

Commentary/Op-Ed - October 2023

The city should provide free MetroCards to CUNY students

In this amNewYork op-ed, CUF's Jonathan Bowles and Fisher Brothers' and Area15's Winston Fisher make the case to the mayor and the City Council that, to ensure a lot more New Yorkers can advance into the middle class, one of the most effective actions they can take is to give every CUNY community college student a free MetroCard.

by Jonathan Bowles and Winston Fisher

New York City's leaders have understandably been focused on solving a multitude of massive policy challenges that have demanded attention in recent months — from sheltering an unprecedented influx of asylum seekers and making New York more resilient amid increasingly powerful storms to strengthening the city's business districts in an age of hybrid work. But even as city officials grapple with these growing concerns, it remains vital to focus on arguably the single greatest long-term issue facing our city: how to ensure a lot more New Yorkers can advance into the middle class.

In this op-ed, CUF's Jonathan Bowles and Fisher Brothers' and Area15's Winston Fisher make the case that one of the most effective actions that Mayor Eric Adams and the City Council can take to achieve this important goal — and revive the middle class dream in New York — is to provide a free MetroCard to every student attending community college at the City University of New York (CUNY). Now more than ever, the path to the middle class runs through CUNY.

Read the full op-ed here.

This op-ed builds on CUF's ongoing research on harnessing CUNY as an engine of economic mobility so more New Yorkers can advance to the middle class, including "To Create a More Equitable Economy, Invest in CUNY", *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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