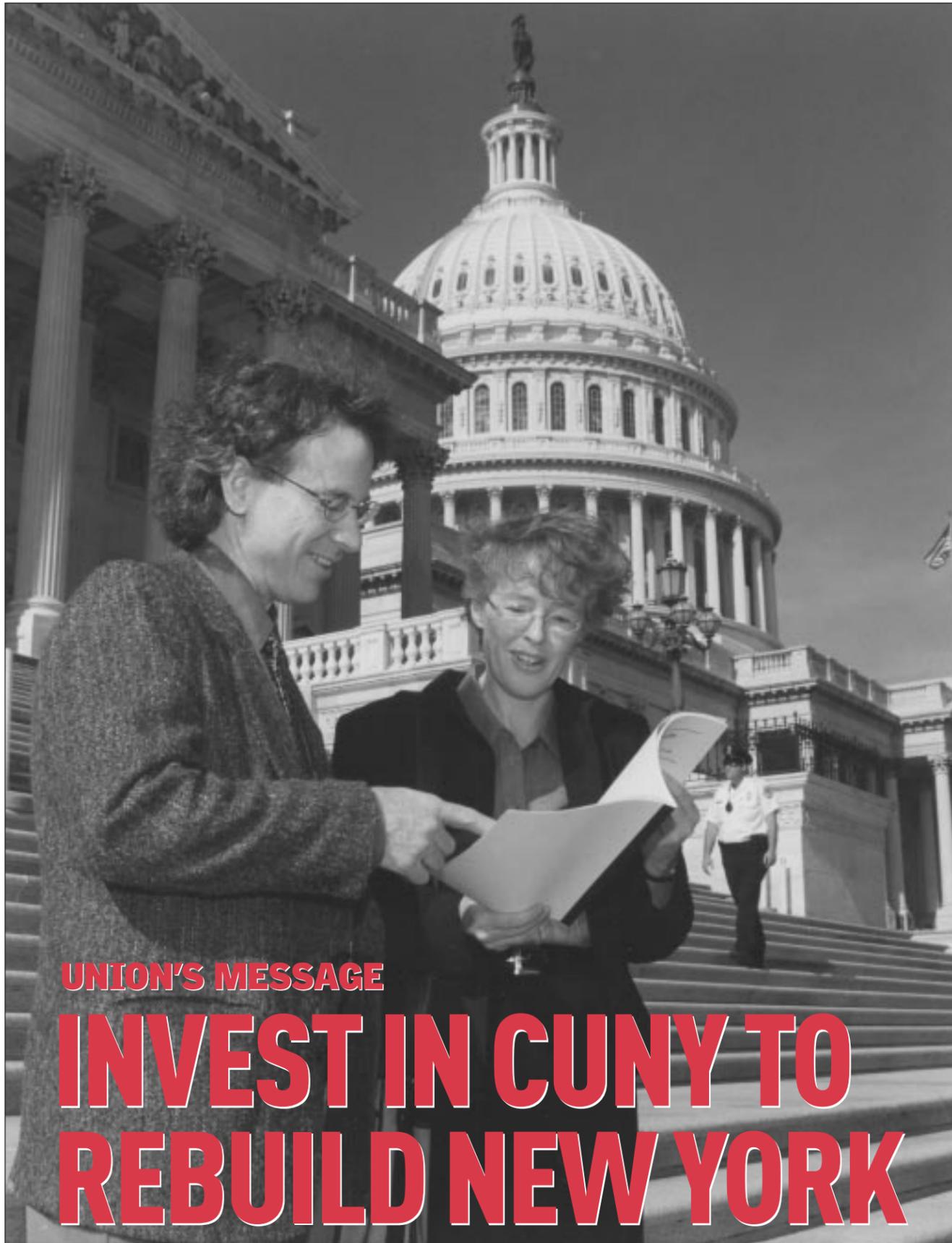


# Clarion

NEWSPAPER OF THE PROFESSIONAL STAFF CONGRESS / CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK



DECEMBER 2001



## UNION'S MESSAGE

# INVEST IN CUNY TO REBUILD NEW YORK

In November the PSC did something new in the budget battle: it took the case for CUNY to Washington. Above, President Barbara Bowen and First Vice President Steve London outside the Capitol, where they pressed for federal aid to help rebuild the University. Earlier this year the union had won pledges of increased funding from the New York City Council, state legislators and Governor Pataki – but after September 11, the PSC had to change gears quickly to organize against proposed budget cuts. **PAGE 3**

Mike Campbell

## ADJUNCTS

### Campus Equity Week at CUNY



PSC members join with 100 other campuses across North America.

**PAGE 4**

## CONTRACT

### Questions & answers on the negotiations

The PSC and CUNY management are in the midst of “expedited negotiations.” What’s at stake, and where is it likely to go? News on the back page, plus answers to members’ questions. **PAGES 11 & 12**



## HEALTH

### Indoor air quality problems at CUNY

The WTC disaster has caused some unusual problems with indoor air quality at BMCC. Unhealthy indoor air is also common at other CUNY campuses: here’s what you can do. **PAGE 9**



## AAUP VIEWPOINT

### Academic freedom after September 11

Analysis of the September 11 terrorist attack and how to respond have been topics of bitter debate – as well as an occasion for threats and intimidation. The head of the AAUP speaks out. **PAGE 11**

# CLIP teachers hurt by "part-time" label

## The reality is full-time work

By CLARION STAFF

Those who teach English as a second language often highlight incorrect word usage in student essays. So faculty in the CUNY Language Immersion Program (CLIP) are quick to take a red pen to their designation as "part-time" workers.

CLIP faculty spend far more time teaching in the classroom than full-time lecturers, who have the heaviest classroom load among CUNY "full-timers." Of course, lecturers spend considerable time on duties outside the classroom. So do CLIP teachers, who are expected to devote many hours to tasks related to program development.

But CLIP teachers are classified as continuing education teachers, and all CUNY continuing education teachers not paid through the Research Foundation are defined

as part-time employees, according to the bylaws of the Board of Trustees.

Unlike all other CUNY faculty, continuing education teachers have neither salary steps nor salary ranges. They only receive across-the-board contractual pay hikes. Because these across-the-board increases have not kept pace with inflation since CLIP's inception in 1995, the program's most senior teachers now earn 3% less in inflation-adjusted dollars than they did six years ago. Starting annual pay has never changed, so after inflation, new CLIP teachers today earn 16.7% less than new teachers did in 1995.

### UNION WANTS CHANGE

Benefits are also problematic. CLIP teachers receive only seven sick days per year and cannot bank unused days for future use. This compares with 20 temporary dis-

ability days for full-timers, who can bank unused days. And unlike full-timers, CLIP faculty must either teach summer classes or go without health insurance and TRS pension credit in July and August. Also unlike full-timers, CLIP faculty are ineligible for parental leave, tuition waivers or pensions through TIAA-CREF.

The PSC has vowed to change this situation. The union believes CLIP teachers are full-time faculty who should be classified as language immersion lecturers and should have the same benefits and salary schedule as other full-time lecturers.

Lois Barnett, the director of BMCC's CLIP program, agrees that change is imperative. "We have fantastic teachers in CLIP and students receive tremendous benefits from the teachers' dedicated and highly skilled performance," says Barnett. "As a director, I'm seriously concerned about losing these superior teachers because of the unjust financial situation and inadequate benefits."

Melissa Brand Nathan is one teacher who has already left. She spent five years at LaGuardia's CLIP, where she found her work "rewarding and challenging." But she chose to leave the program, to some



BMCC CLIP teacher Iris Schickerling-Georgia working with students

extent out of frustration. "At CLIP," says Brand Nathan, "the teachers were dedicated and professional and unfortunately, according to the City, expendable."

### ACADEMIC PIECEWORK?

Ellen Balleisen, a CLIP teacher at Bronx Community College, points out that she and her colleagues are encouraged to create elaborate curricula present their work at conferences and devote time to discussion of program-wide issues. "These responsibilities imply we're career

professionals," she says. "Yet when I attended a collective bargaining session, management's negotiating team claimed CLIP teachers were hourly workers by design. This implies management sees us as academic pieceworkers."

Balleisen adds, "CLIP teachers take pride in helping to develop an exciting new program. But we can't be career professionals while we're also pieceworkers whose pay rates constantly lose value. That's why we're fighting to change our contractual status."



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR | WRITE TO: CLARION/PSC, 25 W. 43RD STREET, FIFTH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10036. E-MAIL: PSC-EDITOR@ATT.NET. FAX: 212-302-7815.

# Dump trucks, diesel fumes and great clouds of dust

● I am a ten-year BMCC adjunct whose class was relocated to a trailer on West St., right across the highway from the barge port. The trailers themselves are fine, but faculty and students must walk outside along decks on West St. to get there or to return inside to use the bathrooms. Even with windows closed, the dust seeps inside.

Picture this scene: streams of dump trucks arrive, bringing rubble from the site. The debris is noisily dumped or hoisted by cranes onto barges. The dumping causes great clouds of dust to fill the air; plus, the trucks and cranes are continuously belching diesel fumes. The air is gross. The wetting down by sanitation does not remedy the problem. I have no prior respiratory problems, yet when I'm in the trailer, I go home with a headache, scratchy throat and stuffed nasal passages.

This is a terrible location for this operation, between two large schools – BMCC and Stuyvesant High. I totally agree with PSC health and safety officer Joan Greenbaum that "the loading site needs to be moved."

– Kate Walter  
BMCC

### Thanks for the poetry

● I just read the latest *Clarion*, your October 2001 issue and want-

ed to tell you how good I think it is. The format is inviting, concise and readable. Of course, I turned to the poetry first – what a terrific idea. The way you treat the WTC disaster, putting it in real terms of members' personal experiences and issues of free speech, etc., is thoughtful and thought-provoking. In all, the paper is a serious and action-encouraging document.

– Maggie Block  
CCNY CWE

### Adjuncts need TIAA/CREF

● Recent notices indicate that full-time faculty who are paid as adjuncts for overload teaching are now eligible to have those hours applied as pensionable credit.

What about adjuncts? They can join TRS but not TIAA/CREF. How about some action to give adjuncts a choice?

"Equity" should include pension systems and credit applied for one's work. Many adjuncts would prefer TIAA/CREF. It is portable (TRS is not) to other states and to private colleges. There is vesting after 13 months. Our talented adjuncts do find full-time work elsewhere and portability not only means credit for adjunct work but immediate pensionability. Additionally, as one who's contributed to TIAA/CREF (via previous teaching), I note that the dollars

I've invested there will be worth more to me than comparable service under TRS.

PSC informs me this issue is being negotiated. A colleague says that part-time administrative staff at the Research Foundation who work over 20 hours a week are required to participate in TIAA/CREF. Thus, a precedent exists for inclusion of part-time employees in TIAA/CREF at CUNY.

PSC must make a concerted effort (like that to include full-timers' adjunct hours as pensionable) to have underpaid part-time faculty eligible for both systems. It would be one small step for equity for adjuncts.

– Sylvia Rackow  
Baruch

### Free speech concerns us all

● Thanks for the excellent article on the assault on First Amendment rights at Hostos. One point needs clarification. The article suggests some at Hostos were troubled that colleagues from other campuses came to Hostos to protest the arrests without first consulting colleagues at Hostos. Such consultation did, in fact, occur.

The evening of the first day of the student demonstration and arrests, I was involved in discussions of the arrests and the need to protest abuse of students' First

Amendment rights with several colleagues at Hostos (including PSC chapter leadership). I also spoke with concerned faculty from other campuses. Although a medical emergency prevented my presence at the protest the following day, it should be understood that colleagues from other campuses came to Hostos after discussion with at least one Hostos colleague – me – and that the protest against the student arrests was discussed among Hostos colleagues the preceding evening.

