training program with our partner, St. Nick's Community Alliance. He is now an entry-level technician installing desktops, laptops, and printers in schools throughout Brooklyn. We've helped students launch financially sustainable, personally satisfying careers in IT, the medical field, construction, and more.

This year, we've launched our first cohort of what we're calling "13th Grade." We have a group of 15 alumni from the class of 2021 and 2022 who are out of school and are either unemployed or underemployed. They participate in a six week, twelve-workshop bootcamp built around career exploration and readiness, figuring out their proper pathway and developing the technical skills—such as resume writing—to pursue it. We're paying them \$500 apiece if they complete the program, because their time is valuable. At the end of the program, they will either re-enroll in college—with a better sense of where they are headed—or enter one of our workforce program partners.

Schools can play a major role in supporting young people after graduation, but we need the resources to staff this work, and institutional partners within the city. I encourage the council to think more about how high schools can play a greater role in re-connecting our youth. Thank you.

As an engine for the lives of working-class New Yorkers, CUNY has served as a mechanism for social transformation for millions. The CUNY system serves students seeking nearly every kind of higher education credential across a myriad of campuses, but one type of institution is particularly important, and largely underfunded: the community college. In the throes of multi-decade economic, political, and health crises, the resilience of the CUNY system and students have weathered austerity to programs, staff, and campus conditions. Given the demographics of our student body, it is many of the Black and Latino students who face the brunt of cuts; something entirely unavoidable and creating sunk costs for us, the students.

For many of us in the CUNY community college system, we have seen our professors and the staff adapt again-and-again to the conditions of COVID and the aftermath. Before the crisis, there was already a downward trend in the student body enrollment (locally and nationally) harming schools; that trend has continued bearing an immense opportunity cost for the future, both for individuals and broader society. CUNY's community colleges are the linkages to the rest of the system, and largely where much of the most necessary, skills-based education is happening for working class New Yorkers.

If the City Council is considering the future of workforce development and CUNY—particularly the budgetary needs of the institution—we ask you to seriously consider the community college system. Now is the moment for the city to invest more in our community college system and to meaningfully connect with the working-class New Yorkers who would benefit the most from enrollment. It is critical to create as many pathways for economic advancement as possible and community colleges are critical.

New York City Council Committee on Higher Education and the Committee on Economic Development

Thursday, October 20, 2022 at 1:00 p.m.
Council Chambers at City Hall, New York, NY 10007

Dwana Franklin-Davis

Good afternoon, Chairperson Dinowitz and members of the Committee on Higher Education. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony before you on Workforce Development Opportunities at the City University of New York. My name is Dwana Franklin-Davis, and I am the CEO of Reboot Representation. We are a coalition of 21 companies in the technology space that have come together in support of our mission to double the number of Black, Latino, and Native American women graduating with computing baccalaureate degrees by 2025.

The coalition was born on the heels of a report that identified the lack of investment in Black, Latina, and Native American women in computing. For brevity, we use the acronym BLNA for Black, Latino, and Native American. In 2017, we surveyed 32 technology companies representing \$500 billion in revenue and \$500 million in philanthropic giving. Those organizations were only spending 5% of those philanthropic dollars on women and girls in tech. Less than 0.1% went towards BLNA women and girl in tech. In 2017, that .1% equated to \$335,000. We also examined who was graduating with computing degrees through the National Center for Education Statistics Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code 11, Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services. BLNA women represented 4% of the graduating population. That number was down by more than 33% over the previous decade and was not projected to double to 8% until the year 2052 without interventions. The companies that participate in the coalition know that no one company created the inequities we see in the tech space today, and no one company can fix it alone. The power of their collective action and pooled investment through the coalition allow us to invest in nonprofit programs and initiatives, while making systemic changes that will impact the least represented in the technology space.

As our country and city continue to recover from the pandemic and as we brace for the looming recession, CUNY is prime to focus on workforce development and enable our citizens not only to thrive, but also help New York lead the global economy. The last 2 years have shown us that tech transcends industry and all pathways through the schools should reflect that. The diversity of CUNY schools and their programs should reflect the communities they serve and the rich diversity of this city. In order to understand the baseline foundation and design program and initiatives with this goal in mind, CUNY must collect and disaggregate data by both race and gender at the very least. Treating students as a monolith will be beneficial to few and harmful to many. Lastly, consider the wrap-around services that will enable your CUNY students to complete their programs and successfully launch into the workforce.

Thank you for your time. I am excited to answer your questions on this topic as it relates to my experience and expertise.



