

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE
ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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

B E F O R E: JAMES VACCA
Chairperson

INEZ D. BARRON
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Annabel Palma
David G. Greenfield
Barry S. Grodenchik
Joseph C. Borelli
Fernando Cabrera
Jumaane D. Williams
Laurie A. Cumbo
Ydanis A. Rodriguez
Vanessa L. Gibson

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

Jane MacKillop, PhD, Interim Dean
School of Continuing and Professional Studies Lehman
College, Bronx

Clarence Stanley, Director
Small Business Development Center
Lehman College of Tech Incubator

Carol Gonzalez, Entrepreneur
Lehman College of Tech Incubator

Ken Iwama, Vice President
Economic Development Continuing Studies and
Government Relations, College of Staten Island

Georgina Castanon, CEO
Artificial Intelligence Company

Jeff Rosenstock, AVP
External and Governmental Relations, Queens College
Appearing for President Felix Matos Rodriguez

Dr. Ted Brown Executive Director
Incubator, Queens College

Weeks Mensah, Managing Director
Incubator, Queens College

Jomacco DeAngelo, Partner
New York City Economic Development Corporation
International Entrepreneurs M2 NYC Partnership

Oscar Trujillo, Founder and CEO
SYNC IOT Technologies

Tech Incubator at Queens College

COMMITTEE ON TECHNOLOGY JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE
ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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[sound check, pause] [background
comments] [gavel]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Good morning.

[background comments] So pleased to see so many of

you here for this topic. My name is Inez Barron. I'm

the Chair of the Committee on Higher Education. I'm

going to be talking today about technology. So,

before I get into the formal presentation of the

topic, I just want to share something with you. Just

a little background on technology. Now, we know that

Africa is the home and origins of human kind, and

that as the New York Times recently reported, the

beginnings of human kind had it's origins in Africa

roughly 200,000 years ago. Now, Africa is the origin

of technology, that is the development of tools,

which we know is one of the hallmarks of

civilization, and those technological tools helped us

to cultivate the land and to build great monuments in

Africa. And as Africa's technology spread across the

globe and enriched the world, here again in this new

age of technology, Africa is a major source of the

resources that are required for the production of

technological tools that creates the microchips for

the technology, and the circuitry that operates our

1 favorite electronic devices. They're called 3TGs,
2 Tantalum, Tin, Tungsten and Gold. Now, we're all
3 familiar with the conflict diamond situation, but
4 today the 3 TGs are today's conflict minerals.
5 Dating back to the Colonial period in Congo under
6 King Leopold II of Belgium where the people were
7 exploited, brutalized, tortured and killed today the
8 puppet Neocolonial governments and the armed military
9 groups continue these practices, and continue these
10 practices and control and illegally export 3TGs under
11 the horrific armed violent conditions of child labor,
12 forced labor, slave labor, little or no wages, and
13 unhealthy work conditions, and other human rights
14 violations. Section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Act calls
15 for transparency measures to report the sources of
16 minerals used in microchips. This call for so-called
17 responsible sourcing seeks to redirect the profits
18 from mining of 3TGs from illicit trade to its path-in
19 its passages through the supply chain to help benefit
20 the indigenous people of the country. The current
21 administration is attempting to repeal these
22 measures, the current federal administration. As we
23 increase our demand for our technological items, we
24 must be cognizant of and responsible to the human
25

1 suffering that brings us our technological toys and
2 items. As we are—as well as the negative impact of
3 deforestation and the endangerment of many species
4 and wild life. We cannot think that we should reap
5 the benefits of technology without bearing
6 responsibility to address the abhorrent conditions
7 that result—that yield these minerals.
8

9 Now, for the topic. We are joined today
10 by the Technology Committee chaired by my colleague
11 James Vacca, who like me is a CUNY alum and shares my
12 ongoing commitment to improve CUNY for the current
13 and next generation of CUNY students. Today's
14 hearings will be focused on CUNY's Tech Incubators.
15 As many of you know, Tech Incubators have continued
16 to become common fixtures on college campuses across
17 the country. In fact, according to the International
18 Business Innovation Association, over half of its
19 members have incubation programs that are associated
20 with higher learning institutions. Tech Incubators
21 provide start-up businesses with office space,
22 administrative, legal, financial and management
23 support at relatively low cost. In return, Tech
24 Incubators offer both faculty and students a wide
25 array of opportunities. For example, faculty in

1 courses such as business, compute science and
2 electrical engineering can work with campus
3 incubators to inform their curriculum as well as
4 innovate their classrooms. For students, colleges or
5 universities with campus incubators will allow them
6 not only to get internships and increase their
7 employment opportunities after graduation, but
8 campuses whose Tech Incubators are student focused
9 promise to help students start businesses, develop
10 new products, and even start social movements. The
11 benefits of Tech Incubators are not limited to the
12 school alone, but also promise to benefit the
13 surrounding community. Some companies after
14 completing their incubation period choose to stay in
15 the same community where they rent office space and
16 hire additional staff, which increases the local tax
17 base in that community. This was exactly what the
18 State Legislature envisioned when it asked CUNY to
19 set up several CUNY incubators in 1999. In addition
20 to housing start-up businesses, the incubators were
21 expected to house over 200 businesses and create over
22 5,000 jobs in low-income communities. The three
23 schools that were to house the first set of
24 incubators were La Guardia Community College, Hostos
25

Community College and the Borough of Manhattan
Community College. Today, seven CUNY colleges host
incubators on the campuses of which three are tech
incubators. The other incubators offer specific
services designed for certain industries such as
media, food services and legal services. CUNY offers
the incubators a variety of services such as office
space, conference rooms, advanced technological
infrastructure as well as the availability of faculty
and students who offer their talents and expertise
when needed. The committees are looking forward to
hearing about the progress of the incubators since
their initial introduction at CUNY over 17 years ago.
In particular, the committees would like to know how
many small businesses have been served, how many jobs
have been created, as well as the type of innovations
that have been born out of the Tech Incubators. I'm
also interested in whether the surrounding community-
communities have positively been impacted by the
accessibility of Tech Incubators, and whether any
innovations have had an impact on low-income
communities. Additionally, I'm curious to learn how
CUNY has addressed intellectual property rights from
innovations that emerge from the incubators

1 especially where student innovations are concerned,
2 and now I'd like to offer the opportunity for my
3 colleague Mr. Vacca to make his opening comments.
4

5 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you, Chair
6 Barron, and I'm Chair of the Committee on Technology,
7 and I'm really excited to be here today. I'm joined
8 by my committee colleagues, Councilman Joseph Borelli
9 from Staten Island, and I think the Tech Incubators
10 represent such a potential for our city, and going
11 forth I know that they're importance will be even
12 more prevalent as we move ahead. Supporting all New
13 Yorkers and training them for an increasingly
14 advanced technological age is vital to our city's
15 economic success. As the manufacturing industry
16 declines across the country, participation in
17 science, technology, engineering and math fields is
18 becoming more necessary for both the workforce and
19 the local and national economies. Tech Incubators
20 can play a powerful role in strengthening these
21 economies. Studies show that incubators are create
22 jobs at lower cost than other federal infrastructure
23 investments such as roads and bridges, industrial
24 parks, commercial buildings and sewer and water
25 projects. Further, a report by NYU has shown that

1 just three of their business incubators generated
2 \$251 million of economic activity, created more than
3 900 jobs, and contributed \$31.4 million in local,
4 state and federal tax revenue since 2009. As New
5 York steadily proves to be a prominent force in
6 technology, venture capital and innovation, we hope
7 to maintain our competitiveness in this field and
8 ensure its benefits are widely distributed.

9 Enhancing the resources of our public universities
10 and colleges so that they are able to provide budding
11 entrepreneurs the tools they need to succeed is a
12 significant way to support these goals. At today's
13 hearing, we will learn about CUNY's three Technology
14 Incubators, funding these incubators at Lehman
15 College, the College of Staten Island and Queens
16 College where I teach, these incubators have jump
17 started the careers of undergraduate students and
18 other entrepreneurs. Moreover, they can provide jobs
19 and revenue in our city and state. Our committee and
20 colleagues at the Council are interested in the
21 program CUNY incubators have made since their
22 inception over the past two years. We hope to gain
23 insight into the programs to assess where resources
24 are being directed and determine how our resources
25

1 are used. We look forward to hearing from CUNY
2 representatives and advocates about the work CUNY has
3 done to enhance technological innovation and to
4 prepare its students to be competitive entrepreneurs.
5 We also want to learn about what challenges may need
6 to be overcome in order to strengthen these incubator
7 programs, and expand them throughout the CUNY system.
8 I do want to add I visited all three incubators, and
9 enjoyed meeting with everyone, and know that so much
10 is being done. I want to thank our committee staff
11 for their hard work in preparing for today's hearing
12 including Committee Counsel Malika Jubali, Senior
13 Policy Analyst Patrick Mulvihill, and my Legislative
14 Director Zachary Hecht. Thank you.

16 CHAIR PERSON BARRON: Thank you, Chair
17 Vacca. I would like to thank my staff as well. My
18 Chief of Staff Joy Simmons; my Legislative Director
19 Ndigo Washington; my Counsel Kiru Gichuru, my
20 Committee Counsel; Committee Policy Analyst Chloe
21 Rivera, and Jessica Ackerman, Senior Finance Analyst
22 for the committee, and I'm going to ask my counsel if
23 he would swear the panel in. We're having Dave
24 Mackalow from Lehman College, Carol Gonzalez from
25 Lehman College Incubator, Ken Iwama from Staten-

1 College of Staten Island and Georgina Castanon
2 Business Owner, CEO, Work and Explore from the
3 College of Staten Island.
4

5 LEGAL COUNSEL: Please raise your right
6 hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole
7 truth, and nothing but the truth in your testimony
8 before this committee, and to respond honestly to the
9 Council Member questions? [pause] Please say I do.

10 PANEL MEMBERS: [off mic] I do.

11 [background comments, pause]

12 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, we have two
13 additional people that we're going to include and we
14 may have to do a little musical chairs so that
15 they'll on camera. We have Jeffrey Rosenstock from
16 Queens College and Oscar Trujillo from Queens College
17 Incubator. So, you'll be sworn in now.

18 LEGAL COUNSEL: Please raise your right
19 hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole
20 truth, and nothing but the truth in your testimony
21 before this committee and to respond honestly to the
22 Council Member's questions?

