

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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April 9, 2021
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HELD AT: Remote Hearing (Virtual Room 1)

B E F O R E: Inez Barron
CHAIRPERSON

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Laurie Cumbo
Alan Maisel
Ydanis Rodriguez
Eric Ulrich
Helen Rosenthal

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

Jarnee Bramlett, Interim President and
Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer
Research Foundation of the City University
of New York

Barbara Bowen, President
PSC CUNY

Lori Rothstein, Delegate
Research Foundation of the City University
of New York

Naomi Zauderer, Associate Executive
Director
PSC CUNY

David Jeruzalmi, Professor
City College of New York
Board of Directors, Research Foundation
Chair, CUNY Faculty Senate

Jose Luis Rodriguez
National Puerto Rican Agenda

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2 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Recording to the cloud
3 all set.

4 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Recording to the PC
5 ready.

6 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Backup is rolling.

7 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Sergeant Hope, you may
8 begin with your opening statement.

9 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Thank you, Sergeant
10 Polite. Good morning and welcome to the New York
11 City Council remote hearing on Higher Education. At
12 this time, will all panelists please turn on your
13 videos? I repeat. All panelists, please turn on
14 your videos. Thank you. To minimize disruption,
15 please place all electronic devices to vibrate or
16 silent mode. If you wish to submit testimony, you
17 may do so at testimony@Council.NYC.gov. I repeat.
18 testimony@Council.NYC.gov. Chair Barron, we are
19 ready to begin.

20 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Good morning and
21 thank you for joining the Committee on Higher
22 Education for this very important hearing on the
23 research foundation of the City University of New
24 York, CUNY. I am Council member Inez Barron, Chair
25 of the committee and a proud alum of Hunter College.

Thank you for everyone who was here to testify today.

But before I address the topic at hand, I have to comment on the state budget. Finally, the state will comply with the court ordered mandate regarding the campaign for fiscal equity and pay 1.4 billion dollars for the next three years to reach the 4 billion dollars owed to black and brown school districts. In 2009, Cuomo had insisted that CFE was done, quote unquote. But by passing the CFE settlement in this budget, the legislature has honored its requirement to repair the inadequate funding that has been due to black and brown children for nearly two decades. I also want to note that this budget rejects the proposed tuition hikes and freezes tuition for the next three years, which brings us closer to my goal of returning to a tuition-free CUNY. Also, there is an increase in the TAP award by \$500, raising that maximum to \$5665 and a three year plan to fully eliminate the TAP gap.

They are getting closer with the college-based aid and are raising that, although it doesn't anywhere come near the need that is existing. It restores 26 million operating aid to CUNY. There is \$100 million for CUNY capital aid and there is-- I'm not sure of

the amount. I see different numbers. But the opportunity programs have been increased, finally, by 20 percent and I'm so pleased to say that there is a new \$10 million dollar scholarship for CUNY for the Martin Luther King scholarship which was advocated by my husband, introduced by my husband and it addresses non-tuition needs. 2.5 million for ASAP. 902 million for childcare centers and something called rental aid-- not quite sure what that is-- but, certainly, in this budget, we can see that we're beginning to close the deficiencies that have existed for so many years in CUNY's budget from the state. The purpose of today's hearing is to better understand a rarely examined institution: the Research Foundation of CUNY. The Research Foundation at CUNY, also known as RF CUNY or the Foundation, is an independent, nonprofit entity that supports CUNY faculty and staff research efforts. According to its website for fiscal year 2020, the Foundation worked with 25 partner institutions, employed an estimated 11,000 individuals, and was responsible for nearly \$581 million in contributions and grants. RF CUNY helps obtain funding from government and private sponsors, oversees the administration of funded

programs, and assists with managing capital construction projects and facilities renovation. In essence, the Foundation provides significant financial and operational support for the benefit of the entire University. I am particularly eager about today's hearing because, to my knowledge, this may be the first time RF CUNY has been examined by the city Council. This topic was originally noticed in February of last year, but, for reasons beyond my control, the hearing was canceled and only recently rescheduled for today. Regardless, this is not the first time the Foundation has been subjected to governmental inquiry. In 2016, a federal investigation was launched after the foundation paid over \$150,000 former city College presidents personal expenses. The investigation ended without any indictments, but the Office of the Inspector General published a report recommending that the University Institute more controls over the relationships between all CUNY-based foundations and they are partner colleges to a sure proper fiscal oversight of the foundations funds managed by those schools. Over the past six fiscal years, the Council has awarded a total of \$16.3 million, or an average of 2.7 a year

to support programs and initiatives administered through the foundation. In fiscal year 2021, that Counsel designated a total of \$2.8 million to support some of the following program areas. Higher education, education, public safety, and cultural organizations. And it is very concerning to think that there could be a misspent taxpayer dollar at a university that is meant to be, quote, of vital importance as a vehicle for the upward mobility of the disadvantaged in the city of New York. It is imperative that we hold our public institutions to a high standard. In addition to myself, many of my colleagues in government wouldn't be here today if it weren't for CUNY. And I expect that the money we fight for CUNY is exactly that: money properly spent at CUNY. At today's hearing, the committee will seek an overview of RF CUNY, its structure, and its operations, as well as its relationship with each CUNY campus research foundation. This includes basic data on where funding is secured, where funding is sourced, how it is distributed, how it is spent, and, if possible, a demographic breakdown of award recipients. The Committee will also seek clarity around how foundations may spend money for non-

research purposes. More specifically for the employment of foundation staff. This includes a demographic breakdown of RF CUNY employees, information concerning full and part-time employees, their salaries, and lines of employment. Lastly, I am looking forward to hearing about how that Foundation benefits CUNY and the CUNY community. And I am grateful for everyone who is here today to share. I want to acknowledge my colleagues, members of the committee, Council member Maisel and I saw Council member Rosenthal and others will be joining us as we proceed. I also want to acknowledge my staff, Chief of Staff, Omawale Clay [sp?], and Indigo Washington, my director of legislation and CUNY liaison, Chloe Rivera, the committee's senior policy analyst, Amy Briggs, the committee's counsel, Michelle Paragrin, the committee's financial analyst, and Frank Perez, the committee's community engagement representative. And, additionally, I would like to thank all the Council staff, including the sergeants-at-arms, who are working so hard behind the scenes to make this hearing possible. I would now like to turn over to Chloe Rivera, the senior policy analyst, to

review some procedural items relating to today's hearing and call the first panel.

MODERATOR: Thank you, Chair Barron. My name is Chloe Rivera and I serve as the senior policy analyst to the Committee on Higher Education at the New York City Council. I will be moderating today's hearing and calling panelists to testify. Before you begin, please remember that everyone will be on mute until I call on you to testify. After you are called on, you will be unmuted by a member of our staff. Note there will be a few second delay before you are unmuted and we can hear you. For public testimony, I will call up individuals in panels. Please listen for your name. I will periodically announce the new few panelists. Once I call your name, a member of our staff will unmute you, the sergeant-at-arms will set a clock and give you the go ahead to begin your testimony. All public testimony will be limited to three minutes. After I call your name, please wait for the sergeant-at-arms to announce that you may begin before starting your testimony. For today's hearing, the first panel will include representatives from the Research Foundation of CUNY, followed by Council member questions, then public testimony. For

the Research Foundation, we will have Jarnee Bramlette, the interim president of the Research Foundation of CUNY. I will now administer the oath to the administration. Please respond once a member of our staff unmutes you. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth before this committee and to respond honestly to Council member questions. President Bramlette?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Yes. I do.

