

# The City University of New York



**Testimony of Chancellor Matthew Goldstein  
The City University of New York  
New York State Senate Finance and  
Assembly Ways and Means Committees  
2013-14 State Executive Budget Proposal  
February 11, 2013**

Good morning, Chairperson DeFrancisco, Chairman Farrell, members of the Finance and Ways and Means committees, staff, and guests. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today about The City University of New York and the 2013-14 State Executive Budget proposal. I will ask the senior officers of the University accompanying me to introduce themselves.

As of fall 2012, CUNY is serving more than 266,000 degree-seeking students and an additional 223,000 adult and continuing education students. The University continues to see record enrollment of students with high school averages over 85, with a 5 percent increase over last year. In addition, SAT scores of students entering Macaulay Honors College are now above 1400, an academic profile typical at Ivy League and other highly competitive institutions. Macaulay experienced more than a 35 percent increase in the number of applicants for this year, to a record 5,537 for 400 places.

Our student progress is also evident in the national awards students continue to garner. This past year, a record 16 CUNY students won National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowships, which offer three years of support for advanced, research-based study in science and engineering fields. No public university in the Northeast has more students or alumni who have won more NSF fellowships. What's more, Nicolas Montano, a senior at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, was awarded a prestigious Marshall Scholarship to study in the United Kingdom. He is the first John Jay student—and one of six CUNY students—to have received a Marshall Scholarship. Only 40 students are selected annually for this highly competitive award.

Most important, CUNY remains one of the best-value college options in the nation. Our students receive an outstanding education while paying a fraction of what students pay at private institutions and most public universities, too. With the availability of financial aid, including TAP and federal Pell grants, nearly six out of 10 CUNY undergraduates attend tuition-free. Predictable tuition and financial aid mean that our students borrow less than most other students, too. In fact, 85 percent of graduates from our four-year colleges are debt free—and more than half of the remainder are transfer students who

arrived with loans. At a time of increasing concern about college costs and student debt, you and your colleagues should take great pride in your efforts to ensure that New Yorkers have affordable options for a world-class education.

Let me also thank you and your colleagues for your support of a predictable tuition policy for CUNY and SUNY. Fiscal year 2013-14 represents the third year of this historic five-year policy. This year's executive budget proposal maintains operating support at prior-year levels and funds projected fringe benefits needs, reflecting the policy's maintenance-of-effort provision. The budget also recognizes this year's modest tuition increase, in accordance with the policy's provision that tuition revenues will be retained by the universities. This offers the University a crucial measure of stability and allows students and families to better plan for the costs of college, thus encouraging students to advance their education.

This year's additional tuition revenue will allow CUNY to make progress on its most important goals, including the continued hiring of full-time faculty. Despite a 13 percent increase in the number of full-time faculty from 2006 to 2010, student enrollment growth has outpaced faculty hiring. The result is that by 2011, the percentage of instruction by full-time faculty had dropped to just 46 percent. Strengthening our talented faculty corps must remain a top priority. We have also set aside \$5 million of the revenue for additional student financial aid. Going forward, we plan to grow this important funding to \$10 million. We appreciate the fact that the budget keeps stable the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP). As you remember, last year CUNY and SUNY were asked to study TAP and offer recommendations for change, and we look forward to discussing our proposals later this year, in November.

### **Hurricane Sandy**

I'd also like to thank the governor and the State Legislature for supporting ongoing relief efforts related to Hurricane Sandy. The executive budget makes available capital funding for Sandy recovery, which is welcome and much-needed assistance.

CUNY continues to address the loss and damage caused by the storm. That includes four deaths, numerous displacements and loss of homes and property, six campuses without power, and significant flooding and damage at Hunter College, Kingsborough Community College, and Borough of Manhattan Community College. Ten CUNY campuses served as shelters for more than 2,000 people before, during, and after the storm. Teams of CUNY employees worked around the clock to keep evacuees safe and facilities running smoothly.

Since then, we have created a CUNY Hurricane Sandy Relief Council to assist members of the CUNY community who suffered personal loss and property damage as a result of the storm. We also made storm relief a focal point of the University's annual "November is CUNY Month" activities, with outreach to the 9,000 members of the CUNY community who live in the flood zone, and to the general community. The University has also launched a new website that features a listing of faculty experts in fields critical to rebuilding and planning for the future.