23 PANEL MEMBERS: [off mic] I do.

24 LEGAL COUNSEL: Thank you.
25

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

JANE MACKILLOP: Good-good morning,
Chairs Barron and Vacca and members of the Committee
on Higher Education and Technology and my CUNY
colleagues. My name is Jane MacKillop. I'm the
Interim Dean of the School of Continuing and
Professional Studies at Lehman College where I've
been for approximately a year. I'm delighted to be
here and on behalf President Cruz and Interim Provost
Niki Fayne I want to thank the—the committee for the
wonderful gift of the incubator, which I'm going to
talk about, which has been truly spectacular in its
impact. [pause] Lehman College is the only four-year
CUNY college in the Bronx, and it serves 25,000
students per year in credit and non-credit programs.
That is in degrees and certificate courses. Most of
the students at Lehman come from the Bronx and they
stay in the Bronx. So, that any impact of City
Council funding is going to be located firmly in the
Bronx and is going to affect all of the participants
and the residents in the Bronx. I took this image to
describe the impact of the City Council funding.
Really what this has done has been spectacular in

1 terms of spreading out across a very wide area. It's
2 bridging the gap between plans, business plans and
3 their execution, but over a wide area. It's not
4 focused just on the—on the Grand Concourse. It's not
5 just on Lehman, but across the whole of the Bronx.
6 It's affected over a thousand entrepreneurs,
7 community residents and students and enabled them to
8 flourish and enabled them to take heir plans into the
9 productive phase. I'm going to start by telling you
10 a story about Cruet Pomsamma (sp?) because this
11 really sums up what we've been doing, and how it's
12 affected a single person, and then my colleague Carol
13 Gonzalez is going to tell her story. So, Cruet took
14 part in some training. The training program that we
15 called the Trained Group Program, which builds an
16 Android app. He then decided that he was going to
17 transfer from Hunter to Lehman to complete his
18 degree. He then won accolades and first prize place
19 and second place in national conventions. He
20 participated in MVP Weekend, and you're saying, what,
21 they're playing sports? No, no. It's Minimally
22 Viable Product. So, this was a way of looking at a
23 possible business idea and then seeing if it could
24 play out. So, he participated in that, and then to
25

1 our great joy he was hired by Google. This story
2 kind of sums up the synergy that goes on between the
3 college and the incubator. In Year 1, we did the
4 construction of the Tech Incubator and this was at
5 CUNY on the Concourse in the old Alexanders Building,
6 which many of you might remembers, and we transformed
7 a room into this beautiful—I love this beautiful
8 innovation lab, and we then set it up with state-of-
9 the-art facilities, Macintoshes and lighting and
10 other supplies. In Year 2, we rolled out of a very
11 ambitious training program in which we were looking
12 to build on local knowledge and then to expand again
13 thinking of this pebble in a pond, the expansion
14 throughout the Bronx. And then in year 3 I'm going
15 to be very excited to tell you about our small
16 business consulting practice, and I'm going to tell
17 you about the direct impact of the funding, and then
18 the indirect impact that is how those ripples spread
19 out in our area. So, the direct impact we had start-
20 up ideas, the Minimally Viable Product Weekend, the
21 Train Cube, but this was in support of business and
22 entrepreneurship, and then you can see the different
23 sorts of training that we did on emerging
24 technologies. One of the aspects of technology that
25

1 is keeping all of us on our toes is the way that its
2 all changing so frequently and so dynamically, and
3 the people who were involved in our training were
4 anxious to stay up-to-date, and this gives you a
5 sense of how many participants and how many sessions
6 we had as people were learning about Android,
7 Polymer, Google, Chrome, Angular JS, Google Computer
8 Engine and many others. Here we have a picture of
9 them actually in the Incubator doing android
10 development training so you can get a sense of the
11 space, which is really beautiful and well lit and has
12 all of the necessary equipment. Another aspect of
13 the direct impact was the networking. Networking is
14 absolutely key in tech business. It's the way that
15 people get together. So, we had the launch pad date
16 for Latinos. We had the Women Tech Makers. I think
17 you came to that, Councilman Vacca.

19 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: [off mic] Yes, I did.

20 JANE MACKILLOP: Yes. We had the Google
21 extended Bronx. We have Dev Fest and so on. We also
22 put together social media guidelines, which were
23 available for all of the businesses for the
24 Continuing Education Program and for the college, and
25 again, here we see people working together

1 dynamically, synergistically. One of the comments
2 that is most often said about the incubator was: I
3 can't believe this is in the Bronx. I can't believe
4 these facilities are available for us. You've always
5 been here. We said, no, no, we've not been here very
6 long, but that's the impact that it has, that people
7 really feel that these facilities are there for them,
8 and can help them move along with their business
9 ideas. So, in terms of the accomplishments, these
10 are the number of people that we've served in
11 different ways both in the networking, in the
12 training. We also have scholarships for Lehman
13 Computer Information System majors, and also for an
14 after school program that Lehman High School, which
15 we anticipate will then segue into the colleges as
16 high school students think about their next steps.
17 And again, we've got some pictures here of students
18 working together in the Innovation Lab, and you can
19 see the—the real joy on their faces as they work
20 together and create new applications and businesses.
21 But there was much more to it than just this.
22 There's much more than just the training, the
23 networking, the entrepreneurship, the building of
24 businesses. It's enabled us to get other funding.
25

1 So, let me tell you a little bit about what—what we
2 got, what we've received most recently. We'll be one
3 of the first city university colleges to receive a \$2
4 million grant as part of an initiative by our Mayor
5 to double the number of CUNY students graduating
6 annually with a tech related bachelor's degree, and
7 in terms of actual numbers, we've just found that we
8 have 567 computer science undergraduates and 10
9 graduates. So, we will be doubling that number with
10 this funding, and this funding in turn builds on the
11 success of the tech talent pipeline, which uses the
12 space at CUNY on the Concourse, and which was
13 launched in 2014. In addition, this funding being
14 the tech hub in the Bronx, enabled other sorts of
15 partnerships. So, we had the collaboration with the
16 Bronx Women Business Resource Center, which was
17 attended by over 180 women entrepreneurs and, as I
18 said, Council Member Vacca joined us for that.
19 Another partnership, which we are particularly
20 excited about was the EON Reality Partnership. This
21 is an international business that chose Lehman
22 because of the Tech Incubator, because of our
23 location, and our already existing resources to set
24 up a virtual reality and augmented reality training
25

1 academy. They gave us over a million dollars in
2 equipment. They provided a state-of-the-art
3 infrastructure, and when we launched our first class,
4 we were having instructors from Sweden, from the
5 United Kingdom, from Manchester, from California,
6 from all over. These instructors were coming to
7 teach a really exciting curriculum in virtual
8 reality. We graduated our first Phase 1 students in
9 May, and they're now working on the project phase.
10 But another thing that was made possible by being
11 this Tech Incubators was that we were able to apply-
12 to apply to the city, to the Mayor's Office of Media
13 and Entertainment and the Economic Development
14 Corporation and to become the hub for the City of New
15 York, to be come the virtual reality hub. Now, we
16 weren't chosen, but we were asked to partner with
17 NYU, which was the entity that was chosen. So, we're
18 now in partnership with NYU and this is so
19 extraordinarily exciting. I think you've already
20 referenced NYU's achievements, but we will now be
21 part of this new initiative. We'll be working again
22 with EON. We'll be working with the Knowledge House,
23 which is a community-based organization, which
24 reaches out to disconnected youths. So, because we
25

1 were the Tech Incubator for the Bronx, all of these
2 other partnerships have become possible, and here we
3 have the Women Tech Makers. I wanted to show you
4 this picture, which has your counselor in it, but
5 also has my colleague Carol Gonzalez, who was there
6 and who will tell you about her own experiences. The
7 impact of the Technology Incubator has led to
8 presentations, competitions, events. We've had lots
9 and lots of visitors to the Training Academy. One of
10 the most surprising was from West Point. They were
11 very interested in virtual reality in times of
12 warfare, and they're moving ahead with that. JDC
13 Israel came from Jerusalem. I have to tell you they
14 were actually in the city anyway for a board meeting,
15 but they did come up to the Bronx because they're
16 also interested, and many other local colleges and
17 colleges from as far away Iowa.

18
19 Return on investment, that's what we
20 really want to find out about and—and this is a—a
21 little bit tenuous when you are looking at training,
22 but what we've figured was this, and we used here the
23 Small Business Development Center algorithm that each
24 business—each jump actually represents 65,000, and so
25 if 10% of the over 1,200 people who came to the

1 training programs, the networking and so on, started
2 or expanded their business at \$65,000 a year, then
3 that would be \$6.5 million. The EON Reality
4 Partnership that I've already mentioned was over a
5 million in equipment and a very great deal. I
6 wouldn't want to put a dollar amount to it, for the
7 trainers and materials. And then, the virtual
8 reality hub for the city of New York is \$200,000
9 every year for three years. In the future what we
10 would like to do with continued funding is to
11 continue this synergy of small businesses and the
12 college. By choosing 30 small businesses and we
13 would work with our colleagues from the Small
14 Business Development Center, and I want to introduce
15 Clarence Stanley, who is the Director of the Small
16 Business Development Center. We would choose 30
17 start-up businesses who would then work with between
18 30 and 60 Lehman students who would be consultants.
19 This would be a three-part consulting program that
20 would start with training, move onto consulting and
21 then into business incubation. What we know about
22 small businesses is that they have very specific
23 needs. There's practical ones like marketing and
24 technology. You've got the legal, finance, and
25

1 accounting side. You need to know about procurement
2 and selling to government, business tax knowledge,
3 loan estimation and all of our small businesses need
4 to be certified as Minority and Women Owned Business
5 Enterprises. So, we would look to the Lehman
6 students to be trained in these areas so that they
7 could then consult for the small businesses, and we
8 would be looking for the Lehman student to be trained
9 online synchronously and in class in these areas that
10 I've just listed. The certification would be done by
11 SBDC, and we would pay the students a stipend as
12 consultants. They would not only learn these hard
13 skills, but they would also learn the soft skills of
14 being consultants, which would be incredibly helpful
15 for them as they themselves become small businesses.
16 So, finally, just to reiterate what I said at the
17 beginning, we hugely appreciate. On behalf of
18 President Cruz and the Interim Provost Niki Harriet
19 Fayne. Thank you very much to the City Council. We
20 really appreciate it. Thank you.

21
22 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you, the next
23 panelist.

24
25

1
2 JANE MACKILLOP: Well, now Carol Gonzalez
3 is going to talk about her experience in the Tech
4 Incubators.

5 CAROL GONZALEZ: Sure. Hello, everybody
6 and good morning.

7 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Good morning.

8 CAROL GONZALEZ: Good morning, Chair and
9 members of the committee and Councilman and
10 Councilwoman. My name is Carol Gonzalez, and I'm an
11 entrepreneur at Lehman College of Tech Incubator. In
12 addition, I'm also a computer science graduate
13 student. I'm currently doing my masters in computer
14 science, and I'm also a lecturer at the college as
15 well. I also run a small website building company
16 called Intuit and through the Guardian as well. Just
17 a little bit of background. About over a year ago I
18 started my journey as an entrepreneur. I was—I'm a
19 graduate student in computer science, and I was
20 taking classes in computer science at Lehman College.
21 I learned a lot of great skills from my professor for
22 my classes and it built me up to where I am today. I
23 met a lot of great people and I have wonderful
24 professors in computer science, and there's wonderful
25 professors in general at Lehman College. What I

1 learned is that the professors there truly care about
2 their students' success, and hopefully—I'm a little
3 nervous and all that.

4 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Don't be nervous.

