

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AND
GENDER EQUITY

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March 1, 2021
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HELD AT: Remote Hearing, Virtual Room 2

B E F O R E: Darma V. Diaz
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Darma V. Diaz
Laurie A. Cumbo
James F. Gennaro
Ben Kallos
Brad S. Lander

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Faye Penn
Executive Director
Women.nyc

Jasmine Baker
Deputy Director
Women.nyc

Christian F. Nunez

Cordel Clear

1
2 SERGEANT AT ARMS LEONARDO: PC recording
3 is underway.

4 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Thank you for
5 joining our virtual hearing today. I'm...

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Hold on, ah, hold on,
7 Chair Diaz.

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS JONES: Hold on, Chair.
9 Hold on one second, Chair.

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS BIANDO: Sergeant Jones,
11 are you cloud?

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS JONES: It was not
13 working.

14 CHIEF SERGEANT AT ARMS PEREZ: Backup is
15 rolling.

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS JONES: We got it now.
17 OK, good morning and welcome to today's remote New
18 York City Council hearing on the Committee on Women
19 and Gender Equity. At this time would all panelists
20 please turn on their videos. To minimize disruption,
21 please place electronic devices to vibrate or silent.
22 And if you wish to submit testimony you may do so at
23 landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. Again, that is
24 landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov. And thank you for

1 your cooperation, and Chair D. Diaz we ready to go,
2
3 ma'am.

4 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Good morning.

5 Thank you for joining our virtual hearing today on
6 Women NYC. I am Council Member D. Diaz, chair of the
7 committee. My pronouns are her and she. This is my
8 first hearing as a committee chair and first want to
9 say that it is an honor and privilege to serve my
10 constituents in the City Council and to be able to
11 address solutions for serving our most vulnerable New
12 Yorkers. I look forward to collaborating with the
13 committee members, my colleagues, and council staff
14 to continue the committee's related to advancing
15 economic mobility, social [inaudible] leadership, and
16 civic participation of New York City's women, girls,
17 trans and nonbinary, nonconforming individuals. I
18 also want to thank everyone who is here to testify
19 today. Women NYC, which was a part of NYC Economic
20 Development Corporation, EDC, is a website designed
21 to empower and inspire women by connecting them to
22 services, programs, and resources. Launched in 2018
23 by our First Lady McCray and former deputy mayor
24 Alicia Glen, women.nyc is a one, one-stop-shop for
25 women seeking information, resources, and tools, and

1 everything from finding a job, starting and running a
2 business, and getting legal help, to assessing, to
3 assisting in health resources and money management.

4 And we are here today because we need to begin
5 discussion access and resources for our communities,
6 perhaps more than ever. In early 2020 the United

7 States witnessed record advancement related to
8 women's participation in the workforce. Then March

9 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic broke out in the US, has
10 affected all industries. By April the [inaudible]

11 increase in the women's participation all but
12 reversed of course and COVID-19 exacerbated existing
13 inequalities experienced by women. Data that is in

14 the early months of pandemic women and especially
15 women of color experienced a disproportionate level

16 of employment opportunities due to COVID compared to
17 men. In April 2020 the national unemployment rates

18 for Latina women surged from 4.9% in February 2020 to
19 20.2% and in May 2020 black women experienced the

20 worst unemployment rate since the 1980s at 16.5%,
21 horrible. In September 2020, four times as many

22 women as men dropped out of the labor force. The
23 national employment rate reveals that 100% of payroll

24 jobless and December 2020 were [inaudible]
25

1
2 excessively to women, by women. This pandemic has
3 affected so many. I'm sure this is a story that is
4 familiar to many of us. But it is important to
5 recognize that women have lost a lot net, a net of
6 5.5 jobs during the pandemic, nearly a million more
7 job losses than for many. Families are hurting.
8 Their long-term consequences of this and it's
9 horrible to see what leadership will look in the near
10 future with women being absent at the table. As of
11 January 2020 more than 40% of the jobs lost by women
12 early in the pandemic had not returned, while data
13 from February 2021 indicates that 40% of women age 20
14 or older who have become unemployed due to COVID-19
15 have been out of work for more than six months. The
16 city needs to address these issues and ensure that
17 it's doing its best to support women and work
18 economic equity. In my own district, which includes
19 parts of Bushwick, East New York, Cypress Hills,
20 Ocean Hill, Bronxville, I see opportunities for women
21 in the city in the areas of development projects. I
22 want to know how we can connect women to secure
23 they're in a, in a place of securing good jobs.
24 Obviously, I started because I see the equity process
25 is no where near what it should be. The purpose of

1
2 today's hearing is gain a better understanding of
3 women.nyc. I, I am interested in hearing about
4 women.nyc services and structures, the website
5 engagement with NYC Women and how it tracks success.
6 I am interested in how the website can better support
7 in low-income neighborhoods and of color in
8 particular given the disproportionate impact of the
9 COVID-19 pandemic on women, women of color, women-
10 dominated industry. Before I conclude my remarks I'd
11 like to acknowledge that last month was Black History
12 Month and yesterday I celebrated. I celebrated Black
13 History Month honoring former councilwoman, former
14 assemblywoman Annette Brown, um, Jesus forgive me,
15 Annette Robinson. She was first elected as council,
16 as school board member in 1977. She then went on to
17 work, as I said earlier, for different levels of, of
18 government. I was honored to have AG Tish James
19 participate in my process yesterday. As women we've
20 come a long way. And before turning it back to the
21 human monitor I would like to thank my staff and
22 committee staff for bringing us this [inaudible]
23 conversation today. Thank you.
24
25

2 MODERATOR: Thank you so much, thank you
3 so much, Chair D. Diaz. Um, we can start by going
4 over procedures for the hearing. Is that OK, Chair?

5 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Yes.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: OK, thank you so
7 much, Chair D. Diaz. So, good afternoon or good
8 morning. I'm Brenda McKinney and I'm the counsel to
9 the Committee on Women and Gender Equity at the New
10 York City Council. I will be moderating today's
11 hearing and calling panelists to testify. Before we
12 begin, we want to remind everyone that you will be on
13 mute until I call on you to testify. After you are
14 called on you will be unmuted by the host. Please
15 listen for your name. I will periodically announce
16 who the next panelist will be. Council member
17 questions today will be limited to five minutes.
18 Council members, please note this includes both your
19 questions and the witnesses' answers. Please also
20 note that we will allow a second round of questions
21 at today' hearing. Um, for public testimony I will
22 be calling up individuals in panels. However, today
23 we will only have one panel of witnesses. Um, so
24 council members, this panel is over and then we'll
25 ask the questions. So, um, as mentioned, I will call

