



# Lifting Up New Yorkers: A Plan to Revolutionize Access to Education and Job Training in NYC

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## Introduction

COVID-19 has completely upended the New York City economy, precipitating a recession that is more devastating in its depth, and more unequal in its effects, than anything the City has ever experienced before. More than other groups, it is low-wage workers, communities of color, and the youth that have borne the brunt of this pandemic and its myriad economic impacts. The most vulnerable New Yorkers with the most precarious finances and employment have been utterly displaced, requiring the city to rethink, reform, and reinvigorate its economic, job training, and educational programs.

Over the last six months, a staggering 253,000 jobs have been lost in the restaurant, retail, building services, personal services, and accommodations industries alone. Some are unlikely to return. This pandemic has rapidly accelerated long-standing trends that have threatened to disrupt our industries and labor market. E-commerce, telework, digitization, automation—forces that promised to displace workers over a period of many years are suddenly coming to a head in a much shorter time frame. As such, we will have to rapidly accelerate reforms to our education and job training systems to prepare displaced workers and youth for a very different economy and we will have to diversify our high-wage industries and expand opportunity.

To meet this moment, it is vital that New York City and State fundamentally overhaul its fractured and poorly targeted workforce development infrastructure, and that we invest in proven ways to help today's displaced workers develop the skills they need to compete in the post-pandemic economy. This report, by New York City Comptroller Scott M. Stringer, lays out a blueprint for how New York City needs to think about education and workforce development going forward, and is organized around two guiding principles:

- First, with its 25 campuses across all five boroughs, the City University of New York (CUNY) is uniquely positioned to educate and upskill first-generation, working, part-time, low-income, and adult learners and serve as an engine of economic mobility for our city. Now more than ever, we need to meet workers where they are—on campus, in their homes, in between jobs and occupations, in short spurts—and make degrees and credentialing programs affordable and accessible. CUNY must be ready, resourced, and empowered and it must forge

stronger partnerships with the DOE, community-based organizations, and private employers. It must also offer, for the first time in decades, free tuition for all residents at its community colleges.

- Second, the plan demands more of private employers, who must recognize that investing in workforce development is not an optional luxury, but a shared and necessary responsibility for stabilizing and fortifying the future of New York City and its economy. That means working with CUNY to provide paid internships for every student nearing graduation, introducing apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, diversifying staffing, and investing time, money, and resources to assure that the City's workforce development system is offering the industry skills that workers need and providing on-ramps to those good-paying jobs.

At a time when nearly one out of every six residents is out of work, the conversation is no longer about improving job prospects for some. It is about large swathes of our city not having the resources necessary to feed and house their families, much less pay for doctor's visits or other basic necessities of life. Ultimately, it is about rebuilding New York as a place of opportunity for all who seek to live, work, and thrive here.

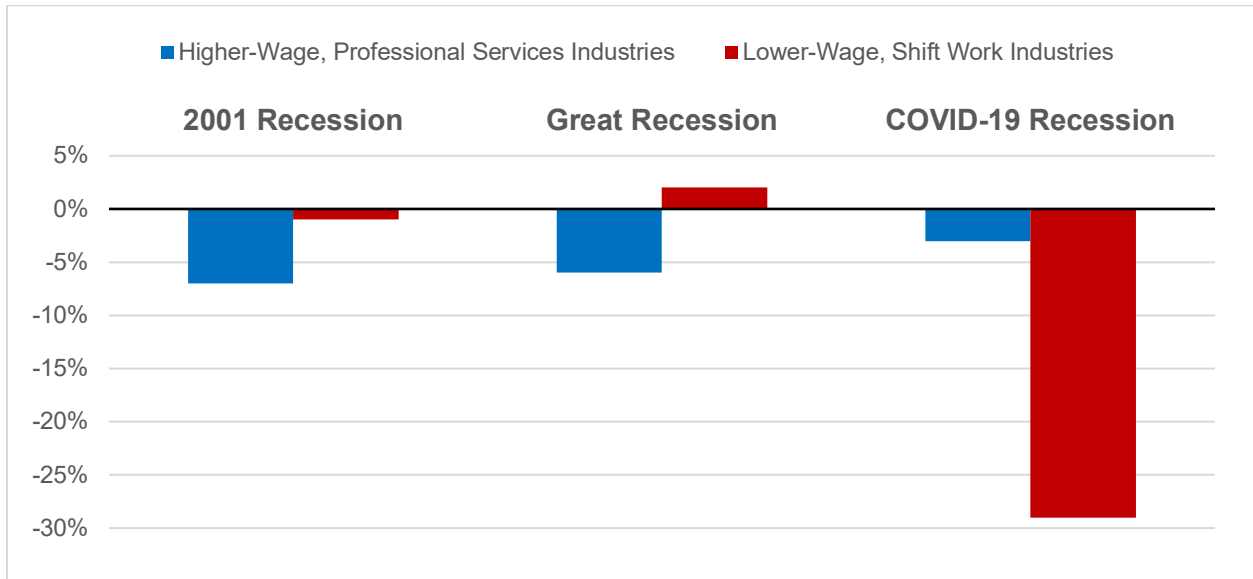
Given the scale of the challenges ahead, boutique solutions and minor interventions cannot meet the urgency, scale, affordability, and needs of our city residents or of growing industries like healthcare, logistics, design, cybersecurity, analytics, life sciences, and many others. Instead, CUNY, private employers, and our extraordinary array of nonprofits will have to lead the way, preparing hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers for a stronger and more equitable post-pandemic economy.