MODERATOR: Thank you. You may begin presenting your testimony.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Good morning, Chairperson Barron and members of the Higher Education Committee. I am Jarnee Bramlette, Interim President and Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer of the Research Foundation of the City University of New York. I have been with the Research Foundation of CUNY for over 25 years. I was appointed Chief Financial Officer in charge around April of 2020 and Interim President in December of 2020. I welcome the opportunity to speak with you about the Research Foundation in CUNY. The Research Foundation of the City University of New York, or RF, is a private, not-for-profit corporation established in 1963 under

the laws of the state of New York. According to its charter, the RF purpose is to encourage the making of gifts and grants to the City University of New York, or CUNY. To receive [inaudible 00:11:45] administer gifts and grants on behalf of CUNY, to finance the conducting of research studies for the benefit of CUNY, and to enter into contractual relationships are appropriate to the RF purpose, the RF entered into an agreement with CUNY to administer sponsored programs all of CUNY's operations. The 1993 agreement designated the RF as a fiscal agent for administering all grants and contracts awarded to any unit of CUNY. The 1983 agreement specifies the RF's responsibilities to include assisting CUNY and identifying funds for public and private donors to support programs at CUNY, serving as joint grantee and applying for such funds, administering grants and contracts in accordance with the terms and conditions, employing necessary personnel to conduct the programs who shall be deemed the employees of the RF and not CUNY, purchasing necessary equipment and supplies, providing administrative functions, including controlling an accounting for expenditures, and establishing policies and procedures governing

all expenditures. The CUNY faculty and staff are responsible for identifying, obtaining, and managing these sponsored funds are referred to as principal investigators. Once funding is awarded, the RF manages to post award process pursuant to the 1983 agreement which specifies that the RF should monitor all expenditures for availability of funds for compliance with RF policies and sponsored requirements and maintaining auditable accounts and render periodic expenditure reports. Oversight of the award or compliance with this turns is the responsibility of the college. Pursuant to the 1983 agreement, the college will comply with the sponsored requirements, university policy, and applicable governmental laws and regulations and will expedite the processing of applications. The college will also see that the principal investigator carries out a sponsored project in compliance with the terms of the award, university policy, and city and state requirements. CUNY's responsibility for compliance was reaffirmed in the March 2012 letter between the CUNY's general counsel and the RF president. The RF reserves the-- the RS serves as fiscal administrator and provides oversight on the spending to the extent

of assuring that spending complies with established budgets but compliance with the terms of the award is CUNY's responsibility. The 1983 agreement is still in effect, but may be terminated by either an RF or CUNY, upon one year's notice to the other party.

Excuse me. The RF is a private, not for profit corporation, but CUNY is a public university. The benefits of being a private, rather than governmental, corporation were a major consideration in CUNY selection of the RF to administer responsive programs. The RF status allows for greater flexibility and administer responsive programs than would be the case if the RF were an arm of CUNY. The legal and fiscal separation of the RF and CUNY also prevents the comingling of tax levy and sponsored funds which come from private and public sources.

Unlike CUNY, the RF receives no government appropriated or tax levied funds from any local, county, state, or federal government or political subdivision for the operation of its business. The RF's operating revenues are principally derived from administrative fees charged to CUNY for the services it provides pursuant to the 1983 agreement. The RF also obtains income from the ownership of the

building where its central office is located. Excuse me. This property is a private office building owned by 230 West 41st Street LLC is a limited liability company that was formed to acquire, own, and operate the building. The RF is the sole member of the LLC. Previously, the RF also derived revenue from Grants Plus. That Corporation was created by the RF to provide post award administration of sponsored programs for nonprofit organizations other than the RF and CUNY. However, all activities at Grants Plus Inc. ended on June 30 of 2019. The income from-- the income for RF obtained from the LLC in Grants Plus was used to support its operations. The RF's annual budget is approved by the RF's board of directors. It is not reviewed or approved by CUNY or any other governmental body or political subdivision. The RF files its own tax returns, issues its own independently audited financial statements, operates its own payroll and financial accounting systems, fringe benefit plans, and purchaser is a wide variety of goods and services in accordance with its own rules and regulations. The RF staffs and maintains it to operating division such as human resources, legal, finance, internal audit, grants and contracts,

procurement and payables, award pre-proposal support, and information technology. The RF maintains its own policies and procedures and practices related to human resources, employees, and employee Labor Relations. The health retirement workers compensation plan maintained by the RF for its employees are private in nature and the RF's pension and benefit plans are subject to the employee retirement income and security Act, or ERISA. The RF routinely private outside counsel when it requires representation or services that exceed the capabilities of its in-house legal department. The RF is not represented by a governmental agency and in any legal proceeding or action in court. Although the RF provides the function of post award fiscal administration for CUNY's grants and contracts, the RF operates independently of CUNY in performing this function. The RF is not owned, operated, or controlled by CUNY or any other governmental entity. The RF is governed by its Board of Directors. A composition of the RF board is established by its bylaws. In order to ensure that all segments of the CUNY community are fairly represented, some RF directors are affiliated with CUNY. This enables the

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RF to provide better service to CUNY and its member colleges while contributing to the diversity of viewpoints and body of knowledge. The 17 member Board of Directors is comprised of the Chancellor or at CUNY or his or her designee who serves as ex officio, the president of the graduate school and University Center who also serves ex officio, to individuals appointed by the Chancellor, four at-large members nominated by a nominating committee and then elected by the board who may not be employed by or under contract to the RF or CUNY, to senior college presidents who are elected by the board by their fellow CUNY college presidents, to community college presidents who were elected to the board by their fellow CUNY college presidents, four faculty members, mainly the chairperson of the Faculty Advisory Council who serves ex officio, and three other faculty members elected by the Faculty Advisory Council, and one full time CUNY graduate student selected by the CUNY Doctoral Student Council. Other than the Chancellor, none of the CUNY representatives hold a position of control over CUNY. The Chancellor has only one vote on the RF's Board of Directors. Under the bylaws, the Chancellor, as chairperson of

the RF's board, has no individual authority other than to call meetings to the board, to preside at meetings of the board, to sign and execute RF documents, and to perform other duties at the request of the board. The appointment and removal of the RF Board of Directors is governed solely by the bylaws and without reference to any statute of the law. The RF's Board of Directors is independent of CUNY, does not report to CUNY, and cannot be removed by CUNY. Excuse me. CUNY exercises no authority over the RF directly or indirectly through the RF's Board of Directors. The RF's bylaws do not provide a single seat on the RF's Board of Directors for a member of CUNY's governing Board of Trustees which presides over oversight over CUNY. While the RF's Board of Directors is ultimately responsible for the RF. RF's day to day operations are managed and carried out by the administration, managers, and supervising personnel who work at RF central office locations-- who work at the RF central office located at 230 West 41st Street, New York, New York, 10036. CUNY does not have authority to hire or fire the executive staff of the RF such as its president, chief financial officer, chief operating officer, chief

counsel, chief information officer, or any other RF central office employee. The RF's human resources, legal, finance, internal audit, rents and contracts, procurement and payables, award preproposal support, and information technology departments are all located at the RF central office. The RF does not maintain any offices on any CUNY campus or any CUNY office buildings. While there are numerous RF employees working on CUNY campuses, those field employees performed work for and on behalf of CUNY in connection with the sponsors grants awards and programs. The offices and buildings on CUNY campuses where RF field employees perform work on sponsored grants, awards, and programs are the RF offices or locations. As fiscal agent, RF administers over 500 million in federal, state, city, and private sponsored programs awarded to CUNY. CUNY's PIs and staff will engage in sponsored programs are required to comply with RF policies and sponsored agency regulations regarding the management of awards in accordance with internal controls. Since the RF receives over 750,000 in federal funds on behalf of CUNY and its colleges, it is required to undergo an annual audit by independent accounting firm retained

by the RF's Board of Directors. The RF is also subject to cyclical audits from sponsors. RF employs up to 6000 employees at any one time and 11,000 overall each year. Currently, the number of full time and part time employees is 2000 and 4000, respectively. The RF has two types of employees refer to as central office employees and field employees. Central office employees are those employees working under the various administrative departments at the RF central office location. Currently, there are 191 central office employees that are exclusively chosen by the RF. The wages and salaries of central office employees are paid by the RF's operating revenues pursuant to the 1983 agreement. The field employees are those employees hired to work on recent programs and other activities for which outside sponsors support. While field employees identified and selected by the principal investigator on whose project the employees would be working, the RF must approve and effectuate the higher confirming that the candidate meets all necessary qualifications and legal requirements. While the principal investigators have critical input on hiring and firing decisions for field employees,

the RF is, at all times, the employer record and, importantly, must comply with all applicable governmental laws, rules, and regulations. The wages and salaries for field employees are paid by the RF utilizing monies from grants, awards, and sponsored programs. Currently, there are over 5500 field employees physically working on CUNY campuses in connection with sponsored programs, grants, and awards. For all RF employees, benefits are given based on the employee's employment status, that is full-time versus part-time. Employees who are appointed to work at least 35 hours a week are classified as full-time and eligible for full benefits. Employees who are appointed to work less than 35 hours a week are classified as part-time and benefits will vary based on their part-time classification. Benefits to our employees are based solely on the hours appointed and worked through the RF. Those benefits are defined by our F policy and may be different from those benefits given by CUNY to CUNY employees. Thank you. That is my report to the committee.

MODERATOR: Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you--
I'm sorry, Chloe.