1 up everybody, um, in the order that they will testify
2 and then call you individually to begin. And for
3 public panelists, once I call your name a member of
4 our staff will unmute you and the Sergeant at Arms
5 will give you the go-ahead to begin speaking after
6 setting the timer. Please note also that when you
7 are muted a little box will pop up and you have to
8 accept the unmute. Ah, as a reminder, all public
9 testimony today will be limited to three minutes.
10 After I call your name, um, again, a brief moment and
11 wait for the sergeant's cue, and just as a reminder,
12 um, we will accept written testimony up to 72 hours,
13 ah, after the hearing. Written testimony can be sent
14 to testimony@council.nyc.gov. So please note the
15 email address is, um, testimony@council.nyc.gov. Ah,
16 so today I will begin with the administration
17 testimony and call on the following members of the
18 administration to testify. Um, this is for the oath,
19 so, um, I will call on both Executive Director Penn
20 and Deputy Director Baker. So today we have Faye
21 Penn, executive director of women.nyc and Jasmine
22 Baker, deputy director of women.nyc. I will deliver
23 the oath to both of you and I will call upon each of
24 you individually to respond to the oath. If you can
25

1 please raise your right hands in Zoom. Thank you so
2 much. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole
3 truth, and nothing but the truth before this
4 committee and to respond honestly to council member
5 questions? Executive Director Penn? Oh, apologies,
6 you're still on mute. Just for the record, we can
7 unmute, apologies.

9 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PENN: Yes.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much.

11 And then Deputy Director Baker?

12 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BAKER: [inaudible].

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much.

14 Um, thank you. Ms. Penn, you may begin your
15 testimony when ready.

16 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PENN: Thank you,
17 Brenda. Um, can everybody hear me OK? OK, great.
18 Um, and thank you, um, Chair D. Diaz for, ah, Diaz
19 and members of the committee. My name is [inaudible]
20 with our deputy what we're doing. Women.nyc got its
21 start, um, in early 2018 when First Lady Chirlane
22 McCray and then Deputy Mayor Alicia Glen took stock
23 of the administration's many innovative and
24 consequential policies that help advance working
25 women with the universal pre-K, salary history

1 [inaudible], and paid family leave, along programs
2 which is a game-changing Women Entrepreneurs NYC at
3 the Department of Small Business Services. Many more
4 career and business supports were not [inaudible] but
5 offer free skills and training in a variety of
6 fields, including tech, film and television
7 production, the trades, and more. So they decided to
8 create a [inaudible] destination where women could
9 access every available career opportunity across New
10 York City [inaudible]. Women [inaudible] would not
11 only be a website that could help women advance in
12 their businesses and careers. It would also be a
13 launch pad for future initiatives. [inaudible] 2018
14 [inaudible] much-needed enterprise. Seven months
15 later I was hired as the first executive director
16 based on my experience in digital publishing, women's
17 media, public-private partnership, and
18 entrepreneurship as a former Brooklyn small business
19 owner. I was attracted to the role for so many
20 reasons, but mainly this one. The past few years had
21 seen an explosion of pay to play empowerment events,
22 counted as helping women get ahead. Power women
23 this, lady boss that. But they did little to help
24 the women who needed power the most. I always saw a
25

1 goal of women.nyc to repackage and reframe the more
2 helpful aspects of this movement, for women who did
3 not have hundreds, sometimes thousands of dollars to
4 spend on networking and coaching. When I arrived,
5 the initiative moved City Hall to the New York
6 City Economic Development Corporation, a hospitable
7 place because of its role in equitably seeding growth
8 and new jobs. I was very fortunate that the truly
9 amazing Jasmine Baker Taddeo joined us in July 2019
10 from a digital communications role at Empire State
11 Development Corporation. We are the only two full-
12 time staff members on this initiative. 2019 was a
13 busy year. We launched Shop Women Owned, a
14 partnership with American Express and WE NYC to
15 promote shopping at women-owned businesses in New
16 York City and partnership with Google and the
17 Brooklyn Public Library. We also taught 24 New York
18 City mothers Java script coding for free, with
19 childcare provided via a New York City cohort of
20 other coders, a San Francisco area based tech
21 training program for moms. In September 2019 we
22 headed to the Bronx Library Center with the first
23 lady to launch our signature program, Ask for More.
24 This partnership with the American Association of
25

1 University Women sought to enroll 10,000 New York
2 City women in in-person and online salary negotiation
3 training. Until COVID-19 put the program on pause we
4 held regular workshops at libraries, colleagues, and
5 universities in all five boroughs, and in
6 collaboration with organizations, including the
7 Society of Hispanic Engineers, I'm sorry, the Society
8 of Hispanic Professional Engineers, the NAACP, the
9 National Coalition of a Hundred Black Women, the
10 Grace Institute, and many more. We and our volunteer
11 facilitators taught women of all backgrounds how to
12 fight the gender pay gap by knowing their value and
13 asserting it to current and future employers in a
14 systematic, data-driven way. To date we have 6000
15 workshop enrollees for the negotiation training in
16 person and online, and pre-COVID we hosted 23 in-
17 person workshops. According to survey data they
18 attracted a diverse set of attendees, 34% black, 20%
19 Latinx, 14% Asian. Many of them told us they had
20 never negotiated a salary offer before. One
21 participant, an operations manager, was prepared to
22 accept a \$60,000 salary on a new job offer, who
23 decided after taking the workshop to hold firm at
24 \$80,000. She called me the next day to tell me she
25

1 got the job and the salary she wanted. While our in-
2 person workshops remain on hold, we are exploring
3 ways to continue this very successful partnership
4 with the EEW. In October 2019 we launched our 30
5 [inaudible] free and low-cost tech training in New
6 York City, getting women all in on New York City's
7 tech boom. Our goal was to help more women explore a
8 high growth in well-paid fields dominated by men,
9 front-end web coding, data science and analysis, and
10 cyber security. We also held a NYCHA meet and greet
11 with around 70 women to find out how women.nyc might
12 be able to support them in their careers and
13 businesses. We met with fashion marketers,
14 construction workers, catering entrepreneurs,
15 healthcare providers, and at least one truck driver.
16 They asked us for more mentorship, networking, and
17 training opportunities. In February 2020 EDC's
18 research team published a report on the economic
19 vulnerability of women ages 50-plus, which looks at
20 the many ways systemic sexism in the workplace and
21 increasing, increased care-giving demands contribute
22 to financial vulnerability for women over time. Not
23 only are women more likely than men to retire with
24 fewer assets, they face a wage gap that grows as they
25

1 age. However, one bright spot for aging women is
2 entrepreneurship and with that knowledge women.nyc
3 announced New Venture 50 Plus, an entrepreneurial
4 boot camp for women 50 and up with our partners at WE
5 NYC. Applications are currently open until March 8
6 for our third cohort beginning March 18. To date, 44
7 women have successfully graduated boot camp. It's
8 hard to believe that around a year ago we were still
9 planning a busy calendar of March events for Women's
10 History Month, while hearing about an ominous virus
11 heading our city's way. Like many city programs, ah,
12 COVID's effects were deeply felt by women.nyc. our
13 in-person salary negotiation workshops ended. Our
14 collaborations with other agencies were put on pause.
15 And our in-person events were cancelled. At the same
16 time as, ah, Chair D. Diaz so eloquently laid out,
17 the need to help woman in the workforce has become
18 ever more urgent. We have all seen the deeply
19 troubling job loss numbers of a pandemic that has
20 landed hardest on women of color. As we geared up
21 for post-pandemic recovery our strategy shifted to
22 external outreach of planning for 2021 with an over-
23 arching focus and forging professional connections
24 and supporting women in the workplace. In March 2020