## **Background: This Recession is Different**

First, some historical perspective. In past recessions, it has been the higher-wage, "white collar" industries that have experienced the greatest job losses. In 2001 and in the Great Recession of 2008-2009, for instance, finance, real estate, tech, consulting, and other professional services cut 7 percent and 6 percent of their workforce, respectively, and gradually relocated thousands of back-office workers to other cities, states, and countries.

The experience was quite different for shift workers in the restaurant, retail, accommodations, building, and personal services industries, which experienced only minor job losses in 2001 and actually added over 16,000 jobs (a two percent bump) during the Great Recession (see Chart 1).<sup>1</sup>

**Chart 1: Job losses in New York City in last three recessions, by industry type**



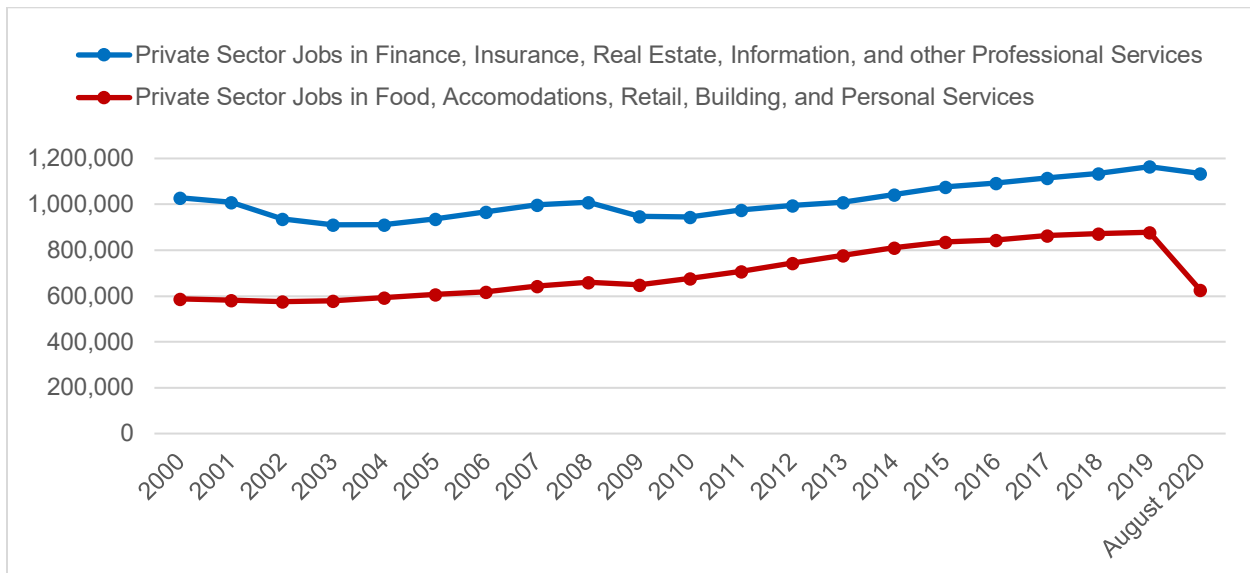
2000-2019: United State Department of Labor, “Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.”

2020: New York State Department of Labor. “Current Employment Estimates,” August.

This recession, however, has followed a completely different and far more disastrous pattern. As office workers shift to working from home, most jobs in “white collar” professions have been retained, shedding “only” 29,000 jobs. Meanwhile, the restaurants, bars, coffee shops, barber shops, clothing stores, and hotels that these professionals frequent and the security guards and janitors that their offices employ, have been severely displaced. With the emptying out of central business districts, mandated store closures, and continued social distancing, the low-wage, service industries have lost 253,000 jobs, a 29 percent drop from 2019.

In fact, while the restaurant, retail, building services, personal services, and accommodation industries accounted for 22 percent of total private sectors jobs in New York City in 2019, they have been responsible for 53 percent of private sector job losses amidst the pandemic. And while these low-wage, shift work industries had added more than twice as many jobs (291,565) as had professional industries (135,955) in the first two decades of the century, in just five months, that trajectory has been profoundly—and perhaps permanently—upended (see Chart 2).

**Chart 2: Annual employment by industry type, 2000-2020**



2000-2019: United State Department of Labor, “Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.”  
2020: New York State Department of Labor. “Current Employment Estimates,” August.

