



TRUMP
End of
DACA?

Students and faculty organize for immigrants at CUNY.

PAGE 5

PSC membership

SURVEY RESULTS ARE IN

Nearly a third of the PSC's membership responded with a vision for the future. Pages 6-7

CONTRACT **Ready to bargain**

The current PSC-CUNY contract expires on November 30. The union's bargaining team is listening to members and preparing demands. **PAGE 3**

BENEFITS **Optical plan success**

This year the Welfare Fund unveiled a new optical plan. So far, members say it has resulted in serious savings and high-quality eye care. **PAGE 4**



ACADEMIA **Predatory journals**

Nationwide, academics are concerned about the rise of "fake" academic journals targeting professors. PSC members are taking note. **PAGE 10**

RACISM **After Charlottesville**

PSC members reflect on the violence in Charlottesville, Va., and how we can resist and understand the rise of racism and anti-Semitism in America. **PAGE 11**



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR | WRITE TO: CLARION/PSC, 61 BROADWAY, 15TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10006. EMAIL: APAUL@PSCMAIL.ORG.

A call for self-criticism

● I've been teaching at several CUNY colleges since 2009. Recently, I served on the Bronx Community College Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) Task Force along with eight other faculty and HEOs of color to develop recommendations for achieving greater diversity at BCC in faculty, HEO and CLT hiring, retention, promotion and development from underrepresented groups.

I'm also an immigrant from Jamaica and now a US citizen, so diversity issues are often top of mind for me, as I relate the following.

I've repeatedly experienced CUNY Caucasian faculty telling me that they are impressed that I'm so articulate, or so knowledgeable, or so well-read, and so on and so on. I'm always bemused by these remarks, and I wonder why my verbal proficiency and intellect need to be commented on. Would these remarks be said to other Caucasian professors?

Recently, I was waiting to borrow a laptop from a media support center in a CUNY senior college. This center loans IT equipment to faculty to use for our classes. A Caucasian professor walked into the center, saw

me waiting at the service desk, and asked me to provide her with a laptop for her class. Even though I was carrying a tote bag filled with student papers, and standing behind the service desk beside her, she mistook me, a black woman, for a tech support employee and not a professor. Another Caucasian professor claimed to witness me at a department meeting when I was out of the country at the time. And in several PSC meetings, my requests to ask questions are frequently ignored, interrupted, or cut short. In talking with other faculty of color, they share similar experiences.

Whether these incidents are thoughtless irritants (at best), micro-aggressions (at worst) or simply the rough and tumble of New York City social interactions, we should be aware that white privilege is insidious. Let us all be mindful of how we interact with each other, stop "othering" one another, and not refrain from calling out each other when these incidents occur.

Marian Stewart Titus
Bronx Community College
Borough of Manhattan
Community College

Excelsior's start at CUNY

By ARI PAUL and SHOMIAL AHMAD

The rollout of the Excelsior Scholarship, which would provide free tuition to those who qualify, has revealed some structural problems with the program.

For one thing, 75,000 students applied, while the state estimated that 23,000 students could receive the scholarship – students must be enrolled full-time and must fall below a certain household income. They must also stay in New York after graduation, or else the scholarship is converted into a loan.

Sylvia Lopez, the director of financial aid at John Jay College, told *Clarion* that the biggest source of frustration has come from transfer students who assumed they had enough credits carried over to get the scholarship for the Fall semester. "It's the break in enrollment that's confusing them," she said.

Lopez noted that most students, upon learning they can't get the scholarship, opt instead for a loan to cover the costs. On a scale of one to 10, Lopez said the rollout of the Excelsior scholarship has been a five. "It's just all the unknown," she said.

SMOOTHING THE BUMPS

Marcus Richardson, director of financial aid at Brooklyn College, said many students didn't understand what was needed to apply for the scholarship. Richardson said the rollout of the new program has "gone as smoothly as could be expected. He said CUNY Central Office was helpful with his office getting equipped for the new program. "With a new program we can always use additional staff who can deal with this directly," he said. "Getting an entire program up and running, to get accepted students at this point in the year is remarkable."

Several other news outlets reported confusion from students about the process. Hunter College student Sabrina Green told *City & State*, "I had no idea that the number of credits from my previous semesters would affect my chances of receiving the scholarship. I don't think I was adequately informed about the qualifications."

The program, which the governor announced this January, will be phased in over the next three years, and it makes CUNY and SUNY "tuition-free" for qualified students whose gross family income is less than \$100,000. (By 2019, the income threshold will increase to \$125,000.)

Lenny Dick: mourning an activist

By ARI PAUL

Lenny Dick, a PSC executive council member known for his passion for organizing and representing workers and students at CUNY, died of a heart attack on August 27. He was 70.

An adjunct instructor in the mathematics and computer science department at Bronx Community College (BCC), Dick was a tireless advocate for anyone whom he believed wasn't getting a fair deal. As a PSC executive council member, Dick highlighted the economic plight of workers and organized adjuncts, and pushed for better compensation – from health insurance to higher pay rates – and more job security from CUNY. BCC Chapter Chair Sharon Utakis said his death "leaves a gaping hole in our chapter."

ALWAYS A FIGHTER

Dick died as he lived, spending his last days gearing up for campus organizing in the new semester.

"The day before he died, Lenny called me excited about a three-hour BCC executive board meeting he had attended on Thursday," recalled retiree Glenn Kissack. "He was enthusiastic about the young leaders at his college and their plans to have a rally there when the contract expires in November. He told me of his plans to speak with other adjuncts and to invite students to the rally. He was ready to go. Lenny was never happier than when he was in the heat of battle."

Allison Gorr, the PSC adjunct liaison for BCC who worked in Dick's department, recalled, "Lenny was an outspoken, dedicated and optimistic leader, who always encouraged adjuncts to be more involved in union activities." She told *Clarion*, "He helped organize chapter meetings, campus rallies and other actions. He introduced me to the PSC at BCC

Lifelong labor militant



Lenny Dick at a PSC rally at Bronx Community College.

many years ago and often assisted me in my liaison work with part-time members."

According to friends and family, Dick came of age during the movements for labor and civil rights. He was a member of the Students for a

Democratic Society and part of the student uprisings at Columbia University in the 1960s. Before teaching at BCC, Dick was a New York City public school teacher, a career he risked by being a vocal advocate for students' rights.

PSC Treasurer Sharon Persinger recalled how Dick was instrumental in her becoming active in the union when she joined his department at BCC. She noted how he always mobilized the chapter to get involved in broader social justice issues, such as protecting unionized cafeteria workers on campus who were facing layoffs.

"We put out leaflets at the cafeteria and with their union, UNITE HERE, organized a rally at the campus gate to educate students and faculty about their situation, and to pressure the administration to ensure the workers kept their jobs," she said. "Lenny organized the BCC chapter to attend the rallies to support the family of Ramarley Graham, a young man from the Bronx killed in 2012 by a NYPD officer, in their fight to get some justice for him. He kept his eyes on workers' struggles, especially in the Bronx, and organized the BCC chapter to act in support of those fights."

RAISE A VOICE

PSC President Barbara Bowen told union delegates, "No rally was too small for Lenny, no effort of resistance was unimportant. At our next rally, coming soon, we should raise a loud shout on his behalf. I admired Lenny for his modesty, his relentlessness, his refusal to be diverted or discouraged."

Clarion SEPTEMBER 2017

Newspaper of the Professional Staff Congress/City University of New York, collective bargaining representative of the CUNY instructional staff. Vol. 46, No. 6. PSC/CUNY is affiliated with the American Association of University Professors, National Education Association, 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, 61 Broadway, 15th floor, New York, NY 10006. Telephone: (212) 354-1252. Website: www.psc-cuny.org. Email: apaul@psccmail.org. All opinions expressed in these pages are not necessarily those of the PSC.

PSC OFFICERS: Barbara Bowen, President; Michael Fabricant, First Vice President; Nivedita Majumdar, Secretary; Sharon Persinger, Treasurer; Steve London, Paul Washington, Alan Feigenberg, David Hatchett, Alia Tyner-Mullings, University-Wide Officers; Alex Vitale, Vice President, Senior Colleges; Penny Lewis, Clarence Taylor, George Sanchez, Senior College Officers; Lorraine Cohen, Vice President Community Colleges; Lizette Colón, Michael Spear, Anthony Gronowicz, Community College Officers; Iris DeLuro, Vice President, Cross-Campus Units; Andrea Vásquez, Albert Sherman, Jacqueline Elliot, Cross-Campus Officers; Susan DiRaimo, Vice President, Part-Time Personnel; Blanca Vázquez, Lenny Dick, Michael Batson, Part-Time Personnel Officers; Steve Leberstein, Glenn Kissack, Retiree Officers; Irwin H. Polishook, President Emeritus; Peter I. Hoberman, Vice President Emeritus, Cross-Campus Units.

STAFF: Deborah Bell, Executive Director; Naomi Zauderer, Associate Executive Director; Faye H. Alladin, Coordinator, Financial Services; Debra L. Bergen, Director, Contract Administration & University-Wide Grievance Officer; Deirdre Brill, Director, Organizing; Francis Clark, Coordinator, Communications; Barbara Gabriel, Coordinator, Office Services and Human Resources; Jared Herst, Coordinator, Pension & Health Benefits; Kate Pfordresher, Director, Research & Public Policy; Diana Rosato, Coordinator, Membership Department; Peter Zwiebach, Director of Legal Affairs.

Editor: Ari Paul / Associate Editor: Shomial Ahmad / Designer: Margarita Aguilar / Copy Editors: Teri Duerr, Matthew Schlecht

© 2017 Professional Staff Congress/CUNY

Opportunity for a permanent CUNY funding increase

By ARI PAUL

As the academic year and legislative session came to a close, the state's public higher education advocates welcomed a significant boost from the State Legislature. Both the Democrat-controlled State Assembly and the Republican-controlled State Senate passed the Maintenance of Effort (MOE) bill, which would require each annual New York State budget to include funds for CUNY and SUNY to cover the inflationary increases of operating costs at the four-year colleges such as rent, energy and contractual salary increases. It would ensure that CUNY and SUNY have funds to maintain academic and other services at prior-year levels without cuts caused by mandatory cost increases.

GEARING UP

State underfunding of the public university systems in New York over the last several years has led to tuition increases for students and persistent cuts to academic programs. The PSC, along with NYSUT, student groups and the academic union at SUNY, United University Professions, is gearing up for an intense, short-term campaign to demand that Governor Andrew Cuomo sign the popular and beneficial piece of legislation into law.

The governor has until the end of the year to sign or veto the bill, but he may request that it come to his desk any time before then. His approval is far from assured, however, despite the bill's widespread bipartisan support. Governor Cuomo vetoed similar legislation in 2015 and attempted to cut CUNY's budget by nearly a half-billion dollars in 2016.

