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Dear Members of the CUNY SPS Community,

I am delighted to present the CUNY School of Professional Studies Annual Report reflecting some of the highlights and accomplishments of the 2017-18 academic year.

This year, we launched three new online degrees: a BS in Health Services Administration, which adds to our cadre of healthcare-related programs and provides a new opportunity for healthcare administrators nationwide to earn an important credential, BA in Liberal Studies, a professionally-focused liberal arts degree designed specifically for working adult students; and an MS in Research Administration and Compliance, intended for academic research professionals.

With the addition of these programs, CUNY SPS now offers 22 degrees: 11 bachelor’s degrees (10 online) and 11 master’s degrees (nine online). We now enroll nearly 3,300 adult students in our credit-bearing programs and over 15,000 in our non-credit workplace learning offerings.

I believe our constant growth and quick adaptation to the needs of our students and their employers defines us as a School. We serve our students with unrivaled dedication and commitment, and receive such high marks in this area that this past year U.S. News & World Report’s 2018 list of Best Online Bachelor’s Degree Programs ranked CUNY SPS 16th in the nation, placing us in the top 5 percent of the 357 institutions that were ranked, and making us the highest nationally-ranked program in New York State.

We are also very pleased that we were ranked 6th in the University in securing external funding this past year, serving the City through grants and contracts of $24,885,353, a 16.5% increase from last year. Highlights include grants from the NYC Human Resources Administration, the New York City Administration for Children’s Services, the Central Park Conservancy, the New York State Office of Children and Family Services, and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

The programs funded by these grants and contracts provide services to our agency partners that are unique within CUNY. Through our Office of Professional Education and Workplace Learning, we design customized programs to help organizations achieve targeted solutions in a wide range of fields. We bring our knowledge of research-based learning practices as well as program and curriculum-development expertise, and help our partners to develop innovative and singular programs specific to their employees.

In addition to increasing our program offerings, with every passing year, CUNY SPS is able to do more for its students financially, through the work of the CUNY SPS Foundation. This year, the Foundation is pleased to report a year-over-year increase of 48% in total dollars raised ($541,074), and an increase of 9.87% in the three-year rolling average (from $364,883 in FY17 to $541,074 in FY18). This increase includes a $150,000 grant from the Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation and a $25,000 grant from the Lynton Foundation, and 95% of all Foundation funds are applied to scholarships and student aid.

I am so pleased and proud of the accomplishments featured in this Annual Report, and I hope that you will also enjoy learning about our School.

Sincerely,

John Mogulescu
Dean, CUNY School of Professional Studies
Spotlight: Online Business Programs at CUNY SPS
The business programs at the CUNY School of Professional Studies are among the longest running degree programs at the School.

Approved in May 2007, the online Bachelor of Science in Business program admitted its first 255 students in Fall 2008, with 15 faculty and 19 course sections. Today, the program boasts 30 faculty and 37 course sections, represents 9% of the total undergraduate enrollment at CUNY SPS, and has over 570 alumni.

The BS in Business program provides students with a fundamental background in business functions and principles that can be used to build or advance their careers. Through the examination of case studies, global business models, and analytical tools, students gain a strong understanding of where they would make the greatest impact within an organization.

Students earning their BS degrees in business build the skills to start their own businesses through the one-year entrepreneurship sequence, and can customize the program based on their interests and career goals through the choice of electives. Additionally, they survey niche topics such as sustainability and green business, international trade, investments, and e-commerce, and solve challenging issues involving the exchange of goods and services, management of personnel, and socially responsible use of resources. Working with dedicated and supportive faculty who have extensive expertise and are committed to student success helps students develop the practical managerial skills needed to thrive in a range of business areas.

“I believe my degree will serve as a stepping stone for more learning opportunities,” said BS in Business student Amoni Brown. “My journey in the business program will offer me experiences, networks, and knowledge that will position me to compete in today’s world.”

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Amoni Brown
Student, BS in Business
Business Programs at CUNY SPS Continued
The Master of Science in Business Management and Leadership (MSBML) program began with an enrollment of 35 students in the fall of 2009. Currently, there are 235 students in the program, which has grown considerably from a faculty of four teaching four course sections, to a faculty of 15 teaching 17 course sections. The program graduated its first students in 2011 and has 319 alumni.

The MSBML degree program was created to inspire working professionals to become innovators, influencers, and decision-makers across all areas of business. With an emphasis on maintaining corporate ethical practices in a global environment, the program examines case studies and organizational models to help students solve timely issues related to diversity, sustainability, and consumer trust.

“The master’s degree in business at CUNY SPS has opened up new career opportunities with my employer,” said alumna Yinette Fernandez. “I’m now in a supervisory role with a greater level of responsibility and seniority.”

The MS degree provides versatility and flexibility to all students as they learn core business functions in addition to emerging industry areas. The program grounds itself in the ability to help students analyze numerical and non-numerical data alike, so they can become better at explaining and justifying their decisions.

Providing flexibility and remaining competitive in the online education field is a top priority for Dr. Edwin Knox, academic director of business programs and associate professor at CUNY SPS. “Our business programs are competitive and we are working to ensure they become more competitive,” explained Knox. “Both programs are currently being assessed to ensure they remain unique in their perspectives and reflect market opportunities and needs.”

The future of the business programs at CUNY SPS includes adding concentrations such as finance, marketing, and entrepreneurship to the online bachelor’s degree to take advantage of local and regional industry and markets. The MSBML degree has added several elective courses over the past few years to reflect industry needs and trends, and the department is considering adding other master’s degree programs in complementary business areas.

Knox explains, “For this expansion effort, we are in the process of establishing an advisory board of academic leaders and corporate executives from for-profit and non-profit organizations. The advisory board will help us to understand industry needs and build bridges for students’ cooperative learning experiences, as well as to grow opportunities for our graduates. We are building platforms for faculty to further hone their instructional skills and strengthen the design of courses for more effective student learning. And most importantly, we are engaging students to assess their aspirations and to ensure that we continue to meet their needs and expectations.”
Dr. Edwin Knox, Academic Director, Business Programs

In the fall of 2017, I joined the CUNY School of Professional Studies as academic director of business programs. Since that time, I have worked to assess and strengthen the competitiveness of these unique online programs. The BS in Business and the MS in Business Management and Leadership are long-standing degree programs at CUNY SPS, and both have seen steady growth in enrollment, courses, and faculty.

For over twenty-five years, I have been an educator, administrator, and business practitioner. As an educator, I taught undergraduate and graduate management, marketing and entrepreneurship courses. As an administrator, I held positions as executive director of enrollment management, department chair, dean of the School of Business, dean of the business and technology division, and senior vice president of academic affairs and student services.

As a business practitioner, I have held administrative positions at a number of educational institutions, worked for General Electric in medical systems, served as a captain in the US Marine Corps in logistics, and am principal and founder of a management and marketing consultancy company that focuses on entrepreneurial start-ups and small business development.