MODERATOR: Thank you for your testimony.
I will now call on Council members with questions in
the order that they have used the raise hand
function. I'm sorry. Council member, Chair Barron--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you very much
and thank you to the panel. To the testimony. It's
quite extensive. Oh, I'm so sorry. It's quite
extensive and it indicates so much of what we have
had a desire to know for such a long period of time.
I will first start and then I'll take a break.
Normally I go through all my questions and then turn
it over to my colleagues, but I have invited
particular colleagues to be here because of the
expertise they have, so I'm going to do my
questioning in bunches so that my colleagues who have
very busy schedules can maximize their time. So, what
was the purpose of creating the Research Foundation
as a separate entity and it seems that CUNY has,
actually, no authority over what they do?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Well, going back to
our charter, our charter indicates that we were

created as a separate entity to arrest see, hold, and administer grants and contracts on behalf of CUNY.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, how does that contribute to CUNY guiding mission statement to operate in an integrated fashion? It seems like it is, you know, a wall that is here, but there are some gaps in the wall and sometimes things seem to go through these gaps. But how does that provide an integrated functioning?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Well, the charter requires the charter states that we are a separate entity for the purpose of administering these sponsored programs, but also for the separation of the tax levy versus the sponsored programs. Again, we are separate entities and the RF was created to administer grants and contracts for CUNY as a separate entity. A nonprofit.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And that was in 1983. So, what happened before 1983?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: The 1983 is an agreement that was set up with CUNY and the RF that identifies the responsibilities of each entity in the process of administering sponsored programs.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, before 1983, what was happening? What was the structure? What was the operation?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Honestly, I believe the operation was the same. I think the 1983 agreement just confirmed the rules and responsibility of each entity. It put information on paper as far as what responsibility CUNY was responsible for as far as the oversight of the award versus the RF and the administration of the project. So, it just clarified the roles of the entities in the process of administering sponsored programs.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. Because the foundation was, I think, in 1963.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: 1963. That's right. Uh-hm.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, are there cost savings or operational efficiencies that are associated with having a separate research foundation and, if so, tell us what they are.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: I don't have a course study, but I will say that the RF has been administering sponsored programs for over 50 years. We are very skilled and trained. This is all that we

do, so there are efficiencies in that in that there's no other types of funds that we're administering that we are focusing on to that extent. So this is something that we have been doing for over 50 years. We have skilled staff who understand the various sponsor requirements, the varied sponsor recording, and that skill set is something that is creating a more streamlined and efficient process overall for CUNY.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Well, I understand that it's very exclusive and I understand it's a particular skill set, but I would really like to know how you quantify that and say that that's a cost savings.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: I don't have any quantification of it as a cost savings. I've not done an analysis in that regard. I'm just talking, essentially, from the structure and the length of time that we've been doing it. This centralized process appears to be a more efficient way as opposed to decentralized, but I don't have a course study. I don't have any evidence of a course study to share with the committee on that.

2 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. So how do we
3 ensure ongoing alignment with CUNY's interests? How
4 do we know the benefits that we're getting? Being
5 measured at?

6 PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Yeah. Well, we
7 are-- RF is a nonprofit fiscal agent of CUNY. We
8 are always in direct contact and communication with
9 CUNY. We work hand in hand with the CUNY PI and
10 staff. We work with the administrators of CUNY, so
11 we have maintained alignment throughout
12 communications. We meet regularly with their CUNY
13 officials, the Council of Presidents, so that we are
14 ensured that we are in line with the overall
15 initiative of what CUNY is doing. But, again, I will
16 process our administration, a sponsored programs is
17 also the focus of our work and we also make sure that
18 we stand in alignment with what the sponsor
19 requirements are, as well.

20 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: How often do you
21 meet with the Council of Presidents?

22 PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Monthly. Monthly.

23 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. Besides the
24 award of grants and funding, how does the Research
25 Foundation support its operation?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: The Research Foundation is a sole member of an LLC, 230 West 41st Street LLC, and that entity was created to own, operate, and manage the facility, the office building. So there is income that is used from the LLC to support its operations. To help offset its operations.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And what is that amount?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: It's usually around-- this year it's going to be about 1 million dollars. In the past, it's been maybe two. Due to the economy and with what's going on with the pandemic, there's been a drop in revenues, but it's about 1 million this year.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And what is the role-- since the RF is an independent entity, what is the role of the Chancellor in that Board of Directors?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: The Chancellor is the Chair of the Board. The Chancellor's responsibility is, actually, to call meetings, to lead over those meetings. He's also required to sign

documents as needed and other duties that the Board may request of him.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. Can you please describe the role of Neil Stall [sp?], the senior Vice President of Preclinical Development and Biomolecular Science Pharmaceuticals in the CUNY Board of Directors and where is he cited?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Yeah. Neil Stall is an at large board member. He has been an at large member for some time on the RF's board. He serves as executive vice president of research and development at Regeneron Pharmaceuticals and he's been in that role since January 2015. To our knowledge, he's not-- Mr. Stall does not work on any CUNY campus. He is an at large board member of the RF Board of Directors.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. I don't recall-- I didn't have your testimony in front of me, so I can't refer to it, but I don't recall you mentioning at large members.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Yes. I did. There are four at large members on the Board.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: You told them.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. Four who were nominated to the committee. Okay. Those are the at large. And do you know who the other three members of that at large division are?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: The other three members are vacant seats. We are in the process of filling those vacancies.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And how does someone get nominated to fill a vacancy?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Yeah. There's a nominating committee that will elect someone and then the Board makes the decision.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. I'm going to-- I have more questions, but I'm going to turn it over to the moderator to allow my colleagues to ask their very pointed questions from their background in finances, in particular. So, Madam moderator, you can [inaudible 00:35:18].

MODERATOR: Thank you, Chair Barron. I will now call on Council members with questions in the order that they have used the raise hand function in zoom. Council members, if you would like to ask a

question and you have not yet used the raise hand function in zoom, please do so now. Also, please remember to keep questions and answers to five minutes. The sergeant-at-arms will maintain a clock and a member of our staff will unmute you. You may begin after I call on you and the Sergeant gives you the queue. We will now hear questions from Council member Rosenthal.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

MODERATOR: We can hear you.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Oh. I've been unmuted. Terrific. Oh. Thank you. Sorry. Hi, everyone. Council member Barron, as always, your questions are perfect and it is so interesting to hear about the Research Foundation. I really appreciate your calling this hearing and, Ms. Bramlette, thank you so much for your testimony and to everyone. One of the things I found challenging in trying to decipher what is being said is two things: one the use of jargon. You know, just to the extent that you can, when you're answering questions try to, you know, think about a lay audience that doesn't necessarily know what these words mean. And

second of all, if you can give examples-- specific examples-- that would really help.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: So, thank you. First of all, could you just-- if it hasn't already been laid out, what are the overhead fees that the foundation charges? Are they different for different types of things or are they standard?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Okay. The Research Foundation, again, we do charge administrative fees and an administrative fee, we would refer to it as. So, that fee is what we use to support our operations. So, that fee is based on the actual spend on the sponsored programs. So, if there is a project that comes into a college that is funded by a sponsor, a government agency-- let's just say NSF. That sponsor--

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: What's NSF? I'm sorry?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: National Science Foundation.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Oh, thank you. Got it. Got it.

2 PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Right. And as
3 the-- and it's awarded to one of the CUNY colleges.
4 Okay. As that project-- as we incur expenses on
5 that project, we charge a fee based on the nature of
6 the expenses. So what we would do-- this
7 administrative fee, we have different rate categories
8 of our fee, so we would charge a specific rate for
9 all personnel related expenditures on a project. For
10 example, employees that are hired on this NSF--
11 National Science Foundation project-- as we incur
12 expenses, meaning there's payroll generated for the
13 employees on the project, there is a specific rate
14 that the RF would apply to those course to cover its
15 fee-- its own operations. There's also specific
16 rates that we would apply to other types of expenses
17 on these projects. So, the administrative fee is a
18 mechan-- is a way of us to recover our costs--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Sure. Sure.

20 PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: And we have various
21 rates that we apply based on the nature of the
22 expenses on these sponsored programs-- projects.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: So, is it just
24 two types of expenses? Personnel or other than
25 personnel?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Personnel is one category. OTPS expenses. Other than personnel expenses. There's a category for ICAs-- Independent Contractor Agreements. So, there are various categories of--

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: And so what's the percentage for PS?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: 6.75.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: And what's the percentage for OTPS?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Five and a half.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: So, overall, it's around 11 and a half/ 12 percent is your overhead?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: It may not equate to that. It's not a total, necessarily, of the rates. It depends on each project is funded differently. So there may be some projects that don't have an OTPS component or a PS component. So it varies. It varies. Meaning there may be projects that come in that don't have personnel on the project, so there won't be a PS component that we would charge a fee against.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: You know, I'm
3 just going to be really honest. I think-- I
4 understand a little better now. Do you think you
5 could send over to the committee counsel like five
6 examples of typical projects and sort of what the
7 overhead applied to those are?