5 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Take your time.

6 [background comments, pause]

7 CAROL GONZALEZ: Back in the game and
8 good. [laughter] Okay. [coughs] So, I'll take a
9 little step back.

10 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Take—take your time.

11 CAROL GONZALEZ: Okay, so—

12 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: If—if I could be—if I
13 can reassure you, rest assured you're not talking to
14 a technological [laughter] panel. I just will
15 critique myself. So, we are very honored that you
16 are here, and your progress and your accomplishments
17 mean a lot to us, and we learn from you and from
18 other speakers. So, just rest assured, if I was
19 sitting there, I would not do as well as I'm sure
20 you're going to do. So, you will be fine.

21 CAROL GONZALEZ: Okay, okay. So, Lehman
22 brought like a wonderful experience to me, and I
23 learned so much from it because I wanted to go not
24 only as an entrepreneur, but as somebody, in fact,
25

1 somebody valuable and effective. So, what I wanted to
2 do was not only just take the skills I'm learning
3 from Lehman, and from my classes, but I wanted to
4 take it not only just to teach students how to become
5 better in tech, but also to have my own small
6 business as well. Kind of build something of my own,
7 and in regard, they know about the Incubator, but I
8 spoke to two professors at Lehman College, their
9 names were Ms. Anna Sofiano and Mr. Hendricks
10 Herreras, and Ms. Georgina Castanon and Mr. Hendrick-
11 -Herreras, and I told them about my goal. I wanted
12 to graduate, you know, be in the tech field, but also
13 start something of my own, and they referred me to
14 the CUNY the Lehman—the CUNY Incubator at the Grand
15 Concourse, the Lehman and CUNY Incubator. They
16 talked to me about the great things the Incubator is
17 doing, how they could help me become an entrepreneur,
18 and the great opportunities and training, and they
19 could help me realize my goal as a small business
20 owner, as an entrepreneur and, of course, since none
21 of the professors at Lehman College ever steered me
22 wrong, I just went with it. I was like, you know
23 what, I'm going to listen to them. I'm going to go,
24 and I decided I'm going to take their advice and I'm
25

1 going to go to this Incubator and see what it's all
2 about. I went to an event that was hosted in the
3 Bronx Innovation Lab called Start Up Ideas, Pitch in
4 Networking, and I pitched my idea. I gave them what
5 my thoughts were and my ideas, and what my goal was,
6 and I found out the great—that that was great. I
7 learned so much from it. I met a lot of great people
8 in the field, and these people who were in the field,
9 they had the same passion as I did, and I made a lot
10 of valuable and very important connections that day,
11 and they showed me—they showed me—they showed me how
12 to improve my ideas by making small little tweaks
13 here and there, which is great because it's very
14 constructive feedback. It's very good to have these
15 events, and how to make my idea more innovative, and
16 I learned so much from that one event, and I felt
17 that my small business idea could really just come to
18 life because I went to that event. That one event
19 showed me that. So, I started going to the Train
20 Cube (sic) Event that they had—that was the training
21 that's in the CUNY and the Concourse, and I started
22 going to every single Train Cube event they had. I
23 went to the Train Cube Mobile. I went to the start-up
24 Pitch. I went to all the Train Cube training events
25

1 they had in the CUNY Incubator. I learned about the
2 ups and downs of starting a small business, how to
3 write proposals, how to create an effective business
4 plan, mission statements, vision statements, et
5 cetera. How to write a proposal, how to—and not only
6 that, but I learned networking with other people, and
7 the end goal of my business, what it should be. The
8 Incubator provided me the space, the confidence to
9 reach my goals, and I realized what it takes to be
10 successful in the tech field, and in my business as
11 well. The skills I developed in college also helped
12 me become what I am today, a tech savvy graduate
13 student, a small business woman in a very competitive
14 market. I recommend the Incubator to anyone who
15 wants to turn their business not only reality, into
16 reality but anybody who has a current business and
17 wants to improve it to make it better than what it is
18 today. We have valuable people in the Incubator that
19 want to see you succeed and grow as a business.
20 That's what I've got. Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Okay. Good job.

23 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you so much.

24 We appreciate that. It's really very important for
25

1 us to hear directly from those who are benefitting.

2 Thank you.

3 CAROL GONZALEZ: Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: The next presenter.

5 [background comments, pause]

6 KEN IWAMA: Thank you so much. [pause]

7 Good morning. My name is Ken Iwama. I'm the Vice
8 President for Economic Development Continuing Studies
9 and Government Relations at the College of Staten
10 Island. (coughs) On behalf of CSI President William
11 J. Fritz, I want to thank the City Council Committee
12 on Technology and Chair James Vacca with a special
13 acknowledgement of our Staten Island representative
14 Joseph Borelli, as well as the Committee on Higher
15 Education and Chair Inez Barron for their tremendous
16 support of the Tech Incubator Initiative. I'm
17 extremely grateful for the opportunity to be here
18 today to tell you our story about how the CSI Tech
19 Incubator, the newest incubator funded by the City
20 Council. It has already greatly advanced tech
21 innovation and entrepreneurship at the College, the
22 Borough of Staten Island and New York City. So, in
23 our case, the impact of your funding could not be
24 over stated. On a macro level, you have allowed us
25

1 to do something quite remarkable. While innovation
2 centers are omnipresent and driving business
3 development and job growth in other areas of New York
4 City. Prior to your support, Staten Island did no
5 have a single business accelerator or incubator
6 dedicated to technology innovation. The CSI Tech
7 Incubator not allowed us to put or stake in the
8 ground as the borough's first ever tech start-up
9 program. It has added a vital legitimacy to the
10 advancement of Staten Island as a growing technology
11 ecosystem. Upon receipt of initial support from the
12 City Council during the 2015-2016 academic year, we
13 moved quickly to establish the CSI Tech Incubator at
14 60 Bay Street in the completely renovated and
15 modernized 1,800 square feet space in the heart of
16 Saint George neighborhood on Staten Island's North
17 Shore. Our location allows start-up companies to
18 leverage the great economic promise stemming from the
19 renaissance of the new development of the North Shore
20 while also providing workforce and other
21 opportunities to area with significant social-
22 economic need, as you can see, these are where the
23 developments are building on the Bay Street Corridor
24 including the Wheel, which everyone has heard about.
25

2 (coughs) During the 2016-2017 academic year
3 following a comprehensive recruitment process, which
4 resulted in a very diverse applicant pool of start-up
5 companies, we have accepted the three most promising
6 companies as our first members of the CSI Tech
7 Incubator. Our inaugural members, companies are 100%
8 minority and women owned. Following their completion
9 or six-month incubator program, I'm pleased to be
10 able to share with you some of their success stories.
11 Our first start-up company Vectuel is New York City
12 affiliated firm from France that creates highly
13 interactive 3D applications for real estate and other
14 urban projects for real estate and other urban
15 projects combining enhanced 3D maps and models and
16 virtual reality media to help developers tell their
17 story in a visual way. So Vectuel was recently
18 featured in the media for its work with the meat
19 packing business improvement district. They were
20 hired to create a virtual reality 3D tour video,
21 which envisioned the completion of 13 major
22 development projects including the redesign of 9th
23 Avenue. Additionally, they partnered with the Long
24 Island City Partnership and won the Small Business
25 Services Neighborhood Challenge Program to create a

1 smart way finding signage system for the community
2 and that will use Vectuel's 3D visualization tools to
3 promote Long Island City businesses and attractions.
4 Vectuel now intends to stay in New York City, I'm
5 happy to announce, and expand its business and has
6 already hired three New York City employees and three
7 interns. Our second company Emtec was actually
8 founded by one of our brilliant computer science
9 student who I'm proud to say graduated from CSI this
10 past spring. Emtec employs artificial intelligence
11 and facial recognition software originally intended
12 for educational purposes automating administrative
13 tasks in a school setting through an online venue.
14 Our success with Emtec was in helping the company
15 pivot its software application to wider commercial
16 use beyond its educational platform for greater
17 market viability. Helping start-ups evolve their
18 business models is a critical component of our
19 incubator program and Emtec is now much better
20 positioned and in a more advantageous position to
21 succeed. Our third start-up company Walk & Explore
22 came to us with an already impressive resume. Having
23 been named the 2017 Best Destination App by Futura
24 (sp?) which is the largest international tourism

1 trade fair in the world. Walk & Explore creates
2 artificial intelligence software enabling smart
3 cities to combine city services such as tourism, and
4 transportation with personalized user profiles to
5 turn city exploration into an interactive game. Walk
6 & Explore came to our Tech Incubator to grow and
7 scale its business in New York City, and the company
8 is actually on the cusp—actually, we have a little
9 bit of an announcement today, later on with our
10 company right here about a potential major deal with
11 a Fortune 500 company. Should this deal go through,
12 Walk & Explore intends to build its business on
13 Staten Island. The company's dynamic and visionary
14 owner, Regina Castanon is here today to personally
15 share with you some details of her experience with
16 our Tech Incubator. Finally, although they're not an
17 official member of the Tech Incubators, we also
18 assisted McKay Labs, a Staten Island based start-up
19 company comprised of three Staten Island tech
20 students, and two college students including one from
21 CSI. The Incubator helped to prepare the company for
22 their cellular phone modification product pitch and
23 to Motorola, Motozine, Motor Mods Pitch Competition
24 in Chicago. Incredibly McKay Labs won the grand
25

1 prize receiving up to a million dollars in investment
2 funding for the noble capital to start their
3 business. The Tech Incubator's auspicious beginning
4 was a success to our CSI team as well as our great
5 support received from our growing list of public and
6 private sector partners including the Staten Island
7 Business, Small Business Development Center, Staten
8 island Chamber of Commerce, Staten Island Chamber of
9 Commerce, Staten Island Development Corporation,
10 Intel, AT&T and IBM to name a few. Beyond providing
11 support for the Incubator inside of companies, our
12 partners have allowed us to expand our Tech
13 Innovation Programming to engage high school students
14 through our game app development and entrepreneur
15 startup camps sponsored by AT&T. Engage members of
16 our Staten Island community and our college students
17 through tech meetups and tech job interview training,
18 and engage higher-Higher Education International-
19 International Higher Education Tech and entrepreneur
20 partners including Shanghai University, and through
21 Chang University of Technology in China. These are
22 just some examples of the tech ecosystem we are
23 building all of which-and this is important-all of
24 which did not exist prior to your funding.
25

1
2 The Future: This academic year we will
3 be welcoming our second group of star-up companies as
4 members of the CSI Tech Incubator, RISK (sp?) acts
5 as an inter-New York City affiliated technology
6 driven commodity brokerage from India that removes
7 the middle person from over the counter to rigorous
8 training. Find my Everything, the second company,
9 utilizes GPS and tracking devices to pinpoint the
10 exact location of any personal items as well as
11 people including wandering children. GBI Enterprises
12 is a tech company utilizing diagnostics to help
13 businesses assess uncautious attitudes and
14 perceptions within the workplace and provides
15 employers with the tools they need to modify
16 behaviors to advance performance. Two of these new--
17 three companies are minority and/or women owned. So,
18 we have an ambitious future planned for the CSI Tech
19 Incubator. With the City Council's support, I can
20 announce that we're planning to expand our incubator
21 to a larger 4,800 square foot space in our current
22 building to create the borough's first ever
23 comprehensive tech innovation hub. Our expansion
24 will allow us to double the membership of our startup
25 companies. Equally significant, we plan to utilize

1 the additional space to surround our incubator with
2 innovation related tech workforce certification
3 programs, faculty tech transport integrations and
4 tech innovation seminars, conferences, and meetups
5 for community members, faculty, college and high
6 school students as well. Ultimately our Incubator
7 space will become the initial point of integration
8 and synergy. For all things related to tech
9 innovation in the borough with the outcome of
10 creating more internships, externships, job
11 opportunities and meaningful partnerships with our
12 startup companies, and Incubator partners for the
13 benefit of all. In closing, this is the future that
14 the City Council's ongoing support has allowed us to
15 envision, and we are building it on Staten Island.
16 Again, on behalf of the College of Staten island, I
17 thank you all.