But this year, Cuomo has posi-

Act has bipartisan support



Faculty and students are pressuring Governor Andrew Cuomo to sign the Maintenance of Effort bill.

tioned himself as a champion of higher education with the Excelsior Scholarship program, which increases tuition-free opportunities at both SUNY and CUNY. Critics of the program have shown that the coverage is less expansive than the governor advertised.

PSC Vice President Mike Fabricant commented that the governor's focus on affordability for public higher education is laudable, but impossible without addressing funding. "Access to a starved university is a false promise," Fabricant said.

Fabricant continued, "The Excelsior Scholarship, at best, provides greater affordability for groups of people who may otherwise find college unaffordable. If you're going to focus on affordability, you have

to focus on quality. They're twin issues. You can't admit thousands of new students and not have thousands of new faculty, counselors and support staff."

ENDING THE 'DANCE'

The MOE bill would begin restoration of CUNY and SUNY's financial health by ensuring that the actual, inflation-adjusted cost of operating the four-year colleges in each system is met each year. The bill would end the "budget dance" in which every year's initial budget represents a real-dollar cut from the year before, and advocates are forced to spend their energy simply restoring what was cut. While the bill does not address community college funding, it would relieve

the biggest shortfall in CUNY's total budget.

As PSC President Barbara Bowen said in City Council testimony earlier this year, the state MOE bill "would gradually but profoundly transform the fiscal condition of the university." CUNY would no longer have to start from an already cash-starved position at the beginning of each budget cycle.

GAME-CHANGER

Bowen and other public higher education advocates have made clear that the money allocated in this bill would be game-changing. "If the legislation were in place now, CUNY senior colleges would have \$157 million more in state funding this year alone," she said. "Each subsequent year new funds would be added to cover mandatory costs, and the spiral of budget reductions would stop."

Specifically, the bill would fund collective bargaining increases and close the gap between the highest TAP

award and the actual cost of CUNY tuition. Closing the "TAP gap" alone would have saved CUNY \$91 million this year. The bill would also fund cost increases for non-negotiable expenses, such as rent and electricity. CUNY has relied on tuition increases to fund these day-to-day costs; the bill, if enacted, would help to eliminate the need for tuition increases to cover such expenses in the future.

State Assembly Higher Education Committee Chair Deborah Glick, a cosponsor of the bill, said in an interview with Spectrum News that the governor should sign the bill as a way to augment the positive impact of the Excelsior Scholarship on college affordability for students. She said the bill would "ensure the state

does its part, not just for this direct aid to students, but also support for the institutions on the vagaries of their costs, utility costs, cost of contracts and some ancillary costs over which they have little control, and that's where the state has not necessarily always been forthcoming."

Fabricant added, "The campaign now is to send this message to the governor: funding for public higher education is vital; it's doable and it's necessary for a progressive state like New York."

That campaign is already underway, as several hundred students have signed a petition organized by the SUNY Student Association directed at the governor, demanding he sign the bill. "Students are not bottomless ATMs that can be

Winning needed funding for CUNY and SUNY

exploited for more cash when the state runs low and fails to live up to its obligation to support public education again and again," an online letter with the petition reads. "Students have and continue to pay more than their fair share and the State of New York must now make up for six years of underfunding mandatory costs at CUNY and SUNY."

THE ROAD AHEAD

With only a few months to build pressure for the governor's signature, PSC members can expect to be called on to push hard for the bill. "This is a rare opportunity to make a permanent change in CUNY funding," Bowen said. "We will need every PSC member and every CUNY and SUNY student to let the governor know that progressive leadership in higher education means funding, not just access." PSC members can start by signing the students' petition, which is open to all at sunysa.org/moe/.

Gearing up for CUNY contract talks

By ARI PAUL

The current collective bargaining agreement between the PSC and CUNY expires November 30, and the union is organizing a member-driven contract campaign.

The union's bargaining team met over the summer to prepare for contract talks with CUNY. The union is committed to begin bargaining as soon as possible, as early as the end of October. (Under the Triborough Amendment of the state's public employee labor code, contract terms are automatically extended past their deadline if no new agreement is reached.) The PSC constitution requires that delegates approve the list of demands before it is presented to management, an atypically democratic procedure in the labor movement, and the bargaining team intends to bring its proposed demands to the Delegate

Agreement ends Nov. 30

Assembly on October 19.

The union's bargaining team, which is drawn from among members of the PSC Executive Council, represents the union's diversity, and has full-time and part-time faculty representatives from both senior and two-year colleges, as well as higher education officers, a college laboratory technician and a graduate employee.

The union activists spent the summer reviewing past contract demands and considering prospective demands, and union leadership is optimistic that negotiating the next contract will not take as long as it did last time. The previous delay in negotiations with CUNY came at a time when then-New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Governor Andrew Cuomo refused to allocate money for collective bargaining, followed

by a set of contracts for state unions that included years without any wage increases. CUNY, for its part, simply refused to put any financial offer on the table.

FEWER DELAYS

This year, the bargaining climate is different. Two state unions, the Public Employees Federation and the Civil Service Employees Association, have settled contracts with 2-percent annual wage increases. The United University Professions, which represents SUNY faculty and staff, was still in contract talks as *Clarion* went to press.

The momentum from major victories in the last contract should also work in the PSC's favor. In the last round of negotiations, the union pressed hard for more job security for adjuncts, resulting in a historic pilot program providing multiyear appointments for part-time teach-



Members at the Graduate Center discussed possible contract demands.

ing faculty. As the semester began, the union confirmed that approximately 1,500 adjuncts had received for three-year appointments.

Members of the bargaining team are energized. "We've had a very productive year because we've made such important gains," said

HEO chapter chair and bargaining team member Andrea Vásquez. "That's been really beneficial for this contract because we can look at how it went, look at how these demands were met and how they were implemented."

Continued on page 10

Moving forward in teaching load reduction

By ARI PAUL

In the memorandum of agreement signed last year with CUNY, the university agreed to a teaching-load reduction commitment that the union had sought for nearly two decades. The two parties “are committed to a shared goal of reducing the annual undergraduate teaching contact hour workload for full-time classroom teaching members of the instructional staff by three teaching contact hours,” states the agreement.

Unlike most contract provisions, this one left two major elements – funding and implementation – to be negotiated. “It was a huge step to get CUNY to go this far,” said PSC President Barbara Bowen. “Now management is legally committed to making it happen.”

PROGRESS MADE

As mandated in the agreement, the union and the university formed a labor-management committee and began meeting last October to recommend a plan for implementing the teaching load reduction and identify resources to make the commitment a reality. The two sides have held several meetings since then, and have made progress on reaching the shared goal of reducing the course load by three credits per semester to allow full-time faculty members more time for research, mentoring and one-on-one student support.

The agreement mandates that the recommendations be implemented

Winning a major commitment from CUNY



PSC Secretary Nivedita Majumdar testified to City Council this year about the importance of the teaching-load reduction.

before a new contract is ratified. As talks on the issue continued over the previous academic year, the PSC mounted a campaign highlighting the urgency of implementing the new provision. At the end of the Spring semester, hundreds of department chairs from around the university sent a letter to both CUNY Board of Trustees Chairman William Thompson and Chancellor James B. Milliken. Their message was clear: CUNY management

could not drag its feet on the issue without hurting both the quality of students’ education and departments’ ability to attract and retain faculty.

“CUNY simply cannot continue to compete for the best faculty or offer our students the support they need without the teaching load reduction,” the letter states. “Almost without exception, the department chairs whose names appear below have

had the experience of losing a top candidate for a faculty position, or seeing a revered member of the current faculty leave for another job, because of the teaching load.”

‘It’s huge, it’s costly and it’s worth it.’

The public campaign was helpful in adding urgency to the talks with management. PSC Secretary Nivedita Majumdar reported, “We are in serious discussions with CUNY about how to implement the teaching-load re-

duction in a way that does justice to faculty and student needs.”

Bowen added, “We have made real progress this summer. Even so, members should not expect the reduction to begin this academic year. The union is pressing hard, but it may take this year to get the funding and implementation in place so that the change can begin in the 2018 academic year.”

GETTING FUNDING

The labor-management committee must confront several challenges, including identifying the needed financial resources, which were not carved out of the most recent contract. Reducing the teaching load for all full-time classroom faculty is expensive because it means that thousands of classes previously taught by existing full-time faculty will now need new instructors. The union has argued forcefully that the new instructors should be full-time faculty and that the teaching load reduction should not contribute to the proliferation of underpaid adjunct positions at CUNY. Union negotiators see the new full-time faculty positions that would be created as an opportunity to move some current CUNY adjuncts into full-time positions and to achieve increased race and gender diversity among newly hired full-time faculty.

Bowen added, “The implementation of the commitment on teaching-load reduction will be complicated; it’s huge, it’s costly and it’s worth it.”

Rave reviews for new optical plan

By ARI PAUL

At the beginning of this year, the union’s Welfare Fund unveiled an exciting new optical benefit, one that promised to offer high-quality coverage and hundreds of dollars in savings to members who use glasses or contact lenses.

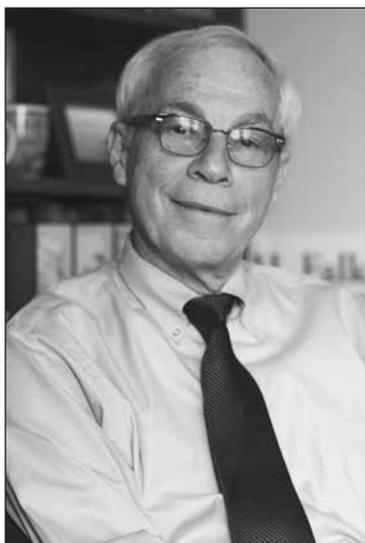
A few months after announcing a new partnership with Davis Vision, the verdict is in: members are getting better, more convenient optical coverage. Several members have reported to the union that they are getting frames and lenses at no cost that would have cost them hundreds of dollars under the previous plan.

FULL TREATMENT

“I knew that the benefits had increased and it was time for me to get new glasses,” said Hollis Glaser, a professor of speech communication at Borough of Manhattan Community College. “It had been over two years, my reading had gotten a little bit different.”

Glaser, who lives in Tarrytown, in Westchester County, New York, went to her local optical store and, as she put it, “they did everything.” She received transitional lenses with “good-looking frames,

Thousands of dollars saved



Terrence Martell

nice stylish frames.” And it was all free.

“It seemed like we had to put in hundreds before,” she said.

The fund reported that vision benefit usage increased by 45 percent in the first half of 2017, compared to the same period in 2016. More than 3,600 members and their dependents have used the benefit in



Hollis Glaser

that period, reflecting an increase of nearly 1,100 more users.

The optical benefit is also available to part-timers.

“I got a pair of no-line bifocals that transition to sunglasses and paid nothing,” said Eleanor Bader, an adjunct instructor of English at Kingsborough Community College. “This was a terrific benefit

since had I not had this coverage, I’d have paid \$826 for them. Yikes! That’s a huge savings.”