### **CUNY Student Service Corps**

Our relief efforts have also led to the development of a new initiative: the CUNY Student Service Corps. The project will provide CUNY students, both undergraduate and graduate, with paid positions working 10 to 15 hours a week on projects that support the civic, economic, and environmental sustainability of New York City and its residents. Planning for the initiative is well under way, with the goal of enrolling 1,000 students in the fall. The initiative enables the University to pursue two essential parts of its mission: advancing students' education through applied learning, and directly serving the urgent and long-term needs of the city and its many communities.

### **Immigration Reform**

CUNY has also had a longstanding tradition of service to New York's immigrants and the children of immigrants. Our Citizenship Now program and related services to students and the community—often with the involvement of elected officials—render assistance on a scale unlike any program in higher education. And our thousands of immigrant graduates contribute enormously to our city and state as productive members of the workforce. I am proud to be among the first academic system leaders to endorse the federal DREAM Act to establish pathways to citizenship. I am heartened that immigration reform is gaining support nationwide.

This is a propitious time to encourage educational attainment among New York's many immigrant communities. Our society benefits when there is sufficient student eligibility for publicly-supported financial assistance for students who graduate from a New York State high school to help defray college costs. If they have earned their high school degrees in New York, and under state law are eligible to attend public colleges, they ought to have access to the support they need to advance their education.

### **Operating Budget**

At CUNY, our community colleges, which have seen the largest enrollment increases over the last several years, continue to be an area of focus. In December, we were pleased that the New York State Board of Regents granted accreditation to the New Community College at CUNY for five years. The college employs an innovative educational model and emphasizes timely degree attainment. Our six other community colleges are also employing creative and effective models to improve student success, from learning communities to the ASAP program. Today, 80 percent of those entering our community colleges are in need of some remediation—ranging from a refresher course to intensive instruction in several areas. Building their skills and accelerating their progress remains a priority.

This is one reason that the executive budget's proposal to keep per-FTE student base aid flat is a major concern. The current per-FTE rate is \$2,272, 15 percent less than the 2009

level. We continue to operate with significantly reduced funding while, at the same time, offering expanded academic services to more students in order to increase student readiness. Stretching our resources to this degree simply isn't sustainable. Given the truly critical role community colleges play in our post-secondary system, we ask that your committees consider the importance of increased base-aid funding.

The executive budget proposal also includes \$2 million in incentive funding for a new program, the Next Generation NY Job Linkage program. The program would award funds to community colleges based on student success measures. I commend the governor for highlighting the importance of community-college education through this initiative. A performance-based enhancement above and beyond base-aid funding has potential for building stronger links between community colleges and employers throughout the state. I think most of us agree that such partnerships are tremendously beneficial to students.

I'd also like to draw your attention to a few items of particular concern to CUNY. The first is the CUNY LEADS program (Linking Employment, Academics, and Disability Services). While we are grateful for the State's \$1 million investment in the program, this commitment is \$1.5 million short of what it necessary to sustain this model initiative. LEADS is a partnership between CUNY and the State Education Department's Vocational Rehabilitation unit of its Office of Adult Career and Continuing Education Services that focuses on improving academic success and employment opportunities for students with disabilities. Thousands of students with disabilities have been referred to the unit and have been retained and employed after graduation at exceptionally high rates. A one-time investment of about \$10,000 to develop and place a CUNY LEADS student in competitive employment saves New York State more than \$14,000 annually in disability benefits. Much of this is in the form of Medicaid savings. Clearly, an investment by the state in this effective program will yield a tremendous return.

The second item is funding for CUNY's child-care centers. CUNY has 18 campus-based child-care centers enrolling approximately 1,400 children of CUNY student parents. All

of the programs offer quality early care and education programs, enabling student parents to access a college education as they balance the demands of family, work, and school. Over the past two years, our child-care funding has been drastically reduced, which is why we were very grateful for the legislature's addition of \$544,000 for child care at the community colleges last year. However, that amount was not included in the executive budget. Once again, we ask for your help in funding this central component of our student services.

In addition, I must note a pressing need for services to our student veterans. I'm very proud that more and more veterans are looking to CUNY for their education. We've seen enrollment increases of 53 percent across CUNY—and 233 percent at our community colleges alone. To ensure that these students can succeed in the challenge of transitioning to college and completing their degree, we must provide appropriate services, including financial advisement, counseling, and disability services, as well as increased student affairs staff. Those who have given much to their country should be given every opportunity to succeed as students and civilians.

### **Capital Program**

Turning to our capital program, the executive budget recommends \$55 million for the new CUNY 2020 Challenge Grant Program. The funds will enable the University to invest in transformative capital projects selected for their positive economic impact, advancement of academic goals, innovation, and collaboration. The executive budget also recommends \$8 million to our community colleges for projects that have received funding from the City of New York.

