

Chair Barron, Members of the Higher Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you and for your commitment and 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 role, after 37 years at Hunter College. While Provost at Hunter I was very familiar with the Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing's undergraduate and graduate programs, and the delivery of expert nursing care to which our faculty and students aspired. The same commitment to excellence holds true for each of our Nursing programs, as CUNY's colleges work together to prepare a sufficient number of qualified personnel to meet the healthcare needs of New York City's residents. With me this morning are 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, a registered nurse and CUNY student. We are joined by our colleagues in the audience, and look forward to answering your questions following our testimony.

CUNY takes very seriously its responsibility to be an important presence in the city's healthcare industry, 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

services fields. Nursing is one of the largest and most academically competitive health majors. Nursing is offered from the associate to doctoral degree level through a network of fourteen (14) CUNY colleges. In academic year 2014-2015, nearly 1600 students graduated from our associate and bachelor's degree programs in Nursing. In 2015, CUNY graduates comprised more than a third of all newly licensed RNs in New York City.

Many CUNY Nursing graduates have worked their way up the career ladder from jobs such as home care worker or nurse assistant. They come from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The vast majority of CUNY's Nursing students are people of color: 65% of our associate degree graduates are from underrepresented groups, as are more than 70% of our bachelor's degree graduates. A majority of undergraduate Nursing students who attain a degree are foreign born. CUNY's Nursing students are often residents of the same urban neighborhoods as the patients they ultimately serve.

CUNY is committed to graduating significant numbers of culturally diverse Nursing students, and at the same time, increasing the quality of our academic programs. In 2015 the combined CUNY pass rate on the NCLEX state licensing exam for our 12 undergraduate Nursing schools was 80%: much higher than the combined NCLEX pass rate of 72% for all other NYC-based Nursing programs. Four CUNY schools- Queensborough Community College, LaGuardia Community College, Bronx Community College and Hunter College- had higher NCLEX pass rates than both NYU and Columbia, local competitors with much higher tuition.

Graduation from a CUNY associate degree Nursing program provides aspiring students with an 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, earnings skyrocketed just two years after completing the degree. Median annual wages jumped from \$10,000 to nearly \$80,000 for bachelor's degree graduates in generic programs, and from \$20,000 to \$75,000 for associate degree graduates.

But it is a difficult road to find one's way into these jobs. Financial aid may not cover a reduced course load many students must take in order to complete their challenging and time consuming clinical classes. Students may pay out of pocket for required background checks or drug panels, licensure prep courses, for the NCLEX licensing exam, and for the New York State license itself. To make it slightly easier to bear the high costs associated with pursuing a nursing license, CUNY supports its Nursing students by covering the costs of liability insurance. Investments made in these students reap benefits for the students, their families, and New York City.

Supporting students to become registered nurses is only part of our responsibility, however. CUNY's nursing programs must respond to the continuing impacts of health care reform and professional trends which affect both nursing education and the career's trajectory. A seminal 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 boasts multiple entry points for advancement through its tiered

and integrated structure. It is a University priority to enable our associate degree graduates to enroll in an RN to BSN program.

You will hear my colleagues describe this issue of upcredentialing and other national trends, and how our colleges are responding. Several CUNY schools collaborate through dual degree programs in which students are enrolled in both an associate and baccalaureate program at the same time. CUNY's new online Nursing programs offered through the School of Professional Studies (SPS) provide additional options for the RN to BSN as well as new master's degree programs, all online to accommodate the busy lives of working nurses. By providing multiple pathways to Nursing across degree levels and also formats, CUNY enables access. CUNY offers new doctoral programs in nursing, both the PhD and Doctor of Nursing Practice (the DNP degree), at the Graduate Center, Hunter College, College of Staten Island, and soon Lehman College. CUNY is creating the nurse leadership for the future, both for primary care settings and the professoriate.

