

**Testimony of Andrea Ades Vasquez, Higher Education Officer
Before the Board of Trustees of the City University of New York
Concerning the University Budget Request for FY 2015-2016 as it
Relates to the PSC-CUNY Collective Bargaining Agreement
(Calendar Item 3.F.)**

24 November, 2014

Good evening Chancellor Milliken, Board of Trustees, and CUNY Presidents,

My name is Andrea Ades Vásquez and I work as a HEO at the Graduate Center's American Social History Project and the New Media Lab. I am also a member of the PSC Executive Council and the Contract Bargaining Team. I am speaking in reference to the University Budget Request (Calendar Item 3. F.) and in support of a CUNY budget that includes funding for salary increases for HEOs who have reached their top salary step and do not qualify for reclassification because their job descriptions have not sufficiently changed. As you know, when faculty members are hired there are clearly defined procedures, timetables, and requirements laid out for them to be promoted. HEOs, on the other hand, discover that they are in a "non-promotional series". The consequence is that after many years, once HEOs have reached the top salary step, even if they have increased their skills and even if they have seen a dramatic, measurable increase in their job duties, there is no opportunity to achieve recognition in title or financial compensation.

There are now more than 4,000 HEOs across CUNY and in ever increasing numbers they are rising to meet CUNY's needs. They are not only doing crucial work in the expected places, such as Admissions, Financial Aid, and Student Services, but they are also promoting STEM initiatives, supporting efforts to increase diversity, solving technical challenges, fundraising, community outreach, and advising more and more students. Many HEOs are the *very doing*

reason that CUNY's new initiatives thrive: from the creation of new Colleges or schools, to the successful implementation of the ASAP program; from the GC's greatly expanded MALS program to the University's thriving Centers and Institutes.

Our proposal lays out a process that will rectify the structural problem HEOs face by providing a fair and transparent means for eligible HEOs to "advance" in title and compensation. Many other universities, such as SUNY and Rutgers, have addressed this inequity by providing a form of advancement. Our proposal provides a means to recognize HEOs who can demonstrate both excellence of performance and an accretion of duties.

It is time for the budget to compensate HEOs who have remained in the same position because of their dedication to the students they serve, the excellence of their work and their commitment to their project, office, or department.