18
19 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you very much.
20 Next panelist.

21 CAROL GONZALEZ: Good morning--

22 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Good morning.

23 GEORGINA CASTANON: Chairman Vacca and
24 Chairwoman Barron, and members of the Committee. It
25

1 makes her nervous to sit down and talk about your
2 business. [laughter]

4 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Welcome.

5 GEORGINA CASTANON: I am so pleased to be
6 here, and I am this moment in time a very happy CEO.
7 The experience that--

8 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Please
9 give us your name for the record, please.

10 GEORGINA CASTANON: Sorry. My name is
11 Georgina Castanon, I am the CEO of--

12 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay.

13 GEORGINA CASTANON: --an artificial
14 intelligence company that helps companies create
15 artificial intelligence based apps.

16 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Can you pull the mic
17 just a little bit closer to you? Thank you. We want
18 to make sure we get all of your testimony on the
19 record.

20 GEORGINA CASTANON: And AI decision
21 assistance apps, (sic) through and easy-to-use
22 virtual framework. So, essentially, we help people
23 build intelligence, artificial intelligence apps. I
24 am pleased to be here to talk about our great
25 experience as part of the first set of startups of

1 the College of Staten Island's new Tech Incubator in
2 Saint George. I am a New Yorker. I am a computer
3 engineer, a woman and a Mexican. A few years ago I
4 took advantage of the excellent education of the city
5 and augmented my STEM skills to become a profession
6 photographer and to continue this education on New
7 York City architectural history, and became a
8 licensed New York City tour guide. With that
9 knowledge, I took my roots and coded it prototype for
10 an application for the city of New York and with it,
11 I decided to create a company base in New York City
12 and constitute it as a New York City company. We're
13 very proud to say that the data application for the
14 city of New York received the award of the convention
15 as the best destination app in the world. In the
16 largest international tourism trade fair there is in
17 the world. Since we joined the Incubator, we have
18 experienced the dedication of CUNY and its faculty in
19 helping my company grow in scale and stay in the
20 borough. We have been featured in many media
21 outlets: New York One, Tech Day, Morning Consult,
22 several IBM ads and references and that has given my
23 company exposure and industry recognition. That has
24 been very important for us. Thank you. Through a
25

1 series of mentors from different areas and CFE, the
2 CSI Incubator helped us reposition our products form
3 a city app provider to a broader and more focused AI
4 company. The new position in messaging have opened
5 new opportunities for Walk and Explore. The office
6 pace at CSI has not only served as a place to work,
7 but the interaction with executives from other
8 incubator companies has helped us with business
9 opportunities, which we're exploring right now in the
10 U.S. and outside the U.S. CSI has enabled the access
11 to government officials, to the Staten Island SBDC to
12 industry members and many other organizations, which
13 have helped our company in multiple ways. Starting
14 your first company at 48 is challenging in any
15 industry. Being a female-- [crying] Now, I'm
16 getting emotional. [laughs]

18 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: You're fine.

19 GEORGINA CASTANON: Being a female, as
20 you know, is challenging, and leading a start-up is
21 challenging in any industry. Having your startup
22 stand out in New York with innovative technology is
23 extremely difficult. With your investment in the CI
24 Incubator, New York is reducing the many challenges
25 of companies like mine. I don't need to solve them

1 alone. It has been brilliantly run by Ken and his
2 strong Latino woman over there, Jasmine Cardona.
3 Jasmine not only enables the tangible elements of the
4 program, but also those kinds of intangibles that you
5 need when times are tough. She is always there for
6 us. We plan to officially move our headquarters to
7 Staten Island from Manhattan, and work with CSI to
8 support new startups in the Incubator. The reason
9 why I'm especially emotional today is because before
10 leaving for this hearing, I received a statement of
11 work from IBM. As a leader in the artificial
12 intelligence industry—space in the world, IBM is
13 helping startups with innovative technology such as
14 mine to become more successful. They provide access,
15 they provided access to our product, to our products,
16 direct communication with their development teams, as
17 well as the executive support closing a contract with
18 Walk an Explore, a small New York based startup
19 demonstrates IBM's strong commitment to companies
20 that develop and use IBM Cloud and Watson
21 independently of their size. More companies should
22 follow their lead. I strongly believe this could not
23 have happened if I was not in New York, and I had not
24 participated in this Incubator, and New York City is
25

1 the best place for us to be. The support we have
2 received from CSI Incubator, IBM, the Council of
3 Mexico [Speaking Spanish] SBS, and the Staten Island,
4 the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce and the Guides
5 Association of New York has made us better prepared
6 to grow our company, and to take those challenges
7 today and in the future. Thank you very much for the
8 opportunity. Thank you for having me here to relate
9 my story in this forum. We look forward in working
10 closely with the City of New York to enhance our
11 award winning app, New York Walk and Explore. Thank
12 you.
13

14 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you very much,
15 and we'll now move onto our next panelist.

16 JEFF ROSENSTOCK: I'm going to slide over
17 here.

18 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Yes, musical chair
19 time.

20 JEFF ROSENSTOCK: Okay. [laughter]

21 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Congratulations to
22 you. I want to add congratulations.

23 GEORGINA CASTANON: Thank you.
24
25

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Thank you for coming today. It's just a fantastic thing to hear what I just heard.

JEFF ROSENSTOCK: Okay. Well thank you. It's relevant.

GEORGINA CASTANON: It's really good.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: But don't go far because we're going to have some questions soon. (coughing) [background comments] Thank you.

JEFF ROSENSTOCK: Good morning.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Good morning.

JEFF ROSENSTOCK: I'll put this back a little bit. Good morning, Chair Barron, Chair Vacca.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Oh, before you begin, I must acknowledge we've been joined by other colleagues, and I keep forgetting we've been joined by Council Member Cabrera and Council Member Gibson both from the Bronx. Thank you.

JEFF ROSENSTOCK: Sure. Good morning, Chair Barron, Chair Vacca, and esteemed Council Members of both of these committees. My name is Jeff Rosenstock. I'm the AVP of External and Governmental Relations at Queens College, and it's my honor to

1 represent Queens College President Felix Matos
2 Rodriguez this morning to speak about Queens
3 College's Tech Incubator, and with me today are the
4 Incubator's Executive Director Dr. Ted Brown,
5 Managing Director Weeks Mensah; and two members Oscar
6 Trujillo who will speak later on today and Jomacco
7 DeAngelo, and Jomacco is one of our two international
8 entrepreneurs who are part of the M2 NYC Partnership
9 with the New York City Economic Development
10 Corporation, and you'll hear from Oscar today as part
11 of our testimony this morning. First and foremost,
12 thank you for including Queens College in your
13 efforts for—to create partnerships such as in CUNY
14 institutions of higher education and the city's
15 technology industry, and for the support you've
16 provided this industry over the past three years. We
17 hope to develop a tech sector in Eastern Queens that
18 serves a significant population of entrepreneurs from
19 varied cultural and ethnic backgrounds, and provide
20 those start-up companies the resources they need to
21 grow and expand, and concurrently, the Tech Incubator
22 at Queens College to enhance their educations and
23 skills. As you may know, Queens College has more
24 computer science majors than any other college,
25

1 public or private in New York City, and our computer
2 science students reflect the diversity of our
3 borough's population. When we accepted the funding
4 to launch the Tech Incubators at Queens College, we
5 did so with the understanding of the expectations we
6 would need to fulfill by being the only incubator in
7 Eastern Queens an area that includes Flushing,
8 Bayside and Jamaica. We engaged Professor Ted Brown
9 to lead our efforts and sought advice and guidance
10 from potential constituents as well as experts in the
11 field. A key result was the need for a 24/7 facility
12 that could accommodate star-up companies at any hour
13 and provide them access to the college's faculty and
14 colleagues across the globe. This is no small order
15 to accomplish as it required we provide a building to
16 be used to exclusively by the tech industry vetter.
17 (sic) We identified that building, had to move its
18 former occupants to other facilities on campus, and
19 undertook an extensive renovation to ensure the Tech
20 Incubator would need the demands and needs of our
21 clients who we wanted to serve. On September 29,
22 2016, the Tech Incubator officially opened its doors
23 to the tech industry with a ribbon cutting ceremony
24 attended by the media, key stakeholders and, of
25

1 course, our first cohort of members and students who
2 chose us to utilize—and to utilize our facility.
3 Representative of the City Council was Chair Vacca
4 and local members Rory Lancman and Peter Koo, Queens
5 College President Matos Rodriguez and other senior
6 faculty and staff warmly greeted our clients, and
7 committee the college's support to this key
8 initiative. Our keynote speaker was our first start-
9 up client, Gene Najutom (sp?) was from Gabon, Africa.
10 And whose business is based in India. His company
11 the Morexil is a startup advisory company, and he
12 commutes daily from Manhattan to Queens because of
13 the facilities our Incubator has and for the ability
14 to work with our computer science interns, and I'm
15 proud to report that Gene is still with us and has
16 expanded his company. Our Tech Incubators is a 7,000
17 square foot, state-of-the-art facility comprised of
18 individual offices, co-working spaces and team spaces
19 in addition to offering members conference rooms,
20 classroom space, and amenities including a playroom
21 to unwind, a kitchenette with coffee, snacks and an
22 abiding place to relax with other clients. It can
23 accommodate up to 70 people at any one time. Members
24 benefit from technical including web development, an
25

1 IT person always on site, network printing, hosting
2 services and data backup to MAS storage. Business
3 support for clients includes workshops, events and
4 access to experts through partnerships established by
5 the Tech Incubator with key business and technology
6 companies. Academic resources include access to our
7 faculty and a strong and well educated intern pool.
8 Also available to members are access to campus
9 amenities including parking, use of the recreational
10 facilities and other resources at Queens College.

11 I'll now share a little bit of information about the
12 various components that make up the Tech Incubator.

13 Most important, our members. Since its
14 establishment, the Incubator has been home to 28
15 small to mid-size companies, teams of 1 to 12 both
16 local and international covering over 15 industries.