My substantial educational and business background has given me the opportunity as the academic director to work with business faculty and CUNY SPS administrators to thoroughly assess the history of the programs, and look at data pertaining to students who are successfully completing their degree programs. Using historical data, business insights, industry trends and needs, and students’ feedback, we have begun to create a plan that will allow business programs to grow and be most effective for the adult students at CUNY SPS. To further enhance our efforts, we are establishing an advisory board of academic and business leaders.

Based on industry trends and student feedback, we are looking to add concentrations to the BS in Business degree, such as entrepreneurship, finance, marketing, sports & entertainment management, and sustainability. Having our students be able to earn a first-rate business degree, while also forming specific skills in a concentration, will make the degree stronger and applicable to job growth and continued mobility in the workforce.

In the MS in Business Management and Leadership students will continue to have the opportunity to focus their degree around a specific business function. Over the past few years, electives have been added to reflect industry needs and trends, so our students can remain competitive in the business marketplace. We are currently considering additional MS degree programs in human resource management and marketing, and in addition, we are working with our MS in Data Science colleagues to develop a joint MS in Information Systems degree program.

This is an exciting time for the business programs at CUNY SPS and I hope to be able to share more with our community and students in the coming months.

Dr. Edwin Knox

[Signature]
“Our business programs are competitive and we are working to ensure they become more competitive... Both programs are currently being assessed to ensure they remain unique in their perspectives and reflect market opportunities and needs.”
Another Year of Growth in Online Degree Programs at CUNY SPS

CUNY SPS continued to develop and launch new online academic degree programs this year, including a BS in Health Services Administration, a BA in Liberal Studies, and an MS in Research Administration and Compliance. These new programs bring the number of online degrees now offered by CUNY SPS to 19: 10 bachelor’s degrees and 9 master’s degrees.
Designed to meet the educational needs of working students, many of whom live and work in New York City and the surrounding boroughs, CUNY SPS launched its first fully online bachelor’s degree program in 2006. Since then, it has evolved to serve a growing adult population of degree seekers.

At CUNY SPS, most of the adult students are seeking flexible alternatives to traditional on-campus degree programs that will fit into their busy lives, engage them academically, and help them to advance professionally. In fact, over 45% of CUNY SPS students hold full time jobs and juggle numerous family and personal responsibilities; nevertheless, they remain highly motivated to finish their degrees.

“CUNY SPS has helped me to continue to finish my bachelor’s degree while balancing other priorities such as work and family,” says Nuri Panjaton, a student in the online BS in Business program. “I chose to continue my education online at CUNY SPS because the School allowed me to transfer the maximum number of credits from my associate’s degree. Also, I knew I would benefit from saving time on my commute if I took courses online.”

BA in Liberal Studies

The BA in Liberal Studies program represents CUNY’s first interdisciplinary online bachelor’s degree. Liberal studies majors take classes in a variety of subjects, including English, history, philosophy, music, math, and the social and natural sciences.

“The creation of the online BA in Liberal Studies program at CUNY SPS represents an important step toward making the kind of interdisciplinary education offered by a traditional liberal arts degree accessible to a wider range of students,” said Elizabeth Alsop, academic director.

As part of the BA in Liberal Studies at CUNY SPS, students gain important content knowledge and have the opportunity to master the important skills of writing, collaboration, critical thinking, and quantitative analysis—competencies that are highly sought after by employers. The multiple foundational and elective courses are anchored by a liberal studies pro-seminar, which introduces the major, and a capstone experience, which showcases learning obtained in the program through an ePortfolio. Along the way, students also identify a core area of study: literature and communication, history and global studies, or ethics and quantitative reasoning.

The BA in Liberal Studies program equips students for career success in any number of fields, including education, law, communications and marketing, and the government and non-profit sectors. The degree also provides a strong foundation for further graduate study.
BS in Health Services Administration

Launched in Spring 2018, the BS in Health Services Administration (HSA) program is the first online program of its kind within the University, and teaches students how to address the constant changes and advancements made in today’s healthcare system. Health Services Administration was a natural fit for the growing suite of programs in the health services field at CUNY SPS, which also includes a BS in Health Information Management and a credit-bearing Certificate in Medical Coding.

Health services administration is a growing field related to the leadership, management, and administration of hospitals, hospital networks, healthcare systems, clinics, nursing homes, and smaller medical facilities. Health information and administration professionals at all levels of education and credentialing can expect to be in high demand as the health sector continues to expand. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, medical and health services managers held about 347,000 jobs in 2016. This is expected to grow by 20% between 2014 and 2024, which is significantly higher than the average growth rate for all other occupations.

“This degree combines the fields of health and business so that healthcare workers have the necessary education to assist their organizations in providing quality healthcare, reducing facility costs, training staff, and evaluating current laws and policy regulations,” says Ellen Karl, academic director of health information programs at CUNY SPS. “Students who are interested in advancing professionally in the healthcare industry, as managers or supervisors, now have a path to do so online at CUNY SPS.”
In Fall 2018, CUNY SPS launched the first online MS in Research Administration and Compliance degree program in the country. The degree, created for research administration and compliance staff, was created so that interested students could navigate a clear path to become competent, highly skilled leaders within these fields in a short period of time.

“Many professionals in this field have experience in one of the many areas of research administration or compliance. There are very few individuals who have experience in more than one area, and even fewer who have knowledge and understanding of all the different components of research administration and compliance,” says Dr. Farida Lada, associate university provost for research administration and compliance at CUNY. “Our program brings together financial research administration and research compliance, as well as training in leadership and management, with the goal of creating future leaders for the research enterprise.”

Research administration and compliance expertise is required across a diverse group of organizations, including academic institutions, research institutes and centers, hospitals, clinics, and the pharmaceutical industry. Complex and overlapping regulations govern each step within the research process, and staff require high-level expertise to integrate concepts, policy requirements, and ethical considerations in order to assess and improve research programs.

In addition to the master’s degree program, CUNY SPS also offers advanced certificate programs in research administration and research compliance. Graduates of any of the three programs may advance in their current positions or become administrators at academic institutions, healthcare organizations, government agencies, and non-profit organizations.
The Office of Student Services has contributed to the quality of student life at the CUNY School of Professional Studies by providing resources and activities that support students’ academic success and personal development. These resources and activities are often as unique as the students themselves.
Student Association

The idea for a CUNY SPS Student Association originated with our students, who played a key role in chartering the Association and drafting the by-laws. By taking advantage of new technologies and interactive formats, CUNY SPS created a Student Association that enables every enrolled student to participate. Elections are held online, and all undergraduate, graduate, and certificate students are encouraged and eligible to run and to vote. The first elected Student Association – nine students – served during the Spring 2017 semester. The Association has now been expanded to 15 students in order to manage additional work.