Terrence Martell, a distinguished professor of finance at Baruch College, was similarly enthusiastic.

“The old plan was too complicated,” he said, noting that in the past he found it impossible to find a store that would meet the plan’s requirements and fit his optical needs. But this time was different.

“The new plan had a very large number of places you could use, including one that was in the next village over from us, very convenient, and they basically said, ‘You can get whatever you want,’” he said, noting that he got transitional glasses that shade in the sun. “I found it, frankly, pleasant, and I think that with the new plan I was able to get an expensive pair of glasses that I would not have been able to do absent the plan.”

SEEING BETTER

Martell continued, “I see better, which is nice, and more importantly, my eyes are protected from the sunlight. That’s a new addition that I couldn’t have under the old plan

and wouldn’t have done myself.”

Specific details of the plan can be found online at <http://pscunyw.org/full-time-actives/fund-benefits/vision.aspx>.

Welfare Fund Executive Director Donna Costa told *Clarion*, “We are happy to report a lot of positive feedback from members who have

‘Wear your new glasses with pride.’

taken advantage of the improved vision benefit. People are pleased to find that many of the most frequently purchased lens options, like photochromic and high-index lenses, are included at no member cost.”

PSC President Barbara Bowen said, “I talked to a member who normally pays more than \$700 for glasses because her prescription is complicated. For her new pair she paid nothing. ‘It’s like getting a \$700 raise for this year,’” she said.

Bowen continued, “More than 3,600 PSC members have made use of the new benefit since it began in January. The Welfare Fund is able to offer the new benefit because of the increased funding we won in the last contract. Every new pair of glasses is a testament to the power of a fighting union. Collectively, PSC members have already saved hundreds of thousands of dollars, while receiving high-quality service. Wear your new glasses with pride.”

Students, members respond to DACA order

By SHOMIAL AHMAD

When Mauro Trejo, an undocumented student at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, was approved in 2013 for the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), an Obama administration program that provided temporary relief from deportation, his life took a turn for the better. With papers to work legally in the United States, he was able to secure a full-time job and save money so that he could start college – first at the Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC) and then at John Jay.

“That’s when hope came into my life and gave me the chance to save money and pay for college out of my pocket,” Trejo, a junior studying criminology, told *Clarion*. While the stability he gained was real, he knew that the security was only temporary. “It was like living on a cloud because I knew it could fall anytime.”

Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced on September 5 that the DACA program “is being rescinded.” In the announcement, Sessions repeatedly referred to undocumented immigrants as “illegal aliens” and referred to the Trump administration decision as an end to “executive amnesty policy.”

Trejo, who calls America home, had been anxious in anticipation of the announcement. Now he’s organizing with other CUNY students and hopes that Congress will finally act on finding a permanent solution, rather than the temporary relief DACA afforded.

In New York State, more than 40,000 undocumented immigrants are enrolled in the program, according to estimates from State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman’s office, and the student organization CUNY DREAMers, a group that represents the issues of undocumented immigrants, estimates that there are about 6,000 undocumented students enrolled at CUNY. DACA, which gives temporary protection from deportation and permission to work legally in the country, is renewable every two years. With the Trump administration decision, it will begin to be phased out in six months unless Congress acts.

TAKING A CHANCE

When the program was first announced five years ago, Trejo was reluctant to apply. The \$495 application fee was a steep price to pay for the 19-year-old, but more importantly, he didn’t want to out his parents as being undocumented. (The application requires proof of residency and birth forms.) Once the first round of approvals came in, Trejo decided to take a chance and apply – and he got approved.

In 2013, he enrolled full-time at BMCC, paying his full tuition from money that he had saved from working. At CUNY, undocumented students living in the state can pay in-state tuition, but they’re shut out of traditional aid programs, includ-

CUNY campuses continue to organize



Mauro Trejo of John Jay College is one of the thousands of undocumented CUNY students affected by the Trump administration’s order.

ing the New York State Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) for low-income residents and Governor Andrew Cuomo’s Excelsior Scholarship program.

On the campaign trail, Donald Trump vowed to “immediately terminate” DACA, but then seemed to change his mind after taking office, telling ABC News that DACA recipients “shouldn’t be very worried.” This summer, 10 state attorneys general, led by Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton, issued an ultimatum in a letter to the Trump administration: either agree to “rescind” the program by September 5 or face a challenge to the program. Sessions announced the decision to terminate the program right on the September 5 deadline.

The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) denounced the decision hours after it was announced. “One of the major factors that makes American higher education a world-class system is the diversity of our faculty and students,” wrote AAUP President Rudy Fichtenbaum, noting that of the 800,000 DACA recipients in 2016, 576,000 of them are enrolled in college. “We owe it to these students and their families, as well as to other undocumented young people, to speak out against this action in the strongest manner possible.”

CUNY Chancellor James Milliken also denounced the decision and said the university “will do all we can” to support DACA students, including being an advocate before Congress and providing counseling and guidance. On the steps of City Hall and in front of Trump International Hotel & Tower, PSC members have been denouncing the decision.

In the immediate weeks following the presidential election, PSC President Barbara Bowen also wrote a letter to the CUNY Board of Trustees Chairperson William C. Thompson and Chancellor Milliken, calling on the university not to allow immigra-

tion officials onto campus, not share the immigration status of undocumented students unless required by a court of law and ensure that CUNY security is not required to enforce federal immigration law.

“There is no time to waste,” wrote Bowen in the December 2, 2016, letter. “The actions you take now will define what CUNY stands for at this time and for many years to come.”

PSC RESOLUTION

The PSC successfully pushed for “A Call for All Colleges and Schools to Be Sanctuary Institutions” resolution in April at the New York State United Teachers representative assembly. Also, through coordination with the union, union members and CUNY students from campuses across the system have been meeting in working groups to advance measures that ensure a sanctuary campus. The activists have formed rapid response teams, which, among other things, work on verifying re-

ports on a specific campus. They have also formed a training group, where people can do short trainings on knowing your rights and how to respond to requests for information.

“Beyond those who have DACA, we also need to remember that we have students who do not qualify for DACA due to the arbitrary limits on age and date,” said Tatyana Kleyn, an associate professor in education at the City College of New York and the faculty advisor of the college’s Dream Team, a student club dedicated to immigrant advocacy. “There’s a lot of fear on all ends and we need to continue to fight, rally and learn about ways to protect and educate faculty and staff about all our immigrant students – with and without DACA – as well as others who are under attack by this current administration,” said Kleyn.

At City College, Kleyn said the Dream Team has been holding events undocumented students know what resources they can access, including

self-care workshops and free legal help from CUNY Citizenship Now. At LaGuardia Community College, faculty have organized several trainings on knowing one’s rights and the group LaGuardia Rising (comprised of administrators, staff, faculty and students) has disseminated information across campus about resources available to students in need. In addition to Know Your Rights outreach, Kingsborough Community College faculty, staff and students met with administrators about how the administration would restrict access to CUNYfirst data, including personal information on students’ immigration status and social security numbers. The PSC has stressed the data security issue in meetings with CUNY’s central administration.

FACULTY ACTIVISM

At the CUNY School of Law, since DACA became federal policy, faculty and students have been advocating for undocumented students. They have helped undocumented immigrants apply and renew their status in the program, and they have worked with a coalition of community and social justice groups to create more opportunities for DACA recipients. CUNY law school graduate Cesar Vargas was party to a lawsuit, that challenged the denial of entry of qualified DACA recipients into the New York State Bar Association. In May of last year, the New York State Board of Regents allowed qualified DACA recipients to receive professional licensing.

“[Many DACA recipients] have become lawyers and doctors and nurses and teachers and everything else. They’re contributing and they’re proceeding with their lives and doing good things in the world,” said Janet Calvo, a law professor at CUNY School of Law. Calvo helped persuade the State Board of Regents to open up licensing to certain undocumented immigrants. “And of course, they’re worried and they’re nervous.”

Calvo said that students who have received DACA – even with it being withdrawn – should be eligible for licensing in the state. Many of the undocumented students whom Calvo’s worked with are remaining focused on their studies and goals.

That’s what Kingsborough student Adalberto Ventura is doing. He’s a DACA recipient who plans to become an electrical engineer, and he said that the Trump administration decision will force him to “go back in the shadows again,” but this time, he said, the federal government knows where he lives and where he works. If there’s one point of assurance for Ventura, it is that even with the discontinuation of the program, the one thing that can’t be taken away from him is his education.

“There are people who have been educated to be afraid. There are people who have been educated to step up, to take the good with the bad and the pros and cons,” Ventura told *Clarion*. “I’ve been educated to not give up.”



PSC members participated in several rallies in defense of DACA.

Results from the PSC membership

By SHOMIAL AHMAD

Nearly 9,000 union members, close to one-third of the membership, responded to the PSC's first-ever electronic survey. It was available to members in the latter half of May. One poll administrator who conducts union surveys noted that such a turnout was "as good a response rate [as] you can hope for."

Members answered survey questions at a critical time for the union. Last year, the PSC settled a long overdue contract, and later this fall the union will begin a new round of contract negotiations. (The current PSC-CUNY contract expires on November 30, 2017. See page 3 for more.)

ISSUES AHEAD

"The survey results will be important in helping the union to shape priorities," wrote PSC President Barbara Bowen in an email to members in May. "The results will also enable us to organize with you on campus to change the conditions that need to be changed."

Besides negotiating a new contract, the PSC, along with other public-sector unions, is likely to face a US Supreme Court decision from a conservative-majority court that will attack the union's ability to maintain its financial and political strength.

"Knowing what matters to you is even more urgent as the Trump administration attempts to deliver a deathblow to unions' power," stressed Bowen in her email to members.

BIG RESPONSE

The detailed survey asked a range of questions: concerning the importance of past contract wins,

Members weigh in on union issues

the level of satisfaction with the recently settled union contract and identify the relative importance of future contract priorities and of paying union dues. The high response rate provides a strong cross-section of members' views, but the survey was not conducted as a random sample and may not be fully representative of the bargaining unit as a whole.

With nearly a third of PSC members responding, the survey results reflect the views of those who responded, and they're not necessarily representative of the bargaining unit as a whole. Response rates also varied by job title, from a high of 49 percent for

full-time CLTs to a low of 13 percent for Continuing Education Teachers. (See June/July *Clarion* for a list of response rates by title series.)

The graphs below show the responses on issues facing the union now – and in the future. Complete survey results will be published later this fall.