8 PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Sure.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I think it
10 would be easier or, you know, whatever is a
11 reasonable number. I think it would be easier for us
12 to sort of decipher what you saying, but I really
13 appreciate you using more lay language. I really do.

14 PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Not a problem.
15 Yeah.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: But it's hard.
17 It still feels like a ball of string that I'm trying
18 to sort of unravel and understand.

19 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Chair, may I
21 continue just a little bit longer? Thank you. So,
22 do you have-- does the Research Foundation actually
23 have employees on the different CUNY Campuses?

24 PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Yes. We have the--
25 the sponsored program activity occurs on the

different campuses and we hire those individuals working on those programs. So, they are all dispersed at the different campuses.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay. Can I say something really dumb and obvious, but I'm just going to try to describe what you're saying. So, there's a scientist at a CUNY campus who has an idea for a project. They get foundation funding from the National Science Foundation, but the money will go through the research fund and then given to the scientist to do their study. Is the scientist considered the personnel? No.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: No.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I'm trying to understand why there would be--

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Okay. Let me--

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: a Research Foundation person on the CUNY campus.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Okay. So, CUNY has faculty and staff that apply for these sponsored programs. They are all on CUNY's payroll. They are not RF employees.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: These individuals, they apply for these awards. Once they grant it, because we are the fiscal and administrative for CUNY, we do the administration of the funds. So, the funds are deposited with the RF. The CUNY PI is at one of the locations of CUNY. They--

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: CUNY-- I'm sorry? The CUNY PI?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: I'm sorry. You're right. The project investigator. The faculty member that administered the-- that received the funds, basically.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: To do the study.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: To do the study. Right. So the CUNY faculty that received the funds is housed at a CUNY location. It's working from a CUNY location and the funds, again, are deposited with the RF. The project is set up within the RF to administer. The CUNY faculty, once this award has been granted, would be-- may need to hire individuals to work on the project.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Ah. I see.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Someone to do clerical. They may have to hire employees to work on this specific National Science Foundation project.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Got it.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Those employees that this CUNY faculty hires is going to be charged and paid from the National Science Foundation grant.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Right. Right.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: And those employees are who we hire. We hire these individuals--

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Got it.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: for these projects that are going on at the CUNY college.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: So, it could even be like teaching assistants-- fellows that are hired.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: It could be.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Not administrative. You know, could be graduate students. It could be--

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: There's research-- graduate students, research assistants. It could be anyone that is needed to administer that on--

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Could it be
3 faculty or part time faculty? No? Adjunct? No?

4 PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Adjunct? No.
5 Usually, there is no-- we don't have faculty on our
6 payroll. They are on CUNY payroll. Adjuncts, yes.
7 I'm sorry. Adjuncts, yes.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay.

9 PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Yes. We do have--
10 Yes. we could hire adjuncts. So there are some
11 joint-- I mean, there are some joint employment, but
12 adjuncts is one of them that we could-- we do have
13 on our payroll, actually.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay. And so,
15 who negotiates the salaries of all of those people?
16 Is it, you know, through the grants?

17 PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Well, the salaries
18 are budgeted for because the National Science
19 Foundation, when they make the award, they've given a
20 defined budget that is been approved for the sponsor
21 to use.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Right. But,
23 usually, when somebody applies for a grant, they are
24 going to put in the salary amount, right? We need
25 five adjuncts at this amount. I need three clerical

roles at this amount. Who determines what those dollar amounts are?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: The CUNY PI. The CUNY faculty member.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: And does-- Got it. Does the CUNY faculty member have any guidance or could they be paying an adjunct more than what, you know, for this foundation work compared to an adjunct working at CUNY teaching courses?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: The CUNY faculty member has the guidance of the administrative on their campus as far as how to formulate and submit budget and what information to put in there. So, with every college, there is what's called a grants office that is responsible for guiding the CUNY faculty with the sponsored programs and given direction in that regard, but that's, essentially, a CUNY function.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: So, okay. So, if I have an adjunct working on a foundation grant side-by-side with an adjunct teaching a class, will they be paid the same amount?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: I don't know, honestly. Honestly, I don't have that information.

2 I don't know for certain what the salary is. I would
3 say that there is likely that they would not be paid
4 the same amount because there are-- if they are paid
5 on a project, there are requirements as to the budget
6 of the project, but, yeah. That is not something
7 that I've done any research on.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay. Okay.
9 Just sort of processing that. So, that-- got it.
10 So, that is something that CUNY campus or the
11 Chancellor's office decides and sends that
12 information to each CUNY campus and they follow those
13 guidelines? So you're not involved in---

14 PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Yeah. The guiding
15 lines that we follow are for the sponsored projects
16 and we pay adjuncts and all employees based on the
17 budgeted amounts.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Which was
19 submitted by the PI--

20 PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Submitted by the
21 sponsor.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: in the first
23 place. Right.

24 PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Which is submitted
25 by the faculty. What the adjunct at CUNY is being

paid and whether it is in the line with what the adjuncts on RF payroll are--

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Got it.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: I don't know whether the salaries are in line or--

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Got it. Got it. Got it. Thank you. And so, a different got a question. What percentage-- and when you look at all the grants, what percentage are sort of research related versus workforce development?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Roughly, it's about a little over 30 percent research related. That has been our-- we have been holding steady on that percent for some time now. And then, there is a population that are more training and workforce related which is--

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Is that in--

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: possibly about a third, as well. A third of our overall activity. Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you. And what's the other third?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Other program public service, other types of programs considered

maybe public service and conferences and stuff of that nature.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay. A third, a third, a third. And is that sort of guiding philosophy?

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: We will come back, Council member.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: You can pose another question and then we'll have a second round.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Terrific. Last question. Of all the grants, what percentage of the employees are part time?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Actually, part time we have-- I would say we have about maybe two thirds that are part time. We have a--

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: What's that--

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: population currently of 6000 employees, 2000 of which are full time and 4000 are part time. So, it's about two thirds.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: So, in the next round, when I come back, I'd be curious to know a little more about why so many are part time versus

2 full time. But thank you so much, Chair Barron. I
3 appreciate you.

4 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you so much.
5 I appreciate your pointed questions and I do have a
6 few questions before I proceed with other members who
7 have questions. You spoke of joint employment. Can
8 you explain what that joint employment is? How it is
9 determined? Who pays what part of the salary and why
10 people can't be placed in one? Because people have
11 wondered if by splitting a person's employment, that
12 person might not, in fact, be losing out on some
13 benefits, some pension, some contributions that would
14 accrue if they were paid by one entity. How do they
15 get their payments? How do they get their W-2 forms?
16 All of that in terms of someone who has a joint
17 employment?

18 PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Well, the Research
19 Foundation, again, was set up to administer sponsored
20 programs with CUNY. So all the-- and per the 1983
21 agreement, all employees that are hired on these
22 programs are employees of the RF. So, we hire who
23 CUNY tells us to hire on these projects. Okay. We
24 are a single employer. We're not CUNY as far as we
25 don't share state plans and benefit plans. We're a

2 separate single employer from CUNY. So we hire who
3 CUNY tells us to hire on these sponsored project.
4 So, there really is no connection, so to speak. We
5 are a separate entity. We hire employees that CUNY
6 tells us to hire on sponsored projects. They may
7 be-- These individuals may be working in some other
8 capacity. Again, adjuncts and graduate students are
9 examples of that at CUNY, but we are responsible for
10 hiring all employees that are on sponsored projects.
11 We hire them through the Research Foundation and we
12 have our own benefit plan separate from CUNY in that
13 regard. So that's just the nature of our being per
14 the charter and the 1983 agreement.

15 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, why wouldn't an
16 employee get-- does an employee get two paychecks?