In its 2015 report for New York City, the New York State Department of Labor cited 'health care and social assistance' as a "significant industry" expected to see strong job demand over the next decade as the population continues to expand and age. The projected employment of registered nurses is expected to grow 14% by 2022. Given this high demand, competitive salaries, and rapidly changing technology, CUNY's Nursing programs will continue to explore new ways to create opportunity for the thousands of students, and millions of New Yorkers, who depend upon them for quality healthcare. Thank you.



The City University of New York

**Testimony of Valerie Taylor-Haslip
Chairperson, Department of Nursing, PhD, RN, FNP
York College**

New York City Council Committee on Higher Education

Status of Nursing Programs at the City University of New York

Thursday, April 21, 2016

Good Morning.

On behalf of this 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 the 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 in Science (BS) RN-BS, Generic, NSLIJ-Forest Hills Hospital (FHH) and Dual Degree RN-BS nursing programs. Our programs are accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) and the NYS Department of Education Office of Professions. I am pleased to tell you our program received the full eight-year ACEN accreditation in 2014.

York College is located in Jamaica Queens; the most diverse county in the United States. York's students hail from about 125 countries and speak approximately 85 languages. Student enrollment has grown by 36.5 percent since 2006; with a 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 19:1.

The college has three schools: the School of Arts & Sciences, the School of Business & Information Systems, and the School of Health Sciences & Professional Programs (SHSPP). The Department of Nursing is within the School of Health Sciences and Professional Programs. Prior to becoming a department, nursing was previously a program within the Health Professions (HP) Department of the School of Health and Behavioral Sciences (SHBS). 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 SHSPP.

York's nursing program is the only accredited nursing BS program in the borough of Queens, which has a population of more than two million people. The department intends to add a Master's in Nursing program in the 2017-2018 academic year, which will make it the only Master's in Nursing program within the borough of Queens.

The Department of Nursing is a member of the CUNY Nursing Disciplinary Council (NDC) which is representative of all CUNY nursing undergraduate and graduate programs. The council unifies and connects each nursing department to bring unification and standardization in program outcomes and practices. The NDC discusses issues that affect students across the nursing programs of CUNY and researches solutions in the form of best practices that can be applied across the university system. Members of the Nursing Disciplinary Council are also members of 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 Board of Nursing (NCSBN), and the New York Organization of Nurse Executives and Leaders (NYONEL), to effect change in nursing from an executive level across the state.

The Nursing Program at York College began in 1985 as a RN-BS completion program created to prepare associate degree registered nurses (RN) with a strong focus in leadership, management, and primary preventative care. In response to the 2010 Institute of Medicine (IOM) report "The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, 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 of the report to increase the total number BS-prepared nurses by 80% by the year 2020. The first cohort of Generic BS students graduated in December 2013. The Dual Degree-RN-BS program was approved by the State Education Department in 2012. This program was designed to remove barriers for RN's obtaining a BS degree, 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 IOM report.

There are currently 67 Generic nursing students and 41 RN-BS students (6 in the offsite RN-BS program at Forest Hills Hospital) enrolled at York College. The first cohort of Queensborough Community College (QCC) dual degree students entered York in the Spring 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 transforming the education of its nursing students through the use of simulation in 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 learn to collaborate and to lead by the examples of our faculty where 7 out of 10 hold PhD degrees and the remaining faculty enrolled in a PhD program. The faculty guides our students through the nursing research process on a continual basis through various research projects and through working in collaboration with a number of research partners. Students present their research at professional conferences hosted by national and international nursing 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 of the healthcare team. Through these activities students in the nursing programs are challenged to become change agents to eliminate healthcare disparity.

More than 50% of the student population in the York College nursing programs are transfer students from other colleges and associate degree programs. Transfer students have unique challenges in that they transfer in many cases 45 credits or more. Students must declare a major at 60 credits, however a student cannot be declared a nursing major until they meet the admission requirements for the program. The Dual Degree programs offer a seamless transition that allows students to be dually enrolled in both the associate and bachelor's program decreasing the barrier of students taking unnecessary credits, spending down financial aid options, and processing through the nursing program application process. York would like to expand the offering of this program through 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 encouraged to continue their education to obtain masters and doctoral degrees and to fill the vacant faculty lines as well as nurse leader roles in all nursing programs. Former students like myself, who obtained a Master's in Nursing degree from Lehman College, PhD from the Graduate Center and moved 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 start a Master's in Nursing program leading students to doctoral programs, meeting another recommendation by the IOM 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.