## Accelerating Trends, Deepening Inequality

The COVID-19 pandemic has rapidly accelerated trends long in development. Automation, digitization, online shopping, remote work. As industries are upended and shift-workers, low-income workers, and youth workers are displaced, the deep inequities endemic to our city now threaten to become ever more ingrained.

Among those workers hardest hit by the pandemic, many were already living month to month with very little buffer. Shift workers in restaurants, retail, building services, personal services, and accommodations, for instance, made nearly five times less in wages and were five times more likely to be without health insurance than office workers in industries well-suited for remote work (see Chart 3). These shift-workers are far more likely to be people of color (74 percent vs. 42 percent), foreign-born (54 percent vs. 32 percent), live in a non-Manhattan borough (73 percent vs. 42 percent), rent their homes (69 percent vs. 51 percent), and be under the age of 25 (16 percent vs. 7 percent).

**Chart 3: Demographics of Service and Office Workers**

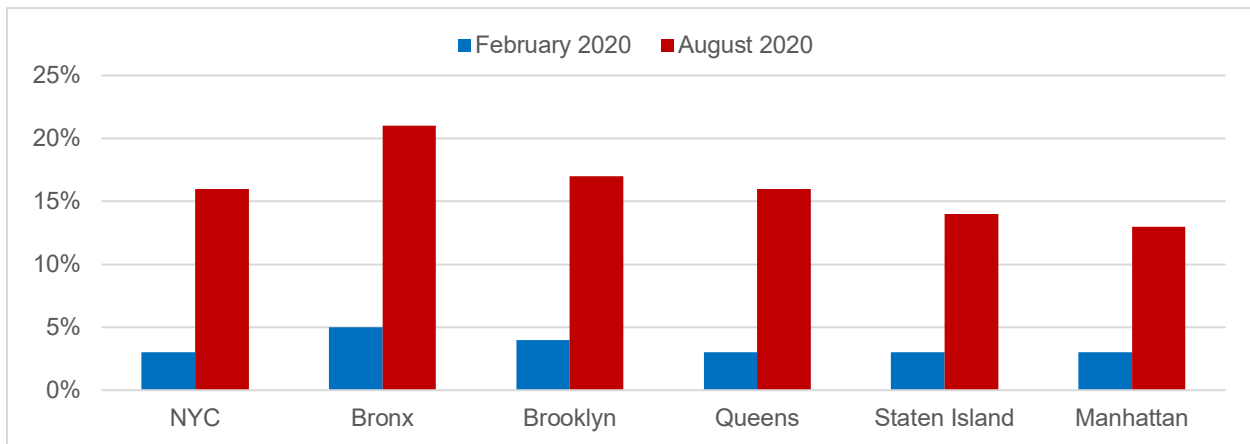
		Service Workers	Office Workers
<b>Salary and Benefits</b>	Average Employee Salary	\$41,869	\$188,728
	Share of Employees without Healthcare	19%	4%
<b>Demographics of Employees</b>	Live in a non-Manhattan Borough	73%	42%
	Person of Color	74%	42%
	Foreign Born	54%	32%
	Non-Citizen	28%	12%
	Renter	69%	51%
	Under the age of 25	16%	7%

Salary: United State Department of Labor, "Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages," 2019.

All Other: United States Census Bureau. American Community Survey 2014-2018 5-Year Estimates.

These disparities, of course, explain the dramatic divergence in unemployment rates by geography, race, and age in New York City. The unemployment rate for Asian (18.2 percent), Hispanic (16.7 percent), and 16-24 year olds (24.3 percent) all exceed the city-wide rate (15.7 percent) and that of white New Yorkers (14.2 percent). The rate for Bronx (21.1 percent), Brooklyn (16.5 percent), Queens (16.4 percent), and Staten Island (13.8 percent) residents, meanwhile, significantly outpaces unemployment among Manhattanites (12.9 percent).<sup>2</sup>

