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By MELANIE GRAYCE WEST
Sept. 8, 2015 6:52 p.m. ET

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The donation of $9 million to Hunter, part of the City University of New York, will honor Mrs. Grove's lifelong interest in promoting the rights of immigrants. It follows several other smaller gifts to the school made from the family's foundation. Mrs. Grove is the wife of Andrew Grove, the former chairman of Intel.

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Mrs. Grove arrived in New York City at the age of 18 and found Hunter to be an enlightening, diverse place, she said. She was a member of the Spanish club and a sorority, Alpha Gamma Delta. She worked in the book room and relished the apples from the vending machine.

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As Mrs. Grove’s daughters considered how to honor their mother, said daughter Robie Spector, they repeatedly came back to their mother’s commitments to advocacy and social service, as well as a commitment to immigrants’ rights and dignity. Both Mrs. Grove and her husband are immigrants; he emigrated to the U.S. from Hungary in 1957.

As for the size of the gift, the daughters thought they should give the college “a bit more” than usual for the milestone birthday, said Ms. Spector. “My father said, ‘Let’s give them a lot more.’”

Part of the grant, $4 million, will establish a scholars program at Hunter’s Roosevelt House and support a variety of student activities and programs in public policy and human rights. Roosevelt House is a place where Mrs. Grove spent many hours as an undergraduate, but now serves as a hub for students with an interest in social justice and human rights.

The remainder of the grant, $5 million, will go toward scholarships and funding internships. Preference will primarily go to students who are, among other things, immigrants or children of immigrants, or who are undocumented.

The internship grants to students are especially important because they allow for many students to take on an unpaid position at a nongovernmental organization or nonprofit, a critical step in getting a foot in the door to a career, said Hunter’s president, Jennifer J. Raab.

Mrs. Grove’s time at Hunter had one other serendipitous moment—at the job-placement center.

It was there that Mrs. Grove was given a lead on a summer job at a hotel in the Catskills. Mr. Grove, a student at City College, also part of the City University of New York, was given the same referral. She was a waitress and he a busboy. They married shortly after graduating from college.

According to their daughter, Ms. Spector, Mr. Grove still carries in his wallet a portrait of Mrs. Grove taken while she was a student at Hunter.

Write to Melanie Grayce West at melanie.west@wsj.com
Teaching Martin Luther King Jr. in the Age of Freddie Gray

By SYREETA McFADDEN  SEPT. 9, 2015

In 1968, when my father was a teenage boy in Memphis, Martin Luther King Jr. went there to support the city’s striking sanitation workers. He marched with King and thousands of other protesters, and in the violence that erupted afterward, the police shot another black boy, Larry Payne. They claimed he was a looter. King called Payne’s mother to console her, but a planned visit never happened. King was murdered just a few days later.

When I was a young girl, my father transcribed from memory some of King’s great speeches and asked me to memorize them myself. Later, he bought old records with recordings of the speeches — “The Drum Major Instinct,” “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop” — and when I wasn’t too busy being a child, he would make me listen to them, again and again. By the time I was in high school, writing essays about the civil rights movement came easily. I had a vernacular and a mode of analysis, and also a discipline. I had learned by repetition how to question authority.

Now I am a teacher, seeking a similar discipline in my students. Early on a Wednesday in April, I found myself standing before my English-composition class at New York’s Borough of Manhattan Community College. My students are earnest, hard-working, even brilliant, but many of them face significant challenges. They are first- or second-generation Americans or
immigrants (from China, Georgia, Ghana, Mexico, Nigeria, Ukraine). They hold down full-time jobs. Some of them are raising their own kids.

We were reading King's "Letter From Birmingham Jail." They groaned about the length, but I ignored them. King's craft, I told them, is demonstrated in how he argues so persuasively for positions that seem at first to be in opposition, and to multiple audiences — not simply "My Dear Fellow Clergymen" but the public at large, which in 1963 may have supported desegregation but also recoiled from the spectacle of protest, with its intimation of lawlessness and chaos.