Valerie Taylor-Haslip, PhD, RN, FNP

The City University of New York

**Testimony of Deborah C. Morris
Chairperson, Department of Nursing, MA, RN
Bronx Community College**

New York City Council Committee on Higher Education

Status of Nursing Programs at the City University of New York

Thursday, April 21, 2016

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 C. Morris, and I am 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 Program is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) for a full 8 years until February 2020 and the NYS Department of Education Office of Professions. I am extremely pleased to tell you about the Associate Degree nursing program at BCC.

Bronx Community College (BCC) 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 and lower middle-income individuals in the Bronx.

The RN Program at Bronx Community College is one of the nine (9) 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 (SPS), which is an online program, and Lehman College. Both proposals are pending approval from the NYS 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 increase the number of bachelor's-prepared nursing graduates from CUNY and contribute to the workforce.

With the changes in health care and reimbursement being outcome based, as well as hospitals going for "Magnet Status", the AAS can no longer be the terminal degree for nurses. The Nursing programs at the community colleges play an important role in preparing their students for the next education 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 care 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 a 67-credit Associate in Applied Sciences (AAS) degree, the nursing program at Bronx Community College admits 35-50 students each Fall and Spring semester. Each nursing course has a laboratory component that is taught by Faculty and includes 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 students self-identify as Hispanic, 39% are Black, 9% are Asian or Pacific Islander, and 4% are Caucasian. Only 13% of the students attend school full-time. The vast majority, 87%, attend part-time. BCC's recent curriculum re-design streamlined students' schedules to support the student population we serve, which are usually students who are employed, have family obligations and other personal commitments.

Program costs cause a hardship for students, especially community college students. The Assessment Technology Testing (ATI) which is a testing package implemented across the curriculum and includes a preparatory package for the NCLEX licensure exam, costs \$365.00 per student. ATI is paid for by Bronx Community College for each student registered in the nursing program at BCC, but this is not the case at every 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 the \$135 cost for a criminal background check. Students in clinical coursework often can't go full-time due to the time commitment for experiential learning and classwork, 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 a strategy to be successful in the program.

As a graduate from the CUNY Educational System, I am proud to now be in the position to serve as a role model for the students in our nursing program and without reservations would encourage them to continue the affordable education and diversity that is offered by the CUNY Schools. Thank you again for allowing me to address you.

NYC Council Meeting

04.21.16

Good Afternoon,

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 a Pediatric registered nurse in the Upper East Side of Manhattan. I graduated with my Associate 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 coursework 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 patients who explain a medical scenario to me, in which I must quickly assess the situation and give further instructions. One day I had a frantic mother call me stating that her 6-month baby had been experiencing vomiting and diarrhea for the past 3 days. She was frightened and explained to me she didn't know what to do. At first, I panicked. I had no idea what to say to her or how to even handle this situation. I thought to myself, I don't even feel like a real nurse! Where is my professor for guidance! But then I took a step back and thought, what was that same question on that Pediatrics exam at QCC? That test question was, when a child is experiencing fluid 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, in the snap of a finger, I knew what the appropriate assessment questions were 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 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 used it for exactly what it was needed for.

I felt 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 guide me and reassure me of my proficiencies. I often turned 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 a patient's room because it "wastes too much time." After consulting the professor, she told me that I was completely right in my way of practice and that I was appropriately following Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) guidelines. This not only reassured me but 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 serve me into understanding of how to become a better 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 had set myself up for future success. The hardest part has been completed and now its time to keep moving forward while I conquer bigger endeavors that come my way. Queensborough helped create that great level of foundation for me in nursing and York College helped me utilize that foundation with confidence and prepare me for obtaining my Master's Degree. I can honestly say, I officially feel headstrong about both my career and achieving my Master's in Nursing. Because of this extraordinary journey, I am confident enough to say, that one day I do feel that I will achieve even greater accomplishments in Medicine.

