

Good afternoon,

I am Andrea Vásquez, PSC First Vice president and a HEO at the American Social History project/Center for Media and Learning at The Graduate Center and I'd like to address some of our goals and expectations for the upcoming PSC/CUNY contract and CUNY budget.

This is, of course, the first post-covid agreement. Our students and communities have suffered immensely during these last 2 ½ years. And our faculty and staff have provided extraordinary service, inspiration, and education, despite understaffing and our own hardships.

Remote / flexible work is one of the top three concerns for PSC members: salary increases and quality education for our students are the two others. The upcoming budget and contract offer the opportunity to rebuild CUNY and introduce historic provisions that recognize the changed nature of work. Doing so will improve the work lives, commitment and quality of work we provide for our students.

Performing **some** of our work remotely during covid has shown not only that we can perform our work as we always have, but also that we can work **better** than we have in the past... while more fully meeting the needs of students.

Taking such an approach would further allow us to more reliably meet and communicate with students "off hours," and it would further allow those of us who have work events and obligations that must be done on weekends or evenings, to better meet those obligations.

Obviously, a workweek with less travel time, allows for a more flexible workday. And there are times during the academic year when fewer classes are in session and CLTs, for example, can effectively do work remotely, instead of in empty labs and offices.

As higher education professionals, we have shown that, in collaboration with supervisors in our units, we can do more to devise ways that will mutually benefit PSC members and the entire university. We can no longer have decisions on remote work dropped upon us with little or no consultation and little time to plan our work and personal lives.

As research studies have repeatedly shown, when workers feel respected and have a voice and decision-making role in their work lives, morale is lifted and performance improves. For current **and** future employees, it is time to reach a permanent agreement on the features of the new work environment that must include provisions for flexible and partially remote work.

Last year, PSC and our allies in CUNY Rising Alliance waged a powerful campaign and ushered in "New Deal for CUNY" legislation that struck the imagination and won the support of our students, our legislators, the press, and the general public. As a result, we saw increased investment such as we have not seen in decades.

This year, we must see an **urgency** in your fight for a strong budget for CUNY, and we must see an **urgency** to settle a contract that recognizes the world we live in and honors and compensates all employees for helping CUNY live up to its promise.