The class was also struggling with an essay that the psychologist Erich Fromm wrote that same year, "Disobedience as a Psychological and Moral Problem." He argued that "freedom and the capacity for disobedience are inseparable; hence any social, political and religious system which proclaims freedom, yet stamps out disobedience, cannot speak the truth."

We returned to King's letter, in which he draws a distinction between just and unjust laws. They didn't know about this King, I found, the one who fought the law. In their view, the civil rights movement was embodied in King the Christlike leader, who stands for peace, love and brotherhood.

I told the students that King went to jail a lot for peace, love and brotherhood.

We talked about Baltimore, where the police had just killed Freddie Gray and street protests were swelling to an uprising. My students were skeptical of headlines and commentary that called for nonviolent protest. One of the students noted that the police were violent, too, and they were placing people in mortal danger just to protect some buildings from being damaged.

"A building is not more valuable than a person," she said. Most of the others nodded in agreement. More began to speak. The rote discussion was
becoming impassioned, cacophonous:

"But there's a difference between rioting and peaceful protest. . . ."

"Are we saying property is more valuable than a human being?"

"That's like saying to protest is unlawful. . . ."

"What does 'peaceful' even mean?"

My most beautifully complex thinker was from Venezuela. His English was fair, but when he spoke, he often discovered nuances within the language that might have been lost to those who were born to it. "I'm not sure you can have nonviolence without some kind of violence," he said.

He pointed to other protests in Venezuela and Mexico. Peaceful protests that became violent clashes, students who dissented and disappeared. Now there was immediate consensus in the classroom. "King is saying that you have to be disobedient if you want justice," one student said.

"Negative peace isn't peaceful, it's just obedience," another agreed.

I was only a witness now, recording their analysis, breaking chalk against a blackboard trying to capture the thoughts of these students who sat in neat rows, grasping for a kind of equilibrium. "Wait," I said, "I want to catch what you just said. I need to remember this."

Syreeta McFadden is an adjunct professor of English at the Borough of Manhattan Community College and a columnist for Guardian US.

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A version of this article appears in print on September 13, 2015, on page MM22 of the Sunday Magazine with the headline: Teaching Disobedience.
**Noted economist Paul Krugman: 'Trump is right on economics'**

Donald Trump

Republican presidential frontrunner Donald Trump listens to a question at a news conference at Trump Tower in New York on Sept. 3. *(Richard Drew | The Associated Press)*

**Brent Johnson | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com By Brent Johnson | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com**

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on September 08, 2015 at 12:51 PM, updated September 08, 2015 at 3:49 PM

**TRENTON — Is Paul Krugman — the noted economist, left-wing New York Times columnist, and former Princeton University professor — praising Republican presidential frontrunner Donald Trump?**

At least in one area.

Two months ago, Krugman said in an interview that Trump is "a belligerent, loudmouth racist with not an ounce of compassion for less fortunate people."

But the headline of the Nobel Prize winner’s latest *Times column, published Monday*, is much more flattering: "Trump is Right on Economics," it reads.

In the piece, Krugman takes aim at former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush — one of Trump’s closest rivals and the GOP establishment’s pick for president — for criticizing the billionaire businessman over his call to raise taxes on the rich and his past support of universal health care.

"The issues the Bush campaign is using to attack its unexpected nemesis are precisely the issues on which Mr. Trump happens to be right, and the Republican establishment has been proved utterly wrong," Krugman explains.

Trump — the real estate mogul and former reality television host who has surprised the political world by leading his 16 Republican opponents, including New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, in the polls — said in an interview last month that he seeks to hike taxes on the wealthy and cut taxes on the middle class.

MORE: Donald Trump seeks higher taxes on rich, lower taxes on middle class

"I don’t mind paying a little more in taxes," Trump, who owns three New Jersey golf courses and once owned three Atlantic City casinos, told Bloomberg News. "The middle class is getting clobbered in this country."