Oversight: Status of Nursing Programs at the City University of New York
Committee on Higher Education, Thursday, April 21, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. in the 14th
Floor Committee Room, 250 Broadway, New York, NY

Ana Paola White

Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing (CUNY), New York City, B.S. Nursing 2015
Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI) Nursing Honor Society-- Alpha Phi Chapter
Nursing Students' Association of New York State (NSANYS, State chapter of NSNA), *President*, 2014-2015
National Association of Hispanic Nurses (NAHN) - Member 2015
City University of New York (CUNY), University Student Senate (USS) *Delegate*, 2014
CUNY Board of Trustees Standing Committee for Academic Policy, Programs, and Research, 2014
NSNA, Hunter College Chapter, *Director of Professional Development*, 2014
Golden Key International Honor Society, Hunter Dean's Honor Roll

As a graduate of Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing at Hunter College (CUNY), I am 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 Students' Association of New York State (NSANYS, a National Student Nurses' Association state non-profit), and as a student representative on the CUNY Board of Trustees Standing Committee on Academic Policy, Programs and Research where changes in Nursing programs were being considered (<https://youtu.be/uDOVMEH0dmc>).

In 2014, 83.7% (103 of the 123) Hunter students that sat for the state Nursing Licensure exam passed; compared to the State average of 78%, according to the New York State Office of the Professions, so we are doing pretty well. In 2015, as a part of the Nursing Students Association of New York State, 3 Hunter students (Veronica Pasha, Alisa Sponton, and myself), authored NSNA Resolution #50: IN SUPPORT OF INCREASED AWARENESS AND ASSESSMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH HAZARDS IN NURSING EDUCATION (with information about the health hazards of Natural Gas high-Volume Hydraulic Fracturing (HVHF), or "fracking") just four months after the Governor banned HVHF in the State of New York. And while the controversy continues about Natural Gas pipelines in the state, CUNY students passed this resolution with equal controversy at a National Convention aimed at providing relevant health assessment tools to the 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 students and the Nursing faculty and staff (and they should be supported for their efforts from the City and State).

In a national context, given the opportunity, our students make an excellent impression. I urge the Council to encourage grants and school support for these conferences 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 trips. Additionally, at least 10 out of 75 students in my class did not get a "preceptorship", which is a student-nursing internship, where a student works with a registered nurse one-to-one, as a part of the final year of the program. Not having this opportunity really puts our students at a disadvantage, and if there are ways for the city hospitals to work with our students, to coordinate this type of opportunity, it could better

prepare our students for the nursing workforce. Lastly, post-graduation preparation for Nursing exams comes at a high cost for students (some programs amount to more than \$350), and Hunter did provide some NCLEX preparation, but I am not sure about all of the colleges at CUNY providing this kind of help, and it would be worth looking into.

The Hunter-Bellevue Student Nurses' Association (HBSNA) also brought a resolution on bullying in the Nursing Profession to the national stage (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 encountered at CUNY, including several Latino students reporting that they were told they would not make it at BMCC, one student being failed in the final semester of nursing school (due to a death in the family), and other faculty using unprofessional behaviors in class to intimidate students. This kind of behavior may not be unique to Nursing but requires more support for Nursing students who are already underrepresented nationally in a profession that is 83% white, and non-Hispanic (HRSA, 2008, <http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/healthworkforce/rnsurveys/rnsurveyinitial2008.pdf>), and especially when the hallmark of our programs is about promoting diversity and accessibility to the students of low-income and minority backgrounds.

