
Committee Meeting

of

ASSEMBLY REGULATORY OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

"Review and discussion of the New Jersey Educational Opportunity Fund program"

LOCATION: Committee Room 14
State House Annex
Trenton, New Jersey

DATE: May 14, 2007
10:00 a.m.

MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Assemblyman William D. Payne, Chair
Assemblyman Alfred E. Steele, Vice Chair
Assemblyman Peter J. Barnes III
Assemblyman Samuel D. Thompson



ALSO PRESENT:

Tracey F. Pino Murphy
Office of Legislative Services
Committee Aide

Jennifer Taylor
Assembly Majority
Committee Aide

Natalie A. Collins
Assembly Republican
Committee Aide

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Sister Rosemary E. Jeffries, Ph.D. President Georgian Court University	5
Glenn B. Lang, Ed.D. Executive Director Educational Opportunity Fund New Jersey Commission on Higher Education	10
Kamal Khan, Ph.D. Associate Director Office for Diversity and Academic Success in the Sciences Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey	26
Samuel Echeverri Private Citizen	36
Stephanie M. Torres Private Citizen	39
Randy Jackson Jr. Private Citizen	40
Asha Bailey Private Citizen	42
APPENDIX:	
Statement submitted by Sister Rosemary E. Jeffries, Ph.D.	1x
Testimony submitted by Glenn B. Lang, Ed.D.	5x

ASSEMBLYMAN WILLIAM D. PAYNE (Chair): Good morning, everyone.

ASSEMBLYMAN STEELE: Good morning.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: It's good to have you all here. It's a beautiful day here in Trenton. And it's good to see all of you here this morning to teach us something about what our government is doing. And we're particularly interested in the future of our young people and how we can help them to become contributors of society.

Before we start, I'd like to--

We're going to welcome you, number one, to the Regulatory Oversight Committee. And, number two, we will have our roll call so that we can officially get started.

MS. PINO MURPHY (Committee Aide): Assemblyman Thompson.

ASSEMBLYMAN THOMPSON: Here.

MS. PINO MURPHY: Assemblyman Michael Patrick Carroll.
(no response)

Assemblyman Barnes.

ASSEMBLYMAN BARNES: Here.

MS. PINO MURPHY: Vice Chair Steele.

ASSEMBLYMAN STEELE: Here.

MS. PINO MURPHY: Chairman Payne.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Yes, here.

Thank you very much.

On the way down, I was listening to the radio. And I heard that a Committee was going to be meeting today on homeland security, and

that there's a lot of interest in that, particularly since there was this plot at Fort Dix. And there's going to be a -- Committee is going to be here, meeting today. It's just by coincidence that they were scheduled to meet. But, anyway, they're going to be talking about that as a crisis that we still face in this country.

One of the things, however, that was not mentioned on the radio was the fact that we were having this hearing today, which I think is probably as important, if not more important to the future of this country than any other thing that's going on here. One of the areas that seems to be missing and lacking any kind of notoriety or attention is the fact that we have thousands and thousands of students that are in the State of New Jersey, who are attending school with the assistance of the EOF. Not only that, but there are many, many more who are deserving of attending who simply do not have the wherewithal to do so. And I believe our State, our government, really is derelict in meeting the needs of many of our young people that do have something to contribute. But without the means to do so, it becomes much more difficult.

You know, a long time ago, there was a saying that the United Negro College Fund had, which said, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste." I think one of the Vice Presidents kind of twisted it around a little bit. But the fact is that there is so much truth in that. Because who knows -- that in the minds of many of the young people that are -- desire getting a higher education -- might very well be the answer for the cure for cancer, may very well be the answer to the cure for autism, may very well be the answer for solving many of the problems that we have in our country -- and in the world for that matter. We have global warming now and things like that.

There are many, many young people who, perhaps locked in their minds, locked in their brains might be the solutions to many of the problems we have. And until we're able to provide for those young people, and the opportunities for them to be able to nurture -- be nurtured, and be educated to make the contributions, then-- I think we are truly derelict in our responsibility to them; and not only to them, but to our country as well.

It's a shame that there are more minority men in jail than there are in colleges. I mean, this is a terrible, terrible thing and, certainly, we need to be able to do something about turning that around. There are people of very, very limited means, which prohibits them from going to college. I think that's something that we need to take care of and resolve. The fact that-- It was after the Newark rebellion, in 1968 I believe, that we developed the -- this fund to provide opportunities for people who would not have had an opportunity to go to college otherwise.

The reason for this hearing, of course, is that this has been on the books for some years now. And I think it's time for us to have some kind of legislative overview -- a review of where we are, how it's working, what's going on, and what we need to do, perhaps.

And so we are very happy that you have come here today to be able to give us the kind of information that would be necessary for us to, number one, evaluate the program, see how it's going along, see what kind of successes it's had, what else is needed, or whether or not you have all the resources you need. I don't know. But certainly we need to hear that.

But it is a crime that -- as I say -- that there are more people -- minorities in jail than there are in colleges. That's something that has to be turned. Because, as I say, there are contributions -- many, many

contributions that these young people can make, to make this a better world for us.

So I'm very glad to have you here.

Before I invite Sister Jeffries to come to -- before us -- because it's my understanding that Sister Jeffries has to leave early. Is she here?
(affirmative response)

Yes, we're going to ask Sister Jeffries to come and testify first.

Because it's my-- I've been told that you have another engagement.

So if one of you will shift around.

But before we do that, before we begin our testimony, I'm going to ask my fellow members if they have any comments they'd like to make regarding this hearing, before we start.

ASSEMBLYMAN THOMPSON: I think you've summarized the situation very well, Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Thank you.

Reverend Steele.

ASSEMBLYMAN STEELE: Proceed forward, Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Mr. Barnes.

ASSEMBLYMAN BARNES: No, Mr. Chairman, go ahead.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Let me welcome Mr. Barnes. I believe it's Peter Barnes?

ASSEMBLYMAN BARNES: Yes, Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Yes -- whose father preceded him in the Assembly and on this Committee. And Peter Barnes is now the Chairman of the Parole Board in the State of New Jersey. And his son is

following in his footsteps. And he's here, and we're very glad to have him here on this Committee with us. It kind of reminds me of the Payne family, Mr. Barnes. It seems to go from generation, to generation, to generation of public servants. So I'm glad to have you with us.

ASSEMBLYMAN BARNES: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: And I'm sure that you'll--

ASSEMBLYMAN BARNES: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate those comments.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Thank you.

Yes. If you will proceed, introduce yourself, and we'll hear from you, Sister Jeffries.

SISTER ROSEMARY E. JEFFRIES, Ph.D.: Hi, I'm Sister Rosemary Jeffries. I'm the President of Georgian Court University, in Lakewood, New Jersey.

Just to give you a little bit about Georgian Court: We've been in operation since 1908, and we were a traditional women's college. We are a University now. We have about 3,000 students. More than a third of those are in graduate education. We have--

It's my pleasure, really, Mr. Chairman, to give some testimony on behalf of EOF. I'm happy to say that Georgian Court, then a college in 1968, was one of the first institutions in the State of New Jersey, among the 34, to adopt this program and to integrate it into our college curriculum and programs. We enrolled 10 students in 1968. There were 1,500 students in the total program. They aimed at providing higher education for families that were disadvantaged, educationally, sometimes from low-income, or lack of access to quality education in preparation for college.