It’s a proposal that puts Trump more in line with the Democratic Party than his Republican rivals.

In his column, Krugman recalls how in the 2012 presidential election, Republican nominee Mitt Romney accused President Obama of favoring a redistribution of income from the rich to the poor — and how conservatives warned that raising taxes on the wealthy was a mistake.
Krugman writes the U.S. unemployment rate has fallen from 7.8 when Obama took office to 5.1 percent as of last month.

"I'm not saying that everything is great in the U.S. economy, because it isn't," Krugman writes. "... But the economy has nonetheless done far better than should have been possible if conservative orthodoxy had any truth to it. And now Mr. Trump is being accused of heresy for not accepting that failed orthodoxy?"

Krugman adds that he is not saying Trump — who has drawn fire for making incendiary remarks about immigrants and women — "is better and more serious than he's given credit for being."

"Not at all — he is exactly the ignorant blowhard he seems to be," the columnist writes. "It's when it comes to his rivals that appearances can be deceiving. Some of them may come across as reasonable and thoughtful, but in reality they are anything but."

Krugman — who worked at Princeton from 2000 until this year, when he left the Ivy League School to teach at the City University of New York — repeats that he is "not making a case for Mr. Trump."

"There are lots of other politicians out there who also refuse to buy into right-wing economic nonsense, but who do so without proposing to scour the countryside in search of immigrants to deport, or to rip up our international economic agreements and start a trade war," he adds. "The point, however, is that none of these reasonable politicians is seeking the Republican presidential nomination."
Duncan, Perez argue for K-14 expansion

By Roger Riddell | September 8, 2015

Dive Brief:

In an op-ed for the Philadelphia Inquirer republished by eSchool News, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and Labor Secretary Thomas E. Perez make the case for a K-14 school model.

The K-12 education system, the two cabinet members argue, doesn’t adequately provide the “knowledge, flexibility, and ingenuity” for a 21st Century economy in which many current students will work jobs that don’t exist yet.

The duo also cite schools that offer career education in subjects like robotics and computer science in partnership with employers, naming Brooklyn’s P-TECH specifically for its six-year high school length and collaboration with IBM and City University of New York.

Dive Insight:

Of course, the argument that schools should partner with private-sector employers might not sit well with those wary of the privatization of public schools. But the need for more career and technical education is a popular argument on all sides these days. The current education system was designed with the notion that a majority of students pumped out would go on to factory work after finishing high school. Today, that simply isn’t the case.

It’s worth noting that President Barack Obama’s proposal for free community college (http://www.educationdive.com/news/5-pros-and-cons-of-obamas-free-community-college-plan/356289/) would also essentially create a K-14 system if it becomes reality.

Recommended Reading

eSchool News: Duncan: U.S. needs to modernize its schools (http://www.eschoolnews.com/2015/09/07/us-modernize-schools-049/)
Government (index.php/government)

McCray Set to Unveil 'Mental Health Roadmap,' Signature De Blasio Plan


Chirlane McCray hosts a mental health roundtable (all photos: the Mayor's Office via flickr (https://www.flickr.com/photos/nycmayorsoffice/))

Over the past several months, New York City First Lady Chirlane McCray has had conversations with many of the city’s service providers, non-profit organizations, and long-time advocates for mental health care provision. In preparation to unveil a "roadmap" addressing the "mental health crisis in New York City," McCray has spoken with a diverse array of constituents who will be directly impacted by new policies.

In collaboration with key departments of her husband’s administration, McCray, who is Chair of the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City, is leading a multi-agency effort to evaluate mental health care provision city-wide, particularly for low-income and at-risk communities, and chart a path forward.

"It is long overdue to acknowledge that our inattention to mental illness is a public health crisis that requires a public health solution," McCray wrote in a recent column (http://www.cnn.com/2015/09/03/opinions/mccray-killings-mental-health/) at CNN.com, in which she discusses mental health care in a national context.