17 PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: The employee gets a
18 paycheck from the RF, okay, because we are a separate
19 employer. If the employee is also working at CUNY,
20 they will get a paycheck from CUNY, I suppose. But,
21 again, we're two separate employers. The RF is a
22 private not for profit corporation that is structured
23 and set up for the administration of these sponsored
24 programs. And all employees working on these
25 sponsored programs are employees of the RF. So, we

are required to employ these individuals. We're required to pay them based on the work they do on these sponsored programs. If, by chance, some of them are doing other functions at CUNY, which is a separate entity, separate organizations, public university, as if they were doing some other function at another employer.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: But is it poss--

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: We have different benefit plans.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. Is it possible, then, that an employee can be doing one function, one position, but getting paid for that one function from two sources? I understand somebody may be working on one project at Research and then doing something different at CUNY.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: No. It's usually-- my understanding is it's usually different. So what they are doing on a sponsored project is different, separate, and apart from what they are doing at CUNY. So, sponsored projects have separate purposes. They are separate works that are going on at the CUNY colleges that are separate and apart from their capacity and what they're doing for CUNY. So, again,

2 these are individuals working on governmental and
3 private sponsored programs that last for maybe up to
4 a year or shorter or longer. Some are longer. But
5 there are fundings that are very defined time periods
6 that they work on and the, whatever they're doing--
7 if they are working at any capacity at CUNY, it will
8 be different than what they are doing on the
9 sponsored project.

10 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, what's the
11 median length of time for service for RF employees?
12 Because I have information that says that 80 percent
13 of them are employees from zero to five years, but
14 then there's a six to 10 years of service is about
15 eight percent of employees in RF. 11 to 15 years of
16 service are six percent. 16 to 20 years of service
17 are two percent. And 21 to 25 are eight percent.
18 So, let's say those in the 11 to 15 years of service.
19 11 to 15 years of service. Have they been in the
20 same position doing the same thing?

21 PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Right. So, most
22 of, again, the population that we hire are in sponsor
23 programs and these programs only last for a
24 designated period of time.

25 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. And just--

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: We have one--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. That information is for the PSC members, just to be clear.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Okay. We have our central office population which are much more long term employees because we are the administrators managing the functions. There is also a population of employees on our payroll that are RF employees but working in capacity-- administrative capacity-- at CUNY which may be part of that long term classification of employee, okay? But most of our population of employees are those sponsored program employees and they run for defined periods of time. The long term employees you'll find were in the central office, our central office, and the population of CUNY administrators that are on our payroll that are doing more administrative function. Not necessarily-- not associated with the sponsored program population.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. And my last question before I turn it back to my colleagues to ask their questions, if RF is awarded a city contract, usually that process would require that the contract get administered and then reviewed by the

city agency and then, subsequently, sent to the Comptroller or does that happen here or is CUNY the managing oversight agency of that contract?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: With city awards, typically, they are reviewed and approved by the agency.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: And they are registered with the state comptroller's office and they are administered--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: The office?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: I'm sorry. The comptroller's office. Not the state. Comptrollers--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: office. I'm sorry.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: No problem.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: And they are administered by the RF. These agreements are typically administered by the RF.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. Thank you. Madam moderator, you can return to my-- I want to also acknowledge we have been joined by Council members Rodriguez and Ulrich who are both members of

the Higher Ed committee. Thank you. Madam
moderator?

MODERATOR: Thank you, Chair Barron. We
will now turn to Council member Rodriguez for his
questions.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. I
have a few questions. The first one is what is the
ethnic breakdown of the employees of the Research
Foundation?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: What is the
employee breakdown?

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: The ethnic
background. Do you have it? Yes or no?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Yes. Yes, we do.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Can you share
with us?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Okay. So, I
mentioned that we have approximately 6000 employees.
10,000 are American Indian, 1000 are Asian. 1075, to
be exact. 1153 are black. 1402 are Hispanic. 690
are not classified. Two-- I'm sorry. 135 are two
or more races. 1596 are white.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Okay. So, the Foundation is lead-- does that also include at the leadership positions of the--

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Yes. That's all employees. Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Okay. My second question. Does the Research Foundation have any interaction with the institutes including the Puerto Rican, Dominican, Haitian, the applicants institutes?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: I mean, our interaction is with the CUNY colleges. It may be that the award is granted to an institute that's-- we're administering. Only in that capacity. But, again, we are the fiscal agent for all CUNY, so if there are funds being granted to one of those entities, they would be administered by the RF.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Okay. But in this particular case and then I'm going to one of my top priorities, are you aware of-- or, of course, in the capacity as a-- not a USA individual, but as a research foundation, are you aware or do you get to also look at centers such as the Puerto Rican Center has any fiscal challenge?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: I'm sorry? Do we
check to see if the Puerto Rican--

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: As the
administrator role that you play at Research, are you
aware if there's any challenge going on with the
Puerto Rican Center?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: No.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: With a center
of Puerto Rican-- Yeah.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Yeah. That
function is really a CUNY function. We're not
involved in any challenges of that extent. Again, if
any sponsored awards are given to any unit of CUNY,
we would administer those funds on behalf of CUNY,
but we are not engaged in addressing those issues.
Those are CUNY issues that are typically addressed by
CUNY.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Is the
Research administered and, of course, like if you
have a different explanation-- you say that the
Research plays a role in administrator of the
funding?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: The Research
Foundation administers the sponsored programs, so all

sponsored programs that are allocated to a CUNY college are sent to the Research Foundation to administer.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Okay.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: And by administer, I mean that we set up on our books and records, these funds and we process transactions at your request. At CUNY's request against those funds in compliance with sponsored guidelines.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: All right. And are you aware of any fiscal challenges of one of those centers from Puerto Rican, Dominican, Haitians?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: I'm not aware. No.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Okay. And so, the last questions and my comment is, as Chair, you are a big supporter with the centers and the institutes and I feel that, if anyone from CUNY can also let us know what is going on with the Puerto Rican Study Center, it is something that I know it is important for all of us. I think that one challenge that I have seen in the past is that funding has been allocated to centers that there is not been a complete clarity when it comes to how the money moves

from the moment when we allocate it, in this case,
from the city Council to the--

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time expired.

COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: and then going
to, in this case, CUNY and if the Research Foundation
plays in administrator role, I think it is important
also that they share with us if there are any fiscal
challenges going on in any of the institutes. I
think that, right now, I have seen how, you know,
some challenges are affecting the Puerto Rican
centers in the centers that, for me, as a born and
raised Dominican, I know how important they are to
connect our students to the research that have
happened for so many decades, not only among the
Dominican study center, but also with the Puerto
Rican and the Africans in the Haitians. So, I also
wanted to highlight and bring to your attention that
I hope also that, in your role as the Chairman,
working with some of the funding of the Puerto Rican
study centers, if we will work with them to be sure
that we provide all of the support they need. Now
that the director Edwin steps out from that position,
I think it is important that the leadership of the
Institute continues playing the role to identify how

they would be bringing the new director of the center and I think that this is something that I hope no one outside the leadership or the founders of the Institute or the Puerto Rican Center will be the one deciding who will be the best person that fulfills all the requirements to be the director of that institute. Thank you.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you, Council member Rodriguez. I have many more questions, so I will start with them now and I thank you for your explanation and for taking the time to respond to these questions. They are very, very important, as I've said. This is probably the first time, so this is giving us a lot of the basic information which we have not had on the record previously. What are the properties that are owned and leased by the Research Foundation?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: The Research Foundation doesn't own any properties. The Research Foundation, as I mentioned earlier, is a sole member of an LL-- 230 West 41st Street LLC and that LLC was established to own the building, the office building on which we are housed.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, that confuses me. You are the sole member of an entity that owns the property, but you don't own the property?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Right. It is a separate entity. The 230 West 41st Street, it's a separate limited liability company that was established to own that property. The Research Foundation is only a member, a sole member of the entity. And that entity has its own tax ID number. It is a separate entity altogether. So, yes.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. And do you have any endowments? Does the Research Foundation have any endowments?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: No. No, we don't.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Do you have any stock investments?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: No.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Not outside of just our normal investment portfolio.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. You used to publish annual reports that included each individual grant that had been awarded, but the last copy that the committee was able to recover was from 2006.

