

Talking Points: Why We are Against Tuition Hikes

- **The City and State deficits are the result of tax cuts.** Tax cuts since 1994 have reduced city and state revenues by \$15 billion per year. This is roughly equal to next year's budget deficits. Working class New Yorkers did not benefit from these tax cuts, so they should not be asked to pay for them now with tuition hikes and increased subway fares.
- **CUNY has already paid its fair share.** CUNY is starved for resources today because its City and State funding was already cut by 30% throughout the 1990's.

What evidence of this de-funding do you see in your day to day experience at CUNY? (i.e. run-down facilities, lack of adequate faculty and staff, etc.)

- **Financial aid is no protection against tuition hikes.** CUNY's poorest students are dependent on financial aid to cover the cost of the hikes. As the fight to prevent TAP cuts last year proves, financial aid in New York is never a guarantee. It must be reauthorized every year, and every year new cuts are proposed. Far from being a protection for poor students against tuition hikes, retaining financial aid is a constant battle that students must fight every year.

What has your experience been in trying to secure your financial aid?

- **Tuition hikes hurt CUNY.** When tuition was instituted in 1976, even with financial aid, CUNY lost over 50,000 students. When tuition was increased by \$750 in 1995, CUNY lost 8,000 students.

How will the \$600 increase in tuition affect you?

- **Tuition hikes are eroding the whole idea of public higher education.** More than ever a greater proportion of CUNY's budget comes from individual students' tuition and fees. In 1990 tuition accounted for 21% of the budget. In 2000 it accounted for 37%. As more and more of CUNY's budget comes from tuition, it becomes harder and harder to call it truly a public university.
- **Our public universities are already over-priced.** New York's community colleges are already the most expensive in the US as a share of family income. New York's public four-year colleges are the nation's third most costly.

How does the cost of your education affect your life?

- **CUNY is the smartest investment New York could make for long-term economic health.** People who graduated from CUNY between 1970 and 1997 pay an estimated \$708 million per year more in City and State taxes than if they had not earned a college degree. Their annual spending is \$4.6 billion higher than it would be if they had not gone to college. CUNY graduates go on to provide services for New York, start business, and create jobs.

Students -- What do you plan to do once you graduate? Faculty -- What have some of your students gone on to do with their CUNY education?