



BRING BACK THE VALLONE SCHOLARSHIP

In 1998, then New York City Council Speaker Peter F. Vallone Sr. established “The New York City Council Academic Scholarship.” In 2001, the Council renamed the program, “The Speaker Peter F. Vallone Academic Scholarship,” to honor Speaker Vallone Sr. for his commitment to making college more affordable. After many years of fighting to protect the scholarship, it was ultimately defunded in 2011 leaving many CUNY students without the resources they need and further threatening access to college for others.

Vallone Scholarship Eligibility

The award was available to full-time students who enrolled directly into a CUNY college within a year of graduating from a New York City high school, public or private, with a 3.0 or higher GPA. Scholars had to enroll in an associate's or baccalaureate degree program and maintain a cumulative B average or higher. Baccalaureate degree students were eligible for a maximum of 10 semesters of scholarship award. Associate's degree students were eligible for 6 semesters.ⁱ

Undocumented Vallone Scholars

Undocumented youth are currently ineligible for any federal and state financial aid that would encourage access to college and success thereafter. The Vallone Scholarship was one of the few programs that were available to undocumented New Yorkers who went on to attend CUNY.

The Impact of the Vallone Scholarship

Roughly 14,000 Vallone Scholars once received up to \$1,450 per year, which at that time paid for nearly half of the cost of tuition at CUNY.ⁱⁱ The annual award dwindled to an amount of \$500 per recipient over the last decade before being eliminated all together.ⁱⁱⁱ

Why We Need the Vallone Scholarship

President Obama has called for more Americans to have a post-secondary education to meet the growing demands of a 21st century workforce.^{iv} However, college costs have grown so much in recent years that next year's maximum Federal Pell Grant will cover the smallest share of college costs since the start of the program.^v Since 2008, New York State has cut more than \$1.7 billion to higher education,^{vi} including cuts to community colleges of more than \$443 per FTE (adjusted for inflation).^{vii} Meanwhile, TAP has remained idle with a maximum award of \$5,000, not keeping pace with rising costs^{viii} such as CUNY tuition, which jumped \$1,400 since the downturn in the economy and is expected to hit \$6,330 by 2016.^{ix} The perfect storm of budget cuts, rising costs, inadequate financial aid and the surge in enrollment have heightened the demand for greater New York City investment in programs that work, such as the Peter F. Vallone Academic Scholarship, which helps to make college more accessible and affordable.

Act Now!

Urge the New York City Council, Speaker Christine Quinn, and Mayor Michael Bloomberg to bring back the Peter F. Vallone Academic Scholarship!

ⁱ The New York City Council: Legislative Research Center, “The Speaker Peter F. Vallone Academic Scholarship, Res 2164-2001,” December 2001, <http://legistar.council.nyc.gov/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=436891&GUID=AB73CD51-5D94-4F23-A743-E175CBC113C5&Options=&Search> (7 April 2013).

ⁱⁱ Hostos Community College: Office of Financial Aid, “Peter F. Vallone Scholarship,” <http://www.hostos.cuny.edu/ofa/scholarships/petervallone.html> (8 April 2013).

ⁱⁱⁱ Queens Ledger, “Popular Vallone Scholarship eliminated from budget,” July 2011, http://www.queensledger.com/view/full_story/14583751/article-Popular-Vallone-Scholarship-eliminated-from-budget (8 April 2013).

^{iv} The White House: President Barack Obama, “EDUCATION: Knowledge and Skills for the Jobs of the Future,” <http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/education/higher-education> (8 April 2013).

^v The Institute for College Access and Success, “Pell Grants Help Keep College Affordable for Millions of Americans,” March 2013, http://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/?default_fld=&bn=A01178&term=&Summary=Y&Actions=Y&Votes=Y&Memo=Y&Text=Y (2 April 2013).

^{vi} New York State United Teachers, “Testimony on Financing Public Higher Education,” October 2011, http://www.nysut.org/legislation_17177.htm (16 August 2012).

^{vii} New York State Senate, “Report on the Enacted State Fiscal Year 2013-2014 Executive Budget,” Page 8, <http://www.nysenate.gov/files/pdfs/2013-2014%20Enacted%20Budget%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf> (8 April 2013).

^{viii} New York State Higher Education Services Corporation, “New York’s Tuition Assistance Program-A History,” www.hesc.com/content.nsf/CA/Appendix_E_New_Yorks_Tuition_Assistance_Program_A_History. (4 February 2013).

^{ix} New York State United Teachers, “NYS Public Tuition Rates 1971-Current,” Jacob Crawford, (10 January 2013).