**Chart 4: Unemployment rates in New York City, by borough**



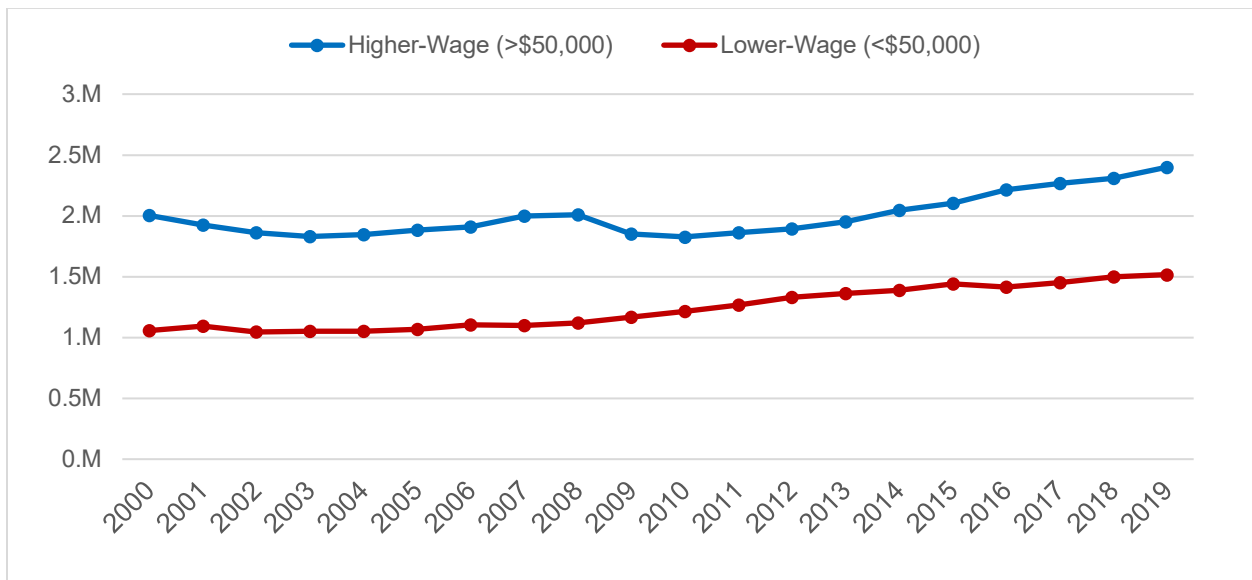
Current Population Survey, not seasonally adjusted.

## The Road Ahead

As workers are displaced and structural changes accelerated, our response must be swift and robust. COVID-19 should serve as a clarion call to overhaul our job training, job placement, and education systems and guarantee greater access and mobility in our workforce.

Going forward, we must simultaneously move beyond the pre-pandemic status-quo while leveraging some of its best features. In recent years, for instance, the number of local jobs in industries that pay over \$50,000 had been growing steadily—rising from 1,826,964 in 2010 to 2,399,511 in 2019 (see Chart 5)—and outpacing employment in industries that paid less than that \$50,000 benchmark.<sup>3</sup> This growth was driven by improved wage-standards in a number of industries and by rapid growth in fields like healthcare administration, digital marketing, data analytics, life sciences, architecture, design, and engineering.

**Chart 5: Number of jobs in higher-wage and lower-wage industries in New York City, 2000-2019**



United State Department of Labor, “Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages,” 2000-2020.

As demonstrated above, these industries have largely been sheltered from the worst effects of COVID-19 and in the medium- to long-term, this pandemic will position them for further growth. For instance, the acceleration of e-commerce, e-health, and e-communications will benefit tech companies; the reconfiguration of ventilation systems and public spaces should employ many engineers, architects, and designers; and the importance of a robust healthcare system has never been more obvious.

The challenge over the next decade, then, is not just to stimulate growth in these industries, but to dramatically diversify their staffing and upskill millions of New Yorkers. To address this dual challenge of job placement and job quality and ensure that workers at every stage of their lives have the skills they need to thrive, the City and State must work with CUNY, private employers, and other workforce development CBOs on the following:

## **Lifting Up NYC’s Workforce: A Blueprint for Improving Job Training, Preparation, and Quality**

### **Re-Imagining CUNY for the Economy of Tomorrow**

The City University of New York is the most powerful engine of economic mobility in the five boroughs and perhaps the entire country. Educating and training 500,000 New Yorkers each year across its 25 campuses, its scope and track record is unrivalled. From high school graduates to displaced workers, part-time learners to disconnected youth, first-generation students to mid-career learners, no other institution has the ability to reach and uplift a broader range of New Yorkers.

In the months and years ahead, CUNY must be ready, resourced, and empowered to prepare the next generation of students and the tidal wave of unemployed workers for a very different economy. Their degree and continuing education programs must be more affordable, more accessible, meet New Yorkers where they are, and prepare them for where they need to go. A robust and inclusive recovery will not be possible without a robust and inclusive CUNY.

#### **1. The State Should make CUNY Community Colleges Tuition-Free and the City Should Guarantee Universal Access to CUNY ASAP for all Community College Students**

For generations of New Yorkers, the promise of a free CUNY tuition was part of New York City’s covenant with its young people. The fiscal crisis of 1976 ended that access, but at a time of so much displacement, and with wages all but stagnant, it is time to move back in that direction. Today, many students must balance their course loads while working a job, caring for children and loved ones, and other obligations. Approximately 53 percent of all CUNY students are employed at least part-time while attending classes. It is these students—who are eager to improve their life and job prospects amidst myriad challenges—who the State and City should be squarely focused upon.