Finally, let me express complete agreement with those who maintain that the attack on First Amendment rights at Hostos is not simply a local, Hostos issue, but affects the entire University and, therefore, warrants a University-wide response.

Thanks to all who came to Hostos in defense of our students and the First Amendment.

– Henry Lesnick  
Hostos

### Make our voices heard

● The current economic crisis has led to widespread layoffs and to proposals for catastrophic budget cuts at public institutions like CUNY. The business community is well represented by George Bush and the Republican Party in Congress. As working people, we need

an independent strong voice. We cannot allow the wealthy to shift the costs of this war onto the backs of working people.

During the legal battle over last year's presidential election, local AFL-CIO leaders such as Randi Weingarten and Dennis Rivera organized a large demonstration in Times Square. I was very moved to be with my brothers and sisters from other unions.

As budget cuts and layoffs grow, we must do more than lobby and write letters to educate the public. I hope that the AFL-CIO leadership will see the necessity for engaging in a campaign that will put people on the streets. The prosecution of this war and calls for patriotism must not be used as an excuse for policies that enrich the few at the expense of workers and our communities. The voices of working people in this city and around the country need to be heard on the streets, in the offices of government and in the corporate boardrooms.

– Lorraine Cohen  
LaGuardia

### Write to Clarion

Letters should be no more than 150-200 words in length and are subject to editing.

## A year of gains in jeopardy

# Union fights to rescue CUNY budget

By MICHAEL KRASNER  
Queens College  
and PETER HOGNESS

After a year of lobbying by the PSC that promised significant budget increases for CUNY, the union has seen the ground shift under its feet. Faced with the double impact of the World Trade Center disaster and an economic slowdown, the PSC had to change gears quickly to oppose a series of threatened budget cuts.

Though it has not made headlines, another factor is having a fundamental effect on CUNY's fortunes: the cumulative effect of years of tax cuts for New York's wealthiest citizens. "Governor Pataki has given away so much money in tax breaks for the rich that we were broke before September 11," said State Sen. Eric Schneiderman.

In October, Mayor Giuliani ordered city agencies to put 15% of their budget into a "reserve." Only 2.5%, was demanded from police, fire and the Board of Education.

But the Giuliani administration demanded that CUNY's community colleges come up with the full 15%, a total of \$19.2 million. Since most of CUNY's Fall spending decisions had already been made, this would translate into more like a 25% reduction in the Spring semester. CUNY's central administration estimated that if the mayor's cuts were implemented, 749 community college employees would have to be laid off, including close to 300 instructional staff.

Gains in City funding that the PSC had won four months before were now threatened, and the union mounted a major campaign against the mayor's plan. Union chapters mobilized to contact the City Council and organized meetings with several key members. PSC members from Borough of Manhattan Community College voiced especially strong objection to the cuts, given the damage the school had suffered in the September 11 attack.

A week and a half before the mayoral election, Republican Michael Bloomberg said that imposing a 15% cut on community colleges would be "penny wise, pound foolish." PSC President Barbara Bowen raised the issue again with Bloomberg a week after the election, during a meeting with the mayor-elect and other union leaders.

On November 15 the PSC joined in a lawsuit filed by activist attorney Ron McGuire, which charged that Giuliani's cuts violate the state's "maintenance of effort" law, which requires the City to contribute at least as much to community colleges as it did the year before. Though CUNY was named as a co-defendant in the suit, the University

told the court that it agreed that the 15% cut was illegal.

At *Clarion* press time, the combination of lawsuit, lobbying and political pressure appeared to be having an effect. Council sources were optimistic about making headway against the 15% cut. And City officials indicated that Giuliani's November 27 budget message would restore funds to community colleges.

The PSC has been mobilizing against state budget cuts as well, but in Albany the union faces a tougher situation. Last winter and spring the PSC's budget campaign had gained substantial increases from both the Governor and the Democrat-controlled State Assembly.

Pataki's proposed CUNY budget included an additional \$20 million, and the Assembly had proposed its own 5.2% increase. "We had every right to expect significant gains," commented PSC Secretary Cecelia McCall. "We had won on both sides."

Instead, the entire budget process collapsed. After months of deadlock, the legislature passed a "bare-bones" budget even smaller than the governor's original proposal, gambling that public outrage would force Pataki to agree to supplemental spending later.

But a faltering economy allowed Pataki to delay, and the costs of the World Trade Center attacks have now allowed him and other conservatives to propose deep cuts in programs that, in many cases, they did

**At press time, plans were in the works for a rally at BMCC on December 5, in a call to "invest in the people of New York."**



PSC President Barbara Bowen makes a point to Ann O'Leary, deputy legislative director for Sen. Hillary Clinton (see article below).

not support in the first place. A supplemental budget that finally passed in late October provides \$200 million (\$100 million each for the Senate and Assembly) to allocate to social services, far less than these programs have received in the past.

Throughout these twists and turns, the PSC has worked to secure support for CUNY – first with a mass postcard campaign, and then with legislative strategies to link CUNY programs to broader pools of state funding. With the Legislature expected to reconvene in mid-December, the PSC is asking members to apply some last-minute pressure (see page 12). At *Clarion* press time, plans were in the works for a

mass rally on December 5, at BMCC linking arms around the building in a call to "invest in the people of New York."

The budget crisis has sparked calls to re-examine the program of tax cuts that has dominated state fiscal policy for a decade. Legislative leaders have indicated that they might consider postponing the next round of phased-in tax breaks.

"Pataki plans to muddle through this crisis with the same tired formula – tax cuts for the wealthy, an increase in the subway fare and tuition hikes at SUNY and CUNY," said Sen. Schneiderman. "We need a statewide campaign against this. We have to make this unacceptable."

## PSC presses for federal aid to CUNY

### Initiates Washington effort with AFT

On November 1, PSC officers did something new: they took the case for CUNY to Washington.

"CUNY was directly hurt by the attack on the WTC, especially BMCC and the Research Foundation," said PSC President Barbara Bowen. "But the financial impact on the University goes beyond the terrible physical damage. And the PSC's assessment of what is needed goes beyond the immediate costs; we seek the kind of investment that would allow CUNY to be a central part of New York's resurgence."

When American Federation of Teachers President Sandra Feldman asked Bowen how the AFT could help the PSC after this disaster, Bowen asked for help with Congress on federal aid. Feldman made this a special project, and directed the AFT's considerable lobbying operation to make it a priority.

The AFT's Legislative Department developed proposed language and briefing materials with the PSC. Bowen and PSC First Vice President Steve London then traveled to Washington and met with Ann O'Leary, deputy legislative director for Sen. Hilary Clinton, who pledged the Senator's support.

#### SUPPORT FROM BOTH SENATORS

The AFT followed up with Sen. Chuck Schumer, and both Clinton and Schumer have been working to secure Congressional support for the proposal.

The proposed language would provide \$279 million to help colleges in the WTC area with the costs of resuming normal operations, including "the replacement of whole buildings and classrooms," plus \$25 million for other expenses such as lost tuition. Also part of the request was

an \$18.7 million proposal by the PSC to address the needs of displaced workers and maintain open access to community colleges.

"City University can make a tremendous contribution to rebuilding New York," London emphasized – "if we are given the chance."

The PSC had asked CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein to make this a joint effort and visit Washington together. Though Goldstein had agreed in principle to work with the union on lobbying, he declined the invitation and arranged to visit Washington on his own, the day before the PSC's appointment. "We feel it would have made a stronger case for CUNY if union and management had gone to Congress together," said Bowen. "We will continue to invite the Chancellor to join us as we mount a vigorous campaign for investment in CUNY." – PH

## The impact this year, and plans for next

When the dust settles from this year's convoluted state and city budget processes, CUNY's budget will be very tight.

Chancellor Goldstein has asked senior colleges to prepare alternative plans for budget reductions of 1%, 1.5% and 2%. Some of the hole in state funding has been filled by reorganizing University finances – for example, by charging staff costs associated with capital spending to the capital budget. "We have worked very closely with the Governor's office on this," said Vice Chancellor Jay Hershenson. "Capitalizing staff is something that the City of New York has done, and other universities have done as well."

At this point 80th Street is not talking about layoffs. The State Legislature is considering a bill to provide early retirement incentives for some state workers, but CUNY is currently not included. This may change if the bill is altered to allow for replacement of some workers who take the buyout.

#### 2002-2003 REQUEST

Meanwhile next year's budget process has already begun. On November 19 the Board of Trustees approved a budget request for 2002-2003 that asks for a \$98 million increase over the budget adopted for the previous year. New full-time faculty lines are described as "the centerpiece of the University's request and [the] priority objective."

Almost half the proposed increases, \$45 million, would come from "self-financing" – \$10 million in "productivity savings" and \$35 million in "revenue enhancements." The PSC voiced concern on both points at a BoT hearing on November 12.

PSC President Barbara Bowen and First Vice President Steve London argued that CUNY has been operating on an austerity budget for the last 10 years. "Where do you plan to trim?" they asked. "Crowding more students into classrooms when some are already sitting in the halls to hear the class?...Squeezing even more work out of employees who already put in hundreds of hours of unpaid overtime?"

Bowen and London stressed that "revenue enhancements" must not include tuition increases, noting that New York already ranks highest among the 50 states in the percentage of income needed to pay for college after financial aid.

Hershenson told *Clarion* that neither point should be a cause for union concern. "Productivity savings" means administrative efficiencies – greater coordination of purchasing, consolidating computer systems, that kind of thing," he said. As for revenue enhancements, Hershenson said that this mainly referred to increasing private fundraising. "There is no recommendation for a tuition increase," he said. – PH

# Campus Equity Week puts adjuncts on the map

International campaign for part-timer parity comes to CUNY



Ingrid Hughes, BMCC



Nick Unger, Central Labor Council



Rich Moser, AAUP



Elaine Bobrove, Camden College



Vincent Renzi, NYU

By **MARCIA NEWFIELD**  
BMCC

From October 28 to November 3, every major faculty union and association in the U.S. and Canada joined together to promote equal treatment for adjuncts, who now make up 60-65% of the academic workforce. Campus Equity Week marked the first time there had ever been such coordinated action on behalf of part-time faculty.

From Acadia University in Nova Scotia to Whatcom Community College in Washington state, there were events at more than 100 colleges across North America. They ranged from rallies to teach-ins to theater. (A complete list of campuses, plus event reports and organizing resources, are available on the Web at [www.cewaction.org](http://www.cewaction.org).)

The week's first event at CUNY was a PSC-sponsored panel on "Adjunct Equity in the University," held October 30th at the Graduate Center. The wide-ranging discussion tackled both the big picture

and nitty-gritty detail. Nick Unger, mobilization director of the NYC Central Labor Council, questioned whether the PSC's emphasis on equal pay for adjuncts was counterproductive to developing careers. Unger argued that raising the salaries of adjuncts does not give them more job security.

#### FOR STRUCTURAL CHANGE

PSC President Barbara Bowen differed, and made the case for a two-track approach. "As a union you must address the needs of your most exploited workers," said Bowen. "On the other hand, you have to make structural change. Improving conditions for part timers begins to effect structural change." AAUP National Field Representative Rich Moser proposed conversion lines for those who have spent years serving the university.

Vincent Renzi, an adjunct assistant professor of classics at NYU, talked about the experience of other unions representing contingent la-

bor, such as Actors' Equity, the American Federation of Musicians, the National Writers Union and the Boilermakers Union, and the lessons they might hold for adjuncts.

PSC Community College Officer Ingrid Hughes, an adjunct at BMCC, focused on the practical challenges of enrolling adjuncts in the union. "Adjuncts are often too much on the run to stop and get educated on how the union can benefit them." While the PSC's adjunct membership has grown from 800 to 2200, Hughes noted that there are 5000 more to sign up.

