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March 21, 2005

Page 11

Students thank lawmakers for supporting TAP

By NICHOLAS DERASMO

Gazette staff writer

Tyisha Lopez stood firm at the podium in the Legislative Office Building last Tuesday afternoon with a large sticker on her shirt that said "TAP Works. Keep it strong."

Lopez, a 24 year-old student and single mother who attends New York Career Institute, responded to Gov. George E. Pataki's proposed cuts in tuition assistance in the Executive Budget.

"We all wouldn't be here today if it weren't for TAP. As a single mother TAP has helped me a great deal," she said.

Students from the Association of Proprietary Colleges came from across New York State to meet in Albany to thank legislators for supporting TAP in the budget negotiations.

"These students need TAP more than any other sector," said Basil Anastassiou, spokesman for APC. "Many of the students who attend classes at APC work and have one or two jobs while raising families."

APC colleges are privately owned and represent one of the four sectors of higher education in New York. They offer a range of targeted associate, baccalaureate and master level degree programs. Ninety percent of APC graduates are placed in jobs across New York and earn 20 percent more than the average salaries in their fields.

"Without TAP, APC wouldn't have students," said Ellen Hollander, president of APC. There are 39 APC campuses located in New York State. Seventy percent of APC students rely on TAP as their primary source of financial assistance. APC graduates who were supported by TAP earned an average of \$13,000 more than the average annual salaries in their fields.



Gazette photo by Nicholas Derasmo
Ellen Hollander, president of the Association of Proprietary Colleges, meets with students to reject the governor's proposal to cut Tuition Assistance Programs.