Key to the push behind the initiative is the notion that better mental health care can not only help people live healthier, happier, and more productive lives, but that an improved approach to mental health care can help the city’s education, housing,
criminal justice, and other systems.

Schools, homeless shelters, senior centers, and jails have been highlighted in the city's new fiscal year 2016 budget as targets of funding for improved mental health care services. In unveiling her roadmap, McCray is likely to follow up with additional initiatives supporting and tying together these and other sectors, "bringing more resources and better resources to those who need it most," as she writes. McCray's plan is due to be released this fall and is certain to discuss mental health as important to all aspects of life, and city services.

Gotham Gazette spoke with service providers and experts in anticipation of the release of McCray's roadmap and many applauded the work of the First Lady and Mayor de Blasio. There is widespread appreciation for their efforts to prioritize reforming mental health care in New York City - and relief that it is being spoken about so openly and with such urgency.

Regarding the roadmap, general suggestions were consistent, with experts and stakeholders saying that it should call for:
- Improved and sustained communication among service providers, city government and organizations for mental health care advocacy;
- Prioritizing mental health care in all aspects of city government policy;
- Reducing stigma of mental illness and promoting larger public education about mental wellness.

Last week, de Blasio's office announced that Richard Buery, Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives, will spearhead the implementation of the plan "to create a more effective mental health system." Over the past two years Buery has overseen and coordinated the rollout of de Blasio's ambitious and initially successful universal pre-Kindergarten program. Dr. Mary Bassett, commissioner of the city Health Department, is also sure to play a key role in implementing any new mental health programming.

"Mental illness touches the lives of most New Yorkers," McCray said in a statement, adding that there has long been two separate health care systems, "one for physical health and one for mental health."

"We can – and will – improve access to mental health care in New York City and bring mental health care services where New Yorkers live, work and study," McCray promised.
In drawing a "mental health roadmap" to accomplish those lofty goals, it appears that McCray will focus on reducing stigma around mental illness and treatment; conducting a detailed assessment of the current state of service provision city-wide; and, creating a comprehensive and sustainable plan for mental health care for all New Yorkers. Informing the entire plan will be the notion that both governmental and non-governmental service providers of all kinds can contribute to a better, more intertwined mental health care system.

Programming efforts will surely be tied with outreach and publicity campaigns pushing New Yorkers to seek treatment and ensuring that people are more aware of both warning signs of mental illness and available services. There will all but certainly be a focus on equity throughout the city’s boroughs and neighborhoods, with a special focus on the poorest New Yorkers and those who do not speak English - aligning with the motivating theme of the de Blasio administration.

A few recent announcements regarding mental health care show key elements of the roadmap and give indication of what the larger plan will look like. McCray’s map and contracts with service providers should provide indication of how the city will measure the effectiveness of its efforts.


“This is a subset of a much bigger mental health reform plan that you’ll hear about from the First Lady in the fall. This is just the first of many pieces,” said the mayor. (http://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/542-15/transcript-mayor-de-blasio-nyc-safe-evidence-driven-public-safety-public)

Connections to Care (CTC), a $30 million program launched in a public-private partnership between the Mayor’s Fund to Advance New York City, the federal Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), and private funders, seeks to expand access to mental health care for low-income and at-risk communities.

The Mayor’s Fund announced the program on July 30, having successfully secured a $10 million federal grant, to be administered over the course of five years, from the Social Innovation Fund of the CNCS; an additional $20 million has been matched by the
Mayor's Fund and selected service partners. CTC will expand mental health care access by collaborating with community organizations to integrate mental health services into existing programs, providing training and support for staff.

The program will also fund a study to assess the efficacy of service providers and the experiences of those receiving care. In the fall, proposals from service providers will be accepted for review.

In May, de Blasio announced his fiscal year 2016 Executive Budget, allocating a projected total of $132.7 million for mental health care during fiscal years 2016 and 2017. The City increased funding for mental health care services in the sectors outlined below. The investment is intended to "build a more effective and inclusive mental health system in New York City" and create a national model. It is sure to form much of the backbone to McCray's roadmap.