Remaining true to the mission of inclusiveness for our online students, members of the Student Association can join the meetings virtually, from anywhere. This provides flexibility for students who cannot come to campus because of work or other obligations. It also permits students who live outside of New York to participate, and the Association has included members from Florida, Iowa, and Texas. When meetings are held on the campus, a camera is set up and participants use Google Hangouts, a communication platform that includes group texting, voice, and video chats.

The Student Association provides a forum for discussing School-related issues, and develops and administers online and in-person social and cultural activities. Representatives serve on School-wide committees with faculty and staff, such as the Accessibility and Inclusion Committee, the Commencement Committee, or the Special Events Committee, as well as on ad hoc committees. One such ad hoc committee took on the development of a student-run online news site, The Kiosk, for which the students received a grant from CUNY’s University Student Senate.

The Student Association was also responsible for developing the Student Association Professional Development Grant and the CUNY SPS chapter of the National Society of Leadership and Success.
The Professional Development Grant allows the Association to give something of value to their fellow students. The Student Association is fully responsible for the grant: they define the criteria, review the applications, and award up to $250 for professional development or career advancement activities. The first Professional Development Grant was awarded in Fall 2017, and grants have been used for conference-related expenses (registration fees, accommodations, travel), career networking opportunities, and professional association memberships. Award funds may also be used to cover the cost of taking a professional licensing exam.

I received a Professional Development Grant in Spring 2018 and used it toward entrance to the Open Data Science Conference. The conference gave me broad exposure to how data science is employed throughout all industries. I had the opportunity to meet leaders in the field and learn from them. Thank you again for the grant.”

Joel Green
Student, MS in Data Science

National Society of Leadership and Success

The National Society of Leadership and Success (NSLS) is the nation’s largest leadership honor society. Membership is by invitation only, and is based on students’ academic standing (3.5 GPA at CUNY SPS) or leadership potential. There is a five-step induction program, through which potential members build leadership skills. The program can be completed on campus or online, which resonates strongly with CUNY SPS students, and includes speaker broadcasts that discuss topics related to leadership, life challenges, and personal goals, which students watch together. These discussions are followed by networking team meetings, another step in the program, in which groups of students share visions and strategies towards success. Students who complete the program are members for life. The NSLS chapter at CUNY SPS has been very successful: more than 300 students have participated since Fall 2017, and interest continues to grow. The first Student Leadership Conference was held on campus in Spring 2018.

As CUNY SPS has grown, so have students’ aspirations, and we are proud that our students have created these leadership, professional development, and community-building opportunities.
Increasing Academic Momentum and Affordability
The CUNY School of Professional Studies was established to address the educational needs of working adults and make the journey to a degree affordable. Our adult students come to CUNY SPS with college credits they have already earned; however, many also have gained knowledge through work experience, professional licensing, and credentials and certifications from training programs. With this in mind, CUNY SPS has pursued several initiatives to identify ways that students can gain credit for prior learning, accelerate their academic momentum, and make completing a degree easier to afford.

Open Educational Resources

Substantial New York State investment to promote the use of Open Educational Resources (OER) has enabled CUNY SPS to increase its number of Zero Textbook Cost (ZTC) course sections. Open Educational Resources are high-quality materials for teaching and learning that are located in the public domain or have been released under a license that allows them to be freely used. They include textbooks, curricula, syllabi, lecture notes, tests, and even audio and video materials. CUNY SPS faculty are compensated for their work to convert their courses to ZTC sections. Students in these sections can enjoy free access to their course materials on the first day of class, and can save more than $1,000 a year.

CUNY SPS has been at the forefront of CUNY’s OER initiative: this year, 32% of all CUNY SPS undergraduate sections were ZTC courses, including 85% of General Education courses; the goal is to have 100% of General Education courses converted to ZTC by Fall 2019. Additionally, students can now complete the BA in Communication and Media program as a ZTC degree. All of the program’s required courses are ZTC courses, and by selecting ZTC-labeled electives, a student can complete the program without ever buying textbooks. Students can find ZTC courses clearly labeled on the CUNY SPS website or in CUNYFirst.

Credit for Prior Learning

CUNY SPS is also a University leader in evaluating our students’ histories to include Credit for Prior Learning. Students can attain up to 90 credits for prior learning in four different ways. The most common and most familiar method is to assign transfer credit from previous educational institutions.

A second way students can earn up to 30 of the 90 credits available to transfer is by taking college-level examinations. CUNY SPS recognizes several programs that offer college-level subject area examinations, including exams in science, math, technology, humanities, business, history, social sciences, and literature and composition. The School recently increased its language examination offerings to 50 different languages so that our many bilingual students can receive credit for proficiency in a second language.

A third way to earn Credit for Prior Learning is through the evaluation of non-collegiate learning, such as professional licenses and industry credentials. CUNY SPS considers credit equivalency recommendations from the American Council on Education (ACE) and the National College Credit Recommendation Service (NCCRS). These organizations have evaluated training and education programs offered by a variety of corporations, unions, and religious organizations. This pathway has
been especially important for students in our Information Systems, Nursing, and Health Information Management programs.

The last and perhaps the most innovative form of earning Credit for Prior Learning is through portfolio evaluation, which allows students to earn credit for college-level learning acquired through workplace experience, military service, civic activities, volunteer service, or even travel. CUNY SPS partners with the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), a pioneer in developing and implementing Prior Learning Assessment, to evaluate these experiences. Students enroll in the course PLA 300 – Portfolio Development for Prior Learning Assessment, where through a study of educational theory and practice, the students are guided through the process of identifying and documenting what they have learned through their experience, how they acquired their knowledge, and how that knowledge translates into specific college-level credit. Each student develops an electronic portfolio, which includes a learning narrative and relevant documentation to make a case for earning credit in a specific course. A credentialed subject matter expert evaluates the portfolio once the student submits it.

Successful students earn three credits for the PLA course itself, plus additional credit for the prior learning portfolio. More than 170 students have completed the course and the assessment since it began in 2014. This is particularly significant, because portfolio evaluation does more than help adults gain academic momentum - it also reinforces the idea that the School values the knowledge and experience that adult learners possess.

**Short Format Courses**

C UNY SPS has also increased academic momentum through the introduction of short format courses. Three years ago the School began offering intensive 3-week winter sessions. Since then, enrollments have increased from 104 students in 11 sections in January 2016, to 263 students in 15 sections in January 2018, with a completion rate of 80%. The success of these short format courses, including solid student performance, prompted us to add a three-week summer session to our course offerings in Summer 2018, and the School intends to look at the feasibility of implementing several short format courses in the time frame of a traditional semester in order to enable more students to accrue more credits more rapidly.