Does RS still produce these annual reports and, if not, why not?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Right. I think on our website we do have the last one at 2016 and, since then, we have not published them. That was the leadership decision at the time. We are at a point now where we are looking to post that information on our website, possibly not in a formal, published a document, but in some kind of report form.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Don't you think that that is really obfuscating what the organization does and its efficiency to reduce information sharing and say, we don't think that we should continue to inform the population as to what awards we have gotten?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Yeah. I think, at that time, that--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: He made that decision, you know, to end it, you know-- I mean--

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: No. No.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: We're talking about being more and more and more transparent.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Right. Right. And I agree. I agree. And that is something that we are

looking to do maybe not in a published book form, but the information that we want to provide out there are definitely the numbers so that the community can see what kind of activity is generated at the various colleges. And that is what we are in the process of doing now. So, from 2016 on word, we will be posting that information to identify the grant-- the award activity that was received by the various colleges.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I would think that the Research Foundation would want to crow about all the great work they have done and how much money they have gotten in the increases and competitive awards. So, I certainly would encourage that to happen.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Thank you. That's what we-- Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: That is definitely something we are working on. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. Is there an operational or other agreement between the Research Foundation and CUNY other than what you've talked about that spells out the obligations or is that that same agreement that you talked about.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: It's pretty much the same agreement. The 1983 agreement. The results--

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: I'm going to speeded up a little. And does that agreement have what is called the arm's-length provision for each entity is represented by legal counsel?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: The agreement was signed by a representative of CUNY and RF. This is the 1983 agreement.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Is there the arm's-length provision so that we don't, as you talk about, keeping the funds separate? Is there an arm's length? In other words, you know, when you go to buy a house, you don't want to have the same lawyer as the person who is selling you the house.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Two separate entities. The Research Foundation and CUNY. So, there are two separate individuals. Our representative from CUNY signing the agreement, as well as the RF.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. So, if an employee of RF is working at a campus and there is an issue that comes up-- a personnel matter that comes

up and it involves conditions on the campus, how does that matter get resolved?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: That matter, if this is an RF employee, that matter could be taken to the RF human resource department. Again, we have our own human resource area and apartment that that issue could be addressed to. We also have a whistleblower hotline if it was an anonymous complaint that needs to be addressed. The issue could also be brought to the college HR department because, again, we are in direct contact with the various colleges on certain divisions. And also to the CUNY PI, the one [inaudible 01:10:25] project.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: So, there are various ways in which that complaint could be sent.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. How recovery accounts, which sponsor reimbursements to individual CUNY colleges for costs incurred to carry out sponsored program works. Does each college have the same amount in their account and, if so, what is that amount and can you describe the types of reimbursements colleges may claim and for how much?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Right. So, the college recovery accounts, that is a general term. It's typically the indirect cost recovery account that's the main account of each college. So, there are different balances in each account and that account is housed at the RF. We administer those funds on behalf of CUNY. So, again, we talked about the college when they receive an award to administer on their campus, they are entitled to recovery of their costs. So, there is a cost to them to administer these funds on campus. They are using electricity. They are using heat. They have building maintenance that is a cost to the organization and sponsors allow the college to be reimbursed for those costs. That is what we are calling indirect costs that the colleges receive and those funds are typically deposited and what we call a recovery account at the RF. And those funds are typically used for purposes mainly to advance research at the various colleges and to support other PIs in their research endeavors.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: You may recall the incident of City College President being cited for inappropriate use, personal use, funds and how was

that situation resolved and what mechanisms are in place to prevent that type of occurrence?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Right. That incident, I believe, was an incident that was at City College. So, what I know has been put in place-- meaning the RF wasn't cited in any of that incident. I mean, what I know that has been put in place that CUNY has implemented in December 2017 to-- they adopted guidelines on how to administer non-tax levy funds or, actually, what is the proper allowable use and nonuse of nontax levy funds. So, the adoption of those new guidelines have been implemented so that there is proper understanding of how those funds should be used going forward and that RF has adopted those guidelines that the CUNY Board of Trustees have approved.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, how does that-- was it approved by a board in that instance? Those personal items? Those personal purchases?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: I don't have any information on-- not by an RF board. I don't believe it was approved by any board. I think these are transactions that, again, with not just recovery accounts, but with sponsored accounts, there is a

2 CUNY official, a CUNY PI that approves transactions
3 and sends them to the RF for processing and that was
4 an example of one transaction that was approved by a
5 CUNY official and then sent to the RF for processing.

6 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. And how does
7 the college go about requesting that type of
8 reimbursement?

9 PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: The reimbursement--
10 which type of reimbursement? I'm sorry?

11 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: The sponsored
12 reimbursement.

13 PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: So, the
14 reimbursements that the colleges are entitled to as
15 far as overhead--

16 CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Right. Overhead.
17 Indirect costs.

18 PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Right. Okay. So,
19 those reimbursements are budgeted for, or sponsor
20 approved and they typically reimburse on a
21 transactional basis. So, as the project incurs
22 direct costs, the sponsor will improve and indirect
23 cost rate. It is a rate that is applied to specific
24 direct costs and they are reimbursed on a
25 transactional basis. We have systems in place and

mechanisms in place to make these entries then reimbursements to the College Recovery Accounts. So, they are, essentially, rate-based and they apply to direct costs on the project.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Two more questions and then I am going to shift to see if other colleagues have questions. You said that there were recommendations that were given input in place so that we don't have the similar kinds of occurrence. Can you share those recommendations with us or tell us where exactly we can find them?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Yeah. What I was referring to was what's considered the breakthrough that CUNY matrix-- it's a document that was created and prepared that identifies what is an allowable course versus prohibited course on nontax levy funds. This is something that I believe is posted on the website. CUNY's website, so I can make note of providing that to you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. Great. And how does the Research Foundation go about finding or creating capital construction projects and how do they get prioritized?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Yeah. Capital construction projects are, basically, at the direction of CUNY. Again, we don't do this independent of CUNY. These are requests that come from one of the colleges and they are either supported on a sponsored project or maybe one of their recovery accounts. But these requests are CUNY initiatives that they initiate transactions and we process them at their request. So, these are not projects that we internally spearhead indirect and prioritize. These are at the individual CUNY colleges.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: So, for the money that-- I'm trying to get a better understanding of this. If the state now is giving additional funds for capital projects to CUNY, are those the types of projects that you would then be involved with?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: No.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Oh. So you're only involved in projects--

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Right.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: That--

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: So, right. Yeah. Whatever the state has given to CUNY for capital

projects, we are not involved in. What we are involved in is whatever's going to be funded through a sponsored project.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: A sponsored project.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Maybe some renovation of an award that is going to be funded by the sponsored project. In those cases, we would be involved in. And, again, all of that is going to be initiated by someone at a CUNY college.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. Great. Madam moderator, are there other Council members that have questions?

MODERATOR: We don't have any other Council members with their hands raised at this time. I am double checking. It looks like we can move on or you can continue with the line of questioning.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. I think most of my questions have been answered. Oh. I have another question. How many programs does RF run net? Do you have a number of how many programs you are currently administering?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Currently, we have about 4800 active projects that we all are

administering and, then again, that number changes based on the volume. So, if the volume is up, that counter projects would increase versus when they are down.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And what's the--
I'm sorry?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: No. That is all.
I'm sorry.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: What is the average length of time-- I know that varies. What is the average length of time of a particular project?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: The averages about a year. Most of them run at least a year. Right. There may be some that run for a shorter., Some that may be extended. There are some projects that sponsors will allow extensions. But, typically, I would say a year is an average turnaround time for a project.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And then, in terms of the evaluation of the project, who does that? Is that part of the description that the sponsor creates when they do their project? How do we know that it has been successful? What does that evaluation and where is that noted?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Well, the evaluation is all a CUNY faculty function in coordination with the sponsor. So, the RF is only involved in the administration of the funds. Anything as far as oversight and evaluation, it would be something that CUNY faculty would be working with the sponsor on.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. So, what compliance and internal controls exist to ensure that money is granted to the foundation go towards CUNY research purposes or otherwise ensure the integrity of the foundation operation?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Yeah. The Research Foundation has a number of policies and procedures that are in place. We have controls that are in place within our systems to ensure that only authorized individuals have access to their sponsored funds. We have financial systems that have checks and balances in place to ensure that, of course, our systems are in sync, and we have ongoing audits to verify and confirm. But, again, our policies and procedures and compliance with them is what we considered to be the strength of our internal controls.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And what is the status of the Grants Plus incorporation or do you still have a relationship or an affiliation with them?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Grants Plus, that activity, that entity is closing in June 2019.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: And what prompted that?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: It was an entity that was created, again, to all for sponsored program activity to other nonprofits other than CUNY and RF, but it just wasn't a profitable entity and it has kind of run its course, so we ended that entity.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: D of any role in supporting CUNY's intellectual property ownership rights and royalties?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: No. That is purely a CUNY function.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. And what is the status of the Inspector General's investigation? I believe there was an investigation that was held. Is that concluded and was there a report?

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: I'm not aware of any status of that investigation. I am assuming you are talking about the city College?

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Yes.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Okay. Yeah. The RF was not told that we are a subject of that investigation. We have not seen nor received any report from the Inspector General or city College.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. Great. Thank you. Madam moderator, are there other members who have questions?