Testimony of John Williams, Co-Founder and CEO and Siobhan Cavanaugh, Project Manager, Career Exploration at Reel Works before the NYC Council Committees on Higher Education and Economic Development

Oversight Hearing: Workforce Development Opportunities at CUNY

October 20, 2022

JCW:

My name is John Williams and I am the Co-Founder & CEO of Reel Works, a Brooklyn based youth arts and career development nonprofit that has mentored and trained thousands of young filmmakers citywide through in school, after school, CASA and workforce programs for over 20 years. Today our testimony is about MediaMKRS, Reel Works' partnership with The Mayor's Office of Media & Entertainment and CUNY to build a media workforce that reflects the talent, drive and diversity of New York City.

SC:

My name is [Siobhan Cavanagh](#), and I am the Career Exploration Program Manager of MediaMKRS, overseeing our internship program which will place one hundred CUNY students into paid media internships in 2023.

JCW:

Through MediaMKRS, CUNY Students explore careers through multiple paid internships over 2-3 years combined with workforce readiness training, 1:1 coaching and industry-backed credentials.

We partner with over 80 employers including major studios like Paramount, Warner Bros. Discovery, Universal, Netflix and Amazon.

What began as a work readiness initiative has become a jobs program with 87% of our graduates securing employment within twelve months of graduation.

Today we are seeking new funding to expand MediaMKRS to reach an additional 100 CUNY students annually.

SC:

To date, MediaMKRS has served 154 CUNY Students from 17 campuses who have completed nearly 300 paid internships.

Students like Fridah Gonzalez, a Brooklyn College Student who wanted to work in media, but was not sure where to start.



Fridah joined MediaMKRS in 2020. In a year and a half, she experienced three internships - starting with small production companies and finally landing at the global media company, Radical Media.

Throughout these internships, Fridah attended classes in workforce readiness skills, received 1:1 coaching on how to interview for jobs, and attended career roundtables to learn about all the different jobs in the entertainment industry.

When she graduated she was still very nervous about finding a job. But thanks to MediaMKRS, Fridah had knowledge, experience, a resume of success and a network of professionals in the industry to help her land a full time job as a production assistant at Showtime last year.

Fridah is one of thirty CUNY MediaMKRS students who entered the workforce this past year. - 87% of whom are working full time at companies like Showtime, Paramount, Disney, and Warner Bros. Discovery for starting salaries ranging from \$30,000-\$60,000.

JCW:
MediaMKRS works.

This year, The Mayor's Office has renewed its support, which will enable 100 CUNY students like Fridah to explore careers in media and entertainment.

We would like to double that number.

Reel Works seeks \$350K to pay internship salaries and hire an additional internship coordinator to serve a total of 200 CUNY students annually.

Our three-year partnership with CUNY has proven the effectiveness of our approach and we look forward to expanding our reach to provide opportunities for talented young people to explore and launch careers in NYC's \$82 Billion entertainment industry.

Thank you!

THE COUNCIL
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CUNY Panel 1 of 3

Appearance Card

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

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 10/20/22

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lauren Anderson, CUNY

Address: University Associate Provost for

I represent: Careers and Industry Partnerships

Address: _____

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CUNY Panel 2 of 3

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 10/20/22

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Name: Kenneth Adams, President

Address: _____

I represent: La Guardia Community College

Address: _____

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CUNY Panel 3 of 3

Appearance Card

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 10/20/22

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Name: Jane MacKillop, Ph.D., CUNY

Address: Dean, School of Prof. Studies Continuing Ed &

I represent: Lehman College Prof. Studies

Address: _____

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Date: 10/20/2022

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Name: Chouaib Fadil

Address: Brighon 101 1st Bklyn, NY 11215

I represent: CUNY

Address: _____

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

☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 10/21/2022

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dwana Franklin-Davis

Address: Broad St

I represent: Reboot Representation

Address: 26 Broadway, 8th floor

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Priscilla Tien

Address: 66th Street Woodside, NY 11377

I represent: CUNY Career Launch

Address: _____

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☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

East Glen Ave. Ridgewood, NY 107450 Date: 10/20/22

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Samira Bahrami

Address: _____

I represent: CUNY on the Concourse / Lehman College

Address: 2501 Grand Concourse, Bronx

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☐ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 10/20/22

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Gerarda Shields

Address: 300 Jay St, Brooklyn, NY

I represent: CUNY - City Tech

Address: 300 Jay St, Brooklyn, NY

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☒ in favor ☐ in opposition

Date: 10/20/22

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Siobhan Cavanagh

Address: 62nd Dr., Rego Park, NY

I represent: Reel Works

Address: 540 President St., 2F, Brooklyn, NY

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**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: John Williams

Address: 540 president ST. Brooklyn NY 11215

I represent: Reel Works

Address: 540 president ST Brooklyn NY 11215

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