Elaine Bobrove, executive vice president of the Camden College Adjunct Faculty Federation, whose contract includes an agency fee provision, described how her local had tackled the problem. "We try everything," she said. "We had a bus with bagels and wine raffles and the Solidarity Singers."

Larry Gold, Director of AFT Higher Education, added an optimistic note from the floor: "The biggest historical shift is that the majority

of full-time faculty has now come around to see that this issue involves them." He noted that pay equity bills passed in Washington and California have set new standards.

Panelists pointed out that wages for full-time academics, adjusted for inflation, are at the same level as in 1972. Thus, contrary to "zero-sum thinking," the evidence suggests that low pay for adjuncts has not been good for full-timers.

#### CULTURAL ACTION

On November 1 at BMCC, "Campus Equity Day" featured 13 adjunct performances of prose, poetry, guitar and songs. Kate Walter read a moving piece about the "job" she became attached to during the weeks that BMCC was closed: greeting rescue workers. Mary Ann Carlese, the PSC's organizing director, did a juggling routine – an appropriate metaphor for adjunct life.

Thane Doss's lyrics served as a postscript: "My teeth are decaying; my glasses are old/ 'so teach with

your mouth shut' is the message I'm told./ I've no time for dentistry/ but grading's hard when you simply can't see..../ Where's the eye that's for my eyes? Where's the teeth for my teeth?"

To obtain Adjunct Equity stickers or buttons, contact Mary Ann Carlese at 212-354-1252.

## CFD: Call for Diaries

The Committee on Adjunct Affairs is gathering information on the lives of CUNY adjuncts and would like to document what a typically busy week involves. The committee is asking all adjuncts to select one week during the semester to keep a comprehensive diary (what you did, when, where, for how long, etc. – i.e. *not just your teaching*). Please send completed diaries to the PSC, Attn: Eric Marshall (25 W. 43rd St, NY, NY 10036), or email them to [ejmpsc@aol.com](mailto:ejmpsc@aol.com).

# Segarra won't turn over her schedule

Ignores demand from CUNY's top lawyer

By **PETER HOGNESS**

The top lawyer for the City University of New York has demanded that Ninfa Segarra turn over records of her work schedule at her CUNY job, but Segarra has refused to comply.

Segarra is paid \$115,000 a year as a Vice President of the CUNY Research Foundation. A close ally of Mayor Giuliani, she is also President of the Board of Education.

Last summer *Clarion* reported that Segarra is rarely seen in her CUNY office, and that she refused to answer questions about how many hours a week she works at that job. But since CUNY is a public institution, Segarra's schedule is

public information. On August 29, *Clarion* filed a request under New York State's Freedom of Information Law (FOIL), asking for copies of all records of Segarra's work schedule "in performance of her duties as Vice President for Intercampus Collaboration." The request specifically included "computer software and records used to schedule appointments."

On September 6, CUNY Records Access Officer David Fields asked Segarra's staff for this information. Six weeks later, CUNY General Counsel Frederick P. Schaffer wrote to Segarra, telling her he was concerned by "your failure to cooperate."

Schaffer noted that when the two

had spoken in early September, Segarra had told him she had no such records for her CUNY job and that her only schedule was maintained at her Board of Education office for her Board of Education responsibilities.

However, Schaffer wrote, Segarra's assistant and Segarra later told the records access officer that she did in fact "maintain an appointment calendar on a computer at [Segarra's] CUNY office that includes appointments relating to [her] work for the University." But he had not been allowed "to obtain that calendar, or other related notes, memoranda or telephone logs."

Schaffer wrote that he had decided to put these concerns in writing

because "I have left several messages for you over the last two weeks, but you have not returned my calls." CUNY's top lawyer insisted that Segarra turn over her schedule records so that the University can "fulfill its obligation under the law."

Segarra and Schaffer did not respond to requests for comment *Clarion* obtained the Schaffer letter through a second FOIL request, which asked for any correspondence related to the first.

"Our CLTs work their hearts out for CUNY for \$27,000 a year," commented PSC President Barbara Bowen. "Our adjuncts are paid \$3,000 for an entire semester's labor. They are glad to tell anyone how many hours a week they work. I hope it's not true that CUNY is paying someone \$115,000 a year



Ninfa Segarra, VP for Intercampus Collaboration

to do little or nothing – especially when there is such pressure on the budget."

# City College teach-in at center of storm

By PETER HOGNESS

City College's October 2 teach-in on terrorism and war began with a moment of silence in honor of the victims of the September 11 attacks.

The panelists who followed included the director of a Middle East research center, the head of CCNY's political science department, an anthropologist who teaches on peoples of the Middle East and the head of the school's student government. They spoke on the history of Islamic movements, the nature of terrorism, backlash against Arabs and Muslims in the US and more. Panelists expressed both opposition to and support for US military action, and both sides received applause.

## THOUGHT-PROVOKING

At the program's end, Sarah Williams, wife of CCNY President Gregory Williams, summed up her reaction: "I feel so grateful to the University, because since September 11 I've been spending probably at least an hour every day with the *New York Times* trying to get information and I feel so cheated and empty-handed. But I've heard so much today in this really terrific forum, with substantive, ... thought-provoking information."

To most who attended, the articles in the next day's *New York Post* read like a description of some other event. "CCNY Bashes America," one headline screamed. "Once-proud Campus a Breeding Ground for Idiots," declared another. The

## Free speech or "sedition"?

*Post* declared that "the fuzzy-headed academics" had "ranted" for two hours of "anti-Americanism."

The *Post's* account was full of errors. For example, it reported that "the terrorists were fondly described as 'freedom-fighters.'" In fact, a videotape of the entire event shows that this phrase was only used once, to make the opposite point. Moderator Marina Fernando, head of CCNY's International Studies Program, said: "Freedom fighters engage in acts of war; terrorists engage in criminal acts. What happened on September 11 was done by criminals."

The *Post's* inaccurate attack on City College, its professors and the PSC touched a nerve among members of the Board of Trustees. CUNY trustees Jeffrey Weisenfeld and John Callandra said that they would introduce a Board resolution condemning those who spoke at the teach-in. "I would consider that behavior seditious at this time," Weisenfeld told the *Post*. Callandra and Weisenfeld's resolution slammed the teach-in as both "seditious" and "un-American," according to the Associated Press. Federal law states that those found guilty of sedition can be jailed for up to 20 years.

*Clarion* later asked Weisenfeld whether he in fact believed that CUNY faculty should be jailed for their remarks at a public forum. "There's the criminal aspect and the

moral aspect," Weisenfeld replied. "Morally speaking, it was seditious." He insisted that "this has nothing to do with freedom of speech."

On October 3 CUNY Chancellor Matthew Goldstein issued a statement that appeared to take the *Post's* description of the teach-in at face value, condemning "those who seek to justify or make lame excuses for the attacks on the WTC and the Pentagon." Goldstein added that the nation must avoid "compromising the free exchange of ideas," but offered no specifics.

"The PSC defends absolutely the First Amendment rights of our members and our students," said an October 5 statement from the PSC, which noted that "it is the responsibility of scholars to seek understanding of even the most horrific of acts."

## NOT ON THE AGENDA?

Benno Schmidt, the BoT's vice chair, opened the Board's October 15 public hearing by saying that there would be no resolution regarding CCNY on the Board's agenda the following week. This was welcomed by faculty and students in attendance, who testified that adopting Goldstein's statement would mean official censure by the board and would have a chilling effect on dissent, especially among those without tenure.

But at the BoT meeting on the



Deputy mayor Joseph Lhota (left) and former deputy mayor Randy Mastro (right), both CUNY trustees, at the Oct. 22 Board of Trustees meeting. At rear are Chancellor Matthew Goldstein (left) and BoT Vice Chair Benno Schmidt.

22nd, former deputy mayor Randy Mastro moved that the Board endorse the Goldstein statement. This surprise move was greeted with cries of protest from faculty and students in the audience. Mastro's motion was seconded by Callandra and the only discussion was Weisenfeld's statement in support. It passed without opposition, Trustees John Morning and Richard Núñez-Lawrence abstaining. Afterwards Schmidt told *Clarion* that he had known of Mastro's intentions for several days.

Since then there have been many

other teach-ins, forums and conferences at CUNY, including events at Brooklyn College, CSI, the Graduate Center, Hunter School of Social Work, Queens and at least two more at CCNY. None has attracted particular attention in the press.

But the battle over open discussion of terrorism, war and peace is far from over. PSC University-wide Officer Stanley Aronowitz commented, "We live in a time when the distinction between justification and explanation is conflated by those who would restrict speech and dissent."

## A PSC Profile: Fran Geteles puts her experience to work Retired counselor helps WTC survivors

By ELLEN BALLEISEN  
Bronx Community College

In the wake of the events of September 11, many PSC members answered the call for volunteers with special expertise. One was Fran Geteles, a retired SEEK counselor from City College who also served as the school's coordinator of services for disabled students.

Geteles isn't the type to spend retirement relaxing. For more than eight years she's been doing psychological evaluations of torture victims in INS detention who are seeking political asylum. After the World Trade Center attack she knew she could be of use to those who survived the terrorist attack but felt traumatized by what they had experienced.

The week following the attack Geteles worked out of the office of the NYC Central Labor Council (CLC), fielding phone calls from people who had been working at or near the WTC. Sometimes these



PSC member Fran Geteles

calls lasted over an hour. "I was on hand both to do the practical things, like helping people who had lost their jobs figure out how to find new ones, and to handle calls from people who needed to talk to a psychological expert," she said.

One caller had serious problems both practically and psychologically. A food server who worked mostly for tips in a restaurant beneath

the WTC, he had no pay stubs and was having trouble proving that he had worked there. He was also plagued by nightmares. "He had seen body parts and people jumping from the window," Geteles recalled. "He is also of Indian descent, so he was experiencing prejudice because of his complexion." But he himself was feeling angry toward Muslims, which he acknowledged as a contradiction. "The whole experience was very painful but eventually he opened up and agreed to try therapy," Geteles said.

Another caller was a woman who worked for the Transit Authority whose asthma made it impossible for her to work at her customary location in Lower Manhattan. "She couldn't get in touch with her union, because it was also located near the WTC and she was worried she would be penalized for

missing work," said Geteles. "So I made a lot of phone calls to find out how she could find a union person who could help her."

Shortly after September 11, the Uniformed Fire Officers Association asked the PSC to help provide counselors for widows and children of firefighters who died in the attack - especially those who could travel to Westchester and Long Island, where many family members live. Geteles was among over

## Geteles also works with victims of torture, and says they have much in common with survivors of the attack on the WTC.

250 who responded, and she volunteered to help PSC organizer Penny Lewis coordinate the effort. As the immediate shock of the attack is wearing off, the counseling is now taking a different direction. "We're trying to set up group counseling in the firehouses," Geteles said, "so we're looking for counselors with experience working in groups and with issues of grief and trauma."

Counseling WTC survivors has much in common with counseling torture victims from repressive countries, according to Geteles. "In

my mind the only difference is that the Trade Center is here and it's more immediate," she told *Clarion*. "In both cases, you're dealing with extreme trauma that's man-made. For torture survivors it's more long-lasting, and the pain and suffering becomes embedded in their personalities. And, on top of all the trauma they've experienced in their own countries, we in this country add to the trauma by throwing them in jail."

Geteles testifies in court at the asylum hearings of these torture victims, and is an expert witness in a lawsuit filed in 1997 on behalf of asylum-seekers in INS detention. She worked for a year on evaluations of the psychological impact of conditions in detention, which the lawsuit says are abusive.

Geteles plans to continue helping WTC survivors and their families, and expects the need for mental health counseling to grow as more people begin to grasp the full extent of what has happened.

