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I am the only ASAP staff member who has worked through the multiple changes and program expansions in 16+ years. I have been in the ASAP Program since it started in 2007. I started as a Job Developer with 100 students in my placement caseload, and in 2009, the program exceeded its graduation projections: We graduated 50% of our cohort in two years-even though the goal was 50% in three years.

My current caseload is 940 students with a projected 550 new students starting college in Fall 2023. My position no longer involves job placement as it is a conflict with academic retention and degree completion, nonetheless students' basic needs need to be covered. If there are cuts to the budget, What kind of quality service am I expected to provide to 1400+ students in 35 hours per week? In fact, ASAP needs more career specialists that prepare students to join the workforce as opposed to the benefits' dependent rolls.

ASAP provides a comprehensive model to help students succeed and its results are proven. The program has been replicated in Westchester County, Ohio, California, Tennessee, West Virginia, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania. Why cut funding to a program that is good for 6 others states and one county to replicate? ASAP students graduate within three years at more than double the rate of non-ASAP students.

Besides achieving a degree, programs like ASAP offer low-income students a unique opportunity: Become part of something successful, positive and that opens doors for their future careers. You heard this before, our students don't come prepared for college life, usually are first generation students with no support with educational goals, have financial constraints and need jobs to support

their families, and the complex issues they need assistance resolving; however, they have the right to receive a quality education just like any kid in the suburbs.

Budget cuts should really be applied to programs that do not meet their targets or don't produce measurable results. Our students don't have the time or taste to wait another four years to get a degree. They want to continue in an Accelerated program that helps them break out of the poverty cycle. How much is the city willing to shell out in benefits for the 25,000 students ASAP helps annually? THEY ARE POTENTIAL TAXPAYERS.

The mayor should not be looking at education as an expense: it is an investment. He should look to cut "pork", like funding for politician's organizations that are under investigation for inappropriate behavior or crimes; non-essential services for the high salaried administrators—why should the city pay the rent and chauffeur services for someone making \$360,000 per year? They should be able to cover their own rent—like every other New Yorker.

The Mayor needs to look somewhere else to cut funding. Successful higher education programs should not be in the chopping block because.