Commentary/Op-Ed - June 2018

Op-Ed: NYC Should Fund Community College Metro Cards

While the City Council's Fair Fares Plan would undoubtedly provide a much-needed boost to tens of thousands of New Yorkers who are barely scraping by, it remains in legislative limbo. As a practical alternative, New York can start by making MetroCards free for the city's community college students.

by Tom Hilliard

CUNY's community colleges serve as the city's most reliable springboards to the middle class. However, for many community college students, non-tuition expenses, including food, housing, and transit, are among the biggest factors that cause students to drop out. There's a lot that could be done to help more students stay in school, but few things would be as valuable as offering free MetroCards.

In this *City Limits* op-ed, CUF Senior Fellow for Economic Opportunity Tom Hilliard suggests a compromise to the City Council's proposal for half-price MetroCards for poor families that is more affordable and very much aligns with the city's goal of reducing inequality: Make MetroCards free for the city's community college students.

Read the op-ed here.

This op-ed is a continuation of the Center for an Urban Future's extensive research on higher education and economic mobility in New York, including the recent study *Degrees of Difficulty: Boosting College Success in New York City*.

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General operating support for the Center for an Urban Future has been provided by **The Clark Foundation**, the **Bernard F. and Alva B. Gimbel Foundation**, and the **Altman Foundation**. CUF is also grateful for support from **Fisher Brothers** for the Middle Class Jobs Project.

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