Schools

According to the Office of School Health, it is estimated that 9% of 6-12 years olds in New York City suffer from anxiety, depression and other mental health challenges. A survey conducted in 2011 reveals 8.4% of high school students have attempted suicide one or more times. McCray described the need to eliminate stigma around mental illness, citing statistics that 61% of adults and 35% of children in the city are not receiving the services they need.
More counselors and outside clinicians at city schools, especially in the "community schools" being opened by the de Blasio administration, are key to the effort of providing better mental health care to students.

Maria Astudillo, Director of Mental Health Services at the Children's Aid Society, asks “what are some of the universal interventions we can do [in schools]?” Given that every year students are required to have physical examinations, Astudillo believes there should be social and emotional screenings for students as well. “We have to be creative, we have to think outside the box,” she said.

Jails

“What we effectively have seen in this country is that the largest mental health facilities in the country now are jails. And people who are mentally ill end up going through the criminal justice system in ways that are utterly inappropriate and hugely damaging and not at all helpful for community safety,” JoAnne Page, President and CEO of The Fortune Society told Gotham Gazette.


“Being at Rikers is trauma -- when you're talking about mental illness, both creation of it and exacerbation of it,” Page added.

Most recently, the de Blasio administration announced (http://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/383-15/health-hospitals-corporation-run-city-correctional-health-service) in June it would not renew the contracts with two contracted for-profit Rikers health care providers, Corizon, Inc. and Damian Family Care Centers, Inc. New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation (HHC) will take over as the primary provider.

“We have an essential responsibility to provide every individual in our City's care with high-quality health services -- and our inmates are no different,” said Mayor Bill de Blasio in a June press release (http://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/383-15/health-hospitals-corporation-run-city-correctional-health-service). “This transfer to HHC will give our administration direct control and oversight of our inmates' health services -- furthering our goal of improving the quality and continuity of healthcare for every inmate in City custody.”
John Boston of the Legal Aid's Prisoner's Rights Project noted, “It is especially appropriate to make this change with respect to mental health care, since the City is attempting to improve mental health treatment in the jails,” adding that Corizon had a “track record” of failing to administer appropriate treatment.

Often anyone receiving treatment while in jail, juvenile detention centers, or homeless shelters has had “experiences with mental health services that were more about control than treatment,” says Page of The Fortune Society.

Furthermore, Page says that policing policies such as adherence to the “broken windows” model leaves “people getting arrested for things like being mentally ill and homeless. So the criminal justice system is stigmatizing people even more.”

In December 2014, the de Blasio Administration launched a $130 million, 4-year plan detailed in a report by the Task Force on Behavioral Health and the Criminal Justice System in order to “drive down crime while also reducing the number of people with behavioral health issues needlessly cycling through the criminal justice system.”

First Lady McCray described the criminal justice system as “a maze [New Yorkers with mental health and substance use disorders] can never escape. The City has made a real commitment to addressing the root causes of this urgent problem.”

Initiatives outlined in the Task Force’s Action Plan -- fewer arrests for low-level crimes and, largely, more alternatives for police can use; better community-based treatment for mental illness; and better alternatives for incarceration or detention -- Page believes are a good start to implementing any sustainable change.

“People should be in jail as a last resort – not on low bail,” Page says. “Not because nobody knows what to do with them, they should [only] be in jail because they’ve done something serious and there's no better alternative. We lock up way too many people.”
Homelessness
The Coalition for the Homeless reports (http://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/basic-facts-about-homelessness-new-york-city/) that every night thousands of unsheltered homeless people sleep in the streets and other public spaces. The large majority of street homeless people live with mental illness or other health problems, according to the Coalition.

"Many cities have a troubling number of cases in which a person with mental illness is subjected to unnecessary arrest or unnecessary violence," said Alex Vitale, a sociology professor at Brooklyn College.