We are particularly grateful for the state's expansion of the SUNY 2020 Initiative to include CUNY, and for the continued attention to our maintenance needs, which have become more urgent. In just the last decade, our enrollment has increased by nearly 30 percent—an additional 62,000 students. Add to that the fact that our campuses are open seven days a week, with classes are scheduled throughout the day, and the result is

significant wear and tear on classrooms and common areas. The average CUNY building is more than 50 years old, and some are more than 100 years old. Our aging building stock and the history of deferred maintenance are the most significant issues impacting our capital program.

I want to take a moment to express our deep appreciation for the appropriations allocated in previous budgets, particularly the extraordinary \$3 billion in funding received in the last five-year plan. With your help, much has been accomplished in the past six months.

Completed projects include:

- The CUNY School of Law's new facility in Long Island City, Queens
- The new Fiterman Hall at Borough of Manhattan Community College, which replaces the building destroyed on 9/11
- The North Hall and Library building at Bronx Community College, the first major new building constructed on the campus since the early 1970s
- A new science facility at Lehman College with laboratories for teaching and research
- Major façade rehabilitations to Marshak Hall and Shepard Hall at City College
- And a major renovation of the Kupferberg Center Arts Complex at Queens College

What's more, several other major projects are well into construction as a result of this funding. CUNY's Advanced Science Research Center and the new City College Science Building will be completed in summer 2014, as will a new performing arts instructional facility at Brooklyn College.

We are also initiating construction on several important projects, thanks to your support:

- We have begun demolition and clearing of the site for the new Academic Building I at New York City College of Technology
- The first phase of infrastructure renovations have begun at Baruch College's Field Building at 17 Lexington Avenue



- And system-wide, hundreds of infrastructure projects are under way, funded by over \$1 billion in critical maintenance appropriations that CUNY was generously provided over the last five budget years

All of these projects were years, even decades, in the making, and we are completing them at a critical time: when New York City needs jobs. There is no doubt that New York City profits from our capital program. For every \$10 million spent in construction, it is estimated that 60 jobs are created at the job site and 30 jobs are created offsite in materials fabrication on an annual basis. Our \$2.3 billion construction program is therefore generating an estimated 14,000 jobs.

However, after this year, it will be several years before our next significant project completion. In fact, if we do not start more projects soon, it could be five to 10 years before another large project is completed. This is not for lack of projects; CUNY has several that are shovel-ready and will alleviate serious space deficits at our colleges. Therefore, we ask for additional funding for programmatic projects. This includes several key projects at our senior colleges that are in design and need full construction funding:

- First is the Hunter College Science and Health Professions Building. This project will relocate science programs from the downtown Brookdale campus to a new facility closer to the main campus. In a public-private partnership, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center and CUNY have acquired a site formerly owned by the city. Hunter's share of the site will allow for a 390,000-square-foot building for health professions programs and science research labs. The city is providing \$100 million to CUNY as part of the purchase agreement. We are seeking \$520 million to construct the first phase of the building
- Next is the new Academic Village and Conference Center at York College. In addition to state-of-the-art instructional space for York's business school, the building also will increase access to conference space for the local community. This will enhance York's ongoing efforts to revitalize the southeast Queens area by sharing resources and expanding campus facilities. We estimate an additional \$239 million is needed to construct the building

- Another important project is The College of Staten Island's Interdisciplinary High Performance Computational Center. It will house a high-performance computer that will serve as a University-wide resource for computer-based modeling and simulation, as well as laboratories for visualization, and classrooms and student work areas. We are seeking \$208.5 million to complete this project
- Next is the new Roosevelt Hall at Brooklyn College, which will provide the college with much-needed instructional science facilities. We need an additional \$290 million to construction this 180,000-square-foot facility
- Finally, we are seeking \$20 million in additional funding to construct Lehman College's Nursing Education, Research and Practice Center, which will address the nursing department's space shortage and allow for expansion of program offerings

These projects demonstrate why CUNY's capital program remains such a high priority for the University. It has been critical to our academic growth, helping to improve classroom instruction and research capacity. It has been equally critical to New York City, creating jobs in a struggling economy. With your support, we hope to continue this important work.

Chairperson DeFrancisco, Chairman Farrell, and committee members, let me thank you again for your continued efforts to strengthen public higher education in New York. A highly skilled workforce is the foundation of the state's future, and we look forward to working with you to help ensure New York's vitality in the coming years.