

I'm Penny Lewis, Secretary of the PSC and Professor of Labor Studies at the School of Labor and Urban studies. I am proud to be here today with so many of my PSC colleagues. Thanks to everyone here listening to and presenting testimony.

At the November public hearing, I testified about the salary needs of our members, in anticipation of CUNY's budget request. I also testified to the fact that the Board was preparing to hire numerous administrators, and grant raises to some more, at salary rates that dwarf those of PSC membership. Some senior members of CUNY management have since received retroactive salary increases of 30%, in some cases amounting to \$90,000 bumps. \$90,000 by itself is a much higher wage than our average or median union salaries. A CUNY spokesperson explained you wanted to keep the salaries competitive. We did not hear about competing job offers senior management have entertained. But if it's a question of what the market bears, as we move towards contract negotiations, we expect the board to be equally vigilant about whether the salaries of the tens of thousands of us who make CUNY run are also competitive.

We are here to tell you they are not. They are not keeping up with increasing costs of living, they are not competitive with similar systems, let alone the NYC market. Average salaries for CUNY senior college professors are substantially lower than comparable SUNYs, Rutgers, UMass, University of Maryland, to name a few. Just across the river, our colleagues at Rutgers Newark average 195,000 as full professors, 135,000 as Associate professors, and 114,000 as assistant professors—averages that are as much as \$60,000 higher than our averages, and all much higher than even the tops of our salary steps. Looking at housing allowances and research support typical of our industry, we are tens of thousands further behind.

And we have lost co-workers, and potential co-workers, as a result. Our full-time faculty numbers are down right now, due to retirement AND losing our colleagues to better supported positions. Brooklyn College alone has lost at least 12 full-time faculty of color since the start of the pandemic. Hunter College has been unable to fill faculty and staff openings. Top candidates are turning us down, and searches are failing, as possible hires look at living costs in NYC and industry norms against the hiring rates and futures salaries on offer at CUNY. Professional staff see jobs around them with more money, more flexible schedules and

guaranteed remote options. Adjunct salaries at New York City private institutions are at times double, in some cases slated to be almost triple, our adjunct salaries.

Ultimately, we expect that you will fight for increased budget allocations and fully funded contract settlements that will create competitive salaries and conditions for CUNY's faculty and professional staff. The University Budget request you are considering makes a good start, but we need additional investment beyond that, and we need aggressive advocacy on the part of the Board and CUNY management to make a better CUNY a reality.