While New York State’s “free tuition” Excelsior Scholarship was greeted with much fanfare, its actual impact has proven quite modest. In fact, just 3,335 of the 146,403

students in CUNY senior colleges and just 820 of the 95,951 students in CUNY community colleges received an Excelsior Scholarship in the 2017-2018 school year. This coverage is largely a result of Excelsior’s restrictive policies on part-time students. Of the 43,513 Scholarship applications that were denied statewide, 83 percent were for “not sufficient credits.”<sup>4</sup>

With over 100,000 CUNY students currently attending school part-time, the Excelsior program is of little utility to the low-income, first-generation, working learners who make up a huge share of CUNY’s enrollment and are most in need of support and advancement. Helping these part-time students and adult learners finish their degrees must take priority over last mile funding for middle-class 18-year-olds.

**At a cost of approximately \$135 million, the State should introduce a true, K-14 education model that firmly recognizes the fundamental importance of higher education in today’s economy, making CUNY community colleges free for all local students.**

The City, meanwhile, must continue to zero in on non-tuition barriers to advancement. Research has squarely shown that programs providing tutoring, academic advisement, and counseling dramatically improve graduation rates.<sup>5</sup> CUNY’s Accelerated Study in Associates Programs (ASAP), for example, has had a major impact on degree completion rates and has become a model for community colleges nationwide.

The program currently serves approximately 25,000 students at nine CUNY campuses, with eligibility largely limited to select associate degree programs, including many STEM majors. Students enrolled in ASAP are provided with financial assistance for books and transportation as well as structured academic supports like tutoring and personalized academic advisory.

While ASAP has been expanded in recent years, increased investments would further benefit and support all CUNY students. Currently, just one campus, Bronx Community College, extends ASAP services for all incoming freshman. **Moving forward, the City should guarantee ASAP programming to all full-time students enrolled in two-year associate degree programs at CUNY colleges—at a cost of approximately \$100 million.**

**And finally, at a cost of \$2.4 million, CUNY should hire 50 “college navigators” to help advise adult learners who have been away from higher education for several years.** These navigators will provide specialized supports, helping adult learners overcome the logistical, financial, and academic barriers to earn their desired credential or degree.<sup>6</sup>



Together, free-tuition, universal CUNY ASAP, and specialty college advisors will support New Yorkers of all backgrounds and at every stage of their career. As COVID-19 upends the five borough economy, increasing opportunities and educational access while upskilling our workforce has never been more urgent or critical.

## **2. CUNY Programs Must be Designed to Meet the Needs of Today’s Displaced Workers, Part-Time Learners, and Low-Income Students**

Now more than ever, we need to meet workers where they are. In their homes, in between jobs and occupations, in short spurts. If we do not make degrees and credentialing programs easy to access, easy to continue, and easy to stop and restart, we will never meet the extraordinary challenge of reskilling and upskilling our workforce.

Institutions like CUNY have long recognized these needs and had begun to develop new curriculums and modalities accordingly. Now, as the pandemic rapidly accelerates trends toward automation, digitization, and displacement, the educational and training programs that were being developed to address these challenges will have to be rapidly accelerated and scaled as well. Most promising, perhaps, are “short-cycle training” and “stackable credentials.”

The former, also known as “micro-credentialing,” offers 30-60 hours of self-paced training for those with work and educational experience who are currently between jobs, looking to shift occupations, or to advance in their careers. These training courses offer highly-focused skill development in growing occupations and industries like healthcare IT, digital marketing, and data analytics. Ensuring that these classes are free, widely marketed, and updated and expanded in conjunction with industry partners and industry needs is key.

Stackable credentials, meanwhile, offer a new and more accessible path for achieving an Associates (and perhaps even a Bachelors) degree. CUNY programs would be divided into two or three discrete and “stackable” credentials that could be done in succession or over time. For early-, mid-, and late-career students, this would eliminate some of the barriers to entry and completion, allowing them to pursue their degree in phases or to take time off during their Associates degree and still have earned meaningful credentials along the way.

CUNY and local employers will have to work in collaboration to help develop and scale these programs and approaches. For Short-Cycle and Stackable Credentials to be useful, they must be developed in conjunction with local businesses, recognized as meaningful by local businesses, and lead directly to jobs with local businesses. Close coordination with the newly minted NYC Workforce Business Council offers an important avenue for doing so.<sup>7</sup>

Moreover, to help working learners, disabled workers, part-time learners, disconnected youth, and displaced workers, the programs must be provided free of charge. Leveraging federal WIOA Individual Training Accounts, Pell and TAP funding, private philanthropy, and State and City support will be critical for addressing the extraordinary disruptions precipitated by COVID-19 and for preparing the New York City workforce of the future.

### **3. Expand Bridge Programs that Pair Job Training with Language Education and Basic Skills Training**

For many New Yorkers who are looking to improve their employment prospects, job training is not enough. More than two million adults in New York City lack basic literacy skills, English language proficiency, or a high school diploma. To better support the capacity and potential of these New Yorkers to thrive in living wage jobs, the City needs to address their post-Secondary training needs alongside English language proficiency and literacy.