PSC MEMBER PRIORITIES The results for this graph show where more than 30 percent of respondents identified an issue as one of their top three contract priorities for the new contract. The high prioritization that respondents in part-time titles gave to "increasing per-course pay for adjuncts to \$7,000" pushed the issue up among

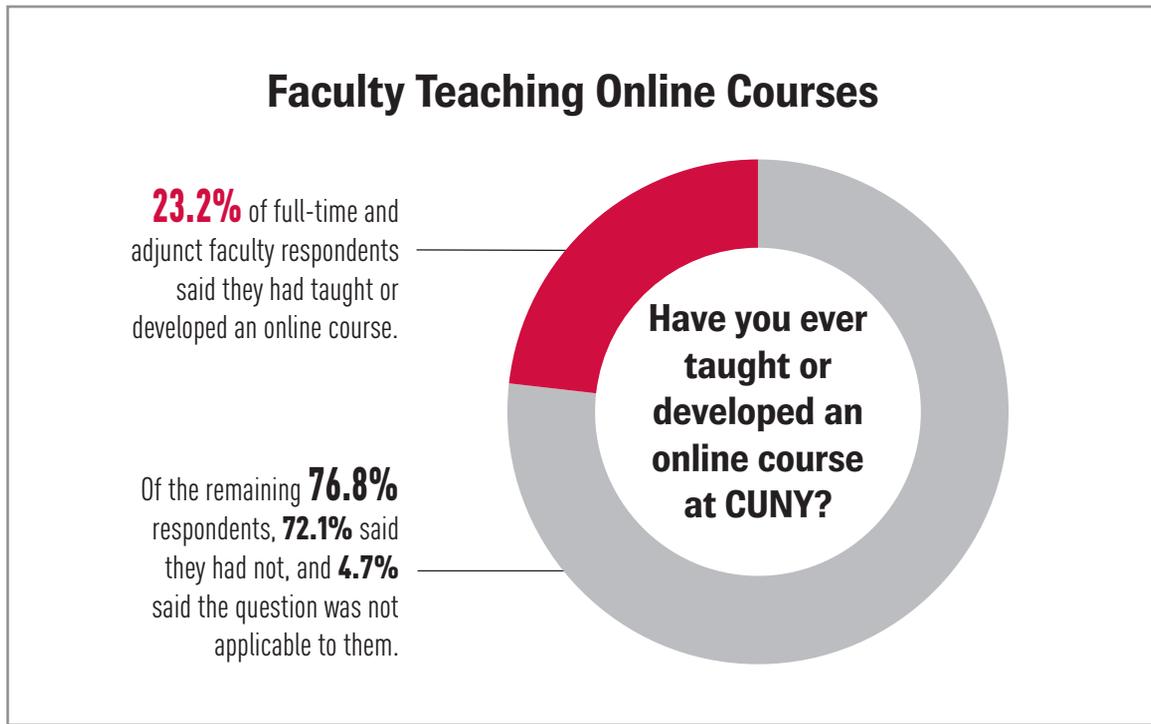
all members' priorities. Increased salary was clearly a top issue (72.8 percent); timely contract settlement (39.5 percent) and job security (38.1 percent) were other issues identified among the top three concerns for many members.

FACULTY AND STAFF IDENTIFY THEIR TOP PRIORITIES Separated by members' title series, these graphs show the five issues that were most often included in respondents' top three priorities.

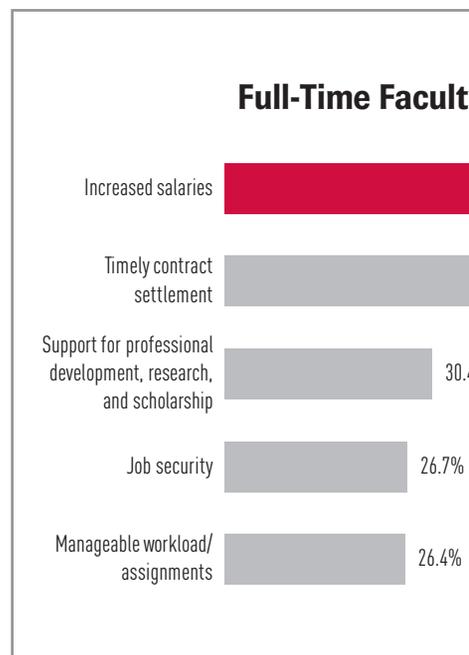
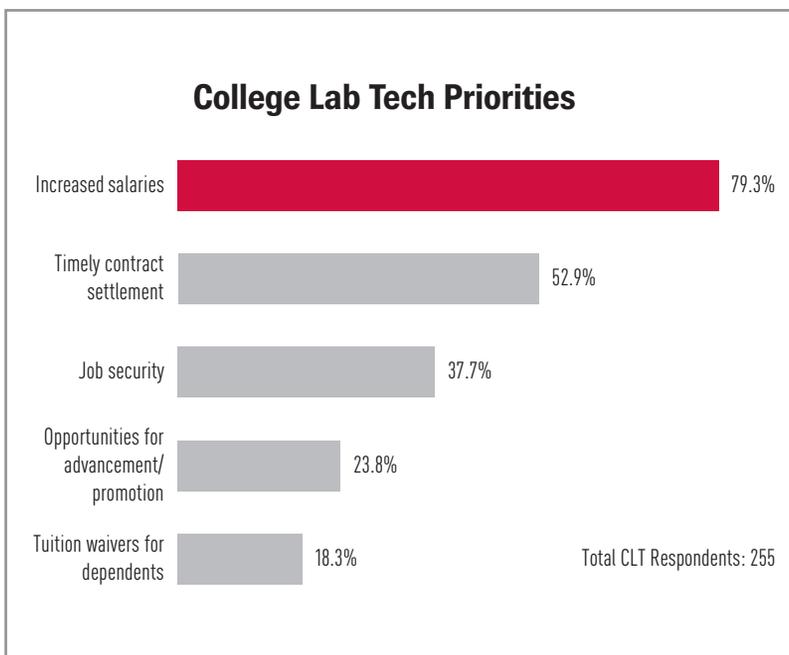
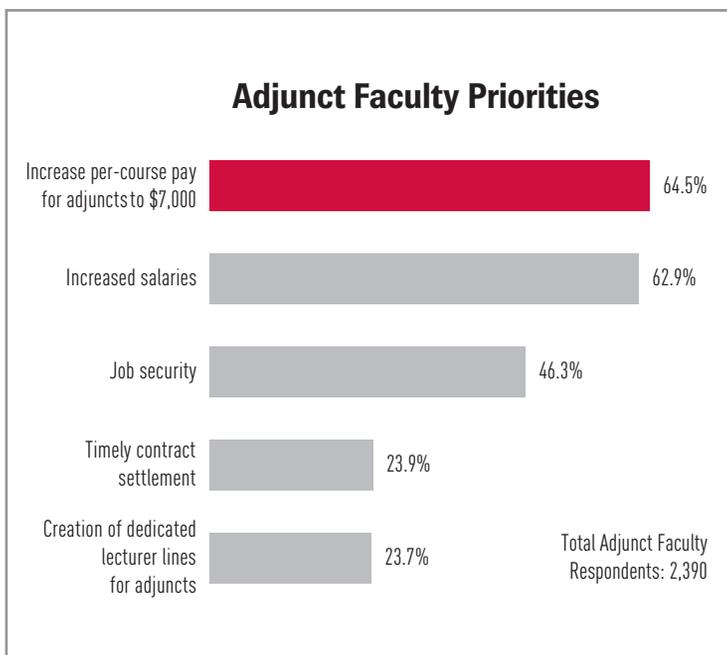
- In all branches, over 60 percent of respondents included increased salaries among their top three priorities.
- Over half of HEO and CLT respondents included timely con-

tract settlement among their top three priorities.

- Two potentially competing high-priority demands are \$7,000 per course for adjuncts and timely contract settlement.
- Nearly half of adjunct faculty and HEO respondents included job security in their top three priorities.



FACULTY AND STAFF IDENTIFY THEIR PRIORIT



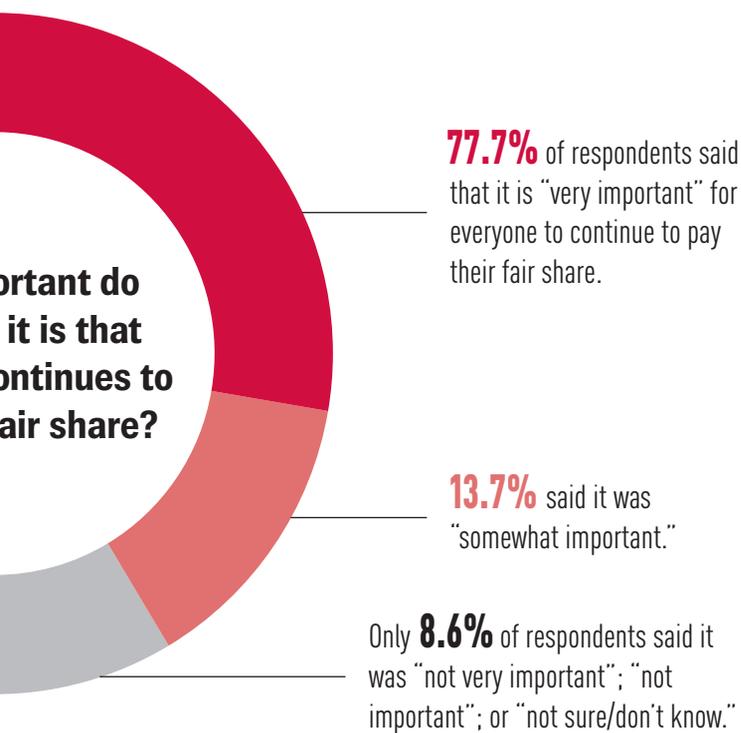
Ship survey

THE IMPORTANCE OF PAYING UNION DUES If the Supreme Court limits public sector unions' ability to collect dues or agency fees, an overwhelming majority of survey respondents (78 percent) said that it is "very important" for everyone to continue to pay their fair share; 14 percent said it was "somewhat important."

FACULTY TEACHING ONLINE COURSES With 28 percent of full-time faculty respondents and 16.7 percent of adjunct faculty respondents reporting that they have taught or developed an online course at CUNY, protecting the rights of faculty who teach online courses is becoming a more pressing concern.

Importance of Paying Union Dues

With the Supreme Court ruling on union dues expected in *Janus v. AFSCME*, all respondents were asked about the importance of continuing to pay their fair share. More than 90 percent said it was "very important."