Pre-Nursing students at the time of my application to Hunter, from within the school was as high as 800 students for 75 spots. There was a pre-medical, but not a pre-nursing counselor when I applied and there is only one admissions advisor within the school to council these students applicants. This competitive ratio may be due, in large part to the affordability of our programs, but my other concern is that some programs may take as long as 6 years to obtain the 4 year- BSN degree. (For example, some programs require 1.5 years in pre-requisites before 2 years of Nursing school, which at a community college will only result in a 2-year Associates degree (still an RN- but taking 3.5 years, and requiring another 1.5 years for a BSN, totaling 5 years and difficult transitions between 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, helping students that are unable to afford the expensive book costs. I am 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.

Good morning, thank you for allowing me to speak today. My name is Taisha Pagan, I am a nursing major at Lehman College and the vice chair for evening and part time affairs for the University Student Senate. I am not currently in the nursing program at Lehman although I did apply this year. As an aspiring nurse I feel that the program on my campus could be better, we have a large population of nursing majors but the amount of classes and space are limited forcing students to take unnecessary classes while they are wait to get into the class that they need.

Getting permission for a class or getting advisement is like waiting to speak to financial aid, students miss classes, are told to come back the next day after hours of waiting, or told that the class is full after days of waiting to see an advisor. When students go to the office for assistance on how to sign up for the program or ask for requirements they are simply told "it's on the website." As a student coming in to the Nursing program I have gone to the website it is not easy to navigate, after clicking through a few links that lead to other pages and none of it the information being 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 then the department is deterring the student from seeking guidance or further perusing a degree at that campus.

Another issue is that the program does not alert students when class spaces are available many times students find out about the classes through repeated trips to the office and from person to person. If students declare a major in nursing, information on classes and requirements should be sent out to students to keep them apprise of what the needs are or what classes they are currently able to take. This would help reduce the lines, waiting periods, and frustration.

Additionally being informed at the start of a student's nursing studies about having to take the HESI nursing entrance exam would allow students to start studying earlier and not come 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 the program. So while some students studied from a book with no guidance, another population of students are being provided assistance. To help all students, 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 name.

Student A:

I believe that a benefit at least at Lehman is that from the beginning they are testing us in a NCLEX form and all of it is computerized. I also like how they pressure us to know a lot of information and make us critically think within a shorter period of time. My main concerns are the lack of funding to our nursing program, because of this there is a lack of opportunity in preparing and bettering us within the limited resources. Also the scheduling for us to come in and work in the lab is limited for the seniors as opposed to the junior who have more time to get their lab work done.

Student B:

The nursing department is very unorganized, that is what I have been hearing every time I speak to nursing students here. They are not helpful at all, in order to get information from them it is 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

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 a 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 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 student are the sole reason the office exists.



Testimony of Denise Cherenfant, 1199SEIU Training and Employment Funds, April 21st, 2016

Good afternoon. My name is Denise Cherenfant, and I am the Associate Director of Nursing Programs for the 1199SEIU Training and Employment Funds.

The Training and Employment Funds, also known as TEF, are a joint effort between 1199SEIU and contributing employers, with the mission of providing opportunity to health care 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 into how all partners must adapt to the future of nursing education.

I should also note that I am a registered nurse (RN) with 25 years of experience in health care, and that I obtained my BSN at Lehman College. This long career would not have been possible without the critical CUNY/TEF partnership.

The TEF Nursing Team that I direct supports 1199SEIU members who wish to become nurses and those seeking to complete their BSN or advanced degrees—these include LPN, RN, RN-BSN, and Nurse Practitioner (NP).

In 2015, TEF supported over 800 members who were enrolled in nursing degree programs. Approximately 40% of these 800 were attending nursing degree programs in the CUNY system, and includes members pursuing AAS, RN, BSN-RN, BSN, and NP degrees.

1199SEIU members also represent a sizable percentage of students in CUNY's nursing programs. Between the 2000-01 and 2013-14 school years CUNY had a total of 2,563 1199SEIU nursing graduates. At BCC, 1199SEIU students represented 24% of its nursing graduates; at Lehman, 1199SEIU students represented 30% of all BS nursing degrees awarded. Throughout the system 1199SEIU members represented 14% of all LPN graduates, 13% of all AAS graduates, 6% of all generic BS graduates, 14% of all RN to BS graduates, and 16% of all MS graduates, totaling 2,563 1199SEIU nursing graduates over the 14-year period.