The need in the '60s, as the Chairman said, was evident in the wake of unrest in the cities. The need, however, is still there. I would submit that in the city of Newark, one in 10 has a college degree; while in the city of Summit, nine in 10 have a college degree. And so, in those neighborhoods and communities, sometimes young people do not have the role models that they're looking for.

The success of this program, I believe, however, is really rooted in the participating campuses that provide staff that do all kinds of programming with these students, starting with a rigorous boot camp. At our campus, we have a five-week, Summer boot camp -- learning how to go to college. Advising, tutoring, social and emotional support for college life, and developing good study skills is key. The ongoing support of staff at not only our own campus, but other campuses, provides ongoing advising and tutoring throughout their college career, and to advise them going on for further careers.

The mix of counseling and academic advising, peer and mentoring, as well as graduation -- preparation for graduate school -- really supports these young people in being persistent and being successful. National data confirms that college students who have mentors or some organization in their college career lending support and help really persist and do better.

The statewide program now enrolls about 13,000, within which the independent sector -- which I represent-- There are 13 independent colleges and universities in the state that enroll EOF students. We enroll about 14 percent of the students. At my own University, we enroll about

100. So we went from 10 to about 105 students in this time period. Some of that is limited by funding.

In addition to the funding that comes from the State, the independent sector has contributed, on average, about \$12.3 million to support the students who are part of the EOF program. Georgian Court, alone, provides each of our students about -- close to \$6,000 in institutional aid. The direct aid from the EOF program also does help with the programming. But the institutions contribute yet other aid to provide things for staff and other parts of the programs. Increasing the program aid would provide staff with the additional funds they might need to do some of the things they're unable to do. For example, some cultural activities that are way beyond the scope of the program and the funding right now.

The EOF program sponsors a high number of minority students throughout the state. It also enrolls about 12 percent of the first-time, full-time freshmen in our colleges and universities.

Despite the increase in numbers, the consistent success of the program, and -- the funding has remained somewhat flat. I add to my remarks today a request for increased funding for program support. That is: counseling, tutors, Summer programs, and other kinds of things that will really help these students to persist.

My own institution -- Ceil Younger, who is here with me today, says she has even additional students that could be enrolled, but is limited with the program funding -- which makes increasing the number of students coming to Georgian Court impossible. I believe an increase of \$2 million to \$3 million would be a wise investment in the educational future of some very deserving students.

As a President of an independent university sponsored by a my religious community -- the Sisters of Mercy -- I'm particularly proud of the accomplishments of the EOF students. As I said before, Georgian Court was founded in 1908. It was a traditional women's college. We began educating women 13 years before women had the right to vote. We believed educating women would change society, and so we went about that task. Likewise, today, in this 21st century, we believe that all students have the right -- whether they come from communities or neighborhoods where education preparation is not as good -- have the right to a college education. Those with potential have the right to be enhanced in their educational dreams.

Many of our EOF students have assumed leadership positions at Georgian Court. They have distinguished themselves. They do not stay disadvantaged. Last year, nearly a third of our students achieved a 3.0 GPA or higher. They're graduating, they're becoming teachers, business and industry managers, pursuing graduate study. These students, I believe, will make a difference in their communities. I know, at Georgian Court, we encourage community service. And I believe our EOF students continue to distinguish themselves in that, not only while they're on the campus, but beyond their time at Georgian Court.

I had the great pleasure of attending the EOF Champion conference in March -- this past March -- in Atlantic City. And I witnessed, firsthand, the statewide accomplishments of EOF students studying at the various State colleges, both county, public, and independent. This program is one deserving of our continuing, and possibly increased, State support, as it prepares to celebrate 40 years.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Thank you very much for your testimony.

Yes, I recall seeing you in Atlantic City during that event. And I was very impressed with the caliber of youngsters that are in your program.

Is there anyone on the -- anyone have any questions for Sister Jeffries? (no response)

I want to thank you for coming here. And although this is not a budget hearing--

SISTER JEFFRIES: I know.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: That's okay though.

SISTER JEFFRIES: I took a shot at it though.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: That's okay. You should. Believe me, I believe that, every opportunity that you get, that you should raise this issue. I think that there are countless youngsters who could benefit from the program. And you're quite right. There is insufficient funding for the program to meet the needs. I think it's very, very important for us, as a State, as a society, to begin to invest more on the front end, and to begin to invest so much more. We invest a lot in prisons and that kind of thing -- and corrections. But we need to have prevention. And I am an advocate, believe me, of spending money on the front end rather than the other. And it seems -- often it seems that it's easier to get money to have -- more money for prisons, etc., than it is for schools or for education.

So keep shining a light on this. And those of us who are here, I think, might also agree with you. And you can look forward to our support in any way that we can do that for you.

Thank you very, very much.

SISTER JEFFRIES: Thank you. Thank you for this opportunity.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Thank you.

We have Dr. Lang with us today, also.

I'd like to ask you, Dr. Lang, to please come up.

He's Executive Director of the New Jersey Educational Opportunity Fund.

Welcome.

G L E N N B. L A N G, Ed.D.: Thank you.

Good morning.

And I want to thank the Chairman and the Committee for this opportunity to bring you the good news about EOF.

I've submitted written testimony to you, so I won't bore you by reading the written testimony to you. It includes some background information about the history of the program, some information about who our students are.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Why don't you give us a snapshot of that, okay?

DR. LANG: Okay.

For example--

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Is your red light on? (referring to PA microphone)

DR. LANG: Now it's on.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Good. Thank you.

DR. LANG: This past Fall, we had approximately 12,300 students. We served a total of 13,000 students this year. To be eligible for EOF, a student has to come from a family at about 200 percent the Federal poverty level, which is about \$40,000 a year for a family of four. Our average student is slightly over approximately \$25,000 a year. You look at the median family income in New Jersey and it's a little bit over \$70,000 a year. So that let's you know who we're serving. We serve students from every county in New Jersey. Some people think they're just from certain urban areas or certain communities. They come from every county in this state. They represent every racial, ethnic group in the state. So we're serving the diversity of New Jersey at almost every college and university in this state. So they're not concentrated in just one sector.

I believe one of the things that makes EOF unique-- One of the concerns, nationally, is that low-income students only get to go to county colleges. In EOF, three-quarters of our students are in four-year colleges and universities. So they have the opportunity to start their college careers at State colleges, at Rutgers; at independent colleges and universities. So they're not just segregated in one sector of higher education. So that's one thing that makes EOF unique.

The other thing that makes EOF unique -- and it's always been in our regulations -- our students have always been assessed holistically. Recently -- some of you may know -- the U.S. Supreme Court, in the Michigan cases, said you have to assess the individual, the whole student. Well, we've always done that. In addition to test scores and class ranks,

there always had to be an assessment of a student's commitment, their motivation, their potential to succeed. They have to participate in a rigorous, five- to six-week Summer program. During that period of time, it's not a free pass into college -- they have to demonstrate that they're still serious in their work habits, their aptitude, and their commitment to their future.

So it's not easy being an EOF student. On top of the circumstances that you have to overcome at home, you still have to demonstrate your commitment and your motivation that you're serious about going to college. So EOF students really have to step up to the plate to go to college.

There is not a large State bureaucracy that's running EOF. Three-quarters of the State staff that runs EOF is in this room right now: myself; my Assistant Director, Audrey Bennerson; and my other Assistant Director, Janis Flanagan; and my other staff member, who is paying his student grants right now, is back in the office answering the phone. (laughter)

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: I was going to ask who was running the show, who was watching the store? (laughter)

DR. LANG: So there are four of us.