17 As part of our collaboration with NYC Economic
18 Development Corporation Into NYC, the International
19 Innovators Initiative, we're home to entrepreneurs
20 from Germany and Italy. We expect to welcoming
21 additional international entrepreneurs in the near
22 future. Of our 26 local companies, 10 are run by
23 African-Americans, 6 by Hispanics, 4 by Whites, 4 by
24 Southeastern Asian and 2 by Asians making our client
25

1 base 85% companies run by people of color. A list of
2 our companies and a brief description about them is
3 attached to the testimony document and I really
4 encourage you to look at these little summaries of
5 thee companies because it's quite amazing. We've
6 partnered with organizations such as QEDC, Score, the
7 Queens Chamber of Commerce, which has allowed us to
8 provided business and professional services and
9 financial advising. We've also recently created the
10 QC Alumni Advisory Board for the Tech Incubator to
11 provide our members with the opportunity work with
12 alumni with career and educational experience in the
13 tech industry. In the Fall of 2016, we teamed up
14 with the Queens College's Tech Talent Pipeline to
15 connect qualified upper level computer science
16 interns with Incubator companies. The on-site
17 opportunities provided member companies with
18 developers who worked on projects that have all front
19 end, back end and mobile development, quality
20 assurance and test development assistance. In
21 addition to accessing tech students, the incubator's
22 internship program connects students from other
23 departments such as economics, accounting, media
24 studies, sociology, French and music with member
25

1 companies. This programs helps interns gain real
2 world job experiece as well as give companies
3 further assistance in building their businesses. One
4 other program Revature in November 2016, the
5 Incubator welcome Revature LLC a leading technology
6 talent development company. The Revature program
7 provides the opportunity for Queens Colleges and
8 other computer science graduates from CUNY to learn
9 the latest entrepreneurized level of next generation
10 and niche technology at no cost. Revature has
11 graduated three classes of students and a new class
12 of cohort will begin in January next year. Each
13 graduate of the Revature program is guaranteed a paid
14 job. Recent graduates have gained employment at
15 places like RBC, JP Morgan, Twitter, Google, IBM and
16 several are working for New York City agencies such
17 the Department of Transportation, Department of
18 Sanitation, and Department of IT and
19 telecommunications.

21 Our Tech Development Lab: This fall
22 Queens College's Media Studies Department offered a
23 course taught by Digital Pioneer and Media Studies
24 Professor Douglas Rush-Douglas Rushkoff. The course
25 is open to graduates, undergraduate, students has

1 helped participants bring their own technology
2 concepts from the idea stage to full proposals and
3 prototypes. The course emphasizes the social and
4 economic impact of new technologies along with more
5 typical development skills and criteria. Students
6 will finish the course with completed project
7 prototypes, demos and business plans suitable for
8 presentation to government and industry investors and
9 NGOs. At the end of the semester up to three
10 projects will be invited to participate as members of
11 our Tech Incubator. We also host events titled The
12 Founders Forum. It's a platform to build, to engage
13 start-ups and business owners to navigate best
14 practices in business—in the business ecosystem.
15 Events are under the Founders Forums series and have
16 covered topics including, but not limited to risk
17 management, accounting, insurance, board members, and
18 legals for startups. We also have the series on
19 technology covering topics such as Virtual and
20 Augmented Reality, Artificial Intelligence, Internet
21 of Things, Predictive Analysis and Sony Pi, an
22 interactive sound workshop, a Technical Skills
23 Development Series covering topics including Get and
24 Get Hoop (sic); Virtual Machine Database and Data
25

1 Modeling; Word Press; Python, a Directive Program,
2 and Personal Website. Another professional
3 development series covering topics such as: Breaking
4 into Tech; How to Develop Soft Skills; How to Use
5 Storytelling to Create a Marketing Message; Linked-In
6 and Networking Technology and Finance Career Panel;
7 and Women in technology. We have student groups an
8 Incubator supported student groups activities such as
9 the project based Hack QCU User Group and ACM, ICPC
10 International collegiate programing contest study
11 group, a machine learning user group, and a Python
12 user group.
13

14 Some general accomplishments: In the
15 summer of 2017, two student teams were welcomed into
16 the Computer Incubator. One of the teams won
17 Governor Cuomo's Making College Possible Coding
18 Challenge. The other team won a CUNY wide Coding
19 Hackathon. Both teams have developed their project
20 ideas and now member companies of our Incubator.

21 Our Future: A new Faculty Advisory
22 Committee is being formed to create partnerships with
23 other academic departments. Other advisors who are
24 well placed are also being considered. The Incubator
25 is working with the Queens College Summer Camp to

1 develop coding classes for children interested in
2 developing their skills. We're also considering
3 offering these classes on weekends during the spring
4 of 2018. We partnering with the Queens Economic
5 Development Corporation and the Queens Library
6 another local organizations and companies to develop
7 joint programs that offer technology classes to local
8 businesses and residents and provide technology
9 assistance to them. One goal moving forward is to
10 continue to advance the tech industry in the Borough
11 of Queens in New York City. We will address gaps in
12 our own programs and in the field at large, which
13 includes engaging more women who lead startup
14 companies and encouraging more women to participate
15 in this industry. To this end, Queens Colleges work
16 with the Black Women Code, the Student Run Women in
17 Technology Club who are organizing a hack day in
18 December and a hackathon in February. We're also
19 going to extend our services and resources to women
20 led technology associations, and companies as well as
21 organizations such as the Girl Scouts who recently
22 approached us to allow Troop 6000, the Girl Scout
23 Troop specially designed to serve girls in New York
24 city Shelter System for an event during Computer
25

1
2 Science Education Week. We're committed to becoming
3 more self-sustaining and less dependent on City
4 funding. However, unlike other tech incubators in
5 private institutions, we do not require a client to
6 share a percent of their potential income from
7 projects they develop with us or share in licensing
8 of these projects. In an effort to become self-
9 sufficient, our members pay an affordable membership
10 fee without giving up equity in their company. In
11 comparison to other spaces, our membership fees are
12 encouraging to startup companies of all socio-
13 economic backgrounds as they are below market rates.
14 To date we've earned over \$120,000 in membership fees
15 from 16 companies. Should the Council wish to
16 allocate additional funding, these funds will be used
17 to increase marketing efforts to encourage new
18 entrepreneurs including women to be aware of the Tech
19 Incubator. We would also create a paid internship
20 program to ensure startup companies requesting
21 critical student intern support for their projects
22 have interns who have the skills they need, which we
23 know they have, and also the time to allocate to
24 these projects because many of our students must work
25 part-time jobs to support their education and their

1 families, and providing paid internships would help
2 both our startup companies and the students in this
3 critical tech sector we're developing. And given the
4 ethnic diversity of our student body, these paid
5 internships would also help develop a more diverse
6 technology. Before I conclude our testimony, I
7 wanted to share very brief remarks by one of our
8 members Oscar Trujillo (sp?), but first I again want
9 to express our deepest appreciation to all of you for
10 allowing Queens College to play a key role in
11 supporting New York City's efforts to build a
12 sustainable tech sector, and also allowing us to
13 provide opportunities for our students to work
14 directly with the start-up companies and, in turn,
15 enhance their ability to enter this industry with
16 experience under their belt, and now I'll introduce
17 Oscar Trejo.

19 OSCAR TRUJILLO: Thank you, Jeff.
20 [background comments, pause] Thank you, Jeff. Good
21 morning, Chair Inez Barron of the Committee of Higher
22 Education and Chair James Vacca, the Committee of
23 Technology, Council Members of these two committees
24 and distinguished guests. My name is Oscar Trujillo,
25 Founder and CEO of SYNC IOT Technologies, a tech

1 startup housed at the Tech Incubator at Queens
2 College. We are building an Energy. We are building
3 an energy saving platform for homeowners and
4 businesses that leverages Internet of Things, Smart
5 Devices to automate, optimize and save energy. My
6 startup has been at the Tech Incubator at Queens
7 College for two months now, and my experience has
8 been phenomenal. Under the leadership of President
9 Felix Matos Rodriguez, Vice President Bill Keller,
10 Executive Director Professor Ted Brown, and Director
11 Weeks Mensah, the Tech Incubators at Queens College
12 has great integrated ecosystem and environment for
13 entrepreneurs to prove their concept idea, build,
14 launch and grow a business at a very low operating
15 cost relative to competitors' fees in Manhattan. The
16 venue offers various resources including deeply
17 discounted office prices, open 24/7 facility with
18 professional IT support staff providing servers and
19 Cloud computing storage, a kitchenette and
20 recreational space for idea generation, and
21 relaxation, a 3D printer, ongoing seminars covering
22 various business topics for startups to help
23 companies grow such as mine. More valuable—more
24 valuable than the office space, though, is the human
25

1 capital the Tech Incubators of Queens College offers,
2 and great value in the quality of business advice
3 that entrepreneur-entrepreneurs like myself receive
4 from the President's Office including mentorship,
5 collaboration with various departments throughout
6 campus as well as access to student interns who are
7 very talented, and eager to work on projects. In
8 partnership with the Internal Program at the Tech
9 Incubator at Queens College, I am looking forward to
10 having intern opportunities for web development,
11 mobile app development and business interns in my
12 team. The Tech Incubator at Queens College has
13 state-of-the-art conference rooms where developers
14 from my team and I collaborate via Skype weekly often
15 twice a week, and will-and will include interns as
16 well resulting in improved efficiency, collaboration
17 and communication. I am proud to say I am a Queens
18 native who grew up in Woodside, Queens, and still
19 live in Woodside, Queens, and I'm very grateful for
20 the opportunity to have access to the Tech Incubator
21 at Queens College. The Tech Incubator at Queens
22 College is a valuable resource for local
23 entrepreneurs like myself based not only in Queens,
24 but all of New York City. SYNC ROT Technologies is
25

1 looking forward to collaborating with Queens College
2 and leveraging the resources at its disposal to
3 generate revenue and hire more people. Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you very much
5 for your testimony.