CUNY, with its robust network of community colleges, continuing education and certification programs, and English language and remedial education courses, has already begun to build out a wide range of these “Bridge Programs.” To accelerate these efforts, the City should direct a larger share of workforce development dollars to CUNY programs, as well as successful bridge programs run by Community Based Organizations.

### **4. Create a CUNY Tech Corps to Help Small Businesses Adopt Digital Tools and Develop an Online Presence**

Small Business Services should partner with CUNY to launch an NYC Tech Corps, helping Main Street businesses develop a web presence, expand online sales, and implement digital payroll, sales, and inventory tools. Rather than offering time-consuming classes and tutorials, the Tech Corp would work directly with business owners to design websites, to help purchase business software, and to set-up these tools. It would be staffed by recent CUNY graduates as well as interns majoring in tech, design, and business-related fields.

### **5. Expand Career and Technical Education, Early-College, and College Now in our Public Schools**

The City must continue to invest in Career and Technical Education and ensure that these schools and programs meet rigorous standards for industry-aligned curriculum, teacher

certification, work-based learning, and job-placement. A focus on IT, STEM, healthcare, and other high-paying fields is essential.

There are currently 301 CTE programs in the city, a large drop from the 413 available in 2013.<sup>8</sup> And while these trends have improved in recent years and there has been a concerted focus on program quality and standards, 153 CTE schools were still *not* certified by the New York State Department of Education as of 2018, 33 had no industry partners, 70 percent of CTE-dedicated high schools had fewer than five CTE-certified teachers, and available internships remain limited.<sup>9</sup>

In fact, achieving industry standards is more important than ever, now that the State has made federal vocation dollars contingent on being NYSED-approved.<sup>10</sup> To enable and expedite this process, the State must work to streamline its byzantine CTE approval process, which can take well over five years to complete.

Meanwhile, only nine of the City's CTE schools are early-college programs, which provide students with an associate degree upon graduation and work closely with an employer partner. Early college programs—whether CTE or otherwise—represent a promising partnership between CUNY and the DOE and a proven model for boosting high school graduation and college attendance. Over the next four years, they should be expanded to 34 schools, with at least one early college high school in each of New York City's 32 community school districts.

In conjunction with these efforts, DOE and CUNY should work together to expand College Now, which allows 22,000 students to take college credit courses while still enrolled in high school. Given CUNY's impressive investment in online education in recent years, massively scaling this program is viable. DOE and CUNY should aim to target 75,000 high school students by 2025, so that 75% of incoming freshmen will already have some college credit upon entering.<sup>11</sup>

## **6. CUNY must Invest in Experienced, Full-Time Faculty**

As part of any effort to raise up the quality of its workforce development programs, CUNY should be investing in experienced, full-time faculty, rather than leaning so heavily on part-time adjuncts. For years, CUNY has increasingly relied on part-time staffers to fill a broad range of positions—from classroom professors and librarians, to lab technicians and administrative support staff. Indeed, part-time adjuncts now comprise more than 50 percent of CUNY's teaching staff. The combination of low salary and the hours spent commuting from campus to campus means that part-time faculty often lack the time to fully develop the academic and workplace potential of CUNY students.

## Aligning Private Industry and Workforce Training

### 7. Local Businesses Must Play an Active Role in Upgrading our Workforce Development System and Creating a Jobs Pipeline

In the months ahead, the City must work closely with business leaders to develop new job training programs and scale up existing ones; establish apprenticeship, paid-internship, and work-based learning programs; help CUNY and workforce development organizations keep their curriculums up-to-date; and develop new certificate programs in conjunction with CUNY's Workforce Innovation Lab. Private employers must also play a more active role in retraining, upskilling, and diversifying their workforce and refrain from leaning on contingent labor.

Local employers should band together to coordinate these actions and to guide their philanthropic support for the field. This can be modeled after the New York City Workforce Development Fund, a consortium of 40 major foundations based in the five boroughs.

Meanwhile, corporate HR departments should make a concerted effort to review their job descriptions and degree requirements in order to better align with workforce nonprofits and community colleges and to diversify their staffing. Where training courses, certificate programs, and associate degrees are sufficient for a prospective job—rather than just a generic bachelor's degree—that should be specified.

And finally, finance, legal, accounting, and tech firms that have relocated back-office operations to low-cost states and countries should bring these middle-class jobs back to New York City. With a decline in office demand and rents, now is the time to reverse course, increase the number of good-paying jobs in the city, and create more opportunities for New Yorkers of all races, ethnicities, and education levels.

### 8. Businesses Should Work with CUNY and the City to Build out a Universal Paid Internship Program for all Students

For a CUNY student approaching their final years of school, a paid internship is more than a paycheck. It is an opportunity to pursue their field of interest, to obtain critical experience, to develop a pathway to a career, and to gain access and connections that are not always available to the BIPOC, immigrant, and low-income students who make up the vast majority of CUNY enrollment.