On average, students who make use of a combination of Credit for Prior Learning and winter and summer session opportunities shorten their time-to-degree up to two terms. In fact, 80% of our 2018 bachelor’s degree graduates took summer courses to accelerate their path to graduation.
As CUNY SPS grows, so do our degree program accolades. CUNY SPS ranked in the top 5% of U.S. News & World Report’s list of the Best Online Bachelor’s Degree Programs. Of the institutions listed, we ranked 16th in the nation, making us the highest nationally ranked program in the state. Additionally, we ranked #13 in U.S. News & World Report’s list of 2018 Best Online Bachelor’s Programs for Veterans.

The magazine assessed more than 350 institutions in four criteria: student engagement, faculty credentials and training, student services, and technology.

Our online degree programs have also been recognized by several other organizations. The Best Schools ranked our online BA in Sociology degree program #1 in their 25 Best Online Bachelor of Sociology Degree Programs list. The online BS in Nursing was ranked #7 out of over 50 online nursing schools in Nurse Journal’s 2017 America’s Best Nursing Schools and Colleges list.

The online MA in Psychology degree program ranked #7 in Online Psychology Degrees’ Top 25 Master’s in Psychology Online Degree Programs 2018 list. College Choice ranked the MS in Business Management and Leadership online degree program 21 out of 35 in the 2017 Best Online Master’s in Management Degrees list, and it was ranked #1 in the 2017 Most Affordable Online Master’s in Management Degrees list.

This world needs you to be your very best. The world is counting on you. I believe in you. And everybody in this room believes in you.”

Shaun King, Keynote Speaker
Close to 750 graduates, our largest graduating class to date, were recognized for their academic achievements at our 2018 Commencement exercises, held at David Geffen Hall, Lincoln Center, in New York City.

Distinguished speakers included Dean John Mogulescu, CUNY Trustee Kevin Kim, and Vice Chancellor for University Advancement Bridgette Bryant, in addition to our student speaker Christopher Bonet, who graduated with his BS in business and inspired us all with his personal, and relatable story about attaining his degree.

“I went on this academic journey because I knew my heart was in it, and I would dedicate myself,” said Bonet. “Here I am, 13 years after finishing high school, earning a degree that 20-year-old Chris never would have thought possible.”

The evening was punctuated by the timely and stirring remarks of Keynote Speaker Shaun King, who challenged our graduates to find their own ways to fight for a better world.

“You are graduating with a hard-earned degree,” said King. “But this is not the destination, it’s just a transition from one phase of your life to another. This world needs you to be your very best. The world is counting on you. I believe in you. And everybody in this room believes in you.”
Olivia Babis, MA in disability studies alumna, ran for a state Senate seat representing Sarasota County and part of Charlotte County in Florida.

Alyse Swick, BA in communication and culture alumna, and the official game day host for the New York Islanders Hockey team, was hired as the new traffic reporter for Spectrum News NY1.

Nicholas Choi, RN to BS in nursing student and ICU nurse at New York-Presbyterian Hospital, spent two weeks in Puerto Rico to assist with the disaster relief effort after Hurricane Maria.

Tammy Chowske, BS in health information management student, received the HIM Champion Award from LIHIMA at the 39th Educational and Installation Meeting.

Patrick Flink, MS in disability services in higher education student, published his article “Invisible Disabilities, Stigma, and Student Veterans” in the Journal of Veteran Studies.

Alan Goldstein, MA in disability studies alumnus, was featured in The Chronicle of Higher Education for a course that he teaches at NYU’s Tandon School of Engineering, which pairs engineering students with adults who have disabilities to create short films.

Joseph Montanez, BA in sociology student and executive director of the Miners Medical Clinic in Pennsylvania, arranged the first Centers of Excellence Conference to discuss how to break the cycle of addiction.
Faculty Accomplishments

The youth studies program, supported by the guidance of its academic director Dr. Sarah Zeller-Berkman, received $297,750 in funding to launch the Youth Participatory Action Research Institute. This research agenda was developed to train young people from across New York City to produce social science data in the service of informing youth policy. Additionally, four MA in Youth Studies degree students earned grants to work on the project.

Dr. Margaret Reilly, academic director of nursing, helped establish and sustain the Petrie Nurse Scholarship program for online bachelor’s degree in nursing students by receiving a generous $150,000 grant from the Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation. Additionally, Dr. Reilly, with the assistance of Dr. Anne Simmons, associate professor of nursing, obtained a $20,000 development grant for their project Advocating Student Success in Growing dual/joint Nursing pathways (AS-SIGN).

Jennifer Holland, academic operations coordinator, received the CUNY SPS Campus Service Award at the 16th Annual IT Conference. This award recognizes an individual from each campus who has demonstrated exemplary IT service to their respective college community.

Dr. Ellen Karl, academic director of health information management programs, partnered with NYC Health + Hospitals to launch Coder Academy, a free training program for eligible health system employees to improve coding accuracy and help ensure reimbursement for services provided.

Dr. Kenya Beard, associate professor of nursing, was inducted into the American Academy of Nursing. Dr. Beard was also invited to co-create the 2018 Josiah Macy “Improving the Environment for Learning in Health Professions” document.

Disability Studies professor Andrew Marcum received the Community Commitment Award at the VOICE-Buffalo award ceremony for developing a project to increase civic and community engagement among people with disabilities in Buffalo and Erie Counties.

Youth Studies adjunct faculty member Susan Matloff-Nieves received the 2017 Book of the Year award from the National Association for Gifted research for her co-authored book Breaking Through! Helping Girls Succeed in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.

Adjunct lecturer Daniel Kane published “Application of Normative Ethics to Explain Colin Kaepernick’s Silent Protest in the NFL” in The Sports Journal.

The relationship between mentor and protégé is often complicated, layered with conflicting sentiments and expectations that can either benefit or afflict the two parties involved. Dr. Bonnie Oglensky, academic director of sociology and human relations at CUNY SPS, delves into mentorship as a way to further examine the intricacies of this power dynamic.

The book, which reflects Dr. Oglensky’s immersion in social science research on the topic over the past 25 years, employs vivid case narratives to take a nuanced look at the emotional complexities of their mentorships.

“I have long been aware of the intensity of the emotional connection and profound influence of mentoring relationships,” says Dr. Oglensky. “At the same time, I have learned from my own experience and from interviews with scores of mentors and protégés about the vulnerabilities and risks that such bonding entails. Mentorship is a hugely important relationship in a person’s life - and understanding and appreciating its ups and downs is crucial to personal and professional growth.”

Throughout the text, Dr. Oglensky traverses the vital and risky elements of this relationship with the intention of providing professionals in numerous fields with a new perspective to the highs and lows of mentorship.