6 OSCAR TRUJILLO: Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: It's been very
8 enlightening having this panel here. I do want to
9 acknowledge we've been joined by my colleague David
10 Greenfield from Brooklyn. It's been very interesting
11 that this, although we're talking about science,
12 we're talking about technology, this has been a
13 presentation that has really evidenced a lot of
14 emotion, which you would think would not be a part of
15 what we're talking about when we're hearing testimony
16 regarding technology. And, I-it-it in a way relates
17 to my opening statement when I talked about the
18 mineral sourcing for the three TGs, and understanding
19 that there's a lot of human suffering that comes to
20 generate these minerals that are the foundation for
21 these microchips and all the software we're talking
22 about. So, the question that I have is: As you're
23 going through the training and the technology for
24 those businesses that are going to develop all these
25

1 great ideas, and as we talk about the government
2 being very much interested in the ability to use some
3 of this technology in its warfare, what capacities or
4 what provisions are made to address these issues of
5 humanity. And we can't control what it is that
6 people do with their products, but to at least have
7 it on the table for discussion, the human capacity of
8 what this technology will generate. So, in providing
9 all of these resources to the technology incubators
10 that are there, what opportunity is there for us to
11 consider that?
12

13 KEN IWAMA: You know, the social aspect
14 and considerations in a starting business are
15 critical and it resonates what you say to me, and if-
16 if you go to a lot of these tech events around New
17 York City and a lot of start-ups now, they're all
18 social justice based, many of them are, get the vote
19 out, how to improve housing, information, open source
20 of data and how to get that to everyone. So, for the
21 CSI Tech Incubator our best screen to make sure that
22 we're having an ethical company that considers its
23 community, and is not harming the community based
24 upon its product is the fact that I think there's our
25 screening committee and we have a rigorous screening

1 committee, and we have faculty from Humanities and
2 the business and STEM on our-our committee. So, as
3 everybody knows, with your faculty members, they-they
4 tend to be very socially justice. The antennas are
5 up all the time. So, from the business side, you
6 know, our faculty I think keep us honest and and-and
7 they ask probing questions that someone from my
8 background, which is not an academic background, may
9 not have picked up, may have not picked up the global
10 implications of-of their technology. So, I think
11 the-the screening process for us and having the right
12 people on the screening process has played
13 significant dividends for CSI.

15 JANE MACKILLOP: I think one of the-the
16 fascinating aspects of the extent to which people
17 work together, and I think as you watch people
18 creating and developing new products and new ideas
19 and working in-in teams, in groups, you actually see
20 how they-they can influence each other for the good
21 as, Ken has said, and that's something that is very
22 striking in-in all of our training programs, and all
23 of the meetup and so on is that people on the whole
24 my observation is that they are keeping each other
25 honest. And I just want to introduce quickly Samira

1 Baharami, who is the Director of CUNY on the
2 Concourse. Would you agree with that? Yep.
3 [background comments] Yeah, so I think working in
4 teams and working in groups, which is how we—we do
5 our training a way for people to stay honest. I
6 don't know if I have answered your question.
7

8 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Yes.

9 JANE MACKILLOP: Yes.

10 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Yes, that's great.
11 Because we know that CUNY's origins are, you know,
12 based in the fact of its concern about the working
13 class, the poor people and giving an opportunity. So,
14 we don't want to be the host and have—have the—
15 generate products that are contradictory to doing
16 what it is that we know our society requires.

17 JANE MACKILLOP: Yes.

18 JEFF ROSENSTOCK: I'm going to briefly
19 answer that, and let Weeks Mensah who is the Managing
20 Director really respond but on a more macro level. I
21 always tell people if you have to go to a hospital,
22 go to a teaching hospital because the students are
23 going to ask probing questions, and I feel we have a
24 very diverse, as I mentioned 86% of our entrepreneurs
25 are people of color. Our student population is very

1 heaving ethnically from people from around the world,
2 and I think looking in their faces and having to
3 address the questions they have, will make our
4 entrepreneurs thank. But I'll let Weeks speak a
5 little bit more about the process.
6

7 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay, if you would
8 have a seat here.

9 WEEKS MENSAH: Okay.

10 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And we'll swear you
11 in.

12 WEEKS MENSAH: Sure.

13 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And we'll hear your
14 testimony.

15 WEEKS MENSAH: I'll be very short.

16 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Wait, wait.

17 LEGAL COUNSEL: Hold on.

18 MALE SPEAKER: They're going to swear you
19 in.

20 LEGAL COUNSEL: Right.

21 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I'm going to have—

22 LEGAL COUNSEL: Right. Raise your right
23 hand, please. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the
24 whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your
25

1 testimony before this committee, and to answer-to
2 respond honestly to Council Members questions?
3

4 WEEKS MENSAH: I do

5 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Good. Give us your
6 name, please and your testimony.

7 WEEKS MENSAH: First name is Weeks. Last
8 name is Mensah. I'm the Managing Director or the
9 Incubator at Queens College, and I'll make my
10 response very short. I think it's very important we
11 invest in conscious-repreneurs right, so people who
12 are conscious of the impact of global and local
13 events. So, I, you know, to the extent of Queens
14 College, we invest not just in entrepreneurs but
15 people who again are conscious-preneurs, the overt
16 conscious meaning that I can testify that all 28
17 companies that have been through the Incubator, their
18 product is somehow serving a local and global
19 problem, and we—we have a screening committee that
20 does that, too.

21 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Great.

22 KEN IWAMA: Chair Barron, if I could add
23 one more thing, something that's tangential to what
24 you just said is look what's happening in tech across
25

1 the country. Look at Uber and other tech companies
2 having issues in terms of their--

3
4 CHAIRPERSON BARRON:

5 KEN IWAMA: --internal management of
6 employees. So, beyond the product itself, it's how
7 are they managing their employees--

8 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right.

9 KEN IWAMA: --in this day and age? And
10 if you look at the success rate of startup companies,
11 you know, I think you probably have about 95% failure
12 of--of most startup companies and--and what we've been
13 seeing in talking to people around the city is that
14 while technology companies are great at building
15 technology, they're not necessarily great at building
16 people, or companies. So, I think for the future for
17 Tech Incubators as well as other accelerators and
18 tech support system, I think we need to infuse more
19 human resources type because, you know, when you're a
20 two-people company, all of a sudden you have a third
21 and a fourth and a fifth, I--I think the--the latest
22 study showed that it's not until they hire 100 people
23 that they hire the first human resources
24 professional. Can you imagine that? Tech--people who
25 are brilliant tech people having no background in

1 managing people or human resources understanding
2 sexual harassment, discrimination. All of a sudden
3 now having to manage up to 100 people without any
4 expertise in there. So, I think as far as incubators
5 especially at CSI, we're—we're concentrating on that
6 bill. So, even if—even like with Regina, you know,
7 has—you know, has a contract with a Fortune 500
8 company. How do we help her grow in scale? Even
9 though she's not part of our program any more, we can
10 continue to assist her in terms of scaling that
11 aspect of the company as well.

13 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Have lots of other
14 questions, but I'm going to turn it over to my
15 colleague, my co-chair.

16 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: I thank you, Chair
17 Barron, and I really am every impressed by all the
18 testimony today. I do have a concern about capacity.
19 So many people are using the Tech Incubators. They
20 really—really take it off, and I—I know that this
21 body, the Council can be very proud of the initiative
22 that we started, but when we address capacity, you
23 all spoke about what you would do with additional
24 money. We do have some colleges that are not part of
25 the Tech Incubators Council Initiative at this point.

1 I do—we do have three members who are returning to
2 the Council. I will not as terms limits has hit, but
3 we have three members who are returning. So, for
4 their benefit, are—I—I think it's important to ask
5 are you at capacity? Do you discern a need to reach
6 out further so that we can accomplish more because
7 certainly what we've accomplished so far is very
8 impressive? I'm sure my colleagues would agree. So
9 who would like to take a chance at answering that
10 question?
11

12 WEEKS MENSAH: Well, we are not at
13 capacity. Again, we—I think we might have the
14 biggest space within just with the Incubator. It's
15 7,000 square feet, and we are constantly trying to
16 bring in more companies with further investment. One
17 of the things that we really want to do is invest in
18 student companies, right. I think Jeff mentioned
19 that earlier, and also really just invest in more
20 companies like Oscar. So, capacity I'm sure we will
21 get there soon enough. We have the space, but what
22 we need now is to actually provide more and more
23 resources to really scale these companies.

24 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: You, you have the
25 space--

1 WEEKS MENSAH: Uh-hm.

2 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: --but how many people
3 are you now--what's your constituency? How many
4 people do you serve?
5

6 WEEKS MENSAH: Right now, so in the last
7 year we served 28 companies. Actively now we have 19
8 companies on site, right, and that ranges from
9 companies of one man to a four-man team to 12. Our
10 biggest client is Revature, you know, which has about
11 30 people at a given time at the space.

12 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: And Lehman in Staten
13 Island, can you answer that?

14 JANE MACKILLOP: Okay, we have--we do have
15 some additional space that we could reconfigure that
16 we could expand the businesses that we serve and I
17 think the point is worth making that the Bronx really
18 needs to expand businesses that the poverty levels in
19 the Bronx are incredibly high. That 30% unemployment
20 is higher than the average in New York City. This
21 kind of investment really repays many, many times
22 over in terms of creating businesses, creating jobs,
23 and creating a synergy with the local education
24 institutions, not just Lehman, but the community
25 colleges, the high schools. If we can--if we can

1 raise the level, all the votes go up and we really
2 need to do that in the Bronx.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: And—and you—you are
5 now on Fordham Road in the Concourse?

6 JANE MACKILLOP: That's right.

7 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: So, you would think
8 that you could acquire space in that facility?

9 JANE MACKILLOP: Well, we do—we do have
10 some space--

11 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: [interposing] And you
12 could have?

13 JANE MACKILLOP: Yes, we could.

14 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: In that building
15 where I was.

16 JANE MACKILLOP: Yes.

17 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: The old Alexanders,
18 as we called it.

19 JANE MACKILLOP: The Old Alexanders,
20 right. [laughter]

21 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Yes, yes, yes. Go
22 ahead.

23 KEN IWAMA: Chair Vacca, we are at
24 capacity. We are under capacity as we started small.
25 With a 1,700 square foot facility again as you saw my

1 presentation, we need to grow in scale at least to 48
2 to 5,000 square feet. Not only to increase the
3 number of incubator companies and startups that we
4 can—we can serve and—and support, but also, you know,
5 again, there is no real tech ecosystem yet in Staten
6 Island, not a mature one anyway. We're starting up.
7 So, what we plan to do in this space is to again
8 surround the incubator, create our own ecosystem by
9 surrounding it with other types of programming to
10 bring students, you know, from Pre-K to 12 all the
11 way through to community members in the door whether
12 it's cyber security programs, whether it's A+
13 computer programs, whether it's conferences or
14 seminars, and then matching them with our incubator
15 companies, and that's the synergy that we're trying—
16 trying to create at the College of Staten island this
17 year. It's like Tech Incubators. It's—it's
18 ambitious. I think it's--its visionary, and it's
19 going to take a lot of work, but we would—the support
20 for the City Council continuous support I—I think
21 we're going to do it.

23 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: I do want to ask
24 about community outreach and engagement. Is there an
25 outreach effort that you do within your boroughs or

1 within your college community so that people know
2 that you're there, and what--what vehicles do you use
3 to accomplish an outreach to the community?
4

5 JANE MACKILLOP: [off mic] Sure, we--[on
6 mic] We reach out to the community in a variety of
7 different ways. We use social media, we use--or
8 catalogs. We use print media, but the--the most
9 significant way to reach people is still word of
10 mouth. You listen to your neighbor. You listen to
11 the person you work with, and so we're getting the
12 word out by having so many people come to the--to the
13 Incubator we can then spread these out. But we're
14 also working with community based organizations like
15 the Knowledge House and others and other initiatives
16 within the Bronx so that the word is out there, and
17 as you heard from Carol, she was told by her
18 professors oh you should check out the Hub Carol, by
19 the way, had to go back to work, which is why she
20 dashed out. But she--she again it was word of mouth,
21 and this what you see that is so powerful that the
22 more people we can bring in for different events, as
23 Ken and Jeff have said, the more the word will be
24 out, and the more it will--it will spread.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: When the local
3 Chambers of Commerce is having events, do you have
4 representatives there from the Incubators? Do you go
5 to networking events at the Chamber of Commerce and
6 things like that?