In 2019, just 21 percent of CUNY students participated in an internship and only 12 percent were in a paid internship. This put CUNY students at a severe disadvantage in a competitive job market where building relationships is key.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, with many of the summer and post-college employment opportunities in retail, accommodations, and food services disappearing, true career-path employment has never been more important.

Moving forward, the City should work with private sector employers and continue to extend a portion of SYEP funding to CUNY students who have selected a major, are on a career track, and are eager to get a foot in the door. This funding should come with no strings attached, allowing CUNY students to pursue the typical eight week, full-time internship, rather than a part-time, six week program designed for high school students.

Meanwhile, CUNY must build out its campus Career Engagement and Development Centers and upgrade its online tools to help students find paid work that aligns with their course work. Together, job counselors, City staff, and private employers can build a universal, guaranteed paid internship program for all CUNY students entering their final year of study, doubling down on CUNY's extraordinary record as an engine for economic mobility.

## **9. New York State Should Overhaul its Shared Work Program to Help Businesses Rehire and Retain Staff**

Across the globe, Shared Work programs have proven to be among the most effective tools for countering recessions, helping businesses retain staff, and rehiring workers. The program, managed by the Department of Labor's Unemployment Insurance division, allows employees to retain their salaries, benefits, and a connection to their employers (at reduced hours), while businesses can hold onto experienced staff by sharing the cost of wages with the government. Across much of Europe and in states like Rhode Island, these programs are highly robust and effective. In New York State, much less so.

To increase enrollment in its Shared Work program and help employers on-board staff, the New York State Department of Labor should improve outreach, marketing, and staffing, streamline enrollment and certification, leverage recent federal government actions to subsidize a larger share of employee wages, and adjust the hours that employers are allowed to cut and furlough. We should also take a cue from Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, who recently issued an executive order to encourage employers to switch their workers from unemployment insurance to work share so that they can begin to transition back to work.<sup>13</sup>

More importantly, the New York should follow the lead of Germany, Austria, and Belgium and use the Shared Work Program as an opportunity to connect furloughed employees to education, training, and upskilling programs.<sup>14</sup> Furloughed employees could enroll in CUNY's continuing education programs to receive new certifications and training. They would also have access to Registered Apprenticeships at their companies so that they can develop new skills and graduate to a better job.

## **10. Build out Subsidized Wage Programs for Targeted Populations and Expand Certified Apprenticeships**

For many New Yorkers, it is not their work experience or credentials that are a barrier to success, but simply getting a foot in the door. To address some of these basic obstacles, the City has successfully piloted guaranteed employment and subsidized wage programs, targeting those exiting the criminal justice system. Working with private employers, these transitional employment programs should be expanded and extended to New Yorkers in homeless shelters, out-of-school-out-of-work youth, and other populations in need.<sup>15</sup>

Moreover, the City should expand and restructure its modest Apprenticeship NYC program, building a public-private partnership to introduce more Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship programs in healthcare, finance, logistics, design, early education, cyber-security, and software development. These programs should be focused on diversifying those fields and increasing economic mobility for those without a college degree.<sup>16</sup>

## **Other Reforms**

### **11. Focus on Youth Unemployment and Out-of-School, Out-of-Work New Yorkers**

For New York City youth, the economic impact of COVID-19 has been absolutely devastating. Unemployment rates among 16-24 year-olds is at 24 percent and secondary and post-secondary education has been severely disrupted. To mitigate the lasting effects of this disconnection from the labor market and education system, the City must take immediate action.

On the labor side, the City should work closely with private employers to expand youth apprenticeships and subsidized, transitional employment opportunities. It should also provide part-time employment opportunities with the Parks, Sanitation, and Transportation Departments to help keep our public spaces clean and to expedite street improvements.

Meanwhile, the DOE and CUNY must work diligently to bring Out-of-School, Out-of-Work youth back into the education system. First, schools should closely track those students who are not signing into remote classes and provide immediate outreach and assistance. Allowing more students to fall behind and drop out is unacceptable.

Second, the DOE must unlock the potential of Transfer Schools. Estimates from the Migration Policy Institute indicate that a significant portion of out-of-school-out-of-work youth are recently arrived immigrant youth age 14-21.<sup>17</sup> These immigrant youth are

especially at risk of not graduating high school because they are less likely to receive adequate language proficiency services in the time needed to meet graduation requirements. It is especially critical then, that they are quickly connected to transfer high schools with robust programming to support older immigrant youth.

Currently there are just five transfer schools that support older, multi-lingual youth, with four of them located in Manhattan. The City should pilot an expansion of the Internationals Network, its most successful transfer high schools that integrate language development along with project-based and work-based learning.<sup>18</sup>

And third, the City must invest in institutional partnerships between CUNY and CBOs. In Staten Island, community-based organizations partner with the College of Staten Island to offer “educational bridges, customized training, and wraparound support services to out-of-school, out-of-work young adults” and partner with the Chamber of Commerce to help young adults secure jobs in high-demand industries and occupations.<sup>19</sup> The CUNY Network for College Success, meanwhile, aims to significantly increase college persistence and graduation rates by helping CBOs develop and improve their college readiness workshops, career guidance, financial aid counseling, and assistance with transfers and re-enrollment. Both programs should be expanded across the five boroughs.

