



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

## Senator Jeff Klein, Assemblyman Victor Pichardo & Association of Proprietary Colleges urge Governor Cuomo to sign bill creating financial aid parity for college students at proprietary colleges

JEFFREY D. KLEIN December 15, 2017

| ISSUE: **COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY**, **HIGHER EDUCATION**

*Legislation would make Enhanced Tuition Awards available to 40,000 more students*

**New York, NY — Senator Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester), Assemblyman Victor Pichardo (D-Bronx) and the Association of Proprietary Colleges** on Thursday urged Governor Andrew Cuomo to extend Enhanced Tuition Awards access to their 40,000 students, who are earning Associate, Bachelor's, Master's and doctoral degrees at their state Board of Regents certified institutions in programs approved and endorsed by the New York State Department of Education.

While the Excelsior Scholarship program created a pathway to free college tuition for students attending CUNY and SUNY and Enhanced Tuition Awards created increased affordability for students attending not-for-profit colleges, not every student in the state can access the crucial ETA funds. The thousands of students attending proprietary colleges, which meet the same standards as all degree granting colleges and universities, were left out of the college affordability plan.

Senator Klein and Assemblyman Pichardo passed legislation in their respective houses to extend much-needed aid to these students, many of whom are working women, minorities

and veterans.

“I’m proud that college affordability topped our list of priorities last year, but we cannot leave any student behind. Those studying at proprietary colleges receive the same degree that they would receive if they opted to go to another college and those students deserve financial aid parity. I urge Governor Cuomo to sign my legislation into law,” **said Senator Klein.**

“As the costs of higher education continue to climb, it’s essential that we expand scholarship programs so that every New Yorker has the opportunity to earn a college degree. Under current law, however, students at proprietary colleges aren’t eligible for Enhanced Tuition Awards, a clear inequity that needs to be corrected. That’s why Senator Klein and I passed legislation to ensure these students can take full advantage of the state’s scholarship and college opportunity programs. The measure passed both legislative chambers with strong bipartisan support, and I urge the governor to sign this bill into law as soon as possible,” **said Assemblyman Pichardo.**

“By lifting the restrictions that are currently in place – Governor Cuomo would be opening doors of opportunity to New Yorkers who are working hard to earn their college degree, reduce student debt and secure a better job,” **said Donna Gurnett, President of New York Association of Proprietary Colleges.**

It is estimated that approximately 8,500 more students who attend degree-granting proprietary colleges across the state would be eligible for an award through the Enhanced Tuition Award program.

The students who attend often work long hours in addition to taking on full-time course loads. At the 12 colleges spread over 23 campuses across the state, nearly 70 percent of students are women; and 41 percent are black or Hispanic. Over 2,000 of the students

currently attending APC schools are veterans.

Students attending APC colleges receive federal and state assistance; grants and aid from their colleges; and secure loans to finance their higher education objectives. These are their stories:

- **Ashley, Bryant and Stratton, Albany Campus**

Ashley graduated from a small rural high school and chose to study accounting at Bryant & Stratton, where she finds comfort in the intimacy of a smaller campus. She works a 50-hour week, has her own apartment, and studies full-time. She noted while testifying at a recent higher education hearing, that many in her hometown are on public assistance and she recognized the value in earning a degree. The Enhanced Tuition Award would help keep her out of debt.

- **Leanna, LIM College**

Leanna chose to pursue a B.S. in Fashion Media at LIM College in New York City. She is currently taking out loans for her tuition, fees and housing expenses to bridge the gap between other financial aid she has received. Participating in the Enhanced Tuition Award program would allow her to become eligible for an award that would greatly reduce her student loan debt.

- **Jayson, Five Towns College**

Jayson hails from Jamaica, New York, where his mom raised him and his three siblings single-handedly since his father's death. He transferred to Five Towns from the Borough of Manhattan Community College to pursue a Bachelor's degree in mass communications because he preferred the smaller, hands-on environment. Jayson is currently receiving \$5,900

in TAP award and \$5,115 in Pell grants as well as \$7,995 in institutional aid for two semesters from Five Towns College and is currently on a payment plan to cover the remaining \$9,500 gap.

- **Nadia, Five Towns College**

Growing up in foster care, Nadia made it through difficult times through music and prided herself on attending school and graduating high school. She is now scheduled to graduate on time in May 2018 with a bachelor's degree in business management from Five Towns College where she thrives thanks to small classes and the ability to live on campus. Though she has received many forms of aid she has still needed to take out loans to pay for her education and will likely need to take out more to graduate. The Enhanced Tuition Award program would help prevent her student loan debt from rising.

- **Karla, Monroe College**

Karla migrated from Brazil to the United States. As a teenager she only spoke Portuguese and not a word of English. It was one of the most difficult challenges that she faced. Karla pushed herself to the limit and learned how to speak and write English fluently. Karla chose Monroe College because she was impressed with its criminal justice curriculum and the college's Simulation Center. To date she has earned a 3.25 GPA. If Karla was eligible to participate in the Enhanced Tuition Award program it would reduce her student loan debt significantly.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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**2017-S5891**

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- Introduced
  - - In Committee Assembly
    - In Committee Senate
  - - On Floor Calendar Assembly
    - On Floor Calendar Senate
  - - Passed Assembly
    - Passed Senate
  - Vetoed By Governor
  - Signed By Governor
  -

Clarifies that enhanced tuition awards are for attendance at private degree granting institutions of higher education

May 04, 2017

Senate Floor Calendar

Sponsored by **Jeffrey D. Klein**

Do you support this bill?