So the funds do go to campus to serve the students and to run the programs. So there is not a large investment at the State level.

The other thing that makes our program unique-- The institutions cover the administrative costs of the program. So the funding that comes from the State does not cover the cost of directors' salaries and the administrative running of the program. The funding that comes from

the State covers the cost of the counseling, the tutoring, the student leadership development, the supplemental instruction, the student grants, the cost of supporting students during the Summer program, and so on. So that's where the State investment goes into the program. Also, institutions match the program dollar for dollar. So it's not just a matter of the State investing funds into the program, and the institutions getting a little overhead and a free ride with the program.

The other thing that makes our program unique is that we set a high standard for accountability, which is a tough word in higher education. But we've been doing it since 1985 -- monitoring the performance of our programs, reporting how well or how well we're not doing with retention and graduation rates, and so on. We have found that even when the news is not good, it's better to put it in the public eye, to be transparent, to report it, and to use it as a method to improve our programs.

Now, if you go to our sister programs in New York and Pennsylvania -- even the Federal TRIO programs -- you will not be able to find any public domain information about the performance of their programs. If you go to our Web site, you will find all types of information about how the EOF programs are doing.

Now, we're audacious enough to have something we call the *equity index*. For years we were hesitant to match ourselves up against how well the more advantaged students at the institutions are doing. Now we say it's time to do that. Even though our students may come in not as prepared as the regular-admit students, we believe now it's time to match ourselves up against the regularly admitted students.

In the independent sector, we're matching them 100 percent. In the State schools, we're closing the gap rapidly. In Rutgers, we're closing the gap rapidly. The long-range plan for higher education calls for a 10 percent increase in the graduation rates of low-income and underrepresented minority students by 2010. We've already exceeded that in EOF. In the State schools, we've improved our graduation rate by 25 percent. And at Rutgers, we've improved it by 11 to 12 percent already. So we're ahead of the schedule set by the long-range plan for higher education.

And even though-- We have done that after six consecutive years of level funding during the '90s; and now we're getting ready to go into our fourth year of level funding again in the 2000s. But we haven't waited for a turnaround in our funding to improve our programs. We do continuous training. And we're getting ready to do two trainings in two weeks to find out better ways to work with our students in our program.

So we use outcomes, we're transparent, we report how we do, and we use that information to try to do a better job with our students. And we haven't changed who we serve. Unlike some other programs, when there's pressure to do better, they may raise their profile or not serve certain students; we haven't done that. We haven't turned our back on the students we serve, from the most challenging situations and the most challenging circumstances.

On the last page -- I'm following what the President said, even though we haven't talked to each other -- I've outlined the two areas where we do need support. The Board and the Commission asked for a \$2 million increase in our program support area. That's where we give the services to students to support things like you're going to hear Dr. Khan talk about in

a few minutes. And we ask for an extra million dollars to support our program to expand what we do in the Summer, so more students can go to our Summer programs. We have had a decline of about 700 students able to go to Summer school because of rapidly increasing costs in the Summer.

One thing I'd like to close on, is give you an idea of what our programs and our students are up against. This past year-- There are two other programs in the Commission on Higher Education that you may know about: one is called the College Bound Program, and the other is called the New Jersey GEAR UP. Two of their counselors waited outside my door one afternoon, when I was in a director's meeting. When I came out of the director's meeting, they asked for EOF help. They had tried to speak to some students in a local high school about going to college. They were told by the principal and the director of guidance, in November, that there were no more students interested in college in that high school. It's an urban high school. They had asked us if they could get an in-college (*sic*) college fair. "Could we get EOF staff in there, who they know could talk to those students about college opportunities?" We had to go over the principal's head, we had to go over the director of guidance's head, to the school board.

We went into that high school. I called EOF directors. We had 31 EOF directors and their staff show up for a college fair in our local high school, in the cafeteria, during the daytime. We spoke to all 500 seniors. We met students in the top 10th of the class who didn't know college opportunities existed. This happened in a local urban high school. We met kids with A and B averages who didn't know that they had to take the SAT, and they were in their senior year. And these are the types of blocks that

many of our deserving young students are facing every day. We had to go over the director of guidance, over the guidance office, over the principal to reach these students. And this is above and beyond the EOF directors' and the EOF counselors' job descriptions, while they're trying to work with their students on their campuses.

But these are the things, in addition to all the conditions that our young people are facing every day, that are happening in some of our schools right now. And if it wasn't for people that I could call on to say, "Hey, I need you to go above and beyond your job, to go into the school -- and we have to take down the doors." And there were some angry people at us in that school that day.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: What school was it?

DR. LANG: Trenton High.

But thanks-- We had a new superintendent who worked with us, and the Director of Workforce Development worked with us. And we saw over 450 seniors that day who learned about college for the first time. And hopefully many of them will be going to college this Fall.

And that's the type of work that EOF counselors and EOF staff do every day on campus, in addition to working with the students that you see here.

As I talked to Ms. Taylor though-- I told-- I informed her that there are probably people with much more interesting stories than mine to meet with you today. So you have the students here, who are on campus every day. And you have the people who work with them every day, who can give you probably a much more -- a much better story of what EOF

really does for folks, and the opportunities that EOF provides on our campuses.

So I just want to thank you for this opportunity.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Thank you very much, Dr. Lang.

There is something called *the elephant in the room*. Nobody wants to talk about-- The reason why I asked you what school, is because we can't -- we simply cannot ignore those kinds of things.

DR. LANG: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: And it's happened not only there, but in other places too.

I happen to serve on the committee for military academies for the congressional -- 10th Congressional District, where my brother happens to be the Congressman. But I'm on the committee where we interview youngsters for opportunities to go to the academies, and also for other-- The Congressional Black Caucus has a scholarship fund, as well, to try to provide opportunities for youngsters.

Well, we contact the schools -- many of the schools. And, unfortunately, many of the school principals and guidance counselors do not disseminate the information to the students. We have to go around them to get into the schools to let the youngsters know that we're there. We have college fairs, as well, up there. And the same thing happens. And I think that we have to put the spotlight on those folks and those schools, because there's a disservice to the young people, disservice to the community. And those kinds of people should not-- They're barriers, you're right. They should not be in a profession that is supposed to be assisting our youngsters. I think we need to highlight it. You need to bring

it to the surface. We can't bury this, can't hide it. Because as long as we do hide that, and we're afraid to speak about things like this, and about the individual schools or people involved, then we're going to continue to have a problem. And I'm glad that you brought it up.

And you say that there is a new superintendent in the school system now. And I expect that you're probably going to get more cooperation, etc. And hopefully we'll resolve that situation.

DR. LANG: He opened the doors immediately for us.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Thank you.

Yes, sir, Mr. Thompson.

ASSEMBLYMAN THOMPSON: What does the direct financial assistance that the EOF provides encompass?

DR. LANG: Okay. It depends upon the college. EOF comes later in the financial aid package. About 75 percent, 80 percent of EOF students are what we call *full-needs* students, which means they don't have the funds to cover any of the cost of their college education. The first thing they will receive in their financial aid package is the Federal financial aid, called Pell. Then they receive the New Jersey Tuition Aid Grant. Then, depending upon whether they live in the dormitory or not, they will receive the EOF grant. If you go to a community college, your bill may be paid. Depending upon the State college you go to, or if you go to Rutgers, or if you live in the dormitory, then your bill may be higher. So we're talking about tuition fees, which are getting pretty high right now -- tuition fees, books and supplies, room and board, and health insurance on the campuses, and the cost of commuting if you're commuting. Those are your basic educational costs that most students must meet.