Dr. Bonnie Oglensky published Ambivalence in Mentorship: An Exploration of Emotional Complexities.
CUNY SPS: Delivering Customized Professional Learning Programs
The Administration for Children's Services Workforce Institute (ACSWI) is a partnership between ACS, the CUNY School of Professional Studies (CUNY SPS), and the Hunter College Silberman School of Social Work. Developed in 2016, the Institute provides ongoing professional skills development for over 12,000 ACS and partner agency direct service staff and supervisors across the child welfare and juvenile justice sectors. The ACSWI was established as part of the New York City Mayor's 2015 Reform Plan, to vastly improve the child welfare and juvenile justice systems in New York City.

In its first two years, the Institute, together with the CUNY SPS Office of Professional Education and Workplace Learning, has focused on developing and delivering customized professional learning programs to strengthen engagement and critical thinking skills among its participants. These programs provide coaching skills training for supervisors and training for all staff on skills associated with conducting effective and strength-based visits with families.

The first year of the partnership with ACS included the opening of five training rooms, one in each borough, and the introduction of two instructor-led trainings, three online modules, and six videos. By June of 2018, the number of learning programs grew to over 30 instructor-led learning programs, over 10 stand-alone e-learning modules, and over 15 videos.

2018 also saw the launch of the new ACSWI website at nycacstraining.org, where visitors can view a list of all the Institute's learning programs, access the video library, and view the training calendar.

The number of ACS and CUNY SPS staff that comprise the ACSWI has expanded significantly over the past three years. In the first year, there were 33 full-time staff and 17 part-time trainers. By the end of the 2018 fiscal year, full-time staff had grown to 68, and the number of part-time trainers to 23. Fifteen part-time actors were hired to support the addition of simulation experiences to the Workforce Institute learning experience.

The number of attendees at ACSWI learning programs has also increased substantially. By the end of the 2016 fiscal year, 3,251 participants had attended ACSWI courses. By the end of June 2018, that number had grown to 8,804 – an increase of 270%.

The Institute is continually investigating ways to introduce effective and creative approaches to support adult learning. For example, last year, gaming was introduced into one of the learning programs. In the coming year, training facilities will be expanded, and simulation spaces will be constructed so that learners can practice skills in realistic settings such as courtrooms, living rooms, or office spaces.

In a few short years this partnership between ACS and CUNY SPS has earned the ACSWI a reputation for excellence in supporting direct service child welfare and juvenile justice staff and supervisors, and ultimately the children and families of New York City.
In March 2018, park professionals from across the country and from several international cities convened in New York City for the first-ever Urban Park Executive Leadership Program, a new program led by the CUNY School of Professional Studies (CUNY SPS) and the Central Park Conservancy, and made possible by generous support from the JPB Foundation.

The immersive five-day program equipped participants with the skills needed to manage an urban park as part of a public-private park partnership. The training featured classroom learning as well as hands-on fieldwork with Central Park Conservancy staff, and covered a variety of topics, including park operations and partnership management. Eighteen high-level managers in established public-private partnerships and agencies working in urban parks and open spaces were part of the inaugural cohort.

“We are delighted that such a diverse and talented group of park professionals attended the first Urban Park Executive Leadership Program,” said CUNY SPS Dean John Mogulescu. “As a leader in professional development in New York City, I am proud of our partnership with the Central Park Conservancy and look forward to our work together to enhance the stewardship of urban parks.”

“As the world leader in urban park management, the Central Park Conservancy is uniquely positioned to teach what we have learned to park managers around the world. We are thrilled to kick off our Urban Park Executive Leadership Program and to welcome so many talented park professionals to Central Park,” said Elizabeth W. Smith, President and CEO of the Central Park Conservancy.

These new professional education programs will facilitate hands-on guidance and capacity building for urban park leaders and executives, and standardize, professionalize, and assess skills for current or aspiring urban park professionals. The program will also explore the feasibility of a degree program for those wishing to enter the field, while also promoting occupations in urban parks as a viable career path for youth.
The CreateNYC: Leadership Accelerator, sponsored by the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA), was designed to promote equity in the cultural workforce. A pilot program developed by CUNY SPS and the CUNY Creative Arts Team, this five-week professional development course served 26 participants selected from a pool of 113 applications from arts and culture institutions throughout New York City.

The program provides mid-level staff at New York City’s cultural institutions with professional development to strengthen the management skills that are integral to career growth and mobility, and to build a diverse network of peers who can support one another as they develop into future leaders.

“DCLA’s commitment to developing an equitable workforce in New York City’s arts and culture space is important and necessary work, and CUNY SPS is so proud to partner with them on this important initiative,” said Tracy Meade, senior associate dean for strategy and innovation at CUNY SPS.

A 2015 demographic study of cultural organizations funded by DCLA found more diversity among junior and mid-level professionals than among organizations’ leadership. While 55% of junior staff and 68% of mid-level staff identified as white, 74% of senior staff did so, suggesting that people of color face barriers to advancement into leadership positions within the cultural sector. DCLA’s commitment to a diverse workforce also encompasses immigrant populations, all genders, and people with disabilities, as well as those from other underserved and underrepresented groups.

The program, consisting of five days of lectures, interactive workshops, group work, role-playing, and self-reflection, included professionals from organizations such as Carnegie Hall, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Bronx Documentary Center, and The Irish Repertory Theatre. A success in its pilot year, DCLA has committed to fund two additional cohorts in 2019.
Grants and Contracts

Human Services

ACS Workforce Institute – $14,993,063
Provides direct service child welfare and juvenile justice staff of the NYC Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) and its contracted provider agencies with the learning, coaching, and support needed to provide high-quality services to the children and families in its care.
Partner: NYC Administration for Children’s Services

Distance Education, Training Management Systems, Needs Assessment, and Evaluation $2,420,225
Supports the agency’s development and delivery of distance education programs, training systems, and evaluation services that serve thousands of state and local district employees in the children and families service field.
Partner: NYS Office of Children and Family Services
Family Development Credential - $43,438
Provides instruction and portfolio advising to frontline family support workers and leaders to help them earn a nationally-recognized human services credential.
Partner: NYC Department of Youth and Community Development

Information Technology Auxiliary Staff - $574,840
Provides training and support to the downstate welfare information system user communities—staff who provide financial assistance and support to low-income residents of New York State.
Partner: NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

Office of Child Support Services
CUNY Training Program - $3,409,173
Defines procedures and trains the agency's employees so that they can fulfill the agency’s mission of helping both parents assume responsibility for the economic and social well-being of their children.
Partner: NYC Human Resources Administration

Families Forward Demonstration Project – $845,837
Contract and program management support in implementing Families Forward, a workforce development program targeting noncustodial parents who owe child support.
Partner: NYC Human Resources Administration

DHS FIN (Financial Independence Now) - $207,799
Provides adult financial literacy training to shelter case managers so that they may assist clients in making financial decisions that will lead them on a path toward permanent housing and independent living.
Partner: NYC Department of Homeless Services