1 we updated our tech training guide to feature all
2 online courses to help New Yorkers gain marketable
3 tech skills while quarantining at home. We also
4 rolled out a COVID-19 resource guide, identifying
5 helpful information and volunteer opportunities for
6 New Yorkers in need and those looking to lend a
7 helping hand. Starting in May 2020 we hosted a
8 series of virtual women's leadership round tables,
9 designed to serve as equity-driven recovery ideas for
10 COVID-19 in the areas of entrepreneurship, workforce
11 development, food and hospitality, philanthropy,
12 public policy, and age equity. The round tables were
13 attended by various nonprofits, public sector, and
14 academic thought leaders, as well as city agency
15 representatives. We also used our social platforms to
16 highlight New York City women, who were really
17 showing up for the communities during COVID-19 by
18 opening neighborhood fridges, distributing hygiene
19 kits and mobile showers to struggling New Yorkers,
20 providing [inaudible] to the first responders and
21 reaffirming our city's collective spirit with the
22 Love Notes to New York City campaign. The pandemic
23 also inspired us to reimagine our work. Giving
24 funding challenges, what could we do, what resources
25

1 could we marshal to help women who are not only
2 overwhelmed by life's demands, but more in need of
3 career supports than ever. We came up with two key
4 areas of focus, the childcare crisis and the network
5 gap. The Childcare Innovation Initiative is a new
6 cross-departmental team at EDC dedicated to closing
7 the data gap on how many New Yorkers have been
8 affected by the childcare crisis and thinking through
9 ways to expand access to childcare. COVID-19 has
10 crystallized what we already knew, that our country
11 is approaching childcare as a private family matter
12 rather than an economic development issue is not only
13 an outsized strain on families, but a particular
14 hindrance to women's professional advancement. This
15 is something at EDC we are spending time looking at
16 and look forward to coming back to this committee
17 later. Our other area of focus is the network gap.
18 When we talk about economic advancement we often talk
19 about skills training. But that's not enough.
20 According to Lipton Research where you grew up, went
21 to school, and have worked contribute to up to a 12-
22 time advantage in access to opportunity. The network
23 gap, while not a new problem, is a prominent one.
24 Lack of access to strong networks has long been
25

1 identified as a major contributor to the gender pay
2 gap, the racial pay gap, and the underrepresentation
3 of women and minority in senior roles in
4 organizations. And so later this year women.nyc plan
5 to launch an all-virtual digital networking hub for
6 New York City-based women to target longstanding gaps
7 - networking, career opportunity, and professional
8 development, particularly for black and indigenous
9 women of color. On the platform emerging
10 professionals will be able to connect with
11 established professionals from New York City
12 companies for mentorship, coaching, and network
13 building. Recently we secured some private funding
14 and currently are reviewing tech partners via our
15 public solicitation. We are also re-upping our
16 public event schedule and have a busy money ahead of
17 us. I'm doing a free workshop called It's Never Too
18 Late to Pivot on March 10 as part of a month-long
19 series of free coaching events from an organization
20 called The Female Quotient. On March 19 we are
21 partnering with Lincoln for an event aimed at job
22 seekers who want to expand their digital toolkits.
23 The event consists of Lincoln master class, small
24 group coaching, and the era of Linked In Learning, a
25

1 platform offering online courses on in-demand tech
2 training. And later this money we're kicking off a
3 series with Luminary, a co-working space aimed at
4 forging crucial career connections when it's so
5 challenging to do so. Like all of our events, they
6 will be free and open to the public. I mentioned
7 that I am leading a pivoting workshop, but I just to
8 say a word about my own sort of public service from
9 the private sector, ah, more than two years ago. It
10 took me a while to land here, nearly three decades,
11 and I'm so grateful I did. In all my career twists
12 and turns I never could have imagined that my day job
13 would be working to help make the city I love so much
14 a place where women can thrive professionally. It's
15 immensely rewarding work, made better by my
16 partnership with Jasmine, a New York City born and
17 bred talent and an incredible collaborator. Thank
18 you for offering us the opportunity to share our
19 work. I want to thank the members of this committee
20 as well as City Hall, City Council, and EDC's staff
21 who helped bring this hearing to life. Jasmine are
22 here to take any questions you have.

24 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Thank you. I want
25 to start by first acknowledging my colleagues and I

1
2 feel strongly [inaudible] I look to see a large
3 number of my committee members are men, that we're
4 going to hold you to task [laughs] on that. I, I'd
5 like to first start by acknowledging former and re-
6 elected Councilman Gennaro. Thank you for joining
7 the, the committee. It's a present, it was a
8 pleasant, um, opportunity for me knowing that I'm,
9 I'm a new member, I'm about three months in tomorrow,
10 so I, I will stand on your shoulders just a little
11 bit and your leadership. Ah, also former chair Helen
12 Rosenthal, it's, it's on. I, I thank you, working
13 with me as I'm transitioning and to try to fulfill
14 your shoes. You did amazing work and I can only hope
15 as I move forward to, to make you proud. My
16 understanding is that a few of my other colleagues
17 are here, CM Kallos, I'm gonna pronounce it the
18 Spanish way, maybe you can come back and just wave a
19 little to us. I'm sure he's preparing a question or
20 two as well. Did I miss anyone, Brenda?

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Ah, Council Member
22 Lander as well. He's been here.

23 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Councilman, oh, I'm
24 sure Lander will have a question or two for me, or
25 for us. I'm going to, to start with my, I come from

1 the shelter system. I [inaudible] 13 years
2 predominantly working with women in the shelter
3 environment. And I didn't know of, of women.nyc
4 which I found somewhat disheartening. So I'm
5 definitely, this is going to be a learning
6 opportunity for me. Your presentation was quite
7 impressive. But I'm gonna need data that speaks to
8 what I find to be the hardest struggling population
9 for you to serve is women coming out of shelter. The
10 community I'm representing, the 37th Councilmanic
11 District, has the highest number of referrals of
12 women into shelter. And, again, you know, coming
13 from that environment that, that [inaudible] for me
14 then also I see use the term Latinx. [inaudible]
15 understood within my community I'd like for you to
16 break down to me when you say Latinx are, are you
17 able to break it down to me a little more thoroughly?
18 Are we speaking to the Dominican population, the
19 Puerto Rican population, the Mexican population?
20 It's, it's important to me to know how you're
21 engaging with us individually as you eloquently
22 [inaudible] Latinx. If you could please start with,
23 with the data, um, and, and the shelter families
24 you've been able to engage.
25

1
2 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PENN: OK, thank you,
3 um, Councilwoman D. Diaz. I appreciate those
4 questions. So I wanted to sort of take a second and
5 back up and, um, make clear that we, our role was to
6 amplify existing programs through the city people
7 and, um, we have amazing resources at EDC to take
8 advantage of. I [inaudible] is really helpful about
9 us being here is the opportunity to amplify what
10 other city agencies are doing, um, to help women, ah,
11 whether they are coming out of the shelter systems,
12 graduating CUNY, um, potentially coming out of
13 community college, potentially coming out of a tech
14 boot camp. We're here for all women of New York City
15 and we can't serve everybody by ourselves, but what
16 we can do is amplify existing work of agencies, ah,
17 other agencies and other parts of the city
18 government. Um, so our goal is if there are programs
19 to help women coming out of shelters we would love to
20 amplify those, and we also would like to make sure
21 that women coming out of shelters have access to the
22 programs that we have coming up, um, particularly our
23 networking platform, our Linked In event, um,
24 anything else, any of the job skills and services,
25 um, that other agencies are offering on our website.