ASSEMBLYMAN THOMPSON: You mentioned matching-- The colleges and so on have to provide matching funds. So are they providing a portion of what we just mentioned, or-- What is their match criteria?

DR. LANG: Well, for example now, let's say-- There are some State colleges that cost almost \$20,000 a year to go to now, if you want to be a residential student. So Pell is about -- oh, what, about \$4,000 now. To go to a State school, the TAG will cover the cost of tuition, EOF is about \$2,000. So you still have a lot of unmet need that a student has to cover for their books, part of their room and board, and so on. So many colleges, for the first two years, will cover that cost.

For example, the College of New Jersey has come up with what is called the Promise Scholarship, which will help on EOF student be debt-free for their first two years. And then they go into the loan market for their last two years.

But it's not uncommon for a student at a State school to graduate with several thousand dollars worth of loans. At an independent college, they're going to come out with many thousands of dollars worth of loans, even after full grants -- \$10,000, \$15,000, \$20,000 worth of loans after four years of college -- even after you have full grants. So many of them will have a loan debt at the end of four, four-and-a-half years, that's more than their families might have seen in a year or two of income.

ASSEMBLYMAN THOMPSON: What is the criteria for being -- receiving EOF funding, or whatever?

DR. LANG: Okay. It's both educational and economic. First, you have to meet the income guidelines, which is 200 percent of the Federal

poverty level. So that's, for a family of four, about -- right now, it's \$40,000 a year. And then, depending upon the institution, it's-- You're not normally admissible by their regular admissions criteria, which means SAT scores. It will differ--

Let's say Drew University, which has a very high requirement, is different from, let's say, another school that has a lower requirement. So it depends upon the institution. So you may be EOF at one and regular admission at another. It's based upon that school's assessment of: Do you need the extra help and support that EOF gives or not?

ASSEMBLYMAN THOMPSON: How does the number of individuals accepted into the program compare with the number of applicants you get?

DR. LANG: I would say it's pretty much the same as regular admit. They're able to take in about half of the number of students who apply, which is generally the same for regular admissions at some schools.

ASSEMBLYMAN THOMPSON: No, qualifying for EOF.

DR. LANG: Oh, okay. Right now, when I look at the number of students who, financially, would qualify for EOF, we're serving about half the number. When I look into the Tuition Aid Grant system, and I see the number of students who meet the EOF income guidelines, we're serving about half of them, I'd say, who meet the income guidelines.

ASSEMBLYMAN THOMPSON: Final question is: What's the total cost of the EOF program?

DR. LANG: Right now, this year, on the -- what's called the *opportunity grant* side, we're spending \$29 million and some change. And on the program side, we're spending \$12.88 million.

ASSEMBLYMAN THOMPSON: So about \$41 million.

DR. LANG: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN THOMPSON: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Thank you, Mr. Thompson.
Assemblyman Steele.

ASSEMBLYMAN STEELE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Lang, thank you very much for that information you shared.

A family of four--

DR. LANG: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN STEELE: --to qualify for the EOF at Rutgers University-- I get different testimony from young people saying they have to work a job in order to continue to stay in college. What percentage of our students are faced with that challenge, even after they're in the program?

DR. LANG: I would say, for almost every student, work-study at least is a part of their financial aid package -- just trying to keep their loans down. And nowadays, if you're a commuter student -- which means you have to have a car, which means you have to have car insurance or you're driving illegally, you're working. There are not many students nowadays in this economy who aren't working. I couldn't tell you how many off the top of my head. I mean, I could go back and do some research for you.

ASSEMBLYMAN STEELE: Sure. I understand.

DR. LANG: But even work-study is a normal part of a student's financial aid package. And I would say, on top of work-study,

they're still taking loans, given the cost of going to school now. I mean, I could research that for you and get you--

ASSEMBLYMAN STEELE: Sure. No, no. And certainly that answer is sufficient. So basically, how many hours are required for work-study?

DR. LANG: I think the maximum work-study hours is 15 to 20 hours a week.

ASSEMBLYMAN STEELE: Okay. So they're taking a full load, doing 15 to 20 hours a week--

DR. LANG: And may be working on the outside.

ASSEMBLYMAN STEELE: --and working on the outside, which is a great possibility. And, obviously, that's why you say we need to do something different, financially, in order to make these students whole.

Also, at the same time, it's almost like we're giving them an opportunity, but with that opportunity comes an obligation that is so great until they actually cannot focus on their academics. And then something is going to -- if there is no balance, something is going to go lacking.

I think we really need to, Mr. Chairman, revisit what -- how we define opportunity, if we're going to have to put an added burden on young people, who are going to have to continue to-- And, believe me, I believe in the work ethic. But I believe, also, that we cannot let the burden be greater than the opportunity that is presented -- then, at some point, how does a child actually balance? When a family is on \$40,000, you know that the average parent is going to try to do whatever they can -- which they are already probably working a job-and-a-half -- to try to help that child through college.

DR. LANG: We're talking about \$40,000 pre-tax income.
(laughter) We're not talking about after taxes. We're talking about before taxes.

ASSEMBLYMAN STEELE: Name that tune, right?

DR. LANG: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN STEELE: Thank you very much.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Thank you, Dr. Lang.

Let me just ask one question regarding the high school-- Explain GEAR UP, if you will; TRIO, if you will, just for us.

DR. LANG: Okay. There are a number of other programs. TRIO are the Federal programs that are similar to EOF and our College Bound Program. They were started as part of the War on Poverty under President Johnson. TRIO is kind of a misnomer, because there are five or six programs under them. But TRIO is the popular name. There is Talent Search, which is geared at middle school and high school; there's Upward Bound, which is geared at middle school and high school; there's what's called Student Support Services, which is similar to EOF; there's one called McNair, which is geared at students preparing for graduate school; and there's one called Educational Opportunity Centers, which is for older, returning students. These are Federal programs, which are only funded on a four- to five-year basis. Then an institution has to write a competitive grant again. So you don't know whether you're going to be funded or not again. They're more popular in other parts of the country where you don't have state-funded opportunity programs like New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania.

GEAR UP is a newer program that was sponsored by Representative Fattah, from Pennsylvania, and President Clinton. It's similar to Upward Bound, but it was aimed at school reform. But it's basically a similar type program, a little bit more academic. It's in its second, six-year term. You can either get a local partnership -- let's say a school district could apply for a six-year grant, or a college could apply for a six-year grant, and states can apply for a six-year grant.

We have a New Jersey GEAR UP program that's running out of the Commission on Higher Education. And we have GEAR UP programs in Newark, Camden, Trenton, I believe Paterson, and Jersey City.

And we have another State program called College Bound, which is a pre-college program for middle school and high school students. That program was founded by former Assemblyman Watson many years ago. That program has been, unfortunately, level funded for 15 or 20 years now. So it's shrinking in the number of students it can serve.

We went after the GEAR UP program to supplement our College Bound program, since that program has been level funded. And it serves students from middle school up through high school.