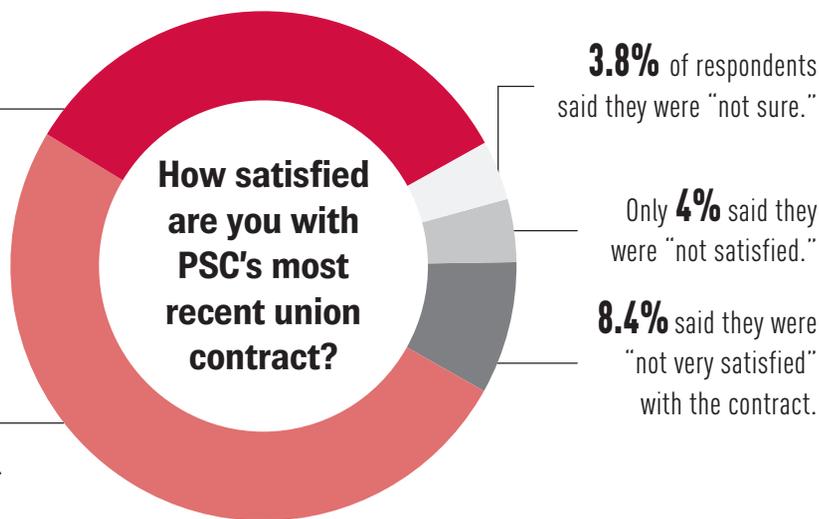


Satisfaction With the Most Recent Contract

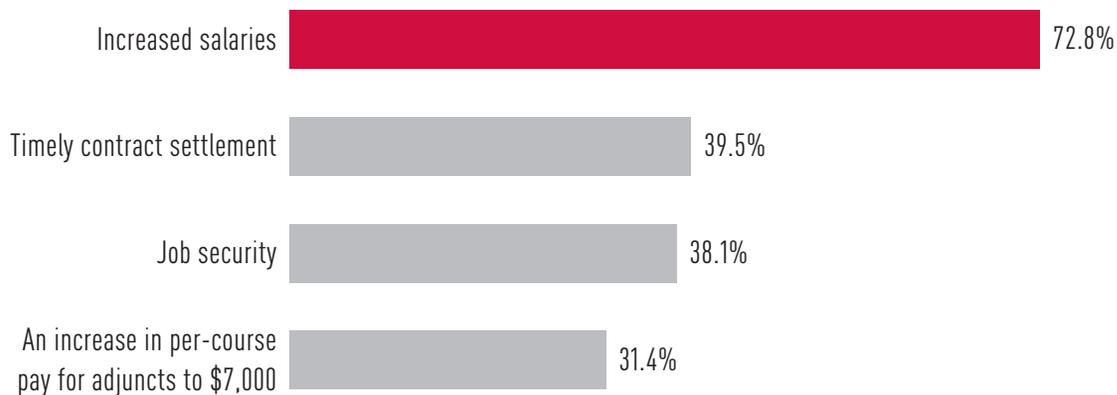
Survey respondents rated their level of satisfaction with the most recent contract on a four-point scale: "very satisfied"; "somewhat satisfied"; "not very satisfied" and "not satisfied"; or, "not sure." **83.8 percent** were either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied," and only 4 percent were "not satisfied" with the most recent PSC-CUNY contract.

33.3% of respondents said they were "very satisfied."

50.5% said they were "somewhat satisfied" with the contract.



PSC Member Priorities

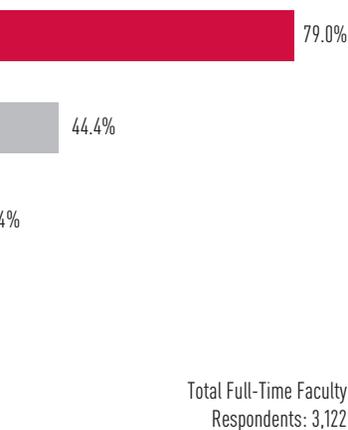


More than 30 percent of all respondents to the survey's questions on contract priorities included the issues in this graph among their top three priorities.

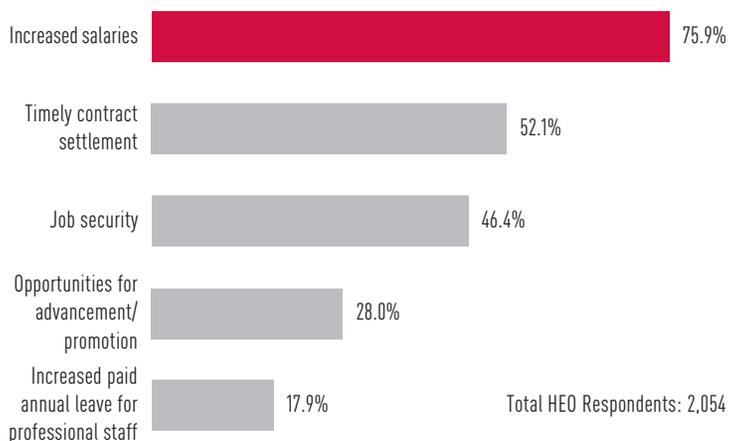
From a list of 17 issues, survey respondents identified the level of an issue's importance to them on a four-point scale: "very important"; "somewhat important"; "not very important" or "not important." Then from those issues identified as "very important" or "somewhat important," respondents selected their top three priorities.

PRIORITIES

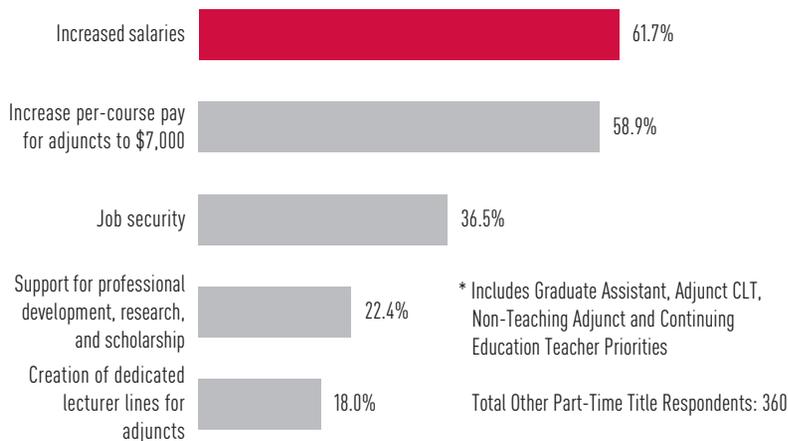
Faculty Priorities



Higher Education Officer Priorities



Other Part-Time Title Priorities*



PSC flexes political muscle in key races

By SHOMIAL AHMAD

There's a saying that "all politics is local," and this fall, the PSC is focusing on key New York City races, including the mayor's race and City Council races, with the goal of maintaining a progressive focus for citywide offices. The union's Legislative Committee is engaged in a months-long process of vetting, endorsing and orienting key candidates for the issues important to the CUNY community.

"The PSC is proud to make these endorsements. The candidates for open seats have demonstrated that they understand the importance of CUNY to the future of New York City," said PSC President Barbara Bowen. "They are committed to making sure that every New Yorker has access to a top-quality, affordable college education – especially when the communities who rely on CUNY are newly vulnerable because of federal policies."

CHALLENGES AHEAD

Primaries for the candidates will be held on September 12, the second Tuesday in September, and the general elections will be on November 7. Seven members on the City Council, including Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, are term-limited and cannot run again for re-election. Thus far, the PSC has endorsed 44 candidates for City Council, and among those endorsements, eight candidates are running in hotly contested races. Many incumbent Council members have primary challengers, making these races extremely important. Also, PSC members who live in New Jersey will be electing a new governor.

While the state is the primary funder for CUNY, city politics remain an important realm for the PSC – the operating budget for CU-

Citywide election year



PSC Legislative Committee member Paul Washington said citywide politics are essential for the union.

NY's community colleges is funded by New York City. And the need for increasing city aid to higher education comes at a critical moment. With a federal government dedicated to reversing progress in access to health care, immigration policy and workers' rights, it's important to have a progressive force at the local level to give some security to vulnerable communities and continue policies which make New York a city where all can thrive. With President Donald Trump in office, it has mobilized many to get more involved in local and regional politics.

"Given what's happening with the Donald Trump phenomenon, it's a great opportunity for people to come together to push for the world that they want, to push for the CUNY they want," said Domi-

nic Wetzel, a PSC legislative committee member and an associate professor at Kingsborough Community College. "We need to get better funding for CUNY, get the MOE [Maintenance of Effort bill] signed, and get more educational access for our students." The state Maintenance of effort bill, if signed, would factor annual projected increases, including salary increases under collective bargaining and increased rates for operating costs, into the guaranteed budget for the university. Both chambers of the State Legislature passed the bill; now it awaits a signature from Governor Andrew Cuomo (see story on page 3).

Through candidate forums, questionnaires, and a session on issues

Members vetted candidates for citywide offices

specific to CUNY, the PSC legislative committee arrived at the list of candidates to recommend to PSC officers and the Executive Council for endorsement.

"The whole process was both exhilarating and exhausting," said Francine Brewer, a committee member and a PSC retiree chapter officer who taught at LaGuardia Community College.

The process culminated in a marathon interview session on a Saturday in May, where candidates talked about their platforms and answered questions from union members. PSC member Jennifer Harrington took part in the session, and she said that it gave her a view of city politics. She said that they were looking for candidates who were committed to CUNY's mission and supportive of progressive issues, including affordable housing, voting no on a state constitutional convention, and giving support to the city's homeless.

"It let me see an inside peek on

how people become candidates and how they get a City Council seat," Harrington told *Clarion*.

UNION PRESENCE

Paul Washington, a veteran member on the PSC Legislative Committee who worked as chief of staff for former City Council member Charles Barron before coming to CUNY, said that the political advocacy the union does is essential to secure funding for CUNY and move politicians to prioritize initiatives crucial to CUNY's success. The direct result of PSC's continued advocacy has increased the visibility of the PSC to city officials.

"We always have to have an inside-outside strategy," said Washington, who works in the Registrar's Office at Medgar Evers College. "You have to be in the street. You also have to engage those people in power to let them know the issues that we're fighting for."

Endorsements:

The PSC has endorsed the following candidates in their races for citywide office. Primaries will be held on September 12, and the general election will be on November 7. To find out your City Council district, go to council.nyc.gov/districts/ and enter your address. For a full list of PSC-endorsed candidates, go to tinyurl.com/psc-endorsements-2017.

Margaret Chin	Council District 1, incumbent
Carlina Rivera	Council District 2
Marti Speranza	Council District 4
Helen Rosenthal	Council District 6, incumbent
Diana Ayala	Council District 8
Marjorie Velázquez	Council District 13
Francisco Moya	Council District 21
Alicka Ampry-Samuel	Council District 41
Justin Brannan	Council District 43
Dylan Schwartz	Council District 51
Bill de Blasio	Mayor of New York City
Letitia James	Public Advocate for the City of New York
Scott Stringer	New York City Comptroller

The political strategy, explained

By CLARION STAFF

Clarion associate editor Shomial Ahmad sat down with PSC Vice President Mike Fabricant to talk about the importance of the union's political strategy.