Though improved access to services and treatment is necessary, Vitale stresses that "ultimately, it is not just mental health outreach workers or a few targeted programs for violent offenders that is needed. To address chronic homelessness, with mentally ill homeless people, is "a supportive housing program," Vitale says. He has written about such a need in a recent Gotham Gazette column, (http://index.php/opinion/5813-the-solution-to-homelessness-is-housing-not-policing)

Susan Wiviott, CEO of The Bridge, shares this sentiment. Wiviott believes McCray’s roadmap will revolve around preventative care and access to mental health services in communities, which is needed, but the costlier programs of supportive housing and in-treatment services must be on the agenda as well. "If you really want to help people and change their lives so they're not living on the street, then there must be some access to a stable place to live."
McCray's outline could very well advocate for an increase of city funds toward supportive housing and renew de Blasio administration calls for the state government to significantly up its contribution to a new NY/NY supportive housing program (/index.php/government/5749-proven-homelessness-fighting-program-loses-state-funding-faces-uncertain-future), the source of recent controversy.

Seniors
Senior adults—60 years and older—represent the fastest growing population (http://www.nyc.gov/html/dfta/downloads/pdf/demographic/elderly_population_0709) in New York City. By 2030, one in five New Yorkers will be a senior adult. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) estimates (http://www.nyc.gov/html/dfta/downloads/pdf/dfta/dfta_aps_sept1314.pdf) that approximately 20% of New Yorkers 55 and older experience mental illness.

The de Blasio administration has allocated $800,000 in fiscal year 2016, which began July 1, to place clinical social workers in the city's 20 largest senior centers.

This is not quite enough, though, for some service providers. "You have to recognize that a good portion of the people who are older, who will need mental health services, are homebound. There has to be support for those services," Nancy Harvey, CEO of Service Program for Older People (http://www.spop.org) (SPOP), told Gotham Gazette.

"You can't just be at senior centers because a lot of the older populations can't get to senior centers," Harvey adds. "Forty percent of clients at my agency are homebound, they cannot get out so you have to be able to deliver the services to their homes, there has to be support and recognition for that model, which is more expensive, but certainly less expensive than them ending up in hospitals or nursing homes."

Harvey credits the First Lady for "bringing visibility to mental health" in New York City and is hopeful about the attention highlighting the need for greater services and treatment, especially for older adults. Senior centers cannot remain the sole focus, however, because "we need to have a broader view of how we're going to reach [homebound] people," she says.
Building a Better Mental Health Care System
DOHMH created the Center for Health Equity
direction of Commissioner Mary Bassett, hoping to employ a community-based
approach toward healthy New Yorkers.

Marlon Williams works at the center as Director of Cross Agency Partnerships at
DOHMH. He uses a "health-in-all-policies" (HiAP) approach, focusing on promoting
community health in the work of different city agencies.

In an interview with Urban Omnibus (http://urbanomnibus.net/2015/04/putting-health-
in-all-policies/), Williams spoke of external factors affecting the health of New Yorkers.

"Very few health outcomes actually have to do with your access to healthcare services,"
Williams said. "Much of what determines your ability to live to your fullest health
potential is about the physical and social context in which you live. Issues of race,
discrimination, class, and poverty all have a tremendous impact on health and create
specific health inequities."

As has been cited in the recent Legionnaires' Disease outbreak in the South Bronx,
poverty and health care issues often overlap. The new Connections to Care program
will soon be looking to contract with community-based organizations where vulnerable
populations can be reached and people with symptoms or at risk of mental illness can
be identified and helped. These can include people struggling with stable housing,
employment, or sobriety; new or expecting parents; and out of work young adults.

McCray and her husband's administration have announced programming so far that
reflect the complexities of health, particularly mental health, disparities. McCray's
roadmap is all but certain to follow a HiAP model, including schools, jails, and other
places where New Yorkers may access services and evaluating needs based on income, cultural background, and more.