"I have all this skill, and I'm in a position to be helpful," she says. "So I feel I ought to be helping people." At the same time, she adds, "what needs to be done is so huge that I feel I haven't done very much."

Clarion roundtable on unions and the public interest

# Labor's agenda for rebuilding

## Jobs, economic security & social justice

From the FIVE BOROUGH INSTITUTE

The thousands who were killed, injured or are missing in the attack on the World Trade Center include many working people, in many unions affiliated with the Central Labor Council. That alone calls for the Institute, as an academic-labor collaboration, to have a voice in how New York will respond to this tragedy. There will be many dimensions to this response:

**Basic Economic Security:** The loss of thousands of jobs has deprived thousands of workers and their families of basic economic security. We must insist that they be made whole, not just for weeks or months but for as long as they lack the necessities of life. Help from government should be prompt, generous and readily accessible. For the large numbers of union members who have lost their jobs, one-stop centers should be brought into union halls to make it as easy as possible for them to receive income, health care, housing and help in finding new jobs.

**Using Federal Funds:** Govern-

ment is already providing massive financial support to industries that have been affected. A significant share of those funds should go to replace the lost jobs and incomes of ordinary workers. We are especially concerned about those jobs that may never come back – those held by members of UNITE who manufacture clothing; members of Local 32BJ who cleaned the buildings that no longer exist; members of Actors Equity and IATSE hurt by the closing of Broadway shows and loss of tourism; members of Local 100 of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers who prepared and served food in shops that may never reopen.

**Job Creation:** A generous program of direct job creation funded by the federal and state governments should put people to work repairing the enormous damage we have suffered and replacing lost City tax dollars that support teachers in the classroom, attendants for the home-bound elderly, health care in the city's clinics, and a host of other needs that will help heal the wounds and renew a better quality of life for our people.

**Reconstruction** Rebuilding the lost structures must be done thoughtfully and with full participation of organized labor. The very best talent should be enlisted to plan how best to reconstruct the economy of lower Manhattan. Bringing the financial sector back to life is important, but it is not all that is needed. A city facing critical shortages of affordable housing, antiquated schools and an aging infrastructure can put to work the resources that a generous nation will provide to make New York City once again the embodiment of progress, social justice and opportunity for all who seek it. What we do now, and how we do it, will long resonate in our nation and around the world.

*The Five Borough Institute (5BI) works to develop sound and progressive public policies. This article, the product of a discussion between the 5BI Executive Committee and NYC Central Labor Council President Brian McLaughlin, originally appeared in 5BI's October newsletter, available on the Web at [www.fiveborough.org](http://www.fiveborough.org).*

## Let's not repeat mistakes of the 1970s

By RANDI WEINGARTEN, President  
United Federation of Teachers

Since September 11, the labor movement in New York City has been confronted with a new reality, with rebuilding Lower Manhattan and rejuvenating the city's economy as top priorities. While the events that brought us to this point are unprecedented, the circumstances we face are not. In fact, they are similar in many respects to those the city grappled with during the fiscal crises of the 1970s, namely a struggling economy, an impending budget deficit and the threat of massive cuts in city services.



As we plan for our future, we must endeavor not to repeat the mistakes of the past. Rebuilding New York City has to involve a partnership of sacrifice, but that sacrifice can't mean that essential services are so reduced that they can't recover. The fiscal crisis of the mid-1970s,

despite critical investments by the unions, inflicted damage to the city's schools from which they still have not recovered. We cannot afford to deny another generation the sound basic education they deserve.

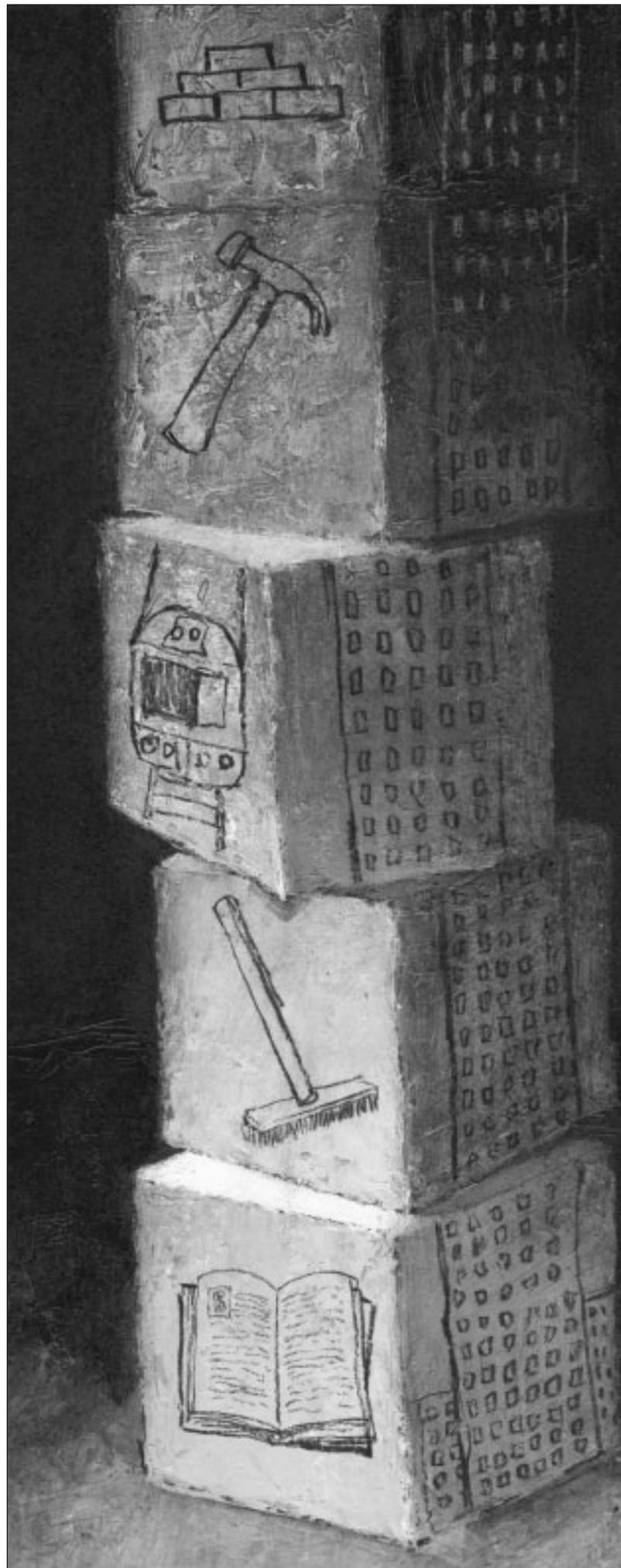
Teachers are willing to look at a variety of possible methods to deal with our current problems, but the city can't make the same mistake in this crisis as it did the last time. A real rebuilding plan will include prudent investment strategies, shared decision-making, maintaining vital services and a commitment by the city and state to look at revenue sources and tax policy, including issues such as reinstating the commuter tax.

In fact, if we are going to rebuild this city as the economic engine it has been for the region and the nation, then good schools for our families and a skilled workforce for our employers must be key elements of any long-term economic recovery. That will require an investment to

ensure that we have schools with adequate supplies and equipment as well as competitive salaries to maintain a teaching force with highly qualified educators.

Neither New York nor its economy is permanently crippled by the disaster of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. Other cities have recovered from catastrophes to become stronger than ever, and so will we. And there is no economic reason to abandon the goals we had before. It's true that circumstances have changed, but the fact remains that the needs and goals of the city are still there. And we will never advance these goals in a real and sustained way unless we improve our public schools.

Labor has a history of coming to New York City's rescue during its times of need, fiscal and otherwise. We can always be counted on to provide the bricks and mortar, the concrete and steel as well as the spirit and sweat to rebuild Lower Manhattan. The disaster of September 11 stands as the greatest tragedy this city has ever experienced, but labor will rise to the challenge once again to help the city move forward, as we always do.



# New York

## Investing in New York's future

By **ROGER TOUSSAINT, President**  
Transport Workers Union Local 100

TWU Local 100, representing the men and women who work for New York City Transit, MABSTOA, and many private lines bus carriers, in conjunction with other Union locals of the Amalgamated Transport Union, has issued a five-point plan to keep New York moving in the wake of the crisis caused by the World Trade Center disaster.

Our plan calls upon the City to:

- Increase service on existing subway and bus routes, and add to our existing bus fleet through the lease or rental of additional buses. Establish new express bus routes to relieve congestion on subway lines. Implement bus-only lanes on major bridges and tunnels, as well as on major Manhattan cross-streets and avenues. Set up peak period bus lanes on expressways. Encourage more employers to offer TransitChek. Give buses traffic enforcement cameras (as the City of London has done) which can issue tickets to cars and trucks blocking bus stops and bus lanes.

- Rail transit should be expanded. Plans for a Second Avenue subway should be moved forward, including a Brooklyn connection. So should plans for a PATH train extension to the Fulton Street station.

- A new effort must be made to seek funding for these mass-transit improvements, recognizing that mass transit is a



powerful engine to drive our economy and that it is a great leveler, bringing economic, educational and health care opportunities to all New Yorkers.

- Manhattan curb space should be used smartly to speed deliveries. We support charging variable fees for on-street parking south of 60th Street in Manhattan. Corner spaces in midtown should be reserved for taxi stands.

- Alternatives to motor vehicle travel should be aggressively promoted, including foot and bicycle access. This means widening sidewalks in congested areas and providing secure bicycle parking near major subway and bus stations.

Local 100's history and tradition is about securing decent wages, respect and dignity for the men and women who move New York. It is also about standing up for civil rights and for the poor and disenfranchised. We hold high the obligation of society to guarantee the right to economic opportunity for all. Investment in our public transportation infrastructure is an investment in the future of our society, and these funds should be earmarked before tax incentives are given to private companies.

Tax cuts – including the elimination of the commuter tax – threaten to make a fare increase more likely. This would disproportionately hurt a labor market that has been flooded with former welfare recipients and new immigrants. Before we raise fares, we should also consider an income-progressive tax on workers in Manhattan (including commuters). Other possible funding sources include congestion pricing, bridge and tunnel tolls and restoration of the commuter tax.

## Rebuilding NYC as a union town

By **HECTOR FIGUEROA, Secretary-Treasurer**  
Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ

New York is a union town. But, as became tragically evident after September 11, too many New Yorkers are not union members. Alongside many union members hurt by the attack on the World Trade Center, countless nonunion workers also became victims or lost their jobs in the aftermath. For these underpaid professional, clerical, food service, security and maintenance workers and their families, including many women, immigrants and minorities, lack of union representation has made it harder to cope with the impact of the tragedy.

Labor's vision for rebuilding New York must include improving the living standards and working conditions of nonunion New Yorkers – full-time and part-time, private and public. Organizing efforts like the greengrocery workers' campaign, Justice for Janitors or the recent organizing efforts at NYU need renewed support.

What would NYC look like if most unorganized workers became union members? Working families would be better prepared to face these difficult times. They would be better positioned to preserve vital public services amidst fiscal austerity. Working New York could have greater influence in City Hall, Albany and Washington, DC.

Public and private sector unions need to partner with community organizations to advocate for job protection, job creation and living wages, including improvements in unemployment insurance and other "safety net" benefits. Measures that require workers to be retained or given preferential hiring when employers change at a given work site would help stabilize union jobs while costing little or no public money.

Cleanup and rebuilding contracts, as well as government subsidies, should be given only to companies that act as responsible employers, paying living wages and benefits

to their workers and respecting their rights. Downtown should be cleaned, built and protected with union labor.

All these measures would help ensure that government and private industry do not walk away from their responsibilities to those whose labor keeps our city running. To "do the right thing" is in the city's self-interest: it will stimulate entire communities and expand our tax base for the future.