What we've done with those programs is: students who successfully complete those programs -- we've grandfathered them into our EOF programs. So they receive a continuum of support, once they get into college. The one thing we can do with the GEAR UP though, that we're not able to do with the State College Bound program-- The Federal government has a requirement that we put a portion of the GEAR UP funds aside for a GEAR UP scholarship. So any student who comes into a GEAR UP program, we have to put a portion of those funds aside into, like, our State

529 program. And that's held in escrow for that student until they graduate from high school. So they have a GEAR UP scholarship as part of their financial aid package, also. So any New Jersey student who participates in the GEAR UP program, and graduates, and comes to a New Jersey college or university -- on top of their EOF, TAG, and Pell -- has a GEAR UP scholarship also. But the numbers are small because the programs are very small.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Thank you.

Reverend.

ASSEMBLYMAN STEELE: Mr. Chairman, through you, through Dr. Lang, is it possible that we would maybe hear the testimony of one of the students?

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Oh, absolutely. I think there's a group of them that will--

ASSEMBLYMAN STEELE: Oh, outstanding.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: There's a panel of students there.

ASSEMBLYMAN STEELE: Oh, okay.

DR. LANG: You have a whole bunch of them.

ASSEMBLYMAN STEELE: All right.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: They're waiting to testify.

ASSEMBLYMAN STEELE: Fantastic.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Thank you very much for your information. I really appreciate it.

DR. LANG: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Dr. Lang, thank you.

Now, let me move on to Dr. Khan.

KAMAL KHAN, Ph.D.: Good morning, and thank you very much for having me here, and our great students from Rutgers University.

I'm here to talk about a program--

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Is your red light on, on that mike please? (referring to PA microphone)

DR. KHAN: Oh, I'm sorry. There you go.

Who we are: We are the Office for Diversity and Academic Success in the Sciences. And if you take a look at the screen, I'll go through to show you the program that really works, that shows you students who are practicing, within New Jersey, in terms of medicine. And we have been very successful. We started back in 1986. We had one student from Rutgers University -- African-American -- who became the first doctor.

Who runs it? It's a team of Dr. Emmet Dennis, who is the Director and a professor at Rutgers University; myself; Jesenia Cadena and Taruna Chugeria, who are Developmental Specialists; Jonathan Langowski, Coordinator of Special Programs; and Ms. Amirah Corbitt, the Administrative Assistant.

Why we do it: to encourage underrepresented populations, as well as educationally and economically disadvantaged students, who pursue majors in the sciences; and, most importantly, to promote academic excellence.

We talk about academic excellence, but academic excellence here is being competitive. Because to get into medical schools, to get into different health allied professions, you have to be able to compete. You cannot just say, "I am going to get a C, and I'm going to become a doctor." Yes, it's true. But how do you increase those grades? And that's one of the

things we're going to talk about here. To increase the number of students entering health professional schools and graduate programs--

What we are working towards: increasing the number of students that are admitted to and graduate colleges, promote academic excellence, enhance problem-solving skills. And this is where the problem lies. Students coming from high school can define what something is, they can tell you about it. But once you start asking them, "What are the comparisons, and what are the similarities, what are the differences," they have difficulty with that. So training students from the first year is very, very important.

Increased entry into graduate and professional schools; and, of course, bridging the faculty-student gap-- Students coming into a university will say, "Teachers do not want to help us. We go to the office; we do not understand what they are saying." But the problem is here: That is true, but how do you overcome that? You have to bridge that. And if you get the students to understand that the professor is the one that is giving you the grade, that is one of the major supports.

How we get it to work: Rutgers University students' Educational Opportunity Fund -- EOF, which we have to thank very much for this -- and the funding agency, through grants; medical and health professional schools; and the New Brunswick high schools. So it is a partnership for academic excellence. And by the time I'm finished here, you will see why I define it as *excellent*.

ODASIS opportunities for students coming in: Once the students come in, they're placed into a program called Success in the Sciences/Project Beck, where they actually get academic support. They're

taught how to take notes. Remember, when a student comes into a university -- no matter if you come from Cherry Hill or wherever you come from -- the professor in the sciences are teaching, at Rutgers, at least 300 to 500 students at a time. The professor draws the circle, the student draws the circle. But they're not listening to what the professor is really saying. So we basically take those notes and spoon feed the students for the first semester, teaching them how to take notes. Then we take those notes back, and we define it in question form: What is it, what does it do, where is it formed, what are the similarities, what are the differences? And you're teaching them how to actually study.

ACCESS-MED Program: where we accept students in their second year -- once they've completed biology, chemistry, and math -- into a program at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. And we nurture these students by taking them on trips to different medical and dental programs, and, most importantly, supporting them in their academic -- giving them that academic support.

The MCAT Preparatory Program: That's the one that you take to go to medical school. And in the junior year, we take the students from September until April, on Fridays from 3:00 in the afternoon until seven at night, on Saturdays from 8:00 in the morning until six -- eight months. Spring break, students take off to Club Cancun. We stay at a building at Rutgers -- eight in the morning until 11 at night, five days a week.

Why? And you will see why. Summer opportunities at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School; at New Jersey Medical School, up in Newark; the School of Osteopathic Medicine, down at Stratford; and the Cancer Institute of New Jersey -- where the students find out more about

medicine, in terms of working with doctors, taking courses from professors that teach at a medical school, giving them that incentive and, of course, motivating them.

Transfer student program: students who transfer into Rutgers University -- trying to keep them on track.

And, of course, going back to the high school-- And here are some results that we brought. On Saturdays, we run an -- for 11th graders, we run our own SATs for eight months. High school students are chosen based on their teachers' advice, not their grades. Grades in high school -- that's their grades. But we want the professor -- or the teachers in the high school to say, "These are the kids who we know can really do it. They need that push." And here, from 2001 to 2005, our students received \$712,561 in scholarships. Not to attend Rutgers; they attend many other colleges. The idea is to run a program to get the students to do well on their SATs and, therefore, go on to college.

And here, this year, 17 of these high school students who participated -- 17 of them got into Rutgers University. And why? Because we are tracking them from the 10th grade, to the 11th, to the 12th. And on the table -- the high school program is there. The 11th graders -- most importantly you help them with their SATs. In the 12th grade, we get the English professors from the English Department at Rutgers to go and teach English 100. When you get into college, you take English 101. If we teach them the English 100, get them to pass it -- which we did here.

Take a look here. We put three of them here. We've got a C-plus, an A, and an A. They came into Rutgers, took the English 101, and they got B, B-plus, A. What does that mean? You keep them in the

sciences. You've got them at Rutgers, you've got them into English. And if you've got them through English, they can take a science course. You've got them in a science course in their first year -- you could guarantee results in four years.

Student SAT average of 978 was higher than the State average of 942 with similar demographics. This is one of our gold mines at Rutgers. A student comes in, we make up their four-year plan based on their placement exam. They're given the placement; and based on if you place in college English, you can take a science. If you do not place, you do not take a science course.

And that is one of the fallacies. Students go by the catalog. They register, because they could register online. They take the wrong courses, and then they come after the first exam or midterm and say, "Can you help me? Can you assist me?" But it's too late. The foundation is gone.

So this is one -- and the five-year program. And if you take a look -- five years -- students finish in five years. They still become doctors, they still become nurses, they still become pharmacists. And here, you'll see, in the Summer, we have a different (indiscernible) program, which is supported by EOF. Again, in the Summer at Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, students go there and get actual credits, working with doctors, taking courses, and ending up with college credits.

Now, this is the gold mine, and this one I want you all to really pay attention to. This takes you through-- You know, like, when somebody says, "You struck gold," this is gold. (laughter) Placement exam: No matter if you went to the greatest blue ribbon school, no matter how

much you scored on the SATs, you have to take the placement exam at whichever college you go to -- Harvard or Yale. Once you take that, then we decide, based on your placement, the appropriate class schedule. We give you the classes -- what you should take.