1
2 We're here to help get the word out. Um, so we don't
3 have the capacity as a small entity really tailors,
4 the two of us alone, to tailor specific programs to,
5 um, specific populations. But we'd love to help.
6 Um, in terms of the Latinx question, I, um,
7 appreciate the question. I'm not sure that the
8 survey data that we have gets as specific as you'd
9 like it to. But I, I'd like to get back to you on
10 that.

11 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: OK. And so it
12 sounds to me, just for my clarity, you don't have a
13 relationship with the Department of Homeless
14 Services. Have you ever done a presentation?
15 [inaudible] NYC was where I participated and was
16 certified as a first responder for anyone in need of
17 mental health and that was something that was pushed
18 greatly through DHS, to DHS to us. So for my
19 clarity's sake moving forward if you do not have a
20 relationship with DHS I want to make it one of my
21 priorities that we do have that conversation. I
22 don't think it's the first point of conversation.
23 That should be part of, of our intake process.
24 That's all I, I see.

1
2 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PENN: You know, I
3 really appreciate that, and that sounds like a great
4 opportunity for us. You know, we need these inbound
5 conversations and connections. That's really
6 [inaudible] to help us through our work, and we'd
7 love to collaborate with you on that.

8 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: And getting, we'd
9 be [inaudible] want to move on to one of my, my
10 colleagues [inaudible] data and breaking it down by,
11 by ZIP code. I'm really eager to know for the 37th
12 Councilmanic District if you're able to bring it home
13 for me so that, just that my [inaudible] more so
14 because during the rezone that took place about four
15 years ago we were promised via EDC a significant
16 amount of training and employment opportunities and
17 I'm not seeing that. If I understood [inaudible]
18 correctly, you mentioned opportunities in the areas
19 of trade. And with all the development that's
20 happening in my community, I'd like to know we were
21 able to train individuals to be [inaudible]. Maybe
22 Ms. Nunez would?

23 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PENN: Fine. Ah, um,
24 OK, thank you for that question also. Um, so we, you
25 know, as I said before, um, I think you're speaking

1
2 to the aspect of our website that sends people to
3 other agencies and programs, and we don't collect
4 data for other agencies in terms of, so if the, you
5 know, we'll send somebody, if there's a job training
6 program run by another agency we help people find out
7 about it on the women.nyc website. But we don't
8 track the job training numbers, um, for those
9 agencies by gender.

10 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: So then, how, how
11 do we measure your success rate?

12 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PENN: Well, I think
13 that there's a couple of ways to do that. I think
14 that, um, one of the ways we can do that is look at
15 the programs that we run ourselves, and I think, you
16 know, I can talk a little bit about our success rate
17 with the salary negotiation workshops, which was one,
18 a program that we really developed and operated and
19 ran. Do you want me to talk a little bit about that?

20 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: I, I, I like
21 [inaudible] because I used to walk away with, with
22 outcomes.

23 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PENN: OK, OK, I
24 appreciate that.

25 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Thank you.

1
2 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PENN: So the salary
3 negotiation workshop, if I, if I have the opportunity
4 to speak about that, was, um, a, a program that was
5 developed by the American Association of University
6 Women. They, um, approached us about rolling out the
7 program in New York City and the idea would be to, to
8 educate 10,000 women in New York City in salary
9 negotiation. Um, we had hoped for a multi-year
10 program of in-person and online workshops, but we
11 only got, um, we launched in September 2019, so I
12 guess that was about six months into the program.
13 Um, we had workshops, um, in all five boroughs. We
14 also partnered with libraries and other community
15 organizations, and we really relied on them to get
16 the word out to their members. And, um, prior to
17 COVID, um, we had about, ah, 3000 women enrolling
18 across the city, um, in person and online, and since
19 COVID we've had 3000 more, primarily online. And
20 what was [inaudible] we had about two or three. What
21 was really impressive about, I, I feel like that, um,
22 what I'm proud of with that effort is that we had
23 community partners involved. We had, um, women of
24 color facilitating in many instance. We were able to
25 reach women in all, um, five boroughs. We had a

1
2 diverse cohort of women participating. And it was,
3 um, free. We did, the city didn't have to pay for
4 the program. We had some marketing costs and some
5 promotion cost association with, associated with it.
6 So I feel like that is really, um, we got great
7 feedback. I mean, it's hard to really gauge
8 longitudinal results from salary negotiation when
9 COVID came along a few months later. These are
10 skills you develop over your lifetime and use over
11 time. But, um, I feel like that program is an
12 example of how, ah, effect we are able to be. Um, I,
13 I appreciate your question about how do we know
14 women.nyc is effective if we can't trace, um, how
15 many people, um, how many more people there are in,
16 say, a job skills program that we advertise on our
17 website. But this is just one entry point. We, we
18 want women to know that these programs exist, um, but
19 we need everybody in the New York City ecosystem to
20 partner with us on gender equity and making sure that
21 women are, um, accessing every opportunity available
22 to them.

23 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: OK. So I'm, I'm
24 gonna back to EDC at a later point, 'cause they
25 interviewed, they made contact with 16,000

1 individuals and the 37th Councilmanic District did
2 13,000 intakes and claimed to have employed 810. So
3 I'm gonna try to figure out in the next couple of
4 months if any of those 810 were exposed to, to your,
5 to any of, of the referrals to you at all. Um, thank
6 you. Thank you for answering my, my questions and
7 your deliverance today. I'd like to turn it over to
8 former chair Councilwoman Rosenthal, who has her hand
9 raised.
10

11 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Hi. Ah, can
13 you all hear me? Yes. Um, I'm driving, so apologies
14 for the lack of video. I'm not sure I really have a
15 question. I have a, I, I just want to say, Council
16 Member D. Diaz, this transition is gonna be seamless.
17 I'm hearing your question and your perspective.
18 You're thinking about things that would not have been
19 in my, ah, world to even thing about, and you're
20 address, you're ask really the most important
21 questions, so in a way I'm just, I wanted to note
22 that, um, and double down on looking forward to the
23 answers to the questions that Council Member R. Diaz
24 is asking. Um, for those who know me, I especially
25 love the data question and while what I, again,

1
2 really appreciate you, Councilwoman, because, um, I,
3 of course, we all know that there are qualitative
4 services where you can't necessarily measure the
5 outcome, right? But there are, the question of, you
6 know, is, ah, women.nyc doing, succeeding in its
7 mission for all New Yorkers is such a valid one and,
8 you know, we could almost even leave it up to
9 women.nyc to come up with what the data measures are.
10 But, and, and Faye, you started to talk about a few
11 of them, um, but I, I just really want to encourage
12 you, Council Member D. Diaz, to keep up that line of
13 questioning, and I really look forward to seeing, um,
14 what, what women.nyc can pull together. So thank you
15 very much.