It is clear the TEF/CUNY partnership is critical to the development of a diverse and quality health care work force here



in the City. In order for this partnership to thrive, we must ensure that we are addressing some of the current challenges in the health care system.

For example, a critical problem in New York is the lack of primary care providers. Increasing the supply of nurse practitioners (NPs) is one the industry's preferred solutions to this problem. And TEF has been working with CUNY to help achieve this by enrolling cohorts of NPs in CUNY programs. However, for our efforts to be successful we need to ensure there are enough clinical sites and qualified preceptors to support the cohort.

In addition, there is currently a national mandate from the Institute of Medicine for a larger percentage of nurses to have a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) or higher degree. Many health care facilities, in fact, require a BSN for employment.

TEF is working with CUNY to address this issue. However, CUNY's entrance requirement sometimes presents a challenge to incumbent nurses with many years of health care experience. Currently, we offer a bridge that supports practicing RNs who are transitioning back to the academic setting. But for many RNs, particularly those not served by TEF, the entrance requirements and transfer of credits present an insurmountable obstacle. As a result, many talented RNs do not return to school for their BSN or they go to other schools at a much higher cost. A potential solution would be a review of these requirements, particularly for nurses with an associate degree in nursing or a bachelor's degree in another area.

We have also heard from many employers in New York that there is a gap between the skills nurses graduate with and what is required at the bedside. We recommend forming a committee of faculty and nurse educators to ensure the curriculum reflects the current skills 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 nurse residency programs but were unsuccessful due to factors outside of CUNY's control. We recommend revisiting the idea of a transition to practice and are ready to partner again with CUNY on this initiative.

In conclusion, the TEF-CUNY partnership is one with a long and rich history. We look forward to continuing that partnership as the industry changes and the future of nursing becomes more complex and requires deeper levels of education.

4/21/16

Good morning,

My name is Kelynn Edmond and I am chair of the Education Committee of the Haitian American Nurses Association Greater New York Chapter. As an advance practice nurse and a nurse educator I was compelled to accept the opportunity to provide testimony today on this platform. In the absence of President Marie Hypolite, I will share a few brief comments.

In 2014 AACN, released a policy brief in which leaders within the profession recognized the connection between a culturally diverse work forces and one's ability to provide quality, culturally patient care. In the same brief the Institute of Medicine (IOM) inscribed the benefits of diversity in the workforce and how that correlates to improved access to care for minorities. Documented in 2010, the IOM spoke to the diversity of the nation's nursing workforce (AACN 2014).

Where does the inclusion or the building of diversity in the nursing workforce occur? It occurs in the development of grants and programs focusing on increasing the minority workforce as it relates to nursing. It begins by staff nurses, nurse educators and nurse scholars engaging in community activities via outreach, diving out to the grades schools in minority neighborhoods and speaking about the profession. Through community edification we can bring nursing to the forefront of healthcare while laying down the cement needed in order to build diversity into the works force in initial construction.

As a child growing up I knew I would call nursing my own. I stem from a generation of nurses. In my travels to date I hear children say, "I want to be a basketball player, I want to be a lawyer, or I want to be a doctor". It is my hope that I will someday hear; I want to be a nurse, as children begin to marvel at the contribution of nurses. Engaging students as early as grade schools helps to introduce the profession early on in life.

Though I have not taught in programs established by City of New York, nor am I a product of its educational walls; I have engaged in interactions with many nurses who are the product of the City Universities of New York. I am moved by the level of preparation and knowledge at which these nurses are prepared. I am confident that with continued support, oversight and inclusion of programs to promote diversity, the City University of New York, will continue to produce well qualified, knowledgeable and culturally diverse nurses.

I thank you.

References

American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN). (2014). The Changing Landscape:

Nursing Student Diversity on the Rise. retrieved April 20, 2016 from

<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/education->

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I represent: University Student Senate (C.U.N.Y.)

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