Those students, automatically, are given two hours of academic support within the sciences: in chemistry -- one science course at a time, not two. "Yes, that's right. Yes, I am perfect. I did so well in high school." No, one science course, one math, one English. And then we've got them going.

And then here, students are required to supplement class notes with ODASIS-provided subject material. We give them those notes, like I told you about. We rewrite it. But we don't just hand it to them. They can come in. The more you write, the more you see. The more you write-- The more you ink it, the more you think it. (laughter) A lot of us, nowadays, want a Xerox. We just want it Xeroxed and handed to us. That's more work you have to do. So the more you write, the more you see.

These notes-- Then the students are tested on a computer program. We make up the questions for the students on the material. It's called a bio-excel. They go in there, and they're given 15 minutes on the material. What is it, what does it do, where is it found, what page in the textbook? Why you are correct, why you are wrong. Work on speed through practice exams; the student is rated by the tutors on a scale of zero to five. And here, anybody placing below a three -- we bring those students in and work with them individually. Most of the time -- a lot of times, those students have to withdraw from those courses in the first year because of wrong placement.

Students take the exam and strive for the A. And once we get them to do that, we take them around a circle. So it's a lot of phone calls, calling them at six in the morning; calling them at five in the morning; being with them; in the second year, not calling them that much. But they really miss it. They call us. They have their parents calling us, "Why don't you call our children anymore?" (laughter) "Because they're growing up."

But, you know, a child here-- When we say 18 years old, yes, you are a man or you're a woman. That's true. But when you get to college, you're free. And you have to be with the students at that age. It's a whole different lifestyle. Well, let's not go there. (laughter)

Now, percentage of students receiving Bs or better. And I want you all to take a look. Here is biology, and here is the ODASIS students. And you will see in biology, we have conquered it. Look how well our students do in comparison to Rutgers University, in terms of receiving Bs. But here, take a look at the chem. You see that chemistry is not that high. And the problem is because of the math. Students now, coming from high schools -- their math is not strong. And, you know, you can attest to that. You're finding more students who are coming from foreign countries doing better in math because of the practice. How do we teach math? So taking back students, understanding that-- And that's the reason for chemistry -- chemistry is all math. Take a look at organic chem -- second year -- students do much better.

And here-- Of course, you want to see how students in Cs are doing. Look, much better. Right? But you want to go back, and you want to get those students up to those Bs. Students pass their classes, and they say, "Yes, I want to become a doctor." But how do you energize them

during the year? We put them into the hospital, a learning community, whereby the students work with different doctors, lab technicians. And then they come back to the classroom, in a presentation, and actually present what they have learned. And there's a student here who did it this past year, and he will explain. And in the second year, the teacher--

And then they go home, and they educate their families. Take, for example, diabetes, hypertension. And we want the students to get more involved with it. Who teaches parents better? Kids. Sure, the doctors will tell them, "Go on that diet." "Yes, I go on the diet." But guess what? Two months later, they go back to the Burger King, because the kids are eating it at home. (laughter) Okay. Thank you for agreeing. (laughter)

All right, let's take a look here. Look at these students here. Do you see this one young lady here? This is Michele Ann Diaz (phonetic spelling), who came through EOF, undergraduate, came into the Summer program before college, had problems with math. She took calculus three times. The first time she got an F, second time she withdrew -- she got smart, she wasn't doing it. The third time she took it, she got a C. But she learned how to study and got into medical school in her senior year at Robert Wood, did well. And where is she now? At Yale doing surgery. Here, she came back-- At Yale, she is doing surgery. Here, she came back to help all these students in systems physiology. All of them want to become--

So it's about giving back. EOF student-- Where did she grow up? In Newark. What did she want to become? She wanted to become a doctor. None of her friends liked her. She had this horrible laugh. *Gee, gee,*

gee, gee all the time. (laughter) But the amazing thing is that this student didn't give up. She worked.

And here, guys, look. ODASIS EOF students: Where are they now? Here is Cindy Vallejo (phonetic spelling). I just went to her wedding. And this is her sister here; she got married two years ago. And they're both-- This one, she just got her M.D. She's getting her M.D. in May. Received his M.D. in 1996, anesthesiologist-- This one here is doing emergency medicine. She is doing surgery. And this one, she is down in Philadelphia, pediatrics -- which I'm doubtful. And this one here -- Baltran (phonetic spelling) -- he is specializing in facial -- you know, the Botox, and cutting up people -- plastic surgery. And look at them. They came in, did Summer programs, and worked hard.

But that's not enough. Here, this is what you would like to see. Eighty-eight ODASIS EOF graduates from 1990 to 2007: 34 M.D.s, two chiropractors, six osteopathic, dentistry, physician assistants, podiatrists, nurses, masters in public health, and 39 pursuing health allied professions. But if you take a look here, over the past three years, we have increased the numbers by 23 percent. The proof is -- that percentage is nice, but let's take a good look at them.

Here, two years -- 2006, 2007 -- 15 of them -- EOF students -- got accepted into medical school. Do you see this one right here? Stephanie Torres, going to Osteopathic at Stratford. She is right here. She is going to talk to you all, too. And here, 16 of them are receiving their M.D.s, osteopathic, podiatry degrees this coming year. Take a good look. These are the same students who had that problem with math, had that problem with English, but didn't give up. They found something that really

worked -- and getting scholarships and going on. (applause in presentation)
Well, we've got to applaud for this guy. This guy -- five years in college, had a tough time. His friends, it came easy to. He had to hide in the library to study. His socks could walk by themselves. But the reason I'm saying that -- he put so much time, and look, M.D. degree this past year, 2006, New Jersey Medical School -- make your parents proud.

Look at this guy. And I'm telling you, he's wearing stilts here. (laughter) This guy was told in his second year that he could never become a doctor. He could never do it. And he started working with a chiropractor, became a doctor down in Florida. And this is his whole staff here. One, two, three, four, five, six; and they're all taller than him, but yet, he's the boss. (laughter) It's funny, but, you know, when you look at it to see where he came from and where he is--

And here we say, "Don't ever give up." And no matter how life is-- Do you see this frog? He is going down the throat, and my boy is still trying to get out.

And here, this is-- (malfunction in presentation) I brought a sample, but I don't think the equipment here is sophisticated enough. (laughter) I brought a sample to show how the support is really run.

But what I'd like to do is to say thank you very much. We are not supposed to ask for anything. But when you look, now, at pharmaceutical companies, we get a lot of grants. We follow up with grants. But when you look at pharmaceutical companies today, to how they were 10 years ago, pharmaceutical companies are not supporting programs for students to become doctors. They are supporting more students to become pharmacists or researchers. So how it was 10 years ago, to now--

Here's a program that shows success. Here's a program that's bringing back doctors, and getting them into medical school, getting -- and getting them to practice and stay within New Jersey.

And what I'd like to do now is to turn it over-- We have one student who is receiving his M.D. in May -- and where he's practicing. And he'll give you a little -- talk a little bit.

Sam. Dr. Sam.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Thank you very much, Dr. Khan.

Introduce yourself, doctor.

SAMUEL ECHEVERRI: Good morning.

My name is Sam Echeverri. I'm currently a fourth-year medical student at Robert Wood Johnson UMDNJ. I was also an EOF student. I went through ACCESS-MED, which Dr. Khan described. And I'm graduating next week. I will be starting my general surgery residency at Morristown Memorial. So I'm staying in Jersey, as usual.