16 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Thank you, thank
17 you, Former Chair. I, I'll be calling nonetheless.
18 Look forward to my texting and my emails. Thank you.
19 Does anyone else have a question? Council Member
20 Gennaro? Oh, OK.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, we're not
22 seeing any hands raised. We're just checking. No
23 council member hands raised at the moment.

24 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: All right. So you
25 all know, I had a million questions to ask you. But

1
2 definitely with your opening, with your opening
3 statement you answered some of my questions, so I
4 just need a second [laughter] to see if you've missed
5 any of, of my points. I'm hearing here, and I'll be
6 as candid as possible. One of the questions we've
7 been discussing internally was there's been a lot of
8 news in reference to the Biden administration the
9 Gender, um, Policy Council, and it's also called
10 Gender for Women. What, what are your thoughts on
11 that? Have you done some research, some studies? Do
12 you see a way how you can perhaps link within that,
13 that conversation?

14 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PENN: Ah, well, thank
15 you for asking, Chair D. Diaz. And I think it's very
16 early, but boy is it good news to have an
17 administration that's taking gender seriously and
18 women in the workforce and childcare. I think that
19 we are very open to seeing how we can collaborate,
20 and, um, but I think it's just very early in these
21 efforts to understand where it's going and what those
22 opportunities look like.

23 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: OK. When you're
24 starting your, your process do you have a target
25 number of success stories you wanted to have? Like I

1 know for me when I began, when I decided to
2 participate in public service at the age of 19, I
3 wanted to contact, be able to know that impacted one
4 person, one family in a positive way and I was able
5 to measure my outcomes that today. Today I'm
6 responsible for 152,000 families in my district. But
7 to me, short-term and, and long-term goals are
8 important. I did not read your RFP, it was, you know
9 how, how you all started, how you would see your
10 measurables. Do you remember what your target
11 number, and do you feel you've, I know you said it's
12 hard for me to pinpoint because I think it's
13 outsourced, but is there ah, somewhat of a number
14 that you think comfortably you've been able to
15 achieve since your original thought process?
16

17 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PENN: That's also a
18 great question. Um, I would say that, ah, every time
19 we launch a problem ourselves the success metrics.
20 What does success look like is the first question
21 that we ask.

22 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Um-hmm.

23 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PENN: You, you know,
24 when we're sending the people all over the city
25 ecosystem we can't be responsible for everybody's

1 success. But I will say that, I go back to the
2 salary negotiation workshops again because it's the,
3 you know, the one program that we owned ourselves
4 entirely, right, um, as an entity and that we were
5 able to, um, reach so many people in such a short
6 time I think is, um, was a success, even though we
7 didn't, um, have, we weren't able to, we had to pause
8 in-person workshops because of COVID. Um, Jasmine,
9 do you want to talk a, a bit about some of other
10 numbers, too, that might answer Council Member D.
11 Diaz's questions?

12
13 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BAKER: Sure, definitely.
14 Thank you for your question.

15 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Thank you.

16 DEPUTY DIRECTOR BAKER: Um, I just, you
17 know, want to reiterate what Faye mentioned in her
18 testimony about women.nyc's mission and the services
19 we provide along with how we provide them. So what
20 [inaudible] New York remains the best place in the
21 world for women of all backgrounds, ages, and
22 abilities, and identities to thrive in their careers.
23 We have kind of three ways that we go about achieving
24 that mission. Like Faye mentioned, we amplify
25 listing New York City resources and programs from

1
2 other agencies. Um, we also convene free and
3 informative events. Um, that's something Faye also
4 touched on, and she mentioned we're doing a lot of,
5 um, we've pivoted, like most people have had to, to
6 virtual events and we're launching, um, quite a large
7 slate them this month. Um, lastly we foster those
8 strategic cross-sector partnerships to launch
9 programs that are providing the real tools that women
10 need. So that said, I think what we're trying to,
11 um, convey here is that our program metrics are
12 varied as they're specific to those particular arms
13 of our services and each metric is different. So,
14 like, in summary I can tell you that to date we have
15 6.3 thousand, um, direct participants in our programs
16 and events. Um, our digital footprint, which is
17 something that really comes into play when it comes
18 to amplifying those existing resources. Those
19 metrics I can share with you here. We've had to date
20 2070 website visitors and we have 30K, um, people
21 that we are reaching through social media and via
22 email. So our visual foot print now during COVID is
23 more important than ever. It makes it really easy
24 for us to get out there and reach money people and
25

2 share these resources, in addition to information on
3 our own programs.

4 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Thank you.

5 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PENN: We also have,
6 um, we always need help getting the word and would
7 love to be able to reach your constituents, or
8 anyone's constituents, with some of our upcoming
9 programs and, um, would love to be able to get in
10 touch, and if you have a newsletter maybe you can put
11 that, some of these events in your newsletter so
12 [inaudible] constituents are aware.

13 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Definitely. Um,
14 I...

15 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PENN: If that, if I
16 may ask?

17 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Of course
18 [inaudible] to ask, and one was the possibility of us
19 doing a webinar, a workshop, something virtually so
20 we can promote your resources. Like I said early on,
21 you know, for the time that I was in shelter as your
22 program began I had not heard of you until my
23 committee began doing some research of our
24 conversation here today. Then you share that you're
25 a staff of two. And we know that funds of those, you

1 know, resources that are not, ah, available, but how,
2 how do, how can I possibly help you help me? Ah,
3 does that mean you need more staff, you know, to
4 collaborate with other partners. What, what, what
5 are your financial struggles? Do you see that you
6 could do more if you had more to work with?
7

8 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PENN: Absolutely.
9 You know, I know, ah, absolutely we could do more if
10 we had more to work with. But I think that, um,
11 given what we do have [inaudible] do everything
12 ourselves as much as possible. Ah, um, but
13 absolutely, I think that, the, the what we
14 [inaudible]. You know, we're here for all of New
15 York City and, you know, as the more partners the
16 more, um, folks that help us get the word out, but
17 also help send us inbound resources and information
18 the, the better we'll be.

19 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: OK, so I'm gonna
20 allow to help me get the word out.

21 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PENN: Great, OK.

22 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: EDC, EDC right now
23 are not, and I am not at the best terms based on the
24 commitment that they make to my community, so I'm
25 gonna figure out how we can better partners, get your

1 word out there with this particular vibe, get your
2 out there which you provide, and also EDC with some,
3 ah, deliverables that I'm being beat up about
4 [laughs] we haven't received. Um, thank you, thank
5 you again for, for your time and, and your effort. I
6 look forward to hearing some more, um, on the data.
7 Brenda, turning it back to you.