MODERATOR: No. At this time, there are no other members with their hands raised in Zoom.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Okay. Thank you so much, Ms. Bramlette. I want to thank you for your time and for sharing the information and we appreciate your being here today. Thank you.

PRESIDENT BRAMLETTE: Thank you so much for having me. Thank you. It's been a pleasure.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. Madam moderator, is there another panel?

MODERATOR: Yes. Thank you, Chair Barron. So, we have concluded the Research Foundation testimony and will now turn to public

testimony. First, I would like to remind everyone that I will call up individuals in panels. Once your name is called, a member of our staff will unmute you and you may begin your testimony once the sergeant-at-arms sets the clock and gives you the cue. All testimony will be limited to three minutes. Remember that there is a few seconds away when you are on muted before we can hear you. Please wait for the sergeant-at-arms to announce that you may begin before starting your testimony. The first panel of public testimony, in order of speaking, will include Barbara Bowen, president of PSC CUNY, the Lori Rothstein, delegate Research Foundation field unit delegate at PSC CUNY, Naomi Zauderer, associate Executive Director of PSC CUNY, and David Jeruzalmi, a professor at City College. Barbara Bowen, Pres. Bowen, you may begin once the Sgt. gives you the cue.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

BARBARA BOWEN: Great. Thank you very much. Thank you, Chair Barron, for holding this hearing, for your persistence in holding the hearings, and also thank you for the introduction where you had a chance to celebrate the long march to victory on the campaign for social equity because

those students 20 years ago, they have all now pass through CUNY where they were underfunded also. So, thank you so much for that and thank you for your focus on this. Thank you, also. I know some of the Council members have another hearing, but am very grateful to them, too. I will not present formal testimony. I want to say just briefly that the professional staff Congress is proud to represent the employees that the central office at the Research Foundation and I think it is important to draw a distinction between the largely full-time employees at the central office to do the processing of grants, who do the expert work of auditing and other financial and administrative work. That is one component and we represent that small group of employees. And then we also represent Psalm. We would like to represent all, but we represent some of the employees who are employed by the Research Foundation. We were speaking about them earlier on library CUNY campuses and who are employed through grant funds. They are many, many more of the employees that are part-time employees and we have serious concerns about the conditions for those employees about the difficulty of negotiating

contracts for those employees. So, we believe that all employees should be, as you know this, should be treated fairly, should have full benefits and compensation, and that many of the employees whom we represent have been part-time for years and years and years and so we struggle with them and on their behalf to have professional and fair conditions and we do that in concert with what you heard about the PIs, the principal investigators who are the faculty or staff who will apply for and achieve these grants. Those are our members. They want fairness, too, and we tried to work together to achieve that. So, I am really pleased that we have one of the research Foundation employees from one of the campuses with us and then Naomi Zauderer from our staff who has led the negotiations on their contracts and I am happy to-- and I know David Jeruzalmi from his really terrific work as a faculty leader at City College. I am excited to hear what he is going to say, too. So, I am very pleased to be here and I will stop with that in just thank you all for being here and I am very pleased to have your probing questions, Chair Barron. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you.

MODERATOR: Thank you for your testimony.
Next, we will have Lori Rothstein.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

LORI ROTHSTEIN: Thank you. Can everyone
hear me?

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Yes.

LORI ROTHSTEIN: I have a rather long
statement. I'm, unfortunately, going to have to
speed read it to you. I will submit it in writing as
a backup. So, I'm going to navigate to that now and
begin reading. My name is Lori Rothstein. I am an
employee at the Research Foundation. I have worked
at the graduate Center for more than 20 years. I am
the elected delegate for the Research Foundation
field units of the professional staff Congress, the
union that represents CUNY faculty and staff.
Altogether, Research Foundation projects that employ
more than 13,000 people each year across CUNY's 26
campuses. This is a figure from approximately last
year when I originally prepared this. Research
Foundation employees work on a wide variety of
projects and grants. The work improves the lives of
the most underprivileged New Yorkers to projects
including adult literacy, workforce development, job

placement, and small business development. They engage in and support cutting-edge research in economics, the humanities, international affairs, and the sciences. CUNY Research Foundation employees will not campuses experienced the same stress is created by the chronic underfunding of CUNY as a whole and suffer from the same structure all inequalities inflicted on the publicly funded employees of the University. Recent records on the three organized campuses, the graduate Center, New York City College of technology, city Tech, and LaGuardia Community College show that more than 60 percent of Research Foundation employees are classified as part-time B, meaning that they work 19 or fewer hours per week. Around four percent are part-time A, working between 19 and 35 hours per week. The rest, or 36 percent, our full time, working 35 hours per week. Just under a quarter, 23.45 percent of all Research Foundation employees and PSC covered units are paid \$18 an hour or less. This is one cent more per hour than subsistence wage identified by the MIT living wage scale for the New York metropolitan area. Median hourly pay for the part time A is around \$21 an hour. Overall, 40.51

percent of the unitaries paid between \$18 and 32.91 cents per hour. \$32.91 per hour. The upper number and that range is the subsistence wage for a single parent with one child, based on the MIT living wage scale. The annual median salary for full timers is around \$52,000 a year. To understand the financial position that the Research Foundation labor pool, it is necessary to examine what living in subsistence mean in this context. These terms do not indicate anything near what most of us assume to be a reasonable level of financial security and comfort. I urge everyone to the road view the MIT technical standards and to consider for themselves the position that those receiving a so-called living wage and especially those who are saving less are actually in. Out of these meager wages, full-time and part-time A employees must also pay a 19 percent health insurance premium for coverage. Part-time B employees have no access to employer-based health insurance. The vacation accrual, holidays, and whether your days are another area in which part-timers are under compensated. No part time employees receive paid holidays or whether days. Noninstructional part-time employees earn vacation on a prorated system based on

longevity. Instructional part-time employees earn no vacation time. Meanwhile, full-time employees receive 17 paid holidays each year. The lack of paid holidays and whether days for part-timers is especially burdensome for working parents. Lost hours must be made up within the same two week pay period. We hear from our members that the money earned on makeup days and sometimes more often goes right back out to pay additional childcare costs. These policies exacerbate the inequality in wages between full timers and part-timers, hurting the most the people who can least afford the loss of income. There are, by definition, no unskilled workers that Research Foundation projects. The majority of positions require a bachelor's degree or above, computer skills, and relevant work experience, yet a significant percentage of employees are paid as if they lack one or both. Part-timers and new hires often do not have pay parity with their peers performing the same work, even when accounting for the lack of benefits for the part-timers. There is also no system for retaining employees when their grants run out and, thus, keeping their expert at CUNY. Meanwhile, at the Research Foundation central

office, the contract, which covers full timers only, shows a minimum salary range of \$46,000-\$82,000 per year [inaudible 01:31:41] depending on rank. The top administrators make well in excess of \$250,000.

These statistics and policies tell us all we need to know. Research Foundation employees on the campuses are largely part-timers who are under compensated and treated as disposable labor law, at the same time, the University trumpets its world-class research initiatives. It is time for the system of exploitation to change. Thank you.

MODERATOR: Thank you for your testimony.

Next, we will hear from Naomi Zauderer.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

NAOMI ZAUDERER: Can everyone hear me?

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Yes.

NAOMI ZAUDERER: Great. Thank you for holding this hearing. I was really grateful to see that it was restored to the docket. I too do not have formal testimony. I did just want to clarify a few things that I heard today. One is, in terms of the longevity of said employees, the numbers that Chair Barron had given did not include central office employees, but even if it had, the number of central

office employees is so small it would've had a very negligible impact on those percentages. The truth is that there are a fair number of employees, Lori Rothstein among them, who have been very long term employees of the RF. It is not-- I mean, yes. There are people who are on short term projects, there are also a substantial proportion who are really doing the work of the university under the mantel of the RF as a private employer. I also wanted to thank Chair Barron for asking about the annual reports that had-- the detailed annual reports that had ceased in 2016. Those actually included information on every single grant that the RF received in who the recipients were. We would very much like to see that reporting restored. And, finally, do just want to call the committee's attention to the fact that the RF testimony actually acknowledge that they hire who CUNY tells them to which is indicative of a lack of true separation between the entities. I would, in my experience, about representing employees at the RF, I have seen the boundaries between CUNY and the RF to be very fluid and its-- I will leave it at that.