Most of my academic achievements are definitely attributed to programs like EOF, and ACCESS-MED, and a number of others that are available at Rutgers University. Honestly, if it wasn't for them, I'm not sure I would be here saying where I am and where I'm going. The reason I say that is because, coming out of high school, I was still very confused as to where I was going, what I was doing. I wanted to be a doctor, but I had no idea how one could carry that out. I remember going through the EOF program, meeting Dr. Khan. And Dr. Khan asked me, "What do you want to do with your life?" I said, "I want to be a doctor." "Do you know how to do that?" "I have no clue." "Come with me." That's pretty much how it went.

Dr. Khan started me on some introductory to biology courses my Summer prior to starting Rutgers University. It definitely helped a lot. It helped me, kind of, get that exposure that I would need in order to smooth the transition when I actually started my full semester. When I started my biology semester, I was able to do well, because I was able to make all the mistakes that Summer. Dr. Khan would tell me, "You know, you're not doing the right thing. You're not sitting the right way. Sure, you're putting your time into it, but you're not being effective and efficient." So he really taught us how to study, how to take those notes, how to really make the most out of your studying. That came a long way.

That followed through, as well, throughout the years with tutoring, with academic counseling. It really helped to know that somebody was there guiding you through it. The exposure definitely helped. Like Dr. Khan said, we would visit other medical schools, just to get the exposure, just to even know that there are other options -- osteopathic versus allopathic schools. All that stuff -- I had no -- I was completely clueless about until Dr. Khan and his staff, kind of, guided us through it.

The ACCESS-MED program, which he described, is when you get accepted into medical school your junior year of college, and you start taking some medical courses your senior year. It's a temporary acceptance, the condition being that you pass your medical school courses. And then, after that, you have half the load when you go into your official first year. That, again -- same concept -- really helped smooth the transition out. It helped you slowly acclimate to the medical school workload, which is pretty overwhelming for anybody. And that also, again, helped us do better than

we probably would have done if we just went the straight route and did it on our own, if we even got that far.

So people like Dr. Khan calling you at five or six in the morning-- He's not joking about that at all. (laughter) I can attest to that. If you don't pick up, his answering machine will say, "I know you're sleeping. You better get up. I know you have an exam. You better be reviewing your notes." Then, afterwards, he would follow up on your grades, sit down with you, counsel you. So things like that really, really did help.

The MCAT prep course, as well-- Full week, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., 11:00 p.m., whenever you were done-- There was no official time towards the evening. But that also prepared us to take our MCATs and to get the solid foundations that we would use to carry on through med school. And to this day, I use a lot of the techniques that I learned through him, and through the tutors, and the mentors. And it's gotten me this far. I'm hoping it will get me further, as well.

Thank you for having me and letting me talk.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Thank you. It's very good to have a real live example of what we're talking about.

Excellent. Thank you very much.

DR. KHAN: Stephanie.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Sam, what's your-- Sam, how do you pronounce your last name?

MR. ECHEVERRI: Echeverri. (indicating pronunciation)

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Echeverri. (indicating pronunciation)

Okay. We have Stephanie Torres.

STEPHANIE M. TORRES: Hi.

Good morning.

My name is Stephanie Torres.

First of all, I want to thank everyone for letting us be here.

I am a senior at Rutgers University. I graduate in four days. I'm very excited. I have been accepted, and I received a scholarship, to the School of Osteopathic Medicine in Stratford, part of UMDNJ.

I did all of the same programs that Sam touched upon. I met Dr. Khan in EOF as well. And I took the pre -- Summer course. And it helped me immensely for my first year. The notes the first year -- teaching us how to write notes. He wasn't lying. The lecturer is lecturing 500 students that think they want to be doctors. But by sophomore year, after (indiscernible), only about 150, 200 of them actually make it. But the lecturer really does write a circle, and then says three words, and then you have to understand the entire concept. And with the ODASIS notes, that helped a lot, because they wrote it out for us. And then by our second semester, we understood what it was that we needed to listen to, and what it was that we needed to catch on the screens when the lecturers actually did write something. So that was very helpful.

All of the programs-- ACCESS-MED -- I was also part of ACCESS-MED. And we got to go to different conferences at the different medical schools. And they were very helpful, as far as getting to know the people in those medical schools. And, of course, they were New Jersey schools. And I'm very happy to be going to a New Jersey medical school. So I'm grateful that I got to see all of the different New Jersey schools.

The program just really, really helps all of the students. I have a lot of other EOF friends that are in the program. And without the program, I really don't know if I would have been able to do as well as I've done. The academic support is great. These tutors don't just teach classes, they actually help you to understand concepts. If you don't understand something, or if you don't do well on an exam, they'll stay after, and they'll make sure that you understand it. And they check up on you, and they all call you, as well as the counselors and Dr. Khan. They all put in their effort.

I also work in the ODAISIS office. So I know how hard they work to help the students. And I also know what it's like for an EOF student to have to work and study. And they help you balance it all. They don't just help you with the academic stuff, they help you with-- They're kind of like a family. So they help you learn how to do everything, not just study. They teach you just discipline, and they teach you how to do everything.

So it's a great program, and I'm grateful to be in it.

Thank you for this opportunity.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Thank you. Excellent.

We have another-- Randy Jackson Jr.

RANDY JACKSON JR.: Yes.

Good morning.

My name is Randy Jackson Jr. I'm a freshman -- well just finishing up my freshman year at Rutgers University.

I was put in a headlock by Dr. Khan, (laughter) when he found out that I was interested in the sciences. He basically-- They took me under their wing.

Well, I was an EOF student who was interested in science a little bit. I didn't really know where I wanted to go. I got involved in ODASIS and saw a lot of people prospering. And that's where-- I knew that's where I wanted to go. And I spoke with Dr. Khan. I took one of his classes. And now he's got me following the same path that they're taking, and it's just flowing. It's like one after the next. I see what they've gone through, see what they've done, and it's like-- The path is clear now. It's paved. It's like it was woods for them, and now it's a highway for me. It's just-- I've got to get on it and drive through.

The program really works. It helps so much with the classes and everything. They call you a lot. And it gets kind of-- It's a little annoying at times, but you know they're only there to help. It helps so much. My friends who aren't in the program, they're like, "How do you do so well in class? How do you know what's going on? I can't understand the professors. I can't understand what he says." I just go in there, I bust my butt, and I get it done.

And I have to thank not only him, but I have to thank EOF. Because without EOF, I probably wouldn't even be in school. I applied to Rutgers, and they rejected me. And I came back through EOF, and they accepted me. So I really have to pay homage to them for allowing me to go to school. Because somebody saw my potential. So now I've just got to live up to it and fulfill it.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: What high school did you go to?

MR. JACKSON: Franklin High School.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Franklin High School.

MR. JACKSON: Yes, that's Central Jersey.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Actually, you know-- Have you read the -- know about the book *The Pact*?

DR. KHAN: Yes.

MR. JACKSON: *The Pact*, yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: *The Pact* -- about three doctors from Newark.

DR. KHAN: They came to Rutgers and spoke. Two of them attended the ODASIS program and Robert Wood.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Okay.

I can say this is the "audacious ODASIS" program. (laughter)
Because it is actually audacious.

DR. KHAN: Okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Thank you very much.

Are there any other -- any questions?

DR. KHAN: For the record, they came from Seton Hall.
(laughter)

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: There's another student that would like to also testify.

A S H A B A I L E Y: Good morning.