9 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Excellent. Thank
10 you, Chair. We're just gonna check, um, if there are
11 any other council members that have questions. There
12 are no hands raised, but if you have questions for
13 the administration please let us know. We're not
14 seeing any hands in Zoom or literally physically.
15 So, um, we will move to the public panels. Thank you
16 so much to the administration. Um, so at this point,
17 ah, we have concluded the administration's testimony.
18 For members of the public, please note I will call up
19 individuals in panels, and because we have one panel
20 will call the names of everyone on the panel and then
21 I will call you individually. Um, council members,
22 if you have questions for a particular witness or
23 panelist and we will call on you on the order that
24 you raised your hand. And for panelists, please note
25 once your name is called, um, a member of our staff

1 will unmute you. That box will pop up to accept it
2 and the Sergeant at Arms will give you the go-ahead
3 building owner begin, at which point you may begin
4 your testimony. We will be using a three-minute
5 clock today, so just a reminder to wait for the
6 Sergeant at Arms. So at this point I will read the
7 members of panel. Um, so we have three witnesses
8 today. Those witnesses are Laura Rabel Gross from
9 Student Leadership Network, Christian F. Nunez from
10 the National Organization for Women [inaudible] and
11 Cordel Clear. Ah, so our first witness will be Laura
12 Rabel Gross. You may begin once the sergeant calls
13 the clock.
14

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Just one moment,
17 apologies. Ah, just technical difficulties. Just
18 one, one moment please. OK, we will go to our second
19 panelist, Ms. Nunez, Christian F. Nunez from the
20 National Organization for Women. Um, you may begin
21 once the sergeant calls the clock. Thank you.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

23 CHRISTIAN F. NUNEZ: Thank you all. Good
24 morning, members, the council, and Committee on Women
25 and Gender Equity. Um, as they said, my name is

1 Christian Nunez, president of National Organization
2 for Women. Ah, I want to thank Councilman D. Diaz
3 for this time and [inaudible] share a few words. I
4 just really want to talk, really talk clearly about
5 why this important issue [inaudible] issue for the
6 National Organization for Women and some of the work
7 that we are trying to do legislatively, um, to combat
8 the impact of housing and homelessness on BIPOC,
9 which is black, indigenous, persons of color, Latinx
10 women, um, and TGNC, which transgender nonconforming
11 women and those who identify as women. So I just
12 wanted to start off by just talking about what we've
13 been through this last year in 2020 and, um, of the
14 last year in 2020, you know, the United States has
15 been hit with two crossing pandemics, the global
16 pandemic of COVID-19 that took more than 500 million,
17 um, 500,000 lives, and racial injustice for many
18 BIPOC commissions, including since those deaths we've
19 seen of unarmed black and brown bodies and
20 individuals and xenophobic attacks on AAPI
21 communities. But of these situations what we have
22 witnessed is a desperate impact on women girls. But
23 those are also consequences of gender equalities that
24 come from those, those, um, results we've seen from
25

1 this pandemics. So over COVID [inaudible], ah,
2 Councilman D. Diaz please started staying this that
3 we've especially women of color have been greatly
4 affected by COVID. In December alone, December 2020,
5 there were 144,000 jobs lost. All of them were by
6 women. And women are usually primary caregivers so
7 unemployment for women can quickly hit hard in times
8 like this. And we know loss of income is the
9 contributing factor to homelessness and without a
10 home it is very difficult to get adequate resources
11 needed to find new employment, to find childcare, to
12 find a car, to find the necessary things to have a
13 sustainable life. And there is also a very obvious
14 disconnect with assistance and the services provided
15 to families. Research is showing, we looked it up
16 right here in New York City, ah, in New York, their
17 monthly assistance of \$789, but however the average
18 monthly two-bedroom apartment rent is \$3600. That
19 means a person would have to work four, work four and
20 a half times in order just to cover their rent and
21 that is not including the cost of just living day to
22 day for food and clothing and housing and every
23 other, ah, needs. So we know housing inequality has
24 gotten worse through the pandemic and is really
25

1 hitting black, hitting black communities and Latinx
2 communities harder with higher rates of housing
3 hardships due to evictions, foreclosures, um, rent
4 and mortgage delinquencies and utility payments. And
5 also we also know [inaudible], um, that came with the
6 pandemic. We've see an increase in domestic and
7 intimate partner violence and child abuse. And in
8 some of these situations those individuals was women
9 and children felony like the only option they had was
10 to leave their home.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

13 CHRISTIAN F. NUNEZ: And...

14 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Could we please
15 give her more time?

16 CHRISTIAN F. NUNEZ: OK.

17 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Thank you.

18 CHRISTIAN F. NUNEZ: So there's a lot of
19 statistics. So we can go on and on about the
20 statistics. But I think what we clearly want to
21 understand is that housing is a feminist issue
22 because it talks about the intersects of oppression
23 that women are experiencing from their gender, from
24 their sex, from their race, from their economic
25 disadvantage and that now we are working really hard

1
2 to work locally and better relate on legislative
3 advocacy to help change policies and laws and, and
4 act and help get bills passed so we'll really make
5 sure they're inclusive for women. And a lot of times
6 we have to look at housing policies have not been
7 from a place of a woman's standpoint or what, or for
8 the place of the children, and so it's really
9 important. And so we partnered, um, with National
10 Coalition for Homelessness to really work on
11 launching on a campaign that will be inclusive for
12 the needs for women and children. I'm real excited
13 about that. And we'll continue working the other
14 organizations, like [inaudible] here that provides a
15 health hotline, um, [inaudible] gender, domestic or
16 discrimination violence, sexual violence, or gender
17 violence abuse in our homes or workplace and I also
18 would be remiss if I didn't talk about our New York
19 State chapter and our New York City chapter, who have
20 been doing extreme work on the state and local level
21 to really truly bring forth changing laws so that we
22 can help impact and, and create sustainable and safe
23 life for these women. So we have to look at this as
24 a holistic perspective. We cannot address, um,
25 gender equity if we're not looking at the whole

1
2 system and how it impacts the women, and now us here
3 to continue working with common cause coalitions and
4 allies to do this work, um, through education and
5 legislative advocacy and activism. So I will stop
6 there, um, so that I save my time. Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: You're, you're,
8 thank you for your presentation. It was definitely,
9 you spoke to my heart. You know, um, women, gender,
10 equity and, and I know I'm being redundant, I was
11 spending 13 years with working with women and
12 knowing, you know, that feeling when I was able to go
13 sign a lease with one of my families, or give them
14 the keys. That's a touch of freedom and
15 independence, you know, so, so thank you, thank you
16 for being on today. Thank you for your vision.
17 Thank you for the data, you know, because this is
18 something that's been [inaudible] and I'm hoping
19 someone out there is listening to our plight. You
20 know, as I said earlier we have the highest number of
21 referrals into the shelter system, which trickles to
22 our little people, right? We're our foundation. If
23 you don't have a home you don't have a place. Like,
24 I, I experienced homelessness at the age of 19-1/2.
25 I was a young mom. It was an experience for about a