CreateNYC: Leadership Accelerator - $240,000
Delivers a leadership development opportunity to mid-level employees from historically underrepresented groups working in New York City’s arts and cultural institutions.
Partner: NYC Department of Cultural Affairs

Learning Programs for Urban Parks – $775,000
Creates and delivers an Urban Park Executive Education Program for urban park leaders; creates an Urban Park Management non-credit Certificate Program, and related evaluation and organizational impact activities.
Partner: Central Park Conservancy Institute for Urban Parks; New York City Labor Market Information Service, CUNY Graduate Center; CUNY Office of Research, Evaluation and Program Support

Energy Management

Energy Management Program - $4,291,449
In collaboration with the CUNY Building Performance Lab, supports the City of New York’s efforts to reduce energy consumption by designing, developing, and delivering training programs for NYC agency building personnel.
Partner: NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services

Energy Efficiency for Multi-Tenant Building Superintendents - $85,164
In collaboration with the CUNY Building Performance Lab, provides no-cost energy-focused training to operators of small- to mid-size apartment buildings.
Partner: Mayor’s Office of Sustainability and NYC Small Business servies

Management and Information Technology

Managing for Innovation - $180,000
Offers an intensive leadership development course for program managers in nonprofit organizations that pilots innovative, anti-poverty strategies for low-income New Yorkers.
Partner: NYC Opportunity

Implementing ERP Business Software, Sponsored by Infor - $79,571
Offers a non-credit course for CUNY students in implementing enterprise resource planning (ERP) software and explore carriers in the industry.
Partner: Infor

Emergency Management

Coastal Storm Plan Training Learning Management System Support - $56,066
Facilitates the delivery of just-in-time training to thousands of city staff to prepare them to operate evacuation centers and hurricane shelters in response to major coastal storms.
Partner: NYC Emergency Management

Build It Back Issue Resolution and Staff Development - $280,000
Develops staff and resolves applicant issues in order to accelerate the processing of applications from homeowners affected by Hurricane Sandy.
Partner: NYC Mayor’s Office of Housing Recovery Operations
Inspired by our students, my fellow board members and I work together to build alumni and community relationships that foster financial support for CUNY SPS. The Board is poised to explore new opportunities for CUNY SPS that will further the commitment to our students, our faculty, and the community.

I am exceedingly proud that our Foundation has raised close to $2.5 million since our founding, which has allowed our School to significantly grow the number of scholarship opportunities available for our students. Since 2012, with the support of our alumni and friends, the CUNY SPS Foundation has awarded named scholarships to nearly 155 students.

This year, I am pleased to report that the Foundation raised over $541,000 in contributions, which represents an increase of 48% over the last year. This increase includes a generous $150,000 grant from the Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation and a $25,000 grant from the Lynton Foundation, both for student scholarships. An example of our continued fundraising program growth is #CUNYTuesday—a University-wide effort for #GivingTuesday, a global day dedicated to giving back. Last year, the Foundation set an ambitious goal to raise $30,000 in support of the ACE Scholarship as part of a challenge grant with the scholarship’s founder, Alan Fishman. Thanks to the tremendous support of our donors, the School exceeded its matching requirement.

I join my fellow board members and the entire CUNY SPS community in offering our thanks to the many alumni and friends who donated last year. As you read the incredible student stories in this report, you will undoubtedly be inspired by our wonderful community.

Thank you for investing in their success.

— Horace Barker
"Since 2012, with the support of our alumni and friends, the CUNY SPS Foundation has awarded named scholarships to nearly 155 students."
Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, the CUNY SPS Foundation has awarded named scholarships totaling more than $336,000 to nearly 155 students since 2012. Scholarship assistance often helps address the financial challenges unique to adult students, and enables recipients to remain enrolled and succeed.

The 2017-2018 CUNY SPS Foundation scholarship recipients are exceptional and inspiring students. They are 30 women and seven men, representing 14 different academic programs. They are working adults who came to CUNY SPS to complete their degrees, who manage work, children, families, and financial obligations, and become successful college students.

Russ Peterson Technology Scholar

**Lizbeth Tejada** graduated high school in 2010 at 17 years old and, despite a passion for computers and advice from her mother to pursue a degree in a technology-related discipline, immediately earned an associate’s degree in hospitality management. With her associate’s degree, she transferred to CUNY SPS to earn bachelor’s degree in business, seeking general employment opportunities in several sectors in New York City. As a young woman with limited work history searching for a fulfilling career with long-term growth prospects, Lizbeth has decided to specialize and pursue a career in cyber security. She returned to CUNY SPS to earn her bachelor’s degree in information systems to learn the basic building blocks of the ever-growing, ever-evolving technology industry.

Patti Lieberman Scholarship for Early Childhood Education

After a 20 year career as a dancer in New York City, **Michelle Lee** began to consider more stable career options. She accepted her first position as an English and drama teacher in Korea nearly ten years ago, teaching more than 200 children aged 3-6. She now works full-time as an assistant teacher at a nonprofit, international school in New York City that serves infants and toddlers. She is currently enrolled in the Child Development Associate certificate program at CUNY SPS, plans to pursue the Children’s Program Administrator Credential, and ultimately aims to open and operate a child care center in New York City. In addition to tuition, Michelle financially supports her retired parents. The Patti Lieberman Scholarship for Early Childhood Education is providing crucial resources enabling Michelle to earn advanced credentials and pursue her goals.

Bob Martin Memorial Scholarship

**Tia Sharps** began her college career at Chaffey College in California, then transferred to Houston Community College after moving to Texas. After medical issues demanded a break in her studies, Tia enrolled in the online bachelor’s degree program in communication and media at CUNY SPS to leverage the New York City location and connections. Still a Texas resident, she works in a local retail establishment while enrolled. Tia plans to pursue a master’s degree upon completion as a next step toward a career in entertainment media.

Since age 13, **Julia Bashkatova** has worked to help her single mother make ends meet. As her peers began graduating from college, she began questioning her path, yearning for more and different opportunities. In search of job stability and upward mobility, Julia decided to pursue a career in nursing. She continues to work part-time while pursuing her bachelor’s degree in nursing at CUNY SPS.
William J. Kissane III Scholarship

Inspired in part by experiences related to personal challenges, Elliot Holloway is enrolled in the bachelor’s degree in disability studies as a first step toward his career goal of becoming a medical social worker. Upon graduating, he plans to pursue a master’s degree in social work. The William J. Kissane III Scholarship provides vital financial assistance to ensure he can complete his bachelor’s degree and allocate future resources to attaining the necessary graduate-level degree and certification necessary to practice.

Raised in England, Susanna Leigh began but did not complete her undergraduate degree. She began working at the age of 14, first in a family business, then working in several capacities at a children’s home for at-risk youth, then at an organization serving foster children. She continued working, married, and became a mother to three children with special needs. Susanna is now a single mother, focused on completing her undergraduate studies in order to advance professionally and earn more income to support her family.

