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Commentary/Op-Ed - June 2023

To Create a More Equitable Economy, Invest in CUNY

In this Gotham Gazette op-ed, CUF's Jonathan Bowles and Eli Dvorkin make the case for why policymakers should prioritize fully funding CUNY. Despite the essential role CUNY plays in creating economic opportunity for low-income New Yorkers of color, it stands to see a net budget cut of $140.9 million in FY 2024. Now is the time to invest in CUNY's effectiveness, not limit its potential.

by Jonathan Bowles and Eli Dvorkin

There is perhaps no institution in our city that has done more to create economic opportunity for New Yorkers than the City University of New York (CUNY). For generations, CUNY has provided its students with the tools they need to build a brighter financial future for themselves and their families. Yet today, CUNY finds itself at a financial crossroads. Steep budget cuts threaten the programs that are most effective at helping students earn a degree.

In this op-ed, CUF's Jonathan Bowles and Eli Dvorkin make the case for why policymakers should prioritize fully funding CUNY. New York's elected leaders are nearly unanimous in expressing the desire to expand economic mobility, while ensuring New Yorkers are ready for the well-paying jobs the city's economy is creating and making the state's tax base more resilient. Bowles and Dvorkin argue that no institution is better positioned to deliver on those needs than CUNY. Now is the time to invest in CUNY's effectiveness, not limit its potential.

Read the full op-ed here.

This op-ed builds on CUF's longstanding research on boosting CUNY as an engine of economic mobility to prepare more low-income New Yorkers for the city's growing and well-paying jobs, including *Playing New York City's ACE Card*, *Harnessing CUNY as a Launchpad Into Tech Careers*, *Opportunity Costs: Affording the True Costs of College in NYC*, and *Degrees of Difficulty: Boosting College Success in New York City*.

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