



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

## Senator Gianaris Pushes Higher Education Budget Proposals, Highlights Need to Prepare NYC Students for College

MICHAEL GIANARIS March 6, 2013

| ISSUE: **EDUCATION, CONTINUING EDUCATION, FINANCIAL AID**

(Queens, NY) In light of recent reports calling into question the preparedness of city public high school graduates who went on to enroll in CUNY community colleges, Senator Gianaris highlighted the need for a renewed commitment to ensure NYC public school graduates are prepared to take full advantage of the higher education opportunities the State seeks to provide. After meeting with Dr. Gail O. Mellow, President of LaGuardia Community College, Senator Gianaris called this an exciting time for college-bound New Yorkers, citing measures in the state's proposed Executive Budget aiming to revitalize the CUNY system and strengthen CUNY community colleges. Keeping these proposals in the final State budget is a top priority for Senator Gianaris.

“This is an exciting time for college-bound New Yorkers. Increased funding for the New York State Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) and unprecedented State support for CUNY community colleges are giant steps toward making sure higher education is accessible and affordable for all New Yorkers. The institution of a CUNY 2020 capital program will provide CUNY with the resources needed to ensure a quality education, and to make the promise of employment opportunities after graduation a reality for CUNY graduates,” said Senator Gianaris.

Senator Michael Gianaris is a strong supporter of the higher education proposals in Governor Cuomo's proposed 2013-14 Executive Budget and is working to make sure these proposals become reality in the final budget. These measures include funding to maintain and support the financial stability of the CUNY system, additional support for community colleges aligned with employer needs to ensure a direct path between graduates and job opportunities, and the implementation of a CUNY 2020 capital program. CUNY 2020 will allow CUNY schools to propose innovative learning initiatives and compete for resources essential to economic development and employment opportunities. In addition, the proposed budget allocates a \$17 million increase in New York State's Higher Education Services Corp and TAP funds reflecting cost increases in tuitions and fees.

“It is all of our responsibility to make sure that our public school students are prepared to take full advantage of these opportunities upon graduating high school,” the Senator concluded.

A recent report from the New York Post brought to light the problems NYC public school graduates are facing upon entering CUNY community colleges. The report found that:

- 79.3% of city public-school grads who went to CUNY’s six two-year colleges need remediation in reading, writing or math

- In 2012, this percentage corresponded to roughly 10,700 students who earned high- school diplomas and enrolled at two-year CUNY schools

- Often those students would have to spend up to \$1,000 per class on remediation classes covering material they should have been taught in high school.

# # #