Tasha Perude earned a bachelor’s degree in communication and media at CUNY SPS in 2016, while working full-time in the chemical dependency outpatient program at a large New York City hospital. Aiming to advance professionally, and inspired by her work with dual-diagnosis patients who are navigating substance abuse and mental health disorders, Tasha is now enrolled in the master’s degree in disability studies program. She intends to become a patient advocate with a focus on helping patients to maintain sobriety and effectively integrate into the workforce. Tasha is a single mother who also provides care to her aging parents. The William Kissane III Scholarship is providing critical resources to enable her to support her family without over-relying on loans.

Nancy Klinger Memorial Scholarship

As a full-time instructional coach at the Brooklyn Kindergarten Society, which serves children in and around New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) projects, Kim Thurman is solving “problems that are hindering teachers from advancing to their highest potential.” Her desire to provide children with better daycare led Kim to the Children’s Program Administrator Credential at CUNY SPS “to understand all the ‘nuts and bolts’ of the organizational management necessary to operate a high-quality daycare.” Struggling financially to balance household expenses and a college-age daughter’s tuition payments, the Nancy Klinger Memorial Scholarship comes at a crucial time for Kim as she completes her final course requirement toward receiving certification.

Stephen M. Rossen Memorial Scholarship

After earning an associate’s degree in computer science, Kelia Ray entered the workforce as a help desk technician and team leader working in the insurance and banking industries. She earned several industry-related certifications including the Assistant Medical Office Specialist (AMOS) certification and the National Coding and Insurance Specialist (NCICS) certification and earned associated promotions, first to medical biller, then medical coder, and finally to surgical coder and biller. She is now enrolled in the online bachelor’s degree in health information management program, plans to pursue a master’s degree in Informatics upon graduating, and ultimately aims to work either as a professor with a focus on technical software, or a corporate trainer at IBM Watson Health. Kelia quoted research from the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) to explain the importance of her continued studies: “HIM professionals are increasingly standard-setters for electronic health records; advocates for quality patient records; and data experts for collecting, interpreting, and analyzing health information.”
McKay Gussine Scholarship

Cindy Lee previously earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology and sociology, a degree that honed “[her] understanding of how individuals behave and interact.” After working as an administrative dental assistant for several years and volunteering as mentor with Big Brothers Big Sisters at a nonprofit teen resource center at a local hospital, Cindy was inspired to pursue a career in nursing. Now enrolled in the BS in nursing program at CUNY SPS, she aspires to become either a certified nurse anesthetist or certified nurse midwife. Since Cindy exhausted her federal financial aid eligibility in earning her first degree, the McKay Gussine Scholarship is providing critical resources that will assist her in completing her bachelor’s degree in nursing and pursuing her career goals.

Timothy Meade Memorial Scholarship

Initially planning to pursue a career as a veterinarian, Melissa Basso enrolled in a veterinary technology program at LaGuardia Community College while working in retail. Her priorities and goals shifted in 2011 after giving birth to her second child, who was born with Down Syndrome. “Having a child with Down Syndrome has made me not only want to learn to become a better advocate for him, but also for all people with disabilities,” she says. Melissa spent five years home schooling her children and began pursuing a BA in disability studies when they both entered elementary school. She recently exhausted her federal financial aid eligibility and the Timothy Meade Memorial Scholarship is providing crucial financial assistance enabling Melissa to complete her final semester and earn her degree.

Founding Dean’s Scholarship

A first generation American, Arlene Sanchez began working at a New York City-based dermatology practice ten years ago. She started as a front desk clerk and now serves as office manager, overseeing all aspects of the billing process, managing staff, and directly interacting with patients. Arlene is employed full-time and financially supports her retired parents. She is pursuing her bachelor’s degree in health information management and plans to enroll in a master’s degree in medical informatics at SUNY in order to seek a managerial position at a Veteran’s Administration hospital in order to “help improve patient care for our veterans with my technology expertise.”

Schulman, Bomboy & Gray Scholarship

George Fox returned to college to complete his bachelor’s degree in human relations after more than 30 years of experience in the insurance industry. Recognizing his managerial and sales acumen, he has been offered a senior vice president position contingent upon completion of his bachelor’s degree. George provided his three children with financial assistance to attend college, and the Schulman, Bomboy and Gray Scholarship is providing vital financial assistance to ensure George can complete his degree, accept his promotion, and bring his classroom knowledge and real-world expertise to the rapidly changing insurance industry.

After earning her associate’s degree in human services, Judelka Pena entered the workforce in an entry-level position in the human resources office in a large New York City agency. She is pursuing her bachelor’s degree in human relations in order to advance within the agency and increase her earning potential. In addition to the monetary benefits of earning her degree, Judelka has been so inspired by what she has learned in her undergraduate studies that she plans to pursue a master’s degree upon graduating.
CUNY SPS Establishes Nursing Scholarship with $150,000 Petrie Foundation Grant

A generous grant from the Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation is helping the CUNY School of Professional Studies (CUNY SPS) establish and sustain the Petrie Nurse Scholarship program for nursing students.

Starting in Fall 2018, Petrie Nurse Scholarship awards provide tuition assistance for students enrolled in the CUNY SPS online bachelor’s degree in nursing (RN to BSN) program who previously earned an applied science (AAS) degree with a major in nursing from a CUNY Community College. Awards will underwrite 100% of tuition, and will follow recipients through degree completion.

“This much needed support from the Petrie Foundation has enabled the School to create the Petrie Nurse Scholars program,” noted Marge Reilly, academic director of nursing programs at CUNY SPS. “We are thrilled to be able to provide critical tuition support to high-achieving students in the online RN to BS in nursing degree program. More than 60% of students in the CUNY SPS nursing program are self-payers, and fewer than 30% receive state or federal financial aid. The award provides essential support that directly addresses these issues.”

George Otte, the School’s senior associate dean for academic affairs, echoed Dr. Reilly, and said, “We are thrilled that the Petrie Foundation has provided CUNY SPS with critical support to help our nursing students finish their degrees. This clearly has a positive impact on their academic progress, but ultimately the benefit is not just to them but to the countless patients they will care for during their careers.”

The CCNE-accredited bachelor’s degree in nursing at CUNY SPS is specifically designed to increase the number of diverse, BS-prepared nurses in New York City. With a current enrollment of more than 450 students, undergraduate nursing has rapidly become the School’s largest degree program.
In 2015, philanthropist Alan Fishman established the CUNY SPS ACE (Achieve College Education) Scholarship program with a generous two year $100,000 matching gift. To date, 53 scholarships have been awarded, and Mr. Fishman has generously renewed his gift to sustain the program, challenging CUNY SPS to raise an additional $100,000 over the next two years.