Labor must help make New York the safest city in the world. A true partnership between government, business and labor needs to be created to raise the standards and requirements of both public and private security officers. Laws that require security companies to provide adequate training

to their workers and pay them good wages and benefits could increase public safety while costing taxpayers nothing. They would also help increase economic justice: most guards are from African American, Afro-Caribbean and Latino communities.

Our movement must also respond creatively to the looming fiscal crisis. Public and private-sector unions must forge a common agenda to rescue our city from an economic abyss. Austerity measures may be unavoidable, but need not be at the expense of vital services for working families, public education, children and family services or municipal jobs. Organized labor must engage in relentless advocacy for new revenue sources and financial assistance from Washington and Albany. Pension funds can help invest in the city's reconstruction. Early retirement and work-sharing programs should be explored instead of layoffs.

Labor can rebuild New York. It can rebuild the city's spirit as well. The challenge is for unions to adhere to the core values of our movement as we seek to shape public policy. Only an organizing, politically active and united labor movement can make sure that the rebuilding of New York makes our city a better place to live and work.



## What the past can tell us

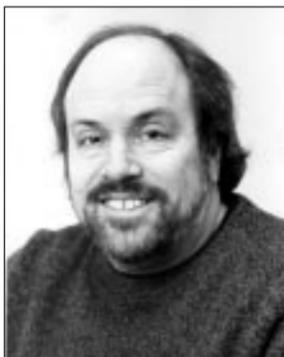
By **PETER RACHLEFF, labor historian**  
Macalester College, St. Paul, MN

In 1886 the Knights of Labor in Richmond, Virginia, confronted a major challenge in the construction of public space in their community. It was time to build a new city hall and the city's political leaders wanted to do it on the cheap. But labor activists insisted that a city hall should be a monument to the city's working people, those who built it and paid for it.

Such a monument should not only be aesthetically pleasing, they argued, but should be made of local materials and by local workers, protected by union contracts and guaranteed union wages and the eight hour day. These labor activists in the former capital of the Confederacy added another key provision: African American workers should have a fair share of both skilled and unskilled jobs on the project.

When the city fathers turned a deaf ear to this proposal, the Knights organized themselves into a political party and contested the upcoming city council elections. As they had done while building their movement in the 1880s, they reached out to African American and white workers, women and men, the unskilled and the skilled. Not only had they represented their members in their workplaces and in strikes, but they had also created cooperatives, a reading room, a lively newspaper and a theater troupe.

From this base the Knights of Labor entered local politics and swept to victory. In short order they were overseeing the construction of that new city hall, complete with hand-carved stone gargoyles in each corner.



It is a beautiful testament to working people that still stands today.

This Richmond story – and others like it – can inform our thinking about how labor can shape the rebuilding of New York City. If ever there was a time that government could convincingly cry poverty, it was the Great Depression. But through local unemployed councils, the national Bonus Army, new and revitalized unions and even state and local labor parties, working people not only pressured the government to create jobs but also to enrich community life.

Programs like the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Works Progress Administration created hundreds of thousands of jobs; built a public infrastructure of schools, parks, zoos and bridges; and underwrote the painting of murals and the performance of concerts and plays. Like Richmond's city hall, many of the New Deal's achievements still stand today.

These experiences share important common elements. Workers organized in unions,

but also in their communities and in the political arena. They reached across racial, ethnic and gender lines which had divided them, putting into practice that old saw, "An Injury to One is an Injury to All." They sought to enrich their communities by raising standards for all workers and by increasing the resources available to the public sector. They demanded the revival of a public culture in which workers would receive due recognition, and their own actions directly contributed to its construction. As New York City workers wrestle with how to shape the rebuilding of their vibrant, diverse, yet wounded community, they can learn from these past experiences.

As many commentators have pointed out, September 11 and its aftermath have restored working people to the center of New York City's self-representation, after a quarter-century of displacement by bankers and brokers. Can labor change more about New York City than its image? The goals and the process of the organizing now beginning will shape the answer. Richmond's city hall or the jobs and plays created by the WPA both hint at what is possible.

# How has Sept. 11 entered your scholarship or teaching?

*In November, Clarion spoke with three PSC members about how the attack on the World Trade Center and its aftermath have affected their work – both in their research and in the classroom.*

## “To study communities affected by the backlash...”

**MEHDI BOZORGMEHR**

Associate Professor of Sociology, CCNY & Graduate Center  
Co-director, Middle East and Middle Eastern American Center, CUNY Grad Center

Immediately after the World Trade Center was destroyed, the National Science Foundation called for proposals for what they call ‘quick-response’ research awards. I contacted them and submitted a grant application within two days; within three-and-a-half days we heard that we would receive it. Out of 14 quick-response grants awarded by the NSF, we are the only one in NYC.

The focus of our proposal is to study US communities affected by the backlash after the September 11 attacks, particularly South Asian & Middle Eastern American. We are looking at the response of community-based organizations, which have acted as intermediaries between these communities and the larger society. They have set up hotlines to report hate crimes, given talks to educate the public; they have lobbied government. They have been coping with bias incidents and also trying to prevent them.

This is a project of CUNY’s Middle East and Middle Eastern American Center, which was officially established just this fall. We got final approval from the Board of Trustees six days before September 11. People from outside might think that the Center sprang into being right away, in response to September 11, but in reality it was four years in the making.

Beth Baron and I, the Center’s co-directors, started with the idea of combining ethnic studies and area studies, looking at them together. Within Middle Eastern studies, the Center is the first to explicitly address the Middle Eastern American experience. Other research centers on the Middle East do not focus on the diaspora.

A basic part of the Center’s agenda is to bring together CUNY faculty who are working in these areas. It turns out there are over 50 faculty in the CUNY system who study and teach about the Middle East and Middle Eastern communities here in the US, but nobody had ever pulled them together before.

One way we are doing this is by sponsoring a series of talks. The

most recent was on Middle Eastern American philanthropy. This is a topic that’s been in the media and has been somewhat sensationalized. But philanthropy is a very integral part of Muslim societies. One of the five central pillars of Islam requires that you give alms; you cannot be a good Muslim if you do not do that. We have developed a curriculum guide on this, which was finished in August and recently published by the GC’s Center for the Study of Philanthropy.

Another of our goals is to catalog the resources in New York City for studying the Middle East and Middle Eastern Americans. We have the richest Persian and Arabic library collections in the country here in the New York Public Library. The largest collection of Islamic art in the US is at the Metropolitan Museum. Now that there is an even greater demand for learning and knowledge about the Middle East, we feel that New York City has a lot to offer.

## “I have never had such a bond with my students.”

**YI-CHUN TRICIA LIN**

Assistant Professor of English, BMCC

I’m teaching an online course on Asian American literature. On September 11, we were supposed to discuss the Japanese American experience in WWII in our first face-to-face meeting. It was scheduled for noon – in Fiterman Hall.

Obviously we didn’t meet, but we immediately began a very active discussion over e-mail. Later I set up a forum on September 11 for the online class on its Web site. I felt that this event sort of crashed down on us; we couldn’t just look at the history alone.

I invited Greg Robinson, author of *By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Ameri-*



Yi-Chun Tricia Lin

cans, to visit the class online. He facilitated a discussion on parallels and differences between the situation of Japanese Americans in 1942 and Arab and Muslim Americans after the “second Pearl Harbor” of September 11. The posts were thoughtful and intense – when I finished reading one student’s post, I almost cried.

In my other class, a remedial writing course, I feel it’s been important to use curriculum materials current to what’s going on – international politics, the domestic situation, interfaith relations. I find that by and large the students in this class are very aware. They look at the history of US foreign policy in the last two or three decades, and they are able to conduct a rather sophisticated discussion.

What I do worry about is that, in discussing these intense issues, not all express themselves. Often non-native speakers of English – as well as the most emotionally affected ones – tend to stay quiet. A few of my students lost family members. In one class, when one student argued strongly for his political analysis, another couldn’t console herself, thinking of a sister who has not yet come home. Over all, I do find it a delicate balance in moderating such discussions.

The salvation in a writing class is that they can talk in writing – and they have been writing a lot. Initial-

ly they were reluctant to write, but then when asked to revise, many make their papers three, four times as long.

In all, I have never had such a bond with my students, and I have never seen so much camaraderie among them. It’s not just the intellectual material we deal with in the classroom: there’s a hunger for a human touch and interaction. It’s unusual how quickly they’ve become attached to each other. When asked by a quiet student if all college classes are like this, I told them that mostly likely they would never have another class like this.

In my work in Asian/Pacific American studies, I have always paid attention to inter-ethnic tensions. I emphasize the notion that to understand “the other” is to understand ourselves. I have always tried to bring forward the writings of “the other,” such as those from the Pacific islands, and I feel this is even more urgent now, to understand who the other is. September 11 has made me more acutely aware that this other – the Muslim other, the Arabic other, etc. – is but part of the fabric of our multicultural self.

## “It could tell you if anthrax is present.”

**DAVID CALHOUN**

Professor of Chemistry, CCNY

One of my students is on call as an EMS worker here at the college. She went down with some other students to work at Ground Zero. After a while she couldn’t take all the gore & destruction. It had a huge emotional impact.

I have another student who’s a New York City police officer. She’s taking the biochem courses that are a prerequisite for Columbia’s PhD program in pathology. She missed some classes because she was working double shifts in the disaster area.

Half of my biochemistry class

missed a lecture because of an anthrax scare in the subway. I went ahead with the lecture but did not include it on the exam – I didn’t think it would be fair. What are people supposed to do if they shut the subways down?

Sometimes students have stayed to talk things through after class – the disaster, how they feel about flying, anthrax. The number of people who’ve actually been killed by anthrax is very small. I’ve told people you’re more likely to get hit by lightning or bit by a snake.

We had a seminar on anthrax last week. The honest-to-God truth is no one knows who’s responsible for the anthrax in the mail. The strain they used, the Ames strain, has been very widely distributed. We have these homegrown nuts who would not have very much trouble doing something like this – anthrax is not that hard to grow. Myself, I think it’s a toss-up whether it was bin Laden or someone else.

In terms of how this affects my own research, recent events have highlighted that we do not have a fast, rapid and accurate test for anthrax. The Army has requested proposals for a rapid method to detect pathogens that can be used as biological warfare agents. I have



David Calhoun

an idea for how to devise one, so I’m writing a grant application that’ll go out in December, including results from some preliminary experiments.

If successful, we’ll have a little box that will tell you if anthrax is present, a device that’ll cost less than \$100. You could put it in a backpack or a shirt pocket, and it would signal if a spore falls on the detector. Something like this that was readily available and inexpensive could be practically useful and also allay a lot of fears.

The idea of it could apply to any bacteria. So we’re not going to test this with anthrax – I don’t want anthrax in my lab. We’ll test it with *E. coli*.

This is a collaboration between chemical engineers & biochemists, one that has made it possible to develop novel ideas. Separately, neither of us would have come up with this. It’s our overlapping expertise that makes it possible to develop a new class of pathogen detectors.



Mehdi Bozorgmehr

# Indoor air quality at CUNY

By DAVID KOTELCHUCK  
Hunter College

Hats off to our colleagues at Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC) and the CCNY Center for Workers Education (CWE), who have been struggling with unusual indoor air quality problems since September 11. While toxic dusts and vapors, such as asbestos dust and lead, appear to have returned nearly to pre-September 11 levels, many BMCC and CWE members are still experiencing throat irritation, headaches and unpleasant, upsetting odors.

PSC activists have been working with the NY Coalition on Occupational Safety and Health (NYCOSH) and several unions to keep a record of these problems. The widespread and similar symptoms (also experienced by UFT members at Stuyvesant High) point to an epidemic of what would normally be thought of as "sick building syndrome."