Q *The ability to settle a contract at CUNY is contingent on New York State and New York City agreeing to the contract terms and providing the funding for them to CUNY. In this most recent contract campaign, the PSC had a multipronged strategy that included campaigns on the campus level, citywide protests and civil disobedience, and lobbying and political action. How do the connections between the different actions work?*

A In order to promote change in this state, you have to have an "inside" and "out-

Why local politics matter

side" game, period. You cannot win changes simply by engaging with legislators and imagining that's going to make the difference. And by going public alone – on the campuses and in the streets – you're not going to be able to influence the elected officials who control budgetary purse strings. It's got to be a combination. The idea has always been to maximize pressure on the outside while negotiating on the inside.

Frankly, the \$240 million for contractual back pay for members would not have been gained without the dogged "inside" work of educating legislators – PSC members and allies meeting with them and sending letters – and the "outside" public and visible contract cam-

paign. There was a point at which legislators in Albany basically said, "You're never going to get it." We achieved it. PSC also pushed back hard against the proposed \$485 million state funding cut to be exacted against CUNY. PSC and CUNY Rising were the public face of opposition, and the union pressed legislators, from the city and upstate, to see the fallacies in the proposal.

Part of the "outside" game is not simply mobilizing PSC members. It's also working with community and other groups who have a stake in this university, and working with students who, like our members, have a very large stake in the university.

Another part of the equation is public relations and media. How do

we produce the kind of narrative, the kinds of stories that attract broad public attention? In the case of the proposed \$485 million cut, the story had its own legs. Our job really was to maximize its visibility and continue to press the governor to reconsider the proposal.

The multipronged strategy also includes pressure on CUNY, internally, at the bargaining table and with the chancellery and college presidents, and externally, rallies, sit-ins, demonstrations at Board of Trustees' meetings. A lot of what we won in the last round had to do with the back-and-forth between negotiation and external pressure. The union doesn't win job security for part-time faculty without a lot of external pressure and a lot of internal negotiations. The same dynamic was true for

winning improvements in HEO advancement and the teaching load reduction.

Q *With today's political reality and ongoing budget austerity, it's easy to lose sight of the gains that unions have made since it seems they are often on the defensive. But the PSC, through lobbying lawmakers and rank-and-file actions, has been able to secure gains from the state legislature, the city council and other local bodies. What are some of the most recent wins on this front?*

A First of all, there would have been no new substantial investment from the city without our political work in the 2013 Mayoral election. We were, with 1199SEIU, one of the two unions that came in early for De Blasio in the primary, when only 10 percent of the electorate was saying they would vote for him. The fact that we were one of the two unions that came in

Continued on page 9

Higher ed advocates turn to national struggles

By ARI PAUL

US Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos has drawn attention from education advocates for many of her controversial stances on K-12 education, but academic unions and other advocates have also been tracking the Trump administration's agenda for higher education. The consensus of many in education is that the agenda is dark, but the good news is that advocates are organizing in resistance.

In July, DeVos held a set of meetings with advocates for those accused of sexual misconduct on campus in which she indicated that her department was willing to revisit and perhaps roll back many of the protections of Title IX, the 1972 amendment to the federal education code that states, "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Title IX was strengthened under the Obama administration in response to complaints that campuses around the country had not taken accusations of sexual assault seriously.

BLAMING VICTIMS?

The complaint DeVos has chosen to respond to, however, isn't the notion that sexual assault isn't taken seriously, but rather that it is currently taken so seriously that the accused have been subjected to tribunals where they aren't allowed to defend themselves. When it comes to Title IX, DeVos told reporters, "There are some things that are working. There are many

Fighting Trump's agenda



Education Secretary Betsy DeVos

things that are not working well."

Candice Jackson, the acting head of the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, was blunter, raising eyebrows when she told the *New York Times*, "The accusations – 90 percent of them – fall into the category of 'We were both drunk,' 'We broke up, and six months later I found myself under a Title IX investigation because she just decided that our last sleeping together was not quite right.'"

What campus advocates had found most troubling about DeVos's day of meetings was that she had met with two "men's rights groups," the National Coalition for Men and Stop Abusive and Violent Environments (SAVE), which critics have likened to fringe groups on the alt-right.

Inside Higher Ed reported, "Advocates say both groups are known for lobbying against protections and for blaming women for assaults. They say Coalition for Men chapters have published names, photos and personal information of survivors of sexual

assault, encouraging the harassment of women who report sexual violence. The group's president, Harry Crouch, in a 2014 interview with *Pacific Standard* magazine cited the domestic violence case of former NFL player Ray Rice as an instance of women initiating domestic assault – what he termed the 'men's violence industry.'"

It continued, "The Southern Poverty Law Center has identified SAVE as part of a sphere of websites and forums 'dedicated to savaging feminists in particular and women, very typically American women, in general.'"

Unions joined lawmakers and advocates for victims of sexual assault in protesting DeVos's agenda on Title IX. "For months, DeVos's Education Department has sent a chilling message to students and survivors by openly questioning Obama-era rules to protect students," American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten said in a statement. "DeVos's meetings today with so-called men's rights groups, and other fringe groups that want to silence sexual assault survivors' voices, legitimize those efforts. As a survivor of sexual violence, I will not sit back in silence while Betsy DeVos pretends that rape deniers have something useful to say about this topic."

For academic unions, including the PSC, Title IX protections serve not just as an important form of protection for students, but for all campus workers who might be subjected to sexual violence or sexual harassment in the workplace.

For the PSC, this hit home last

year when CUNY settled a DOE investigation finding that Hunter College had not made it clear to students and workers where to file Title IX complaints and did not adequately address complaints.

The Trump administration simply will not take these complaints and the need for Title IX protections nearly as seriously as the previous administration.

OTHER THREATS

But DeVos's move on Title IX hardly stands in isolation; her meetings came just days after 19 state attorneys general sued the DOE for delaying implementing protections for students defrauded by for-profit colleges. The *Washington Post* reported, "The complaint, filed in US District Court on Thursday, accuses the Education Department of violating federal law by halting updates to a regulation known as the borrower defense to repayment. The rule, which dates to the 1990s, wipes away federal loans for students whose colleges used illegal or deceptive tactics to get them to borrow money to attend. The Obama administration revised it last year to simplify the claims process and shift more of the cost of discharging loans onto schools."

DeVos claimed that the delay was necessary in order to attend to a federal suit brought by a group of for-profit colleges seeking to block the rules entirely, but Senator Elizabeth Warren said in a statement that this was an attempt by the administration to "make it easier for fly-by-night schools to cheat students."

New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman is participating in the lawsuit, a move welcomed by unions as necessary to confront the

scourge that is for-profit higher education. The lawsuit has also been observed to be a part of the effort by progressive state officials to act as a defense mechanism from the federal government's conservative agenda.

National Education Association President Lily Eskelsen García said in a statement, "It is simply wrong that the Department of Education would want to do away with regulations that would protect students. It is no surprise that these regulations have been strongly opposed by for-profit schools, which have saddled students with crushing debts for college degrees. If that weren't enough of a burden, some of the degrees provided by these for-profit institutions have failed to prepare students with

Defending Title IX and affirmative action

a viable pathway to getting a good job and are often not even worth the paper on which they're printed."

And no conservative agenda on higher education would be complete without an attempt to undermine affirmative action by colleges and universities, a right upheld by the Supreme Court. As *The New York Times* reported in August, "The Trump administration is preparing to redirect resources of the Justice Department's civil rights division toward investigating and suing universities over affirmative action admissions policies deemed to discriminate against white applicants."

An executive directive against campus affirmative action is clearly an attempt to undermine what remains clearly protected by the judicial branch. Last year, conservative groups seeking an anti-affirmative action ruling from the Supreme Court were dealt a similar blow when groups seeking to end the agency-shop fee system for public-sector unions – hoping for a 5-4 ruling by the conservative majority – were left with a Court deadlock following the death of Justice Antonin Scalia. This included *Fisher v. University of Texas*, in which a white applicant claimed affirmative action policies had wrongfully denied her acceptance based on her race.

A GOP AGENDA

American Association of University Professors First Vice President Hank Reichman said in a statement, "While the department does not explicitly mention affirmative action, it is clear that the effort – to be directed, it appears, by political appointees rather than career attorneys in the Office of Educational Opportunity – will target programs that offer opportunities to members of historically disadvantaged groups. That such programs remain necessary is demonstrated by Department of Education data showing that the gap in college enrollment between blacks and whites did not change measurably between 2003 and 2013."

It's often easy to demonize or even ridicule the Trump administration for being completely divorced from any sort of mainstream political agenda, but the fact of the matter is that the Education Department's agenda, at all levels, is part and parcel of a decades-long Republican agenda to defund public education, move resources to the private sector and roll back protections for women and minorities.

Political strategy, explained

Continued from page 8

early meant something to him. We were clear on the importance to the city of a serious commitment to increased CUNY funding.

He has come through; he has committed about \$150 million new dollars to the university over the course of the past three or four years. A large part of it's been an investment in ASAP [Accelerated Study in Associate Programs] for students at community colleges to have the support they need to stay in college and graduate on time. And the city's share of funding our last contract was never in question.

Simultaneously, the city has done their work on their version of maintenance of effort. They have supported year over year costs for the university in a way that the state has not. So that has made a significant difference, not only for

the University but for our members and for students.

On the state level, I mentioned our recent victories earlier. We have also been able to push forward on an enhanced Maintenance of Effort provision. The State Senate and the Assembly passed it almost unanimously. But the Governor has to sign the bill for it to become law, and that is going to be a very steep climb. The PSC and our allies will have to mobilize all our influence and then some to get the Governor to see the importance of this provision to the state and its economy.

Q *The PSC and its affiliate unions, NYSUT at the state level and AFT on the national level, endorse political candidates in many prominent races. What's the PSC's role in the endorsement process?*

A PSC makes its own endorsements in local elections. The work begins with the union's legislative committee, and everyone and anyone is welcome to committee meetings, interviews and the decision-making process when endorsements are recommended. All recommendations go to the union's Executive Council, to the Executive Council, and to the Delegate Assembly in the case of citywide offices such as mayor. At the state and national level, the PSC cannot endorse unilaterally. So we will have a set of recommended candidates for state office, for example, approved by the Executive Council, that we bring to the statewide endorsement conference of our state affiliate, NYSUT. We will fight for those candidates, but the decision to endorse is not ours alone. Finally, the endorsement of national candidates, senators and congresspersons is the responsibility of AFT. We try to influence

their process as well. For presidential candidates, the decision is made by the Executive Council of the AFT, and Barbara Bowen sits on that council, knows PSC's positions and will lobby others on the EC to vote with us.

Q *Once you endorse a candidate, what does that mean for the union?*

A The union is on record, so the candidate will often use our endorsement to amplify his or her campaign along with other endorsements. The PSC Political Action Committee contributes money to some candidates for city elections. We may send some of our members to do canvassing on behalf of selected candidates or to phone bank through targeted lists we have of our members and their voting districts for City Council, and State Assembly and Senate.