1 month, you know, but nonetheless it was my
2 experiencing. [inaudible] of not knowing. You know,
3 thankfully I was able to secure a permanent place and
4 I there for 18 years, but that allowed me to put
5 myself on a path where I wanted to have a stable home
6 for my daughter. So when my husband died at, my
7 daughter 9, that took me even to a stronger saying
8 Darma you have to figure this out. You know, you're
9 really own your own, that support that I thought I
10 would have forever and a day in raising my daughter
11 was no longer there. That was where I figured out a
12 way by creativity having programs available to me,
13 having resources, makes me, ah, allowed me to be a
14 homeowner today. You know, and where my daughter and
15 I'm a grandma and seeing exactly [inaudible] home,
16 you know, has allowed me to fulfill my mission, but
17 more because I understood that I did not want my
18 daughter to face displacement. Having a landlord
19 saying you have to move because you're pregnant, it's
20 inhumane. And then you have to move again because
21 your baby cries, you know, so, and, and those are
22 stories that my women shared with me, you know,
23 while, while in the shelter, you know, and not, not
24 everyone falls into the shelter system because they
25

1
2 want to. Not, it's not always the fault, you know,
3 of, so I'm able, you know, I'm hoping that we will
4 continue to work together. Ms. Nunez, it was nice
5 meeting you, even though it is virtually, but, I, I
6 believe in your mission and I believe we have a lot
7 of work to do. So, again, thank you for
8 participating here today. I'd like to know if any of
9 my cohorts, if there is any of the council members on
10 they would like to ask a question or, or have a
11 comment. Again, thank you, thank you for what you
12 do. Thank you for making me feel empowered, and it's
13 good to know that when I'm at ground zero you're at
14 ground 100 fighting the fight because it has to
15 trickle down and we'll meet in the middle. Again,
16 thank you.

17 CHRISTIAN F. NUNEZ: Please always reach
18 out as well.

19 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Oh, I will.

20 CHRISTIAN F. NUNEZ: OK, thanks.

21 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: I will. Thank you.

22 CHRISTIAN F. NUNEZ: Thank you.

23 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: All right, um, Chair,
24 we have one more witness, um, today, Cordel Clear. It
25 looks like, ah, they are ready to testify.

2 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Wonderful.

3 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts now.

4 CORDEL CLEAR: Good morning. Can you
5 hear me?

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Yes.

7 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: We can hear you.

8 CORDEL CLEAR: OK, thank you so much.

9 Good morning. I just wanted to lend my voice of
10 support, ah, to, ah, women and gender equity. Ah, in
11 my district, I live in Harlem, and I participate in
12 many, um, advocacy efforts and organizing efforts to,
13 ah, grow opportunities for women, especially women in
14 business and women in small business. Um, and I, and
15 that includes, ah, vendors, ah, that includes
16 entrepreneurs. Um, a lot of women, especially during
17 this pandemic, have found it hard to provide for
18 their families. These are not just single women, you
19 know, in our community everybody has to work. The
20 household has to work. And we really have to empower
21 women in a way that they can get an opportunity to
22 open businesses, to grow businesses, and the sister
23 that was speaking before I totally agree with, you
24 know, the opportunities being made for mothers, women
25 who have children. I, I myself, ah, spent a period

1
2 of time, um, in a shelter, ah, with my family and it
3 is just that much harder. It's very difficult to do
4 that, ah, you know, to, to make a living, to, to try
5 to create opportunities to get yourself out of the
6 situation that you're in. So I just want to support
7 women getting funding opportunities, women getting
8 contracts, women, ah, getting business opportunities.
9 I recently worked on a, with a group of women to try
10 to get a female architect, um, ah, a contractor, and,
11 and a female artist, ah, to get a contract. You
12 know, they're just, when we do have these skills and
13 we do have these talents it's very hard to get
14 ourselves out there. Ah, so I think that we have to
15 make some really deliberate and purposeful efforts to
16 reach to women, to find women, ah, in a world that's
17 often dominated by men. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Thank you, thank
19 you immensely for sharing your story, and also your
20 struggle. This is 2021. Your struggle shouldn't be
21 so big, and, and it also goes to the men at the
22 table.

23 CORDEL CLEAR: Yes.

24 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Like, let's not
25 talk about it, let's be about it.

2 CORDEL CLEAR: Yes.

3 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: You know, if you're
4 really with us and you understand your plight as men,
5 I'm gonna challenge you. The next time you're
6 looking for an architect, here we have a system, the
7 struggle, who's saying, hey, I'm equipped.

8 CORDEL CLEAR: Yes.

9 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: And also
10 [inaudible] is equipped. And, and that's what it has
11 to be about. You know, I, I'm not gonna bash men
12 because that's not, you know, who I am, but I am
13 gonna use the word challenge to ask you to bring us
14 to the table. You know, there's been a lot of
15 conversation on how we should be working together.
16 Well, then, let's make it happen.

17 CORDEL CLEAR: Yes.

18 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Let's [inaudible].

19 Six months from now I would like to be in a
20 conversation where we have a couple of men coming on,
21 you know, to the hearing and saying we heard you. We
22 heard you with so and so and so and so and, and this
23 is where we are. We landed the contract. And when
24 it comes to gender and, and equity, you know,
25 transgender folks, I, I hear you. You know, and, and

1
2 it bothers me that employment opportunities are made
3 that much harder for you. It should be about your
4 resume, how you present well. The police that in
5 Darma, and I'm gonna say Darma, because that's how I
6 want folks to see me, as the individual that's
7 transitioned from the voice of not being at the
8 table. My, my committee in the next couple of
9 hearings we, we'll be discussing employment and
10 opportunities and the disadvantages that need to be
11 flipped to our favor. You know, we're born who we
12 are, we're gonna take our toolbox, and we're gonna
13 run with it, you know, so 2021 we're here. We're
14 here, we're strong, we're proud, we're gonna continue
15 to have these conversations. Cordel Clear, thank
16 you, thank you, thank you for coming on. I'm sure it
17 wasn't easy to get up this morning and, and say I'm
18 gonna tell my story. And for, you know, being in the
19 shelter system and talking about it, it's humbling.
20 So thank you. Because I, I know that from my point
21 when I was a case manager and had three titles in one
22 I always told my clients, I'm here today but I could
23 be where you are tomorrow. And I hope that your
24 experience where you work was similar to the
25 experiences that my clients had when I was in the

1 shelter system. To this day, um, they text me, they
2 call me, they let me know when they're OK. I've
3 gotten emails unexpectedly for Ms. Diaz, thank you,
4 you know, so I, I'm hoping for you as well, that you
5 have your transition in, into a solid place and
6 you're not scarred in any way, 'cause I, I know not,
7 each provider has the best staff and understands what
8 it is when you have a child and you can't make it in
9 on time and you have to be creative and have two jobs
10 so you can qualify for a voucher and during the
11 pandemic I know it's been real tough. So to DHS, if
12 you're out there, I'm listening, I'm paying
13 attention. I may not be on staff, but I know the
14 struggle that my families, my clients, continue to
15 suffer. Vouchers are difficult to achieve and during
16 COVID even harder to be processed. So I, again, I'm
17 going to thank all my panelists, but Cordel, stay
18 strong, and if any conversation has impacted me it's,
19 it's been yours, because it hits home.