While tests of outdoor air in lower Manhattan can be interpreted in different ways, our main focus has been on health effects felt by people inside BMCC and the CWE. The union recommends that those affected see a doctor at Mt. Sinai Hospital's occupational health clinic. If you work at BMCC or CWE downtown and have work-related breathing problems, call Sharon Gluck at 212-987-6043 for an appointment. The

## HEALTH & SAFETY

PSC is working with NYCOSH to evaluate the steps taken so far to improve indoor air quality and to recommend further measures.

The indoor air quality problems at BMCC and CWE stem from pollution external to the workplace. For most of us at CUNY, air quality problems arise from conditions within our buildings, such as toxic chemicals, toxic molds or poorly maintained heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems.

We'll discuss HVAC systems in a future column; below we take a look at chemicals and molds. If you notice such problems on your campus, contact Buildings and Grounds. If the problem is not corrected right away, put your request in writing and give a copy to your local PSC health and safety committee or chapter chair. CUNY management is responsible for ensuring a healthy work environment.

### TOXIC CHEMICALS

Formaldehyde is used to make plastics, synthetic fabrics and plywood, and may be emitted by new rugs, new office furniture and plywood partitions. It can cause eye, nose and throat irritation and is a suspected cancer agent. So when

new rugs or furniture are installed in your office, open the windows (if you can) and let the room air out overnight or over the weekend – an exhaust fan in the window helps.

Many rug and floor cleaning agents are sold in concentrated form. If not properly diluted they can cause eye, nose and throat irritation. Some rug cleaners contain sodium lauryl sulfate, which can cause allergic responses. If you notice health problems after a cleaning, check the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) on the cleaning agent's container and speak with the custodial staff about the problem.

### TOXIC MOLDS

Molds exist throughout the natural environment. If they land on a nice damp indoor surface made of materials they can digest – untreated wood, drywall, ceiling tiles, food or even paper – they're in mold heaven.

The key to dealing with molds is moisture control. If moisture problems remain undiscovered or unaddressed (for example, in basements or under leaking roofs) mold growth will follow. To clean mold off hard surfaces, scrub the surface with bleach and water (1 part chlorine bleach to 10 parts water). Rugs which remain drenched or flooded for more than 24 to 48 hours need to be replaced.

Most important, humidity must



Susan Lerner

NYPD officer lining up for food at BMCC on September 13.

be kept low, between 30%-50%. This means providing adequate room ventilation, particularly in the basement, and reducing condensation on cold surfaces like pipes and exterior walls by better insulating them.

A particularly dangerous type of mold, which releases a toxin into the air, is the greenish-black *Stachybotrys chartarum*, also called *Stachybotrys atra*. Those allergic to its toxin develop initial symptoms of hay-fever. But identifying a particular mold is expensive, time-consuming and probably beside the point. It is wiser to treat all of them as potentially dangerous: affected areas should be cleaned and moisture levels reduced.

For more information: [www.nycosh.org](http://www.nycosh.org), [www.cdc.gov/nceh/asthma/factsheets/molds](http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/asthma/factsheets/molds) and [www.epa.gov/iaq/pubs/moldresources.html](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/pubs/moldresources.html).

## Undocumented students hit Tuition hike

By PETER HOGNESS

Starting next semester, undocumented immigrant students at CUNY will be charged a higher rate of tuition. CUNY officials said the change, announced in November, was required by a 1996 federal law.

Since 1989 residency rules had been the same for all for CUNY students, regardless of immigration status. But from now on, undocumented immigrants will have to pay the higher out-of-state tuition rate, no matter how long they have lived in New York. This means an increase of \$676 annually at community colleges and \$3600 at CUNY's four-year schools.

Last year almost 3,000 CUNY students told the University that they are in the US without legal status; the actual number of undocumented students may well be far higher.

"This raise in tuition will adversely affect English As a Second Language students at CUNY," said Susan DiRaimo, vice president of the CUNY ESL Council. "Some of my students were in tears when I told them the news." The number of ESL students at CUNY senior colleges has fallen by 80% since 1994.

The new policy was announced two days after a *New York Times* report that State Sen. Frank Padavan had "told CUNY that allowing illegal immigrants to study [there] was both a national security issue and 'an insult to every citizen and legal immigrant.'" CUNY officials denied any connection. They said that the conflict with federal law came to light in a review of CUNY's policies on foreign students, initiated after the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center.

### TEXAS AND CALIFORNIA

The 1996 law says that foreign students "not lawfully present in the US shall not be eligible on the basis of residence within a state" for higher education benefits unless all U.S. citizens got the same benefit.

But both California and Texas public colleges charge thousands of US citizens and undocumented immigrants the same rate of tuition. Patti Del Valle, a counselor at Santa Monica Community College, told *Clarion* that California law was recently changed so that all high school graduates who attended a California high school for three years would qualify for lower tuition. By using a criterion other than residency, it avoids a conflict with federal statute. Texas uses a broader interpretation of the federal law, one that CUNY believes is invalid.

The CUNY tuition change comes amid other moves to tighten restrictions on foreign students, such as Sen. Diane Feinstein's call for a six-month moratorium on student visas – which account for only 2% of US visas overall.

## PROFESSIONAL STAFF CONGRESS/CUNY NOTICE OF NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS — SPRING 2002

### Chapter Officers, Delegates and Alternates to the PSC Delegate Assembly and PSC-CUNY Welfare Fund Advisory Council

Term of Office: 3 Years

#### ELECTION SCHEDULE

- Nominating petitions will be available upon request from chapter chairpersons or the PSC office from February 1 to March 1, 2002.
- Nominating petitions must be received at the PSC office, 25 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036, by 5:00 P.M., March 1, 2002.
- Ballots will be mailed to members on April 1, 2002.
- Ballots must be received by 5:00 P.M. on April 22, 2002.
- Ballots will be counted at 10:00 A.M. on April 23, 2002.

#### OFFICERS TO BE ELECTED

In each of the Chapters listed below, voters will elect the Chapter Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, four Officers-at-Large, Delegates to the Delegate Assembly (in addition to the Chapter Chairperson, who shall automatically be the initial delegate to the Delegate Assembly) and Alternates to the Delegate Assembly according to the following listing:

| Chapter                  | Members | Delegates | Alternates | Petition Signatures Required |
|--------------------------|---------|-----------|------------|------------------------------|
| Baruch                   | 496     | chair + 4 | 4          | 25                           |
| Bronx Community College  | 288     | chair + 2 | 3          | 25                           |
| Brooklyn                 | 575     | chair + 5 | 4          | 25                           |
| City College             | 489     | chair + 4 | 4          | 25                           |
| College Lab Technicians  | 408     | chair + 3 | 4          | 25                           |
| CUNY Central Office      | 169     | chair + 1 | 2          | 25                           |
| Graduate School          | 188     | chair + 1 | 2          | 25                           |
| Hostos Community College | 156     | chair + 1 | 2          | 25                           |
| Hunter                   | 628     | chair + 5 | 4          | 25                           |
| John Jay                 | 365     | chair + 3 | 4          | 25                           |
| LaGuardia                | 386     | chair + 3 | 4          | 25                           |
| Queens                   | 689     | chair + 6 | 4          | 25                           |
| York                     | 225     | chair + 1 | 2          | 25                           |

#### ELECTION RULES

Eligibility for Holding Office: Members shall be permitted to hold chapter level office who have been members in good standing of the Professional Staff Congress for at least one (1) year prior to the close of nominations, March 1, 2002.

**Voting Eligibility:** All chapter members shall be permitted to participate in the nomination process and to vote who have been members in good standing for at least four (4) months prior to the mailing of the ballots, April 1, 2002.

**Nominating Procedures:** Nominations of an individual or of a slate shall be by official nominating petition signed by no fewer than twenty-five (25) members of the chapter in good standing or by no fewer than twenty-five percent (25%) of the members of the chapter in good standing, whichever is less. For an individual candidate, petitions shall include (a) the printed name, signature, department and college of each petitioner, and (b) the printed name, department, college and the office being sought of the nominee.

**Slate Regulations:** A slate of candidates will be recognized if it consists of candidates for twenty-five percent (25%) or more of the officers to be elected, and if it submits, prior to the close of nominations, (1) a listing of caucus officers, including the person designated to authorize nominees for that caucus slate and the members of the caucus's Committee on Vacancies which, unless otherwise designated, shall be the caucus nominating committee authorized to replace any candidate on the slate whose name is withdrawn no later than seven (7) days prior to the mailing of the ballots; and (2) a nominating petition including (a) the printed name, signature, department and college of each petitioner, and (b) for each candidate running on the slate, his/her signature as well as the printed name, department, college and position being sought. The candidate's signature on the slate petition shall constitute that candidate's acceptance of the slate designation.

**Balloting:** All voting must be on the official PSC ballot. Write-in votes are permitted. A write-in vote shall be valid if the intent of the voter is clear (written, printed, typed names are acceptable). A write-in candidate must meet the same eligibility requirements as a regular candidate in order for a write-in vote to be considered valid, and must receive at least ten percent (10%) of the total votes cast to be elected. Write-in candidates who are elected must submit written acceptance of office to the Elections Committee within ten days (10) of the notification of election results.

**Campaigning:** Candidates may mail literature at their own expense, either directly or through the PSC mailing house, Johnson & Hayward, 500 Rte. 46 East, at Trenton Ave., Clifton, N.J. 07011-1800. At the request of the candidate and at cost, the PSC

will provide Johnson & Hayward with home-addressed labels of the membership, or will provide candidates with college-addressed labels of the membership. Candidates must notify the PSC five business (5) days in advance of the mailing to allow sufficient time for the ordering of labels.

**Election Tally:** Each candidate, or a representative of the candidate, is entitled to watch the counting of the ballots.

#### PSC-CUNY WELFARE FUND ADVISORY COUNCIL

At each of the colleges listed below, voters will elect the designated number of members of the PSC-CUNY Welfare Fund Advisory Council in accordance with the above schedule and rules, and the by-laws of the PSC/CUNY Welfare Fund:

| Colleges                 | Council Members   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Baruch                   | 2 Council Members |
| Bronx Community College  | 2 Council Members |
| Brooklyn                 | 2 Council Members |
| City College             | 2 Council Members |
| CUNY Central Office      | 1 Council Members |
| Graduate School          | 2 Council Members |
| Hostos Community College | 1 Council Members |
| Hunter                   | 2 Council Members |
| John Jay                 | 2 Council Members |
| LaGuardia                | 2 Council Members |
| Queens                   | 2 Council Members |
| York                     | 2 Council Members |

**Voting Eligibility:** All members in good standing of the PSC at the above colleges, who have been members in good standing for at least four (4) months, including Higher Education Officers, Registrars and College Laboratory Technicians, as well as faculty, will elect the PSC-CUNY Welfare Fund Advisory Council members running at their respective colleges.

**Eligibility for Holding Office:** PSC-CUNY Welfare Fund Advisory Council members must be CUNY instructional staff members who have been members in good standing of the PSC for two (2) years prior to the close of nominations, March 1, 2002.

**Nominations:** Advisory Council members shall be nominated by written petition signed by no fewer than twenty-five (25) or twenty-five percent (25%) whichever is less, of the CUNY instructional staff members at each unit who are also PSC members. Slate nominations will be permitted.

Results include favoritism, anxiety and resentment

# Merit pay: the California experience

By HENRYKA MASLOWSKI

For at least 30 years, the administration of the California State University has been attempting to impose some form of “merit pay” on the faculty. And until recently, the CSU faculty were successful in resisting such schemes. While there had been various one-time awards for “merit,” the pay scale – 15 steps with salary increments of 5% – remained intact.