7 JANE MACKILLOP: Yeah, yeah, and-

8 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Do you wish to--

9 JANE MACKILLOP: [interposing] and we
10 also hold this development center. You can see that
11 Clarence is very much involved in the Tech Incubator,
12 and again, reporting out. Do, you want to say a
13 quick word? [background comments] Clarence.

14 CLARENCE STANLEY: Yes.

15 JANE MACKILLOP: Yes

16 CLARENCE STANLEY: I do.

17 JANE MACKILLOP: Okay.

18 CLARENCE STANLEY: I was just waiting.

19 (sic)

20 JANE MACKILLOP: I think you have to be
21 sworn in, yes.

22 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: We're going to have
23 to get a podium, I think. [laughter] This--this is
24 really a-

25

2 CLARENCE STANLEY: This is not my thing.
3 (sic)

4 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: This is an all-
5 inclusive type forum.

6 LEGAL COUNSEL: Please raise your right
7 hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole
8 truth, and nothing but the truth in your testimony
9 before this committee, and to respond honestly to the
10 Council Members questions?

11 CLARENCE STANLEY: I do.

12 LEGAL COUNSEL: Thank you.

13 CLARENCE STANLEY: Yeah, with this
14 development service-

15 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Please
16 give us your name for the record.

17 CLARENCE STANLEY: I'm sorry. I'm
18 Clarence Stanley, Director of the Small Business
19 Development Center. We're very active in the Bronx.
20 We work with the Chamber of Commerce and mostly I sit
21 on the Board of Bronx Economic Development. We work
22 with all of our partners throughout the Bronx, and
23 very active in outreach, which is actually word-of-
24 mouth. We work with the banks and access to capital,
25

1 and that sort of thing. Very active in the Bronx, if
2 that answers your question.
3

4 JEFF ROSENSTOCK: Chair, if I could--

5 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] If I
6 could jump in here.

7 JEFF ROSENSTOCK: --if I could add. Oh,
8 I'm sorry.

9 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: In terms of the
10 outreach, what does it cost for a person who might be
11 interested? To use your services, what would be the
12 cost to them?

13 CLARENCE STANLEY: Our costs are very
14 inexpensive. We're funded by the Small Business
15 Administrations and our cost are zero.

16 JANE MACKILLOP: Yeah, I mean in--in terms
17 of all of the services that we offered, all of the
18 training, there was no charge.

19 CLARENCE STANLEY: No charge.

20 JANE MACKILLOP: So, so everybody to
21 whatever they could. They took out of it whatever
22 they needed to take. We reached out to them in the
23 best way that we could, but there was no charge.

24 CLARENCE STANLEY: One other thing. All--
25 all the clients that are in the Incubator become

1 clients of the Small Business Development Center.
2 They have access to all of our programs including our
3 research. We bid on MWBE certification, government
4 contracts, and whatever services are available,
5 through the Small Business Administration, all the
6 Incubator clients participate in our program, and we
7 do follow on. After they get there, we help them get
8 incorporate, and we help them with access to capital
9 and then we follow on the city as they grow from
10 start up phase to—to the next step they're going,
11 developing websites through the incubator programs we
12 work with the Technology Center. If someone needs a
13 website development, we actually work with the labs
14 to get that incubator—to get that website set up, and
15 take the client to the next step, social media and so
16 forth.
17

18 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, for the
19 incubators and I'm—for the incubators on college
20 campuses, what do they pay in terms of renting space
21 and utilization of all of that equipment?

22 CLARENCE STANLEY: Oh, that would be—
23 okay, I was just going to— Oh, that's alright.

24 WEEKS MENSAH: With respect to just
25 hitting the earlier question, one of the big—we use

1 all the platforms. We work with local communities,
2 organizations. One of the biggest outreach we have
3 done since founding this one series, which is, you
4 now, hosting workshops for—it's open to the entire
5 community. So, doing accounting for startups, which
6 we see a lot of people coming to participate even
7 though they're not necessarily part of the incubation
8 program. With respect to our prices, we are again
9 below market value because it is an incubation
10 program. We are there to really support and scale
11 startup on companies. So, prices ranges from \$100
12 virtual membership, you know, to \$300 a seat, a table
13 at which comes with using the space 24/7 to having a
14 fixed space to work from to if you want a private—a
15 private team space we can accommodate that at a very
16 affordable rate with respect to just the square feet
17 we provide. So, our prices I can say it's, you know,
18 very low below market value. I starts from \$100 and
19 whatever.
20

21 CLARENCE STANLEY: And at Lehman there is
22 no charge for the Technology Incubator.

23 WEEKS MENSAH: And students don't pay.

24 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Students don't pay.
25

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Excellent. I like that. [laughter]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: You can extend that to the full issue of tuition, and--

WEEKS MENSAH: [interposing] There you go.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --we'll be going straight ahead.

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: And one last question. I just wanted to follow up and ask you what type of follow-up do we have when people leave the Incubator? Do you keep in touch with them? DO we have a continuing mentorship or is there--do you know whether or not they stayed in the community or stayed in the city? I just was interested in knowing about follow up.

CLARENCE STANLEY: Well, very often we have an MQS System and we put the clients into the system and get them started. Once we get the capital, once you get the business incorporated, once you get it going, for the most part it's very difficult to keep up with them. They begin to grow. What we just started doing more recently is going out to the--we got a database of about 10,000 small

1 businesses in the Bronx that we've identified. Now,
2 we're going after those businesses to see where they
3 are. We're doing that right now. We see where you
4 are right now. For the most part once a person, a
5 bank generally responds and sends someone to us
6 that's not bankable at that time. Once we get them
7 structured, and they become bankable, we don't—they
8 don't need us any more. Okay, but now we're going
9 after talking to small business owners particularly
10 contractors and different businesses, and the
11 technology companies to see what do—what do you want?
12 What's your next step? What would you like to do?
13 So, we've got an intake sheet, we got a follow on
14 sheet. They ask them when you—are you interested in
15 getting a government contract? Are you interested?
16 What do you need to do to take your business to the
17 next level? We're doing that as we speak right now.

19 KEN IWAMA: All our companies from our
20 inaugural cohort are staying in New York City, and
21 Georgina and our students M Tech Company are also
22 staying on Staten Island, and let me go back to the
23 screening process back here. One of the things that
24 we developed in our questionnaire is how vested are
25 you in this community? Did you come knowing about

1 Staten Island? Did you know coming about the issues,
2 the social issues, the conditions, the advantages,
3 the development that's happening on Staten Island?
4 So, had a lot of Incubator companies that—that talked
5 the talk. So, I want to be in New York City, but
6 didn't really evidence any real affinity towards
7 either New York City, the outer boroughs or Staten
8 Island. So, I think—I hope our success was in large
9 part due to our initial screening that those who want
10 to be here, including our Into New York City company
11 from France, you know, we grilled them pretty
12 heavily. Do you intend to take what you hear and go
13 back to France or are you going to stay here and
14 build this as a company, and—and they're doing it in
15 New York City.
16

17 CLARENCE STANLEY: I just want to add one
18 other thing. As you're starting to see the Bronx
19 start to grow, now you're starting to see technology
20 companies moving into Bronx from Manhattan because
21 Manhattan is a little more affordable. Now, we see
22 the challenge now. Businesses coming in, and you're
23 getting into the gentrification phase where we're
24 trying to see folks within the Bronx possibly being
25 phased out. So, what we're going to do now is make

1 sure that our—that our population in the Bronx gets
2 to participate in this new technology growth in the
3 Bronx. We see Hutchinson Metro, for example, you see
4 a lot of development. We got the MTA coming in. So,
5 the idea right now was to make sure that the folks in
6 our community don't get displaced. You're not going
7 to take advantage of these programs as they come in
8 to participate.

10 WEEKS MENSAH: And for us we have a
11 pretty comprehensive database, which we keep for
12 active companies and companies that has less
13 incubation programs. As soon as we started last
14 year, eight companies exited from the Incubation for
15 several reasons: Family reasons, you know, they—some
16 pivoted their business and realized that that wasn't
17 the right market, but we—we—we are very actively in
18 touch with them, you know, starting from a weekly
19 newsletter they get every Monday at 9:00 a.m. to our
20 friends from Sievers, which we send to companies
21 that, you know, went, you know, left the Incubation
22 program. So, we are very in touch with them. We have
23 folks that come back just to rent office space for
24 the day, right. (1) Because their business is not in
25 a space where it, you know, they—they have—I'm on the

1 job, right, and it's, you know in the place where
2 they can do it full time. So, we have-we have seen a
3 lot of those companies, but we provide support, you
4 know, on all angles and my phone line is open. All
5 my-our members, former and current, call me on my
6 cell phone any time they need help. So, we are very
7 in tune as we have a very small company space where
8 we support the startups.

10 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Yes, Council Member
11 Cabrera.

12 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Council Member
13 Cabrera has questions.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Thank you so
15 much. Thank you so much to both of the chairs. My
16 very first question is a very important one. I
17 noticed that you had Chairman Vacca in the picture.
18 I just wonder what kind of app he was working on.
19 [laughter] I know that he's almost done here in
20 Technology as the Chair of the Technology Committee.
21 Is this part of his second step in life or--?

22 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: I walked into that
23 one I'm telling your right now. That-I-I knew that-
24 Fernando, I know that was coming. [laughter]

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Well, I want to
3 thank you for answering. Our Chairman Vacca asked
4 two questions. I was very interested in his capacity
5 and outreach. I do want to ask you regarding—you
6 mentioned the HR issue. Do-do you promote having the
7 startups to use outside vendors for HR, and this with
8 some of them they—they don't have the resources yet.
9 They have an in-house one.

10 KEN IWAMA: I think that's certainly
11 something to consider in—in the future because again
12 for, as you say, for small companies and medium sized
13 companies there are plenty of consultants and vendors
14 out there who provide this—this service, but as—as of
15 yet, the—you know, our—our—our plans of the CSI Tech
16 Incubators to increasing to fuse some of those
17 concepts within the professional development and with
18 the business development in the companies and to
19 bring outsiders in as well, too. We—we started an
20 affiliation with—with a consultant that actually was
21 the head of Human Resources on Wall Street, and was
22 affiliated with the Wheel project for some time. So,
23 she is now working with as well, too. So, we'll be
24 bringing as we mature and develop more human
25

1 resources technical expertise to assist—to assist our
2 companies.
3

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: I'm surprised
5 somebody didn't use that as a startup.