21 CORDEL CLEAR: Thank you so much. Thank
22 you for saying that. And it didn't scar me, and I
23 rose to great heights.

24 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Good.

1
2 CORDEL CLEAR: But it is, it is, ah, a
3 disability of such, ah, it's not just being a woman.
4 There's also the stigmatizing from being homeless.
5 And people not understanding that this is not a
6 condition that you want for yourself. Ah, you know,
7 no one wants to be there. Trust me. Um, but we did
8 get out of a situation and there were some good
9 people and there were some not-so-good people on that
10 path. But everybody doesn't have, ah, the
11 opportunities maybe that I had and I, I respect you
12 for the work that you do for home, that you've done
13 for homeless families and for incorporating that into
14 what you're, ah, doing right now, ah, it's so
15 important for us to realize that everybody is just
16 trying to make it, and it's very tough for women to
17 get out there and make it, and especially that's just
18 another barrier when you're homeless and you don't
19 have a place to live. It's just another judgment
20 that people put on you and it becomes a disability,
21 just like womanhood and motherhood, all those things
22 [inaudible] put on us. So I appreciate this message.
23 I appreciate what you're doing and your colleagues.
24 And, um, I just look forward to change.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Well, you're,
3 you're part of the change. You're leading the way.
4 You're here today, you're talking about it. And for
5 full disclosure, I also, I was, um, experienced NYPD
6 staff and FDNY and, and EMS, social workers, you
7 know, people that were gaining employment, but were
8 evicted, you know, or just were in a bad situation or
9 DV, you know, I got men with me in the shelter, you
10 know, men that took on that, the feminine role and
11 we're gonna [inaudible] how society did change,
12 right, where the male now takes on being the mommy
13 and me and, and the daddy. And I share it as well
14 because, sometimes we're just one paycheck away.

15 CORNEL CLEAR: That's right.

16 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: So one [inaudible]
17 conversation away or someone at home that's suffering
18 from mental illness, and we just got to get away. We
19 just got to get away. But, again, thank you all, and
20 I don't know if anyone else has, has a comment. I'm
21 sure we have enough time if it's something that one
22 of the panelists said or not able to say, some
23 clarity, I'd like to give you a minute or two to come
24 before we close. I think Ms. Nunez.

25 CHRISTIAN F. NUNEZ: Can you hear me?

1

UNIDENTIFIED: Yes.

2

3

CHRISTIAN F. NUNEZ: OK. I just wanted

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to add that I also think it's really important that

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we understand that in order to change this, um,

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housing crisis that we're having, not only in New

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York but like in America, we have to look, um, it's

8

more things than just providing transitional housing.

9

It's about providing childcare. It's about

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providing, ah, a sustainable living wage. You know,

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there are multiple parts that go into this, and it

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really is up to all of us on not only like the

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federal level, but also the local and state levels to

14

make sure that we are passing ordinances, passing

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programs, um, that are gonna help our families, help

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our women, um, help our children, so we can't look at

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housing just as a home, I mean, a home is more than

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that. It's more holistic than that, and it's really

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important the services that we provide are wrap-

20

around and provide all those things. So I'm also a

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social worker background [laughs] so I have a little

22

of that. But I just think we have to look at that

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from a childcare, paid family medical leave, paid

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sick leave, all those things together can make it for

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a person to be able to have a livable and sustainable

1 and safe life. And, and that's what [inaudible],
2 it's not just a home over your head. So I just
3 wanted to add that point, so when we are thinking
4 about services and wrap-around, we're looking at it
5 from a holistic perspective of, of one's needs.
6 Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Thank you. I'd
9 like to just go back as [inaudible] is women.nyc
10 still on? Do we still have them, Brenda?

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: I don't see members
12 of the administration, Chair.

13 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: OK. What I'd like
14 to do is, if it's OK, I'd like to forward the
15 questions that I did not ask. I, I thought that they
16 were gonna be somewhere challenging for them. A lot
17 of it is data-driven and, and specifics to detail
18 that I was made to feel they were not going to be
19 able to answer the questions. But I will give
20 categories to everyone we're gonna emphasize on was I
21 had more questions in the area of engagement,
22 advertisement, which obviously I feel is lacking, the
23 resources, employment, more the target date
24 [inaudible] which I asked for, small business and
25 entrepreneurships, workshops, and then a program She

1
2 Built NYC. So once I receive their answers to these
3 questions I will share with my audience today and,
4 and I'll make it public on my website. Thank you.
5 Brenda, back to you.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much,
7 Chair D. Diaz. Um, so we'll check before. This is
8 the end of panel one. Um, so before we move on to
9 check for any witnesses we might have inadvertently
10 missed, um, I just want to check if there's any other
11 questions. We don't have council member hands. Um,
12 so at this point we have concluded public testimony,
13 Chair D. Diaz. So, ah, if we have inadvertently
14 missed anyone that would like to testify and is
15 logged in, please use the Zoom raise hand function
16 and we will call on you in the order that your hand
17 is raised. So we're just checking, I'm just waiting
18 for hands. We're not seeing any. OK. Chair D.
19 Diaz, um, at this point we have concluded public
20 testimony for the hearing.

21 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: If, if I may before
22 we close I'd like to, what I used earlier as my gavel
23 was what we call a, a [inaudible] which in my culture
24 we, we use to mash, it could be our garlic, it could
25 be we make ourselves lethal, and I share something

1
2 what I think we should collaborate more as a people
3 and use the [inaudible] which is a green plantain as
4 Puerto Ricans make [inaudible] out of. Your
5 Dominicans make [inaudible]. And my Honduran sister
6 does. We then make chips it out it. I share this
7 say that we should collaborate, and that's my bottom
8 line. I see New York moving forward if we share our
9 resources. So if I, if I can end it on a happy note,
10 it's just share, share, share, and figure out a way
11 to make this happen. I'm gonna go home and try to
12 make some sofrito 'cause my daughter would like some.
13 Thank you. Until next time. Again, thank you to
14 all my staff, Brenda and Chloe, Richard, Karen
15 Cherry, the sergeants, and if I've avoided anyone
16 it's, as Karen says, judge my heart, not my head.
17 And to Speaker Corey Johnson, thank you for the
18 opportunity to chair this committee. Thank you.

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Madam Chair, we need
20 you to officially gavel out with [inaudible].

21 CHAIRPERSON D. DIAZ: Oh, my goodness.
22 I'm gonna [gavel] [gavel]. Thank you.

23

24

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date April 9, 2021