MODERATOR: Thank you for your testimony. Before I turned back to Chair Barron for questions, I would like to remind Council members to use the raise hand-- Oh. My apologies. We one more person who was supposed to testify. I'm very sorry about that. David Jeruzalmi, you may begin when the sergeant gives you the que.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

DAVID JERUZALMI: Chair Barron and members of the New York City Council committee on Higher Education, my name is David Jeruzalmi and I am a professor of chemistry and biochemistry at City College of New York. I am also the chair of the City College Faculty Senate and I'm a member of the CUNY University Faculty Senate Research Foundation Faculty Council and, as a result, I'm a member of the RF's Board of Directors. We welcome the involvement of the New York City Council and oversight of the CUNY RF. I represent CUNY faculty and, as such, will only speak from this perspective. So, for CUNY faculty, the CUNY ERS is the fiscal agent for research awards, grants, and contracts. The CUNY ERS manages a number of functions for running all of these awards, grants, and contracts. And, as such, the CUNY RF is a

crucial tool for the research mission of the city University of New York and, in turn, the research mission is an important component of the access and excellent submissions to educate the children of the whole people of New York City. Now, in 2015, the city College Faculty Senate published results of a survey of faculty satisfaction in the surfaces provided by the CUNY RF. This survey found deep dissatisfaction in the processes and services of the RF, though many CUNY clients, faculty clients, reported positive interactions with CUNY RF employees. The 2015 survey was followed by a satisfaction survey commissioned by the RF itself in 2018 and this more recent survey confirmed the findings of the 2015 survey and identified specific areas of concern. The appointment of Gale Horowitz in 2019 as interim president of the CUNY RF brought with it an honesty and willingness to change the RF and she led an effort to improve some of the services provided by the RF and to honestly and openly engage with faculty who wish to work with the RF to reform the RF into a more efficient partner for faculty research. And in just a few months on the job as interim president, Jarnee Bramlette has impressed me

not only with her willingness to take a critical look at the CUNY RF, but also by her personal example of openness and transparency. CUNY faculty have every reason to expect to that Jarnee Bramlette's tenure as president will bring important changes to the RF and we look forward to continuing to work with her in fulfilling the RF's work in CUNY's teaching and research missions. Thank you.

MODERATOR: Thank you for your testimony. Before I turned back to the Chair for questions, I would like to remind Council members to use the raise hand function in Zoom to indicate that you have a question for this panel. Chair Barron?

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you, Ms. Rivera. I am always pleased to have panelists give testimony who are the ones who are in the field with their shoulder to the wheel and boots on the ground and doing the interaction. So, I certainly thank you and, in fact, much of what was used to be able to the present questions to Ms. Bramlette generated from conversations that I've had with PSC about the questionable practice that is that seemed to result in gross inequity and lack of employee benefits and security. So, we are very much concerned about that

and we think that, at this time, particularly, where we are having that push to get equity in so many areas and to increase the number of-- you know what I'm going to say-- black and Latino persons also, not only in the general, but at this decision making levels. We are looking to make sure we can do that and I just want to thank you for your testimony and for sharing your experiences and for highlighting the differences in the limitations that are put on employees who are part-time A as compared to part-time B. We know when they keep you under 20 hours, it limits what their obligations are, so it is interesting that it caps at 20. And also the fact that the rate of pay is just-- what is it? A penny less than what would be qualified to be in another category. So, I thank you for your testimony. I look forward to continuing to hear from you and your input as now that we have some floor to look at in terms of the Research Foundation, we can explore how to make them bother, particularly hearing that there seems to be someone at the helm who is interested in being more transparent and looking at how we can make improvements in the Research Foundation. So, I think you for your testimony.

LORI ROTHSTEIN: Thank you, Chair Barron.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. Madam
Moderator?

MODERATOR: Seeing no other Council
members waiting to ask questions, we can turn to the
next panel. Just a reminder that I will-- that once
your name is called, a member of our staff will
unmute you and you may begin your testimony once the
sergeant-at-arms sets the clock and gives you the
que. All testimony will be limited to three minutes.
Remember that there is a few second delay when you
are on muted before we can hear you. Please wait for
the sergeant-at-arms to announce that you may begin
before starting your testimony. The first panel, in
order of speaking, will include-- allow one moment.
It looks like we lost two of our witnesses. So, we
will hear next from José Luis Rodriguez from the
National Puerto Rican Agenda. We may begin when the
sergeant gives you the que.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Time starts now.

JOSÉ LUIS RODRIGUEZ: Thank you. I am
José Luis Rodriguez. I am representing the National
Puerto Rican Agenda and its president [inaudible
01:42:40]. The National Puerto Rican Agenda is a

national organization composed of multiple Puerto Rican organization and individuals throughout the United States and is a nonpartisan organization that addresses Puerto Rican issues. I am the coordinator of the MPRA New York Central advocacy campaign effort that the MBRA is waging here in New York. We would like to thank the Madam Chair, Inez Barron, for giving us an opportunity to speak at this hearing. We also would like to thank the whole committee and, specifically, we would like to thank Mr. Ydanis Rodriguez and especially for his bringing up the central issue to this committee in his earlier intervention. I also would like to come into the Chair Barron for the announcement that was made for that battle that has finally been one by New York City and I am sure it is going to be a benefit to all New Yorkers, not only to black and brown New Yorkers, but all New Yorkers are from that announcement. To date, you can hear to bring a very important issue to that is impacting the Puerto Rican community, not only New York, but throughout the country and that is the situation at that Center for Puerto Rican Studies. The Center for Puerto Rican Studies is experiencing an existential crisis. For the last few

years, these issues have been made by Hunter College administration has put in jeopardy the existence of the center. The center is the most prestigious research depository of information and history and documents the diaspora experience in this country. We would like to have this Council engage in requesting a hearing, a full hearing, on your earliest convenience, so that the issue surrounding Central can be addressed. MPRA has requested, through [inaudible 01:46:05] information from Hunter College on areas of funding and areas of academic status and areas of relocation and we have not gotten any answers as per statute. We intend to appeal that. We have [inaudible 01:46:32] to do that, but, today, we would like to respectfully request that the Council do a hearing where not only a community can participate and experience itself in terms of what's going on, especially the academic community, but also that we can hear from Hunter College and other CUNY officials as to what the future of Central is going to be and how to correct whatever is going on there. We also would like to ask that Council that the funding for Central, instead of being continuously diminished, that it be increased. And, very

important, we want Hunter College to undertake a permitting search for the director as soon as possible and that process conclude expeditiously and that it includes and that it follows the tradition that all searches for directors have taken in the past. So, again, we would be submitting a written testimony also of written information to the committee and I would like to thank the staff for assisting us with this presentation today and I just learned that the other three individuals that were going to testify had to leave. Once has an emergency and I guess [inaudible 01:48:24]. But we thank, again, the committee for their participation today.

MODERATOR: Thank you for your testimony. If we have inadvertently missed anyone who would like to testify, can you please use the raise hand function in Zoom now? Seeing no one else with a raised hand to testify, Chair Barron, I would like to turn to you for questions.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you, Ms. Rivera. I want to thank Mr. Rodriguez for coming and participating in this hearing and for raising the issue that he has and we certainly are concerned about all of those institutes in every aspect of CUNY

that affects how we are able to deliver and make sure that the students and the faculty are entitled to receiving the best support and services and instruction that they possibly can. So, we thank you for your testimony. Madam moderator, are there any other persons wishing to testify?

MODERATOR: No. And they are council members with raised hands either.

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you. That being the case, I want to say, yes. Once again, I am extremely pleased with the legislature that is finally put into the budget the money that is needed for the campaign for fiscal equity, but let me just say, it's been there all this time, so we are not resting. We're not just saying it is done. We're going to make sure that we exert the unnecessary pressure to make it happen because the legislature for all these many years has failed to make it happen. So, yes, while we are celebrating that the money is there, we're going to make sure. So, those of us who understand how important it is that our young people get the basic sound education that they need that will advance them to CUNY and not have them take remedial classes because they did not get the

foundation that they needed in public school. We're going to make sure that we continue this battle and make sure that this money rolls out and gets to those districts and to those schools. We have lost at least a generation of children who did not get what they needed, but now we have this opportunity to make the coming generations whole and to use this money also to see what kinds of programs can restore what was missed for those generations and those people who suffered. So, I am pleased about that. I am excited about that and also about the Martin Luther King Junior scholarship and I want to thank Ms. Bramlette. I see that she has stayed for the duration and that is always a good sign. I am pleased to have her be here and be a part and I look forward to getting a better relationship as we understand the possibilities of what we can do. I want to thank my staff again and I want to thank everyone for participating in, with that, I am going to use my shakere have the conclusion of this hearing. This hearing is adjourned.

[gavel]

CHAIRPERSON BARRON: Thank you.

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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 May 28, 2021