But in 1995, merit pay came to CSU. The results have not been good. Instead of a smoothly functioning community of teacher-scholars putting forth their best efforts and greatest creativity, secure in the knowledge that they will be properly rewarded, merit pay has produced backbiting and anxiety. Relations between faculty and administration are increasingly antagonistic: our contract negotiations are now at an impasse for the second time in five years.

## PROPAGANDA TERM

The term “merit pay” has good propaganda value. Who could possibly oppose paying good professors more and bad professors less? In fact, there are many flaws in this seemingly simple idea, and at least three bases for opposition to merit pay can be identified.

Some oppose merit pay schemes in principle. They note that faculty undergo vigorous evaluation and review before they are granted tenure and before they are promoted to associate or full professor. Additional merit review is excessive and punitive. Since all faculty have essentially the same job description, they say, we should consider narrowing the pay range rather than increasing it. Those whose opposition is more pragmatic fall into two groups. The first fears that awards are not likely to be made fairly, and that “merit pay” will tend to degenerate into “patronage pay.” The other group holds that, even with the most scrupulous and impartial efforts to distinguish those more meritorious than others, the ways in which we can be meritorious are so various and so subtly differing that in practice it will be impossible to make just awards. Our experience in the CSU supports each of these positions.

The first version of permanent merit increases in pay, in 1996-97 and 1997-98, consisted of one, two or three salary step increases in the existing pay scale with several supersteps added at the top of the range. They were awarded by campus presidents to no more than 20% of the faculty and there was to be no right of appeal. Their name – “Performance Salary Step Increase” – led to

the diabolical acronym, “PSSI.” We saw a curious split in the faculty between those who thought it more professional to carefully say “P-S-S-I” and those who freely adopted the natural pronunciation, “pissy.” A new argot was quickly born: if you got a pissy, you were “pissomenous.” If you got several pissies, you were “polypissomenous,” no pissy and you were “*ungepissst*.” If there was no way you could get a pissy, you were “impissible.” On my campus, the president felt no obligation to be polite: in a tone that indicated it was exactly what we deserved, he told faculty that “you are stuck with pissies.”

Pissies were part of a contract that CSU

dents, in preening magnanimity, promised they would more or less abide by faculty recommendations.

## HOW IT USED TO BE

Most of us recognized this new set-up as an instance of what the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu calls the “principle of Socrates’s shackles,” in which constraints are alternately tightened by a large amount and relaxed by a small amount. Achieving the small relaxation appears to be a victory. A successful application of Socrates’s shackles can be terrifically damaging to our cause, for it serves to peel off those who accept the small concession and separate them from

deadlines, are angry. There are full-time faculty members in egalitarian departments who lost out because they missed a deadline – and they are angry.

Each of the three bases for opposition to merit pay has been validated. No one has improved his or her performance or increased his or her professional efforts in ways that have any connection with the mission of a university. Petty behaviors are in evidence. A colleague whose work I complimented asked me to put it in writing so he could get a pissy. (A joke? Probably, but jokes have their roots in reality.) Awards granted by administrators are seen as capricious or politically motivated. Not surprisingly, the pattern has

been to favor those who bring in outside grants or who are squarely on the side of campus administrators. Awards granted by departments, while potentially fairer, are bound to be uneven and vary according to the philosophy of a given department.

## CORROSIVE EFFECT

Merit pay at CSU has had a corrosive effect, damaging the collegiality that is vital to a university. It is a “divide and conquer” strategy that produces ill will and antagonism, part of a hard-line approach to management that leads to constant conflict with both the union and faculty governance bodies. The Trustees have praised Chancellor Reed for his “leadership” and for the “initiatives he has brought to the system.” Faculty have a different view: academic senates on 13 out of the 22 CSU campuses have passed resolutions censuring the Chancellor.

We should not demonize Chancellor Reed (though it’s hard not to). Merit pay is only one of many threats facing public higher education, and good arguments alone are not enough to defeat it.

Ultimately it is a question of what a university should be. Instead of a self-governing community of scholars, too many universities now model themselves after for-profit corporations, with centralized management measuring each employee’s worth by his or her contribution to the bottom line. In place of policies that are shaped by faculty and staff, we get a college administration that gives orders and expects them to be carried out.

Those of us who believe in a different vision must organize to win the kind of university we want.

*Henryka Maslowski is a professor of mathematics at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, and a member of the California Faculty Association.*



Bill Tsukuda

faculty approved reluctantly and under duress – the classic “hold your nose and vote ‘yes.’” But CSU Chancellor Charles Reed, a big merit pay booster, always makes a point of referring to it as “the contract approved by faculty.”

The next round of contract negotiations produced an impasse, then faculty rejection of a proposed contract, then the imposition of conditions of employment by Chancellor Reed. The pissy was then replaced by the Faculty Merit Increase or FMI, which quickly became known as the “F-me.” An apparent concession by administration, the F-me was more palatable than the pissy in that there was more faculty input. Faculty members could apply for them and more money was allocated to fund them. The awards were no longer integral numbers of salary steps, but varying dollar amounts. Thus, the pay scale has been mangled. Campus presi-

those who remember how things used to be before the tightening. F-me’s are really as unacceptable as pissies.

When many departments chose an egalitarian distribution of funds, deans threatened not to approve uniform awards. Several departments buckled to the extent of designating three tiers, differing by about \$100/year. Even this very limited effort to subvert, circumvent or adapt (choose your own word) the FMI has demanded an inordinate amount of work by faculty: department policy statements, preparation of individual applications, evaluation by departmental committees, evaluation by university committees, evaluation by appeals committees. And still no one is happy.

Non-awardees in non-egalitarian departments are angry at awardees and at the egalitarian departments. Part-timers, generally either excluded or not made aware of

“Merit pay” tends to degenerate into “patronage pay.”

## CONTRACT AND BUDGET

## Questions &amp; answers

By BARBARA BOWEN  
PSC President

Since September 11th questions have been flooding in from members concerned about the impact of shifting economic and political conditions on the PSC's work. It's a sign of the union's vitality that members think *through* the union about the current political climate, and I want to continue in that spirit by addressing some of the most prominent questions directly.

**Why did the Negotiating Team agree to an expedited process on the contract? Aren't there risks involved?**

We eliminated the major risk by stipulating that we can return to the original process at any time. There is a loss of freedom to report on the sessions, but so far the results of the expedited process have been promising. If there's a chance that the union can reach an acceptable settlement by acting more quickly, we felt we had to take it.

The union has always wanted to move quickly toward an agreement; now I sense an urgency from management too. The negotiating team is in overdrive, preparing for and participating in bargaining sessions several times a week. And remember, this was a two-sided process: management also shortened their list of demands, and some difficult issues are at least provisionally off the table.

**Why did you put out the figure of 9%? Isn't that unrealistically high (or, as some have asked, shamefully low)?**

What we really need in order to restore this University is something on the order of a 70% increase, if you include not just restoration of salaries but the cost, calculated in terms of the overall wage bill, of adjusting the workload and creating equity for adjuncts and others.

If there were any justice in the world, we could expect that in this contract. But there isn't, at least not for CUNY. We are trying to climb out of a 20-year hole in funding and also resist new pressure to balance the city's budget on the backs of its workers. Our strategy is to hold fast to the principle of rebuilding the University but accept that we will achieve it over the course of more than one contract, of which this is the first.

**But now that you're in the traditional, closed-door process, do you feel that the membership activity for the contract all last year made any difference?**

Absolutely. It set the agenda for the present negotiations. The big difference between this round of bargaining and previous ones is the prominence of *the union's* de-

mands: the support for the PSC contract demands exhibited by thousands of members and students announced that the future of the University is at stake in these negotiations. Membership involvement remains the most powerful voice at the table. To push this process to a close, we may have to call on you to take action on very short notice.

**You wrote last month about the need to invest in public life. What has the PSC done to campaign against the imposition of fiscal austerity on public employees?**

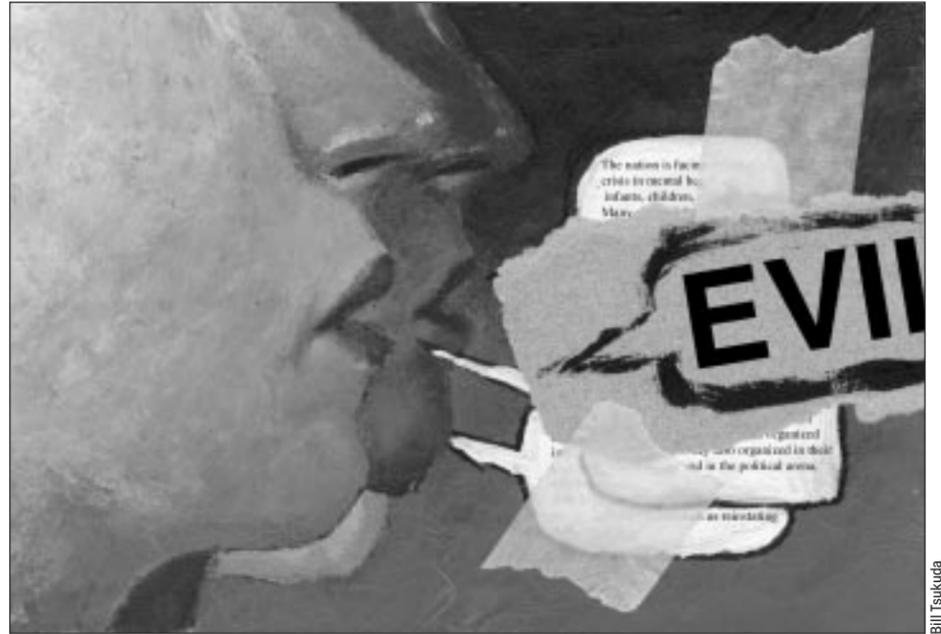
Our struggles around the contract and the CUNY budget are united by this focus. I think the most important thing we've done on the budget is approach the problem creatively. When the AFT President, Sandra Feldman, asked me what she could do to help CUNY after September 11th, I said what we needed was long-term restoration, in the form of federal money. That was the beginning of our effort to include funding for CUNY in the federal disaster relief appropriation.

In the meantime, we pursued strategies closer to home: testifying at City Council against the proposed 15% cut to the community colleges, coordinating strategies with CUNY's budget director, meeting with Mike Bloomberg and commending him on his opposition to the 15% cut, joining the lawsuit charging that the cut would violate the maintenance-of-effort law. In Albany we've been similarly visible, as you can read elsewhere in this issue.

But there are limits to what can be achieved by lobbying and lawsuits, no matter how aggressively they're pursued. Tapping the union's real strength also requires organizing outside the corridors of power. The PSC has put hundreds of members in motion on the budget, and we expect hundreds more at the rally at BMCC for investment in the people of New York.

**But contract and budget aren't everything. Have the current pressures forced you to abandon the larger vision with which you entered office?**

Not at all. It's a false notion anyway that there's a dichotomy between bread-and-butter issues and a larger vision of change. The historical evidence is clear that unions achieve more on wages and conditions when they see themselves as part of a larger movement for social justice. Being active, as the PSC now is, on such issues as academic freedom, adjunct organizing, City Council elections, immigrant rights and support for other unions *adds* to our strength at the bargaining table. It's not a one-to-one calculus in which you can trace direct effects, but all the activities together help to define the union as an emerging political force.



Bill Tsukuda

## SEPTEMBER 11

## What do the faculty think?

By MARY BURGAN

The nation was shocked into silence by the unimaginable images of deliberate carnage that we witnessed on the morning of September 11, and for a time we wanted no opinions – only the details of what had happened. And then we wanted the stories of heroism and self-sacrifice. And we also wanted a time of silence to mourn.

I stood outside a packed church in downtown Washington at noon on September 14 when the whole city was solemnly silent – except for the drone of a passing helicopter from time to time. New words failing us, we turned to old ones in hymns and prayers and patriotic songs.