6 KEN IWAMA: Yeah.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Yeah, yeah. I'll
8 give you HR for all of you.

9 KEN IWAMA: [laugh] That's right.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: You have a great
11 business idea. I'm sure somebody who is watching
12 right now might take advantage of that.

13 KEN IWAMA: [laughter]

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Alright, I heard
15 you say that there as a 95% failure rate for a
16 startup? What is it for the Incubators in all the
17 CUNYs?

18 KEN IWAMA: I wouldn't have that
19 information. I only have for our Incubator, which-
20 which is two of our-of our three companies are-are
21 scaling and highly successful. Our third company,
22 which is student owned, one of our computer science
23 students. He's still in-in-in the-we had to pivot
24 his company a little bit because he came in with one
25 idea about how it was going to grow, and we said it's

1 not gong work that way. So, we expanded his business
2 model. So, that's an ongoing. So, you know, two of
3 the three have been very successful so far.

4
5 WEEKS MENSAH: And for us, I think we'd
6 be in a better position to answer that maybe around
7 next year.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Okay.

9 WEEKS MENSAH: So, we can have like a
10 full two years to really watch some of these
11 companies, but within that 95 I think it's very
12 important to address the reason why companies fail,
13 which is like a thong of issues, right. But I think
14 the most important thing is that we are investing in
15 the right talent and being, you know, having the
16 right resources available can go a long way.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Okay, and then
18 in terms of for example in the Bronx how many of
19 those students live in the Bronx, and once they start
20 the startups stay in the Bronx?

21 JANE MACKILLOP: Yeah.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Do you have that
23 data?

24 JANE MACKILLOP: I—I love that question.
25 We do have the data. We don't have it in great

1 detail, but we can tell you that in general the
2 majority of Lehman students, for example, are from
3 the Bronx, and the majority of them stay in the
4 Bronx.
5

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Okay.

7 JANE MACKILLOP: We also find that some
8 of them go down to Gatlin College from the Bronx and
9 then come back. So, we're—we're sort of tracking
10 that, but I would say that the—it's always the
11 majority. It's well over 50%, and that impacts the
12 Bronx hugely.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Fantastic. I
14 did want to make a point of clarification of the
15 statistics that was given that the Bronx has 30%
16 unemployment.

17 CLARENCE STANLEY: Well, not--

18 JANE MACKILLOP: [interposing] No, no,
19 no, not unemployment poverty.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Oh, for what?

21 JANE MACKILLOP: Poverty.

22 CLARENCE STANLEY: Poverty.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Oh, poverty.

24 Okay got you.

1
2 JANE MACKILLOP: Poverty. No,
3 unemployment is 6%.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Okay. Sorry.

5 JANE MACKILLOP: That, yeah, 6 point--?

6 CLARENCE STANLEY: 6.6%.

7 JANE MACKILLOP: 6.6% almost there.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Yeah, it's--it's

9 JANE MACKILLOP: [interposing] It's--it's
10 higher than I think Manhattan, but it's--it's much
11 lower than it was.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Yes, much. In
13 my district it used to be 23.5. We were the worst
14 on.

15 JANE MACKILLOP: Wow.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: The entire
17 district, and now we're down to 6.7. So--

18 JANE MACKILLOP: [interposing] Yeah.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: ---we're--we're
20 rea;;u excited what's happening there, but thank you
21 what you're doing, and keep up the great work. The
22 future of visionaries are literally going to be going
23 through all your incubators and then you'll be
24 shaping the world. Thank you so much.

25 JANE MACKILLOP: Yeah, thank you.

1 COUNCIL MEMBER CABRERA: Thank you so
2 much to the Chairs.

3 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. I have a
4 few more questions. Are your Tech Incubators in
5 anyway benefitting from or affiliated with the
6 Governor's Startup New York Program where you don't
7 have to pay—I think it's that you don't have to pay
8 taxes for X number of years?

9 JANE MACKILLOP: Yeah, I followed up with
10 that question when Chloe sent it to us yesterday, and
11 we're open to doing this in conjunction with CUNY.
12 We're eligible at Lehman under certain circumstances,
13 and I believe that Bronx Community College may be a
14 site, but I think there—there are some restrictions,
15 and I would need more time to--

16 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] Okay.

17 JANE MACKILLOP: --follow up and get back
18 to you.

19 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, you'll get back
20 to us.

21 JANE MACKILLOP: [interposing] It's a
22 note to--

23 KEN IWAMA: Well, at—at CSI, you know, we
24 are considering the startup program even before the
25

1 incubator. We received funding for the—for the
2 incubator from the Council, and there were some
3 impediments in terms of the bonding issues that were
4 happening on our—on our campus that—and again, I
5 don't know the details, but the way the—the—I think
6 it was bonded originally by having a private industry
7 company there would—would potentially have some
8 impact on—on our ability to maintain our status as—as
9 a CUNY, as a public institution. Therefore, you
10 know, and we go back to the capacity issue. Right
11 now, with our 1,700 square foot incubator, there's no
12 place to house a company. I think if we expand
13 because many of our companies including Georgina I
14 think has—has asked about the startup and new
15 programs. So, we're interested in pursuing it. We—
16 we just need the capacity to do it.

18 CLARENCE STANLEY: The—the SBDC, I
19 believe that we are signed up for the Startup New
20 York program, and it has been a challenge in terms of
21 space and in terms of some of the criteria to
22 participate in the Startup New York Programs, the
23 business company to get a tax rebate.

24 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right.

25

1
2 CLARENCE STANLEY: I'm not able—should
3 not be able to—should not compete with existing
4 businesses. So, it has been a challenge. They told
5 us that was a space issues and getting and obviously
6 tech companies would—would qualify, but we are—in
7 answer to the question, we are involved with the
8 Startup New York Program, but it hasn't been hugely
9 successful.

10 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you, and
11 generally, what's the average number of staff persons
12 in each of these tech startups in these incubators?
13 Is it one, two, three? What's the range of people?

14 JANE MACKILLOP: Two.

15 KEN IWAMA: Two.

16 JANE MACKILLOP: It's two.

17 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

18 KEN IWAMA: It looks like that's the
19 common number. [laughter]

20 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Are you going to
21 that?

22 KEN IWAMA: Yeah, with me and me, as they
23 say. (sic)

24 JANE MACKILLOP: Okay.

2 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And one of the—one
3 of the sites indicated that students, I think it was
4 CSI you have a student tech. Are there other students
5 Tech Incubators at the other sites? Do we know?

6 WEEKS MENSAH: Yes, ours is a mixture of
7 community companies and then students.

8 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: You do have some
9 students?

10 WEEKS MENSAH: Yeah, we have students.
11 Yes, in fact, we have two student companies that are
12 housed right now. We have the—the program we are
13 developing now they go through the class, and at the
14 end, the top three teams or students get to also
15 onboard to Incubation for free.

16 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Alright, I think
17 that's it. We have other questions, but they would
18 be directed to CUNY, and we'll forward them to CUNY
19 and—and look forward to a response. We always
20 appreciate CUNY getting back to us and responding.
21 They always do, and we appreciate that because we do
22 look at their responses to see how further they can
23 direct what it is that we want to present to just not
24 our students, but to our society and to the city and
25 to the country at large as well. I think--

[background comments, pause] Okay, to my colleague,
do you have any closing comments?

CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Well, not really. I mean I think that this is exciting and that we at the Council who are on the cusp of this initiative is rewarding, and just hear all that's been done, means that we have more to do, and that's my view of this, and it's such pleasure to hear everything, and congratulations. Today's announcement was fantastic, and technology--technology is an ever-evolving field, but there are people there who I know would not have gotten, not have gotten started without all of you, and I thank you for your service to the city and hope that you continue to serve. Thank you so much.

CLARENCE STANLEY: Thank you.

JANE MACKILLOP: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Just in closing, your financing, is it all from CUNY? I did hear you say that the Mayor's Office of Movie and Entertainment--

JANE MACKILLOP: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: --is giving you-- you've been able to leverage CUNY money to give that.

JANE MACKILLOP: Right.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: But is it CUNY—is it
3 City Council money that operates all of your—is that
4 the only source for your—operation for your Tech
5 Incubator?

6 JANE MACKILLOP: No, we—we've leveraged
7 all of this--

8 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: [interposing] You've
9 leveraged that, right?

10 JANE MACKILLOP: For example, for the
11 training for EON Reality and then with the—with the
12 partnership with NYU. So, we're—we're—and then the
13 grant from—from Mayor de Blasio. I mean the—it's—as
14 I—really, becoming a Tech Incubators the way we—
15 you've enabled us to be has allowed us to access all
16 sorts of other funding. It's really huge.

17 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I would love to be
18 able to see that on a chart so it you could do that.

19 JANE MACKILLOP: Oh, I'd—I'd be—I'd be
20 happy to give you more details.

21 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And do—do
22 participants in the training get any type of
23 certificate at the conclusion or is just for their
24 own benefit?

25 JANE MACKILLOP: Yes, they do, they do.

2 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: They do?

3 JANE MACKILLOP: Yes, yes, they do. Ken,
4 did you want to say something?

5 KEN IWAMA: No.

6 JANE MACKILLOP: No.

7 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON VACCA: Just one more
9 questions. I-I wanted to ask about people with
10 disabilities. Do-and-and people that have-are
11 limited in English Proficiency. Can you go into
12 working with the disabled-with the disabled adult or
13 the disabled student, and how we are addressing the-
14 those with the English Language Learns?

15 OSCAR TRUJILLO: So-

16 JANE MACKILLOP: yeah.

17 OSCAR TRUJILLO: Oh, yeah, I might take
18 this question. So, lucky for us, our Incubation was
19 built to host people who have disability problems.
20 So, we have a bathroom that can take people that are
21 handicapped, and even the entrance. We also had one
22 company, which the founder actually had a mental-
23 mental illness and he builds the first-the first only
24 online dating platform for people with mental
25 disabilities. So, we are positioned to place the one

1 just the physical location to harness, then really
2 help people with disabilities and also we are working
3 on these other programs overall to really house
4 people that have disability issues.

5 JANE MACKILLOP: Yeah, our-our space is
6 accessible. So, it's-it's, you know, it meets all
7 requirements to be accessible. Most of our staff are
8 bilingual. So, we're able to help people in those
9 regards. We don't have training, but we-we do have
10 some training in Spanish.

11 FEMALE SPEAKER: We do have some training
12 in Spanish.

13 JANE MACKILLOP: Yeah, we have some-some
14 training in Spanish. So, yeah.

15 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Well, once again,
16 thank you for coming. We've learned a lot, and it's
17 exciting, it's encouraging, and I just want to make
18 sure that we balance the technology with the humanity
19 and--

20 JANE MACKILLOP: [interposing] Yes.

21 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Make sure that as we
22 go forward we benefit that and raise the
23 consciousness about the source of these minerals and
24 make sure that we don't just benefit from that
25

without addressing the suffering that generates these
minerals. Thank you so much.

JANE MACKILLOP: Thank you

CLARENCE STANLEY: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: There being no
further testimony, we are concluded. Thank you.

[gavel]

C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date December 5, 2017