On the lookout for 'predatory journals'

By LIZA FEATHERSTONE

An issue hits CUNY

The emails can be flattering. An academic journal with an important-sounding name (*Journal of Comprehensive Research*, say, or *Academy of Social Science Journal*) wants to publish your work. Maybe they even want to make you into an "editor." There are "Nobel Laureates" on the board, the email boasts. Perhaps this august-sounding publication is even inviting you to a conference in Hong Kong, Hyderabad or someplace else you've always wanted to visit.

Get informed before you hit reply – there's a good chance the journal is a fake.

Predatory academic journals have become widespread, according to Jeffrey Beall, scholarly communications librarian at the University of Colorado, Denver. Beall has been tracking and writing about the problem for the past decade. If a journal demands payment from the author, deviates from scholarly norms such as peer review, shows a lack of transparency about its operations or uses any kind of deception to ensnare authors, it could be a scam, said Beall. Stressed-out academics' careers depend on being able to claim they've published a certain number of articles; this creates a market for predators.

A 2015 study by Finnish scholars Cenyu Shen and Bo-Christer Björk, published in *BioMed Central*, an open-access peer-reviewed medical journal, found that in 2014 some 8,000 predatory journals published an estimated 420,000 articles, a dramatic spike from about 53,000 in 2010.

BIG CASH

What motivates these publishers? Money. As numerous cases show, a journal sends a query to an academic, the academic says yes, writes and edits a paper and, upon acceptance, the journal editor requires the author to pay a fee. A lot of times this trick works, in large part because there are also legitimate journals that require the same kind of fees.

For Beall, predatory journals are "the biggest threat to scientific knowledge since the Inquisition." Asked to elaborate on that in a *Clarion* interview, he explained that fake journals have enabled people with "non-scientific agendas, like anti-vaccine campaigners and climate denialists" to publish papers that wouldn't pass a peer review process. Even "9/11 was an inside job" conspiracy theorists have taken advantage of unscrupulous publishers to lend their ideas a veneer of empiricism.

In addition to undermining scholarly standards, predatory journals also take advantage of confused young scholars, who may be unfamiliar with traditional journal submission processes. Academics for whom English is not a first language



Queensborough Community College PSC Chapter Chair Edmund Clingan said academics must 'take a careful look' at predatory journals.

may be particularly vulnerable (people fluent in the language might suspect that *Journal of College and University* might be fraudulent).

At CUNY, the issue affects scholarship, said Edmund Clingan, history professor and PSC chapter chair at Queensborough Community College (QCC). Some professors in the science departments at QCC have reported that their colleagues have been promoted and received grants on the strength of CVs that include publications in dubious journals. Meanwhile, said Clingan, some of his members who have avoided these journals "haven't been promoted, have been shoved aside."

LARGER STUDIES

PSC members have plenty of company beyond CUNY. Derek Pyne, an associate professor of economics at Thompson Rivers University, a small business school in British Columbia, Canada, studied the phenomenon among his colleagues. Not only did he find that most had published in predatory journals, he also found that those who did so were rewarded, making higher salaries and receiving more in-

ternal grants from the university than those who stuck to traditional peer-reviewed journals.

Tenure committee members seeking to evaluate the legitimacy of a colleague's journal publications will find that earlier this year, one resource for doing so disappeared. For years, Beall maintained an online list of suspected predatory journals, but recently "felt pressure" from his university to stop doing so. He declined to elaborate, but said, "Unfortunately, we don't have a union." Earlier this year, *Inside Higher Ed* reported that both external threats and internal politics on his campus forced him to cease operations.

Nevertheless, much of Beall's investigation remains on the record and in the public domain. It's still possible to find Beall's list online, but, with no active curator, there is no way of knowing whether it's up to date. Cabell's International, a publishing company based in Texas, publishes a similar list, but it is available only by paid subscription. (Beall's list was free. He said he can't judge Cabell's list, noting with rueful amusement, "My university doesn't subscribe to the product.")

OPEN ACCESS

Beall attributes the rise of predatory journals to the growth of open-access publishing, arguing that when open-access journals pass the cost of providing free content along to the author, as some do, they have an incentive to accept as many articles as possible. (He is quick to add, however, that there are ethical and peer-reviewed open-access journals.)

Emily Drabinski, coordinator of library instruction at Brooklyn's Long Island University and a prominent advocate of open-access publishing, bristles at this equation. "We want open access because the cost of journals is predatory. Open access is about how you access it, not about the quality," she said.

Beall has also tangled with his fellow librarians over what some see as his list's pro-Western bias: many of the fake journals he includes are located in Asia. Asked about this issue, Beall said he has applied "the same criteria" to all journals, regardless of geography, and many predatory journals are located in Asia. Indeed, more than

a quarter of predatory journals are published in India, while almost 12 percent are based elsewhere in Asia.

Drabinski, for her part, fears that the way this problem is discussed can stigmatize legitimate scholarship outside the West: "The panic around predatory journals makes people suspicious of any journal from the global South," she said.

Looking at the numbers in Shen and Björk's study, however, what's much more striking than the publishers' countries or continents of origin is how many of the authors are from the global South. Fewer than 10 percent from the United States, suggesting that the

problem may affect faculty in the global South even more than it does faculty in the U.S. In much of the global South, academics are pressured to publish in "international" publications (meaning, journals in which US academics also publish), yet there is not much oversight of the quality of these journals. Like the pressure on Western academics to simply publish regardless of quality, such expectations create a market for unprincipled actors and are driving the boom in fake journals.

"The problem isn't India," Drabinski said. "The problem is metrics."

CUNY RESPONDS

For its part, the CUNY administration has been helpful in alerting faculty about the issue. In one dispatch to members, the administration advised faculty on how to verify a journal's legitimacy. Does the journal provide full contact and mailing information? If it only has a web contact form, be suspicious. If the journal lists noted academics on the editorial board, reach out to those people for verification. Look for a peer-review policy on the journal's website. Contact the journal's authors to see what they think.

As Clingan said, "We need to take a careful look at this."

Gearing up for CUNY contract talks

Continued from page 3

Under the terms of the existing contract, Vásquez and her chapter have trained more than 80 members who now serve on HEO labor-management committees to address how members can attain the newly negotiated \$2,500 salary differential. The experience of working in labor-management groups around the university has energized the chapter's membership for the upcoming contract campaign, Vásquez said.

She added, "For the next contract, we're looking at how we can improve upon these gains. We're looking at what we won and how we worked,

and how things could have been made easier or clearer for members."

Luke Elliott-Negri, the Graduate Center PSC chapter chair who is part of an advisory group on the needs and concerns of part-time instructional staff members, including graduate assistants, has organized tabling at the Graduate Center so he and other GC chapter activists can meet with as many rank-and-file members as possible about the contract.

"We want to engage with members," Elliott-Negri said. "It's really to make sure that people are aware of the breadth of contractual provisions and issues."

In an interview with *Clarion*, PSC President Barbara Bowen underscored that gains for the PSC at the bargaining table in the last round were important, not just for PSC members, but also in fighting austerity in public higher education.

"Some of the most important advances against austerity for CUNY have been made through the bargaining process," Bowen said. "Changes like 80 percent paid sabbaticals, junior faculty released time, the HEO professional development fund, the adjunct paid office hours – all those are ways of reducing austerity conditions that would otherwise prevail at CUNY."

AGAINST RACISM

Fighting hate after Charlottesville

By CLARION STAFF

The white nationalist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, gripped the nation in August, as a far-right extremist killed a peaceful antiracist protester and injured more than a dozen others in a vehicular attack. The outpouring of rage was both immediate and strategic. Demonstrators against fascism and white supremacy shut down a white nationalist rally in Boston, and similar demonstrations elsewhere have been canceled.

While the presidency of Donald Trump has legitimized the growth of an openly fascist right, it has also mobilized a new wave of resistance and brought renewed focus to the pivotal role of college campuses in political and ideological struggle. Some PSC members offer ways of moving forward below.

Education is key

Organized violent racist groups such as the KKK and the Nazis existed before Donald Trump became president and they will exist after he leaves office, but his presence in office has emboldened these groups in ways that we have not seen in recent US history. Antiracist activists have been exactly correct in organizing counter-demonstrations to exhibit, for all to see, the small following these violent racists have.

Of more concern are the much larger segments of the white population who voted for Trump and actually believe, demonstrated in poll after poll, that whites are now the chief *victims* of racial discrimination and that *their* rights are being violated. This belief permeates large segments of the white population and has even found articulation on the Supreme Court in numerous opinions of the late Justice Scalia. It resembles, in some respects, what the Germans felt after WWI, and the Confederates after Reconstruction. As we have seen, those who harbor this belief remain strong supporters of Donald Trump, and now form the backbone of the Republican Party, which has become the dominant political party in the United States, and which Noam Chomsky has characterized as “the most dangerous organization in world history.” Republicans feel they can consistently maintain these views and simultaneously condemn the KKK and Nazis for their racist violence. However, these forces will eventually morph as the Klan and Nazis begin to run presentable khaki-clad candidates in future elections as Republicans.

Any antiracist activist strategy to deal with this dilemma must begin with education, but it must also fight for a fairer society, which includes the elimination of class and racial barriers set up by institutions across this society that drastically narrow the numbers of beneficiaries of a defunct and rapidly degrading capitalism that has recently been turbocharged by neoliberalism.

Frank Deale
CUNY School of Law

The Jewish questions

Like many who grew up in liberal, secular Jewish families, I experienced the fear of my grandparents' generation from a distance. In my own political experience, fear of anti-Semitism was most often used to suppress criticism of Israel and to shore up



A solidarity rally in Manhattan after Charlottesville.

a conservative establishment that belied the values of progressive Jews. As a result, many progressive Jews of my generation found our political identities outside the Jewish community, whether through the labor movement, movements for immigrant rights or racial justice or elsewhere. Like many Jewish progressives, I've long been deeply cynical of how the Israeli government and its defenders manipulate fear of anti-Semitism to justify the oppression of Palestinians. Even so, I can't say I anticipated that right-wing Israelis would dismiss the appearance of actual Nazis as less of an enemy than antiracists, as the Israeli prime minister's son did recently.

Fortunately, more and more Jews, led by young people, have recently demanded that Jewish institutions stand for the progressive values of the communities they claim to represent. Groups like Jewish Voice for Peace, If Not Now and Jews for Racial and Economic Justice are building new alliances and challenging everything from training exchanges between the Israeli military, US police and ICE to the Jewish establishment's condemnation of Black Lives Matter for expressing solidarity with Palestinians. It has always been the right thing to do; Charlottesville has only highlighted that it is in our self-interest as well.

Laura Tanenbaum
LaGuardia Community College

A gendered struggle

I am a daughter of the South, but black women like me have often been silenced and effaced from discussions about Southern heritage and public history. I remember growing up in a majority black town in South Carolina and seeing a Confederate statue that honored a fallen soldier in the middle of Main Street. It seemed that none of my ancestors had been consulted about its erection despite the fact they had roots in the area that extended back to the town's colonial past. My hometown, like Charlottesville, another town where I lived, provided amplification and voice for only two groups of Southerners, white men and women.