That time has passed, and now we are back to our usual habits of analysis, criticism and scorn. The pile-up of details is not enough; as a rational species, we must push beyond them to imagine causes, motives, remedies. And that is good. That is what we do as citizens in America. That is what faculty do as professionals.

The faculty do not, however, have a single brain that renders a unified opinion on matters of public policy. We have, in our Congress, a Republican conservative former professor of economics who wants to drill for oil in the Arctic, and we have a liberal professor of physics who doesn't. Professors crowd our video screens with opposing opinions about the budget, genetic engineering and cultures of the Middle East, and we seem to accept their diversity in times of peace. But in times of crisis, our tolerance of such diversity fades and the words of any

one faculty member may be taken to be the words of all.

It is predictable that after we had passed through the initial phases of reaction to September 11, we should want more subtle analyses. And so the discourses of academics – passionate as well as cool – have commenced. And so have the voluble reactions of those who believe that thinking out loud in our colleges and universities is so subversive that it ought to be stopped, somehow.

A distrust of intellectuals has always lurked beneath the surface of American popular opinion. Now it has begun to leak out again – either through the frontal assault in the partial reporting by the *New York Post* of a forum at the City University of New York, or the sideswipes at “campus teach-ins” by a respected columnist like Tom Friedman or others such as John Leo. Such editorializing may be legitimate, but to demonize “the faculty” is harmful.

Further, there's a difference when the responses to faculty opinions come from those who have the power to retaliate. White House press secretary Ari Fleischer withdrew his ominous warning that public people should “watch what they say,” because the government has the power to censor. Just so, the comments of some members of the board of CUNY, and of its chancellor, should also be rethought. These warnings have been accompanied by nods to academic freedom, but they still open the possibility of retaliation.

So, what *do* the faculty think? They think many things about September 11. Some of them died in the bombings; some lost loved ones. They disagree vociferously on ethics, strategy, causes and effects. From my own informal survey, faculty opinion ranges from vengeful to conciliatory. That's why we cannot speak on the course of war or peace for “the faculty” that we represent within the American Association of University Professors. But we can speak for faculty on one big thing – the necessity, as patriots and professors, to think and express our views in freedom.

*Mary Burgan is General Secretary of the American Association of University Professors.*

## Clarion DECEMBER 2001

Newspaper of the Professional Staff Congress/City University of New York, collective bargaining representative of the CUNY instructional staff. PSC/CUNY is affiliated with the American Association of University Professors, the American Federation of Teachers (Local 2334), AFL-CIO, the New York City Central Labor Council and New York State United Teachers. Published by PSC/CUNY, 25 West 43rd Street, New York, NY 10036. Telephone: (212) 354-1252. Web site: www.psc-cuny.org. E-mail: psc-editor@att.net. All opinions expressed in these pages are not necessarily those of the PSC.

**PSC OFFICERS:** Barbara Bowen, President; Steven London, First Vice President; Cecelia McCall, Secretary; John Hyland, Treasurer; Stanley Aronowitz, Blanche Cook, Frank Deale, Susan O'Malley, Sheldon Weinbaum, University-wide Officers; Michael Fabricant, Vice President, Senior Colleges; Robert Cermele, Peter Ranis, Nancy Romer, Senior College Officers; Anne Friedman, Vice President, Community Colleges; Lou Alpert, Samuel E. Farrell, Ingrid Hughes, Community College Officers; Peter I. Hoberman, Vice President, Cross Campus Units; Steven Trimboli, Robbi Weaver, Cross Campus Officers; Eric Marshall, Vice President, Part-Time Personnel; Irwin H. Polishook, President Emeritus; Israel Kugler, Deputy President Emeritus; Harold Wilson, Vice President Emeritus, Cross Campus Units.

**STAFF:** Deborah Bell, Executive Director; Mary Ann Carlese, Associate Executive Director; Debra L. Bergen, Director, Contract Administration & University-wide Grievance Counselor; Mary Crystal Cage, Director, Public Relations; Diana Rosato, Coordinator, Membership Department; D. Nicholas Russo, Director, Legal Affairs; Clarissa Gilbert Weiss, Director, Pension and Welfare Benefits.

Editor: Peter Hogness

© 2001 Professional Staff Congress/CUNY

# A faster pace at the bargaining table

## Union and management push to resolve differences

By PENNY LEWIS  
BMCC

Contract negotiations have been moving at a faster pace since late October. After months of foot-dragging, CUNY management proposed that the two sides enter into a process of expedited negotiations and the PSC quickly agreed. The shift in part reflects the changed atmosphere after the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center.

"This was an opportunity to advance the process," President Barbara Bowen explained. "In the context of September 11, both sides feel a new urgency about making progress on the issues. Our negotiating team recognizes that the economic climate has changed, but remains committed to reversing the damage that has been done to CUNY." Bowen said that the past year's activism had positioned the PSC for this new round of talks. Events like "Teach CUNY" and pickets at the Board of Trustees broke through management's refusal to make an economic offer. "The agenda of these negotiations remains advancing the University, even in these tough economic times," Bowen said.

"Expedited negotiations" has meant increasing the frequency of meetings while simultaneously narrowing the scope of the demands that both sides bring to the table.

**Parents and students sported stickers that read, "Rebuilding NY, Rebuilding CUNY: Support the PSC Contract, Fund CUNY Now."**



PSC bargaining team member John Hyland, right, briefs members before they sat in on a negotiating session earlier this fall.

Starting in late October, the teams met six times in less than a month.

The two sides have agreed to keep these discussions confidential.

Though the particulars of each side's positions are covered by this confidentiality agreement, the four major areas that the union has stressed throughout negotiations are still priorities: salary restoration for all members, achieving a competitive workload (for classroom faculty, counselors, CLTs, HEOs and others), progress towards adjunct equity (including both pay parity and professional concerns) and an overall enhancement of pro-

fessional academic conditions (faculty governance, money for research, etc.). The bargaining team is putting periodic updates on the PSC Web site, at [www.psc-cuny.org](http://www.psc-cuny.org).

### LESS THAN 2%

Management's original economic offer proposed annual increases of 2%, 2%, and 2.5%, compounded over a three-year contract. But the resulting wage increase under this proposal would have been less than 2%; these small percentages were also supposed to cover the costs of any other demands, such as workload reduction or improvements for HEOs and CLTs. The PSC negotiating team has responded that management's offer does not come close to what CUNY needs. Even if used for salary

alone, management's proposal is still below the rate of inflation and thus would amount to a pay cut.

The PSC has made an economic counterproposal of 9% compounded annually, or a 29.5% increase in overall funding over the course of the contract. "Their figures do nothing to help reconstruct the University," said Cecelia McCall, PSC Secretary and negotiating team member. "Our proposed numbers would take us a significant step in the right direction – and even then, it will take future rounds of negotiations to get us where we need to be."

Bowen explained that the new, expedited phase of negotiations is "provisional – we'll see how far we get." The union has the right to return to its original demands,

which convinced the union's negotiating team that the process was worth exploring.

At *Clarion* press time, PSC bargaining team members report that they are getting a more detailed response from management and have found some areas where they may be able to make progress.

Since September 11, every campus has been visited at least once by members of the bargaining team, at meetings that have drawn anywhere from 25 to 150 members. "Immediately after September 11, a lot of members were disheartened," said Mary Ann Carlese, the PSC's organizing director. "But people soon got back on board, realizing that the things CUNY needed before are even more important now."

### GRADUATION ACTION

At LaGuardia's graduation in October, parents, students, faculty and staff sported stickers on their suits and gowns that read, "Rebuilding New York, Rebuilding CUNY: Support the PSC Contract, Fund CUNY Now."

A petition with a similar theme was signed by a majority of faculty and staff at Bronx Community College. "Rebuilding has to go far beyond real estate and leases," the petition states. "Rebuilding means providing viable alternatives – education, job retraining, career programs – for the tens of thousands of New Yorkers of all nationalities whose lives have been disrupted...CUNY has played that role for thousands in the past. We can do it again – if we are given the chance." The petition called on CUNY management to negotiate in good faith, and urged government to recognize what CUNY can contribute.

For the latest on the contract, check the Web at [www.psc-cuny.org](http://www.psc-cuny.org) or call Mary Ann Carlese, 212-354-1252.

# "Merit pay" scheme at Baruch is dropped

By PETER HOGNESS

In an October 24 memo, the dean of the Zicklin School of Business at Baruch declared that the school would adopt a "merit pay" scheme for future raises in salaries. Dean Sidney Lirtzman's "directives" on the subject included "the stipulation that all increases are merit-based," and the provision that final decisions on salary would rest with him.

But on November 14, CUNY management notified the PSC that the memo would be withdrawn. Though contract law and labor law are both taught at Zicklin, Dean Sidney Lirtzman's memo had ignored basic elements of each. CUNY management has raised demands for merit pay and over-scale pay in contract bargaining: the attempt to impose it without negotiating with the union was a clear violation of state law. It also violated Article 1.1 of the union contract, which recognizes the PSC as the bargaining agent for instruc-

## But 80th Street rejects negotiations on RRIs

tional staff. Strong objections were raised by the union, and the plan was retracted.

### DEAN WOULD DECIDE

Lirtzman's memo, written in the wake of a special tuition increase for Zicklin's MBA program, stated that some of the new funds would now go towards "merit supplements for current faculty." A committee was to establish guidelines, but the memo specified that "all recommendations for increases are advisory to the dean." In other words, the dean, not faculty or staff, would decide who had "merit" and who did not.

"The PSC is absolutely in favor of raising salaries at the top of the scale," said First Vice President Steve London. "But we already have merit pay at CUNY. We have constant peer review, and decisions on promotions and tenure are evaluated by our colleagues." London

also noted that management already has discretion to raise someone's pay within a given salary schedule. "The main problem at CUNY is that our entire salary structure is too low," he said, "not a lack of merit or discretion."

The last contract tried an experiment to allow management discretion to pay above scale. The Recruitment and Retention Initiative (RRI) provided for additional salary supplements of \$10,000 or \$20,000 above the top pay step. The experience with RRIs indicates that tacking a few discretionary sweeteners onto a non-competitive salary scale is no solution.

### EXTREMELY DIVISIVE

"I think the RRI has been extremely divisive," said Sheldon Weinbaum, a distinguished professor of mechanical engineering at CCNY who receives an RRI. "It can

put new hires on a different pay scale than the top people you have in-house and that creates a good deal of bad feeling." Weinbaum added that existing CUNY faculty can only qualify for an RRI if they go out and get competitive offers from other institutions. "Looking elsewhere may prompt faculty to leave," he said, "because our salary scale is so bad that even with an RRI, CUNY usually comes out behind."

Some RRI recipients have found that negotiating as an individual has its pitfalls. London cites one faculty member who negotiated a \$10,000 RRI for himself – and was later distressed to learn that management could have given him \$20,000. "He thought management was negotiating with him in good faith," said London, "but nobody told him that \$10,000 wasn't the maximum."

"The PSC recognizes that special market circumstances exist," said London. "And we're willing to deal with this in the context of negotiations. But we need an overall salary structure that can accommodate most cases. Neither 'merit pay' nor RRIs will solve that problem."



### 15-MINUTE ACTIVIST

## Call to help save CUNY programs

The New York Legislature plans to reconvene on December 17 to make the final decisions on the 2001-2002 state budget. The next few days are a critical time to call your legislators and urge support for CUNY.

Please phone your Assembly member and State Senator. Ask them to give support to SEEK, campus child care, worker education programs and new full-time faculty lines. These are the CUNY programs that are most at risk, and the ones where our calls can make the biggest difference.

You can find the names of your state legislators on the PSC Web site at [www.psc-cuny.org/polaction.htm](http://www.psc-cuny.org/polaction.htm).