I am not in the ODASIS. I am actually at Rutgers University. I am an English major, so completely on the opposite--

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: You don't have to apologize for that. I was a political science major.

MS. BAILEY: Okay.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: I'm a Rutgers political science graduate, to let you know. So you don't have to apologize.

Your mike is on? (referring to PA microphone) The red light is on, isn't it?

MS. BAILEY: Yes.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Give your name, and identify yourself, please.

MS. BAILEY: Asha Bailey. My name is Asha Bailey, and I'm from Rutgers University. I just finished sophomore year, currently entering into junior year right now. I'm an EOF student. I also serve on AESNJ, which is a statewide organization -- student organization -- that basically goes to the needs of the EOF students across the state. I kind of work as a liaison.

Honestly, EOF, for me, has worked -- is miraculous. It's a great program. I am-- Basically, I'm a product of Newark, New Jersey. Both of my parents -- drug addicted. So I know struggle.

When I was enrolled into the EOF program, the Summer program was amazing. Coming from Science High School -- which is actually a school that develops you, or prepares you for college -- I actually had some of the materials coming into college, and knew what to do. But the EOF program basically went beyond.

I ran into excellent counselors -- not just my counselor, Shawna Berkley (phonetic spelling) -- but all of the counselors within the EOF program not just attend to their students, but to all of the students -- come

and knock on the door, "Hello," you know, "What do you need help with," because my counselor is busy.

The Dean, Dean Torian, is like a father to me. Last year -- freshman year -- I actually lost my grandmother, who was my caretaker. And I was living with her for the past eight years. And EOF is not just-- It's a family. It's not just a group of people that get paid and go home. They actually assist you with your problems, not just academically. But they prepare you. "What are your classes? What different things do you have to do," in that nature. "What's going on at home? How are you doing? How are your jobs going?" I work two jobs. I've been working two jobs. One job is a morning job -- or a daytime job -- and the other one is a night job, just to put food on the table and bring some money back home to my mom and my baby brother. So that's a struggle -- and then taking 15 credits each semester, which is also a struggle. But EOF is there for me.

Going back to the Summer program, they gear you up to also -- telling you -- teaching you how to take notes. They prepare you on how to be a leader, how to balance academics and leadership skills or social skills. They have different-- It's also very rigorous. They have-- Your daytime is scheduled from eight in the morning until, like, eight in the evening, just teaching you and letting you know the different things that you're going to come across in entering into college. And it definitely prepared me. My freshman year, I started off with a 3.0. And with EOF, I am basically inclining my GPA to 3.5 right now. And I want to actually increase that, and I plan on it, because I want to go into grad school for English and education. I plan on staying in New Jersey, also. (laughter) So I'll look you up.

But, honestly, EOF is awesome. I actually have my counselor's cell phone number. I can call her anytime. She is like my second mother.

Also, people within the State -- Penny, and my advisor on the Board, and Dr. Lang -- every last one of them are here. I could definitely call on them. They definitely have all the answers to -- as of what's -- about EOF. You know, what do I have to -- go through the different loops and different things of that nature. It's definitely a program that students like myself -- that didn't really think that-- You know, "I'll just cruise through college, and get out, and try to find a job, and try to make ends meet." No, it goes beyond that. They actually gave me the motivation, made me ambitious, to go after and actually become what I want to become, which -- get my Ed.D., become a teacher, or basically a principal of a school.

Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Thank you very much.

Anyone have any--

Keep your seat.

ASSEMBLYMAN STEELE: No, no, no. No question, Mr. Chairman, just comments.

I think it's just remarkable -- the testimonies and the whole program, I think. This is -- this image -- what EOF is doing, and other organizations are doing -- New Jersey has something to be proud of. But, more importantly, I think what you started off with -- we need to make sure that we're putting money where we can get more of these kinds of testimonies; as opposed to what we're doing on the back end, as opposed to what we should be doing on the front end.

I know this is not a Budget Committee, but I know you're on the Budget Committee, Mr. Chairman. (laughter) I thought I would recognize that. And, certainly, I would partnership with you to make sure that we make sure that we continue to do the right thing. And in the midst of a budget crisis, we cannot afford not to help young people who have this kind of tenacity, and ambition, and stick-to-it-ness.

So I just wanted to commend you young people, as well as Dr. Lang.

MS. BAILEY: Thank you.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Thank you very much.

Are there any other students or anyone else who'd care to testify? (no response)

Let me ask you: The request of this year for EOF-- Was the request the same as last year? I mean, did we request more money for the program or not?

DR. LANG: Yes, we requested--

HEARING REPORTER: Excuse me, Mr. Chairman.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Yes.

HEARING REPORTER: He needs to come up to the microphone.

ASSEMBLYMAN STEELE: Could he come to the mike so he could be recorded? Or did you want that off the record? (laughter)

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Come, please.

DR. LANG: Do you want the red light on or off? (laughter)

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Everything is -- this is government under glass.

DR. LANG: Oh, okay.

The request this year was for a \$2 million increase in what's called *Article IV*, or our supplementary opportunity grants, which are our program funds; and for a \$1 million increase in what we call *Article III*, or opportunity grants, to expand our Summer program so we can get more students in our Summer -- where they can earn credits in the Summer and get accelerated during the Summer.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: And that's within the-- That would be included in the budget for Higher Education. Is that correct?

DR. LANG: Yes, that was requested by the EOF Board of Directors and the Commission on Higher Education.

ASSEMBLYMAN THOMPSON: I think the Chairman's question was: The Governor's request -- does it include that?

DR. LANG: No, the Governor's budget recommended level funding for EOF. It did not include the increases that the Commission and the EOF Board requested.

ASSEMBLYMAN PAYNE: Thank you, Mr. Thompson. You were right -- clarified it.

Let me just say-- I think we have no one else to testify.

But, obviously, what we heard today is something that should have been on national television. We have all kinds of negative things coming out of our cities in the media, etc., that impact on young people -- the same young people that we're talking to today, the ones who have demonstrated that they, in fact, given the opportunity, can succeed, and will succeed, and make contributions. But, unfortunately, we do not have the opportunities to expose this. We do expose and publicize gangs, and

gang relations, etc., and that kind of business. But we simply do not have the same interest, apparently, in the positive things.

But I have to tell you that I'm glad we had this hearing, at least. It's going out over the Internet and people are hearing this thing, I believe. At least they'll know some of the things that are going on. And it's very, very positive. And you have-- I think you have some advocates here that will -- certainly will speak up for whatever we can do to try to make sure that the program continues, and becomes enriched, and enhanced, and will be able to reach more children.

I have to say that-- I did say that this is audacious ODASIS, because the things that you all are doing -- the EOF program is doing are just absolutely incredible.

And I also note a bit of passion from those of you who are running these programs. And that's important. That's so important. And I'm sure that it transforms the youngsters who come before you, and it permeates throughout your organization. That's great. That's really-- It's not just that you're doing some perfunctory kinds of things. But what you're doing is really making an incredible change in people's lives and contributing to society as a whole.

I do have to commend you. And we will certainly do whatever it is we can.

And I want to commend the young people. There are-- There is hope. When you read the papers, you wonder sometimes whether there is. But there is -- obviously, there are demonstrations that have been given to us here; and across the State of New Jersey, I'm sure that there are very positive things going on.

Thank you very much for coming today and enlightening us on what you're doing.

And if there are no other comments, then this hearing is concluded.

Thank you.

(MEETINGN CONCLUDED)