Historically, white women's groups dedicated to the Confederacy spearheaded the monument movement. Yet white women's roles in the construction of these Confederate monuments have been marginalized.

The public face of white nationalism is largely male, although too many white women have been foot soldiers in the march to maintain a stronghold on the racial supremacy they believed was slipping away. If there is a lesson for us to learn after Charlottesville, it is that progressive white women must work harder to gather up their kith and kin and teach them that equality benefits us all.

Deirdre Cooper Owens
Queens College

A call to teachers

The events in Charlottesville call out to educators in general, and historians in particular.

The demonstration by white supremacists and neo-Nazis with their salutes, slogans and symbols, and the subsequent calls for the removal of Confederate monuments, must be seized as teaching moments. We who teach, from elementary school through college, are responsible for instructing students and providing them with the knowledge to navigate the world.

For years, reading and mathematics, more recently STEM subjects, gained priority. Charlottesville highlights the need for knowledge of history.

Calls abound for the removal of Confederate statues. What then? To destroy them or warehouse statues eliminates historical artifacts from the public. The absence of evidence of the past diminishes history, leaving little or nothing to learn. In that vacuum historical mythmaking replaces accurate knowledge. And ignorance or myth is injurious to a democratic polity.

Educators must demand that Confederate statues become instances for instruction. Placed in museums, in collections focused on the Confederacy and its aftermath, these sites should be classrooms for students to learn the history of the Civil War, Reconstruction, segregation and Jim Crow, the Civil Rights movement and the principles in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Rejected statues transform into tools for repairing the lack or shallowness of knowledge that students, whether born in this country or newly arrived, have of the history of their country so that they become knowledgeable citizens.

Lack of knowledge of history beyond the

How do we respond to the far right?

United States is even greater. Young people must learn what Nazism and fascism were, how they acquired power, what they did with that power. To know what symbols and slogans meant in actual history, what evils they wrought, empowers students to shun native Nazism. White supremacists and neo-Nazis seek to recruit students on college campuses. Educators and educational institutions must repel such efforts with the tool of knowledge of history.

Vivian R. Gruder
Queens College, Emerita

South to South Africa

White people the world over tend to be blind to racial privilege. It is hard for us to notice the perks of being white, from ready access to quality education, mortgages and health care to the absence of police violence in our daily lives. We may deplore racism but still be oblivious to the subtler forms of systemic discrimination that press down on our fellow citizens. As a result of living in this zone of racial comfort, white people tend to be extremely fragile.

Growing up in apartheid South Africa, I was exposed to one of the most virulent forms of white supremacy of the day: Afrikaner nationalism. Descendants of Dutch colonists who had settled in South Africa beginning in the 17th century, the Afrikaners repeatedly fought against the black majority during centuries of settlement and, after being defeated by the British during the Anglo-Boer War in the early 20th century, lost significant political and economic power to English-speaking whites.

The Afrikaners' sense of themselves is perhaps best emblemized by the Voortrekker Monument. Built during the late 1930s and early 1940s, shortly before the Afrikaner-supported National Party won national elections and began instituting formal apartheid, the monument consists of a huge granite structure on a hilltop surrounded by a wall with images of an Afrikaner *laager*, the circled wagons which the settlers used to repel attackers. This formation offers an emblem of the aggrieved and inward-looking character of Afrikaner culture, embodying the Afrikaners' sense that they were righteous victims whose time would once again come.

As I learned after my family moved to the US, white Southerners also feel that they are history's victims, their proud independence as a people destroyed by the soulless Yankees during what they, against all evidence, insist on calling “the war of Northern aggression.” Confederate monuments are the props of this ideology of righteous victimhood. They are the most visible symbols of a narrative that justifies forms of racial terror that stretch from the film *Birth of a Nation* (instrumental in the founding of the KKK) to the many decades of lynchings that took place in the Jim Crow South, to today's emboldened racism and neo-Nazism.

As the bloody history of apartheid in South Africa and Jim Crow in the US show, the myth of the white victim helps legitimate feelings of righteous rage that target subjugated peoples. Monuments that affirm this myth should be removed, but this removal should also occasion frank and difficult conversations about the dangerous myth of white victimhood.

Ashley Dawson
College of Staten Island



15-MINUTE ACTIVIST

New membership cards

This month's action will take fewer than five minutes, but it's as important as anything you will ever do as a union member. Go online and sign the redesigned PSC membership card. The card is available at psc-cuny.org/UnionYes and from your chapter chair. Your old card is still valid, but we have redesigned the card to solidify the member-

ship's power as we go into contract negotiations this fall and anticipate the Supreme Court's ruling on union membership this spring.

The new card asks for two signatures, to affirm both your membership and your commitment to paying union dues. Increase our power by reaffirming your union membership. Read the article below and you'll be glad you did.

Professional Staff Congress/CUNY
61 Broadway, 15th Floor
New York, New York 10006

Return Service Requested

NonProfit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
New York, N.Y.
Permit No. 8049

RACE AND LABOR

The racist roots of the *Janus* case

By MICHAEL PIERCE

As “right-to-work” laws proliferate, it’s worth remembering that they originated as a means to maintain Jim Crow labor relations in the South and to beat back what was seen as a Jewish conspiracy.

No one was more important in placing right-to-work on the conservative political agenda than Vance Muse of the Christian American Association, a larger-than-life Texan whose own grandson described him as “a white supremacist, an anti-Semite and a Communist-baiter, a man who beat on labor unions not on behalf of working people, as he said, but because he was paid to do so.”

The idea for right-to-work laws came from *Dallas Morning News* editorial writer William Ruggles, who on Labor Day, 1941, called for a constitutional amendment prohibiting the closed or union shop. Muse visited Ruggles soon thereafter and secured the writer’s blessing for the Christian American Association’s campaign to outlaw contracts that required employees to belong to unions. Ruggles even suggested to Muse the name for such legislation – right-to-work.

Muse had long made a lucrative living lobbying throughout the South on behalf of conservative and corporate interests, or, in the words of one of his critics, “playing rich industrialists as suckers.”

Over the course of his career, he fought women’s suffrage, worked to defeat the constitutional amendment prohibiting child labor, lobbied for high tariffs and sought to repeal the eight-hour-day law for railroaders.

AN EMPLOYER-BACKED RACIST

Muse first attracted national attention through his work with Texas lumberman John Henry Kirby in the Southern Committee to Uphold the Constitution. That committee sought to keep President Franklin D. Roosevelt from being renominated in 1936, on grounds that the New Deal threatened the South’s racial order.

Despite its name, the Southern Committee received funding from prominent Northern anti-New Deal industrialists and financiers, including Alfred P. Sloan and the du Pont brothers.

Among Muse’s activities on behalf of the Southern Committee was the distribution of what *Time* called “cheap pamphlets con-

taining blurred photographs of the Roosevelts consorting with Negroes,” accompanied by “blatant text proclaiming them ardent Negrophiles.”

In 1936, Muse incorporated the Christian American Association to continue the fight against the New Deal, offering up a toxic mix of anti-Semitism, racism, anti-communism, and anti-unionism.

Supporters of the Association considered the New Deal to be part of the broader assault of “Jewish Marxism” upon Christian free enterprise. The organization’s nominal head, Lewis Valentine Ulrey, explained that after their success in Russia, the “Talmudists” had determined to conquer the rest of the world and that “by 1935 they had such open success with the New Deal in the Unit-

eral handouts of the Bum Deal – sorry, New Deal. Or is it the Jew Deal?”

BREAK LABOR’S POWER

By the early 1940s, the Christian American Association, like many Southern conservative groups, focused much of their wrath on the labor movement, especially the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). The Association solicited wealthy Southern planters and industrialists for funds to help enact anti-union laws and thus break the “stranglehold radical labor has on our government.”

Muse and his allies continued to claim that Marxist Jews were pulling the national government’s strings, but changed the membership of this supposed cabal to CIO leaders like Lee Pressman and Sidney Hillman.



The 1968 sanitation strike in Memphis was a pivotal moment in both the labor movement and civil rights movement.

ed States that they decided to openly restore the Sanhedrin,” that is, both the council of Jewish leaders who oversaw a community and the Jewish elders who, according to the Bible, plotted to kill Christ.

According to Ulrey, this “modern Jewish Sanhedrin” – which included Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter and NAACP board member Rabbi Stephen Wise – served as the guiding force of the Roosevelt administration and the New Deal government. Muse voiced the same anti-Semitic ideas in simpler terms: “That crazy man in the White House will Sovietize America with the fed-

The Association insisted that the CIO was sending organizers to the rural South to inflame the contented but gullible African-American population, as the first step in a plot to Sovietize the nation.

By the early 1940s the waves of anti-Semitism emanating from the Nazis in Germany and the prospect of American involvement in the war convinced the Association to tone down its anti-Semitic rhetoric. As Muse’s co-worker and wife, Maria, confessed in 1943, “Christian Americans can’t afford to be anti-Semitic outwardly, but we know where we stand on the Jews, all right.”

Why the right wants to crush labor

Muse and the Christian Americans initially had little luck selling their right-to-work amendment but did have success peddling a prepackaged anti-strike law to planters and industrialists first in Texas and then in Mississippi and Arkansas. This law made strikers, but not strikebreakers or management, criminally liable for any violence that occurred on the picket line.

For a fee, Muse and his organization would lobby legislators and mobilize public support through newspaper advertisements, direct mail campaigns and a speakers’ bureau. In Arkansas, Muse portrayed the anti-strike measure as a means to allow “peace officers to quell disturbances and keep the color line drawn in our social affairs” and promised that it would “protect the Southern Negro from communistic propaganda and influences.”

RIGHT-TO-WORK AMENDMENT

The Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation and allied industrialists were so pleased with the Christian American Association’s success in passing the anti-strike measure that they agreed to underwrite a campaign in 1944 to secure a right-to-work amendment for the Arkansas Constitution. This placed Arkansas alongside Florida and California as the first states where voters could cast ballots for right-to-work laws.

During the Arkansas campaign, the Christian Americans insisted that right-to-work was essential to maintain the color line in labor relations. One piece of literature warned that if the amendment failed, “white women and white men will be forced into organizations with black African apes...whom they will have to call ‘brother’ or lose their jobs.”

Similarly, the Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation justified its support of right-to-work by citing organized labor’s threat to Jim Crow. It accused the CIO of “trying to pit tenant against landlord and black against white.”

In November 1944 Arkansas and Florida became the first states to enact right-to-work laws (California voters rejected the measure). In both states, few blacks could cast free ballots, election fraud was rampant and political power was concentrated in the hands of the elites. Right-to-work laws sought to make it stay that way.

A version of this article originally appeared in Labor Notes.