## **12. Help Connect Local Residents to Local Job Opportunities**

Over the last two decades, employment growth in Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx, and Staten Island have far outpaced Manhattan. These dynamics will likely accelerate in the months and years ahead, as New Yorkers stay close to home, work remotely, and shop local. Main Street businesses beyond the Central Business Districts have already fared much better amidst this pandemic and some satellite offices have emerged in order to be closer to their workers. As the city’s economy continues to decentralize, it is critical that local residents have access to local job openings.

To support these efforts, the City should help improve coordination among workforce development providers, particularly at the community level. The Lower East Side Employment Network (LESEN), a partnership of seven lower Manhattan workforce development providers and Community Board 3, should serve as inspiration.

LESEN was formed in 2007 to connect local job-seekers to new businesses and avoid antagonistic and duplicative business recruitment efforts. The Network streamlines business outreach and helps local employers recruit, hire, and retain quality candidates,

access available subsidies and tax incentives, and develop customized training for new and existing employees.

The Mayor's Office of Work Development should convene Community Boards and community-based organizations in every district to help build partnerships and cultivate a collaborative business outreach model that suits the needs and resources of individual neighborhoods. Appointing a Network Coordinator in every community district would represent a definitive step toward a more robust, integrated, and inclusive local economy.



# Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> The 2001 Recession considers end-of-year 2001 employment numbers and end-of-year 2002 employment numbers. The Great Recession considers end-of-year 2008 employment numbers and end-of-year 2010 employment numbers. The COVID-19 Recession considers end-of-year 2019 employment numbers to August 2020 Current Employment Estimates.
- <sup>2</sup> Current Population Survey, not seasonally adjusted
- <sup>3</sup> This analysis was conducted by looking at average wages for every New York City industry at the four-digit NAICS level. The number of jobs were adjusted so that the sum of employment at the 4-Digit level was equal to the total number of private sector jobs (NAICS Code 10).
- <sup>4</sup> <https://nycfuture.org/research/excelsior-scholarship>
- <sup>5</sup> See Deming, David. (2019) Economics for Inclusive Prosperity: The Economics of Free College. <https://econfip.org/policy-brief/the-economics-of-free-college/>
- <sup>6</sup> [https://www.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/page-assets/about/administration/offices/budget-and-finance/FY2021-CUNY-Budget-Request\\_2020-02-10\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/page-assets/about/administration/offices/budget-and-finance/FY2021-CUNY-Budget-Request_2020-02-10_FINAL.pdf)
- <sup>7</sup> <https://nycetc.org/nycetc-announces-formation-of-business-advisory-board>
- <sup>8</sup> <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/about-us/news/announcements/contentdetails/2018/11/29/chancellor-carranza-announces-47-new-career-and-technical-education-programs-successfully-opened>
- <sup>9</sup> Local Law 174. 2017-18 Report on Career and Technical Education. <https://infohub.nyced.org/reports/government-reports/computer-science-and-cte-reports>
- <sup>10</sup> <https://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/education/ny-vocational-education-funding-cut-20200113-mycjmfssinfchj46ytw3dwrvee-story.html>
- <sup>11</sup> [https://www.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/page-assets/about/administration/offices/budget-and-finance/FY2021-CUNY-Budget-Request\\_2020-02-10\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/page-assets/about/administration/offices/budget-and-finance/FY2021-CUNY-Budget-Request_2020-02-10_FINAL.pdf)
- <sup>12</sup> Partnership for NYC. “A Call for Action and Collaboration,” July 2020.
- <sup>13</sup> Goger, Annelies. “Turning COVID-19’s mass layoffs into opportunities for quality jobs,” Brookings Institute, July 23, 2020.
- <sup>14</sup> Parton, Brent. “We Have a Powerful Tool to Flatten the Unemployment Curve,” New America. March 27, 2020.
- <sup>15</sup> NY Workforce Recovery Strategy Group. “Recovery for All,” July 2020.
- <sup>16</sup> Sharp, Naomi and Eli Dvorkin. “The Promise Of Apprenticeships In New York,” Center for an Urban Future. September 2018.
- <sup>17</sup> Over 4,200 newly arrived immigrants in New York City are age 14-21 and are not enrolled in school. See National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy, Analysis of Newly Arrived Immigrant Youth in New York City. February 2020.
- <sup>18</sup> <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/deeper-learning-networks-cs-internationals-network-report>
- <sup>19</sup> Conway-Pierce, Jessica and Amanda Rosenblum. “The Early Impact of COVID-19 on Young Adult Workforce Development: Insights from the Field,” JobsFirst NYC. May 2020.