ACE Scholarships provide full tuition support through graduation to high-achieving undergraduate students who demonstrate financial need and are within 6-30 credits of completing their degrees.
Kennya DiLegge earned a bachelor’s degree in biological sciences with a concentration in psychology from Fordham University and began working as a research assistant at a large biomedical research conglomerate. She was promoted multiple times, eventually managing a team of researchers and authoring submissions to the Federal Drug Administration. Though successful, Kennya’s research career did not enable her to pursue her passion for direct patient care. She returned to school to earn her RN license and began working as a registered nurse coordinator with a large New York City nonprofit nursing organization. Kennya must earn a bachelor’s degree in order to continue to advance in the nursing field. Because she is pursuing her second bachelor’s degree, she is ineligible for financial aid, and the ACE Scholarship is providing crucial resources to ensure she can graduate and advance. In addition, Kennya brings expertise to the ACE Scholarship mentoring program, having been an ACE mentee in her first semester at CUNY SPS.

Daniela Borodin began her undergraduate studies in her native Brazil before moving to the U.S. more than 20 years ago. Direct experience navigating immigration policy for decades has inspired her to pursue a career in law to protect immigrants’ rights. Daniela relocated to New York City from Los Angeles in 2009 and was determined to complete her bachelor’s degree. After completing her associate’s degree at LaGuardia Community College, where she was on the dean’s list every semester, she is pursuing her bachelor’s degree in communication and media while working full-time. Daniela plans to take the LSAT and enroll in law school in 2018, and she is “determined to prove that age and finances are not limitations for those who have a goal and persist.”
Originally from Trinidad and Tobago, Kevin Bourne is the first member of his family to pursue higher education. He began working at age 14, and has continued throughout secondary school and while earning his associate’s degree in computer network technology from Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC). Kevin now works 66 hour weeks managing customer service for an online retailer while pursuing his bachelor’s degree in information systems. Upon completing his bachelor’s degree, he plans to pursue his master’s degree in business management and leadership at CUNY SPS to further advance in his career and inspire his young son.

Lyne Jean-Louis earned her associate of applied sciences (AAS) degree in nursing in 2015 and licensure as a registered nurse in 2016. She currently works as a part-time charge nurse at a rehabilitation facility while enrolled full-time in the bachelor’s degree in nursing program at CUNY SPS. “My long-term goal is to earn a master of science degree in nursing and to become a woman’s health nurse practitioner. With expansive growth…in the healthcare field, I firmly believe that healthcare innovation should focus on diversity and embrace new ideas,” explained Lyne.

Cheryl Clarke has worked in the medical field for several years but was laid off twice recently amidst changes in the industry. She earned an associate’s degree in community health in 2014, and an AAS in nursing in 2015, both from Kingsborough Community College, after previous attempts were derailed, largely due to chronic, undiagnosed health issues. Ironically, after earning her associate’s degree in nursing, Cheryl was able to understand her lab results and ultimately brought the correct diagnosis to her doctor’s attention. She has since undergone a successful surgery. Without her bachelor’s degree, she was unable to find employment opportunities that offered adequate income, and she enrolled in the online bachelor’s program in nursing in order to re-enter the workforce.

Sarah Krusemark began her undergraduate education directly after graduating from high school but she “was not focused on school…did not do well, and dropped out.” She found employment at the University of Nebraska, used employee benefits to take tuition-free courses, and found the focus necessary to succeed. However, Sarah could not afford tuition after her employment ended. She has been working in an administrative capacity at a New York City contracting firm that specializes in mechanical engineering, HVAC, plumbing and electrical work for the past three years. She first enrolled at CUNY SPS in 2016 determined to complete her degree. Sarah is earning her bachelor’s degree in psychology at CUNY SPS and plans to pursue a master’s degree in industrial/organizational psychology upon completing her undergraduate degree.

Nuri Panjaton earned an associate’s degree in 2014 and was hired as a quality assurance coordinator at manufacturing company. She enrolled in the BS in Business program at CUNY SPS in 2015, and will be the first member of her family to graduate from college. Combining her classroom knowledge and work experience, Nuri has transitioned to a part-time role as a purchasing assistant in order to launch her own small business as a professional henna artist. “I slowly began by getting my licenses, renting space, and operating on a low budget…I compared the things I learned with my skills at work…how products are marketed, how to increase growth and sales.”

Anna Levinovsky is pursuing her bachelor’s degree in business in order to advance professionally. She previously worked as a licensed real estate broker with larger firms in New York City and South Florida, and has been an active volunteer in New York City since the mid-1990s. Anna is pursuing her bachelor’s degree in business to augment her knowledge, and aims to start her own real estate brokerage with a focus international investment in the luxury, waterfront condominium market.
Neal Rogers began his undergraduate studies at Illinois State University in the studio arts program, the first member of his family to pursue higher education. Though enrolled in a fine arts program, Neal discovered an interest and aptitude for computer science and technology, and ultimately left college to start working as a self-taught computer technician in suburban St. Louis. He gained on-the-job experience and earned industry-recognized certifications from Microsoft and CompTIA, an industry association, then relocated to New York City and found employment at the United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations. He left that position to work at a tech start-up. Unfortunately, after an early growth spurt, the start-up ultimately had to lay off a significant portion of its workforce, including Neal. He enrolled in the CUNY SPS bachelor’s degree program in information systems to earn the necessary credentials to continue advancing in his career.

After beginning her undergraduate studies in 1995, Malissa Sylver is pursuing her bachelor’s degree in business, seeking the relevant credentials to advance in her career and increase her earning power. Malissa raised two children who are both nearing completion of their undergraduate degrees. She has been working full-time as a Human Resources Analyst at the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) for the past six years and plans, armed with her bachelor’s degree, to pursue advancement opportunities upon graduation.

Francesco Mazza earned a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice and law administration from Western Connecticut State University and had planned to pursue a career as a state trooper for the Stamford Police Department when he was offered an opportunity to become a New York City firefighter. Early in his career as a firefighter, he was inspired by his experiences to consider a career in nursing. Francesco earned his associate of applied sciences (AAS) degree in nursing at the College of Staten Island, enabling him to serve as an emergency medical technician for the FDNY. A husband and father of three children, Francesco is pursuing his bachelor’s degree in nursing in order to transition into a career in nursing while still being able to support his family.

Adam Rakhamim is pursuing his bachelor’s degree in psychology at CUNY SPS. While completing his degree, he teaches English to Azerbaijani high school students and adults, with a focus on preparing his students for the IELTS test, which measures English proficiency.

Originally from Sweden, Charlotte Wahlquist moved to New York in 2010 with her five children. She earned her associate’s degree from Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC) and has been working as a full-time registered nurse since January 2017. As a single mother working full-time, Charlotte is enrolled in the online RN to BSN program at CUNY SPS to increase her earning power and support her family.
## Our Donors

### Individuals

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