Creating an effective and comprehensive mental health care system will require, Williams believes, that the city government figures out “place-based intervention to address, mitigate, or even prevent [health inequities] — so anyone anywhere in New York City has an opportunity for optimal health.”

Essential to the city's efforts will be tracking its programs and the work being done by community organizatins, service providers, and city agencies. With more investment comes more scrutiny and the need to prove the efficacy of devoting resources to new work.

In her recent op-ed for CNN (http://www.cnn.com/2015/09/03/opinions/mccray-killings-mental-health/), McCray extended a call for action to other local and national leaders, urging them to commit the time and resources to implement needed mental health care services.

“Stigma, a lack of resources and the marginalization of mental health for decades have left us a fragmented and broken system that must be fixed. Too many people's lives are at stake, in New York City and beyond.”

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by Kaela Sanborn-Hum, Gotham Gazette
@GothamGazette (https://twitter.com/GothamGazette)
Reform Criminal Justice For Justice, Not Political Expediency

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GUEST POST WRITTEN BY
William G. Otis and
William J. Haun

Mr. Otis is adjunct professor of law at Georgetown University Law Center. Mr. Haun is a lawyer in Washington, D.C.
It’s good to see President Obama and members of Congress take an interest in criminal justice reform, but their emphasis is wide of the mark. Rather than focus on building on our success in decreasing crime rates, advocates of “sentencing reform” seem to think that massively decreasing incarceration will rebuild trust in the justice system. But truly restoring trust will not come merely from empowering the federal courts to lower sentences through more “discretion”—which they used carelessly in the 1960s and ’70s—but from returning most law enforcement to the local level and criminal law to punishing the truly guilty.

Local communities’ willingness to incarcerate those who were destroying their neighborhoods helped create far greater safety in inner cities across our country. In fact, our criminal justice system is arguably the most successful domestic program in the last half century. Today, we have more than five
million fewer serious crimes per year than we did a generation ago. We have ten thousand fewer murders. The crime rate is half what it was in the early ’90s.

As CUNY Professor Michael Fortner and many others have observed, poor and minority communities both advocated and benefited from the system’s stand aghast crime. Their neighborhoods, businesses and children once bore the brunt of crime-breeding decay, and proactive, “broken windows policing” helped stemmed the criminal tide. The eminent scholar James Q. Wilson concluded that 25% or more of the drop in crime is due to increased imprisonment. Other authorities have reached the same figure.

“Too much law amounts to no law at all”

The laudable desire for reforming federal criminal law needs to be informed by these gains and to understand how they may be undermined by the federal government’s criminalization of ordinary life.

The late Harvard Professor William Stuntz rightly noted that “[t]oo much law amounts to no law at all.” The sprawl of modern federal criminal law bears him out. Many seemingly
ordinary acts that no one would think of as criminal are now subject to federal penalties, while local justice systems have become subordinate to federal priorities. Federal intervention has made the law less accessible, less knowable and less controlled by local communities, thus less efficacious in doing what we adopt law to achieve in the first place.

Recommended by Forbes

There is an emotional appeal in enhancing the sentencing discretion of federal judges and having greater faith in the government’s ability to rehabilitate criminals. But we’ve tried it before and it doesn’t work.

Well-intentioned but misguided federal criminal policies saw crime skyrocket by more than 300% from the ’60s to the late ’80s. Just in the last year, in cities from coast to coast, the murder rate has spiked as similar “progressive” activists tried to dictate the community’s response to local crimes. Even as things stood before then, the recidivism rate—the frequency with which released inmates return to crime
—was a startling 77%. If we now start releasing criminals earlier, we already know what’s going to happen.

There’s no room for reform that replays the crime-ridden failures of the past

The first choice for reducing both crime and incarceration remains what it has always been—families building a culture of personal responsibility. But the government also has a role to play: Winnow out the huge number of criminal statutes that do not require bad intent, and sometimes do not even require that a normal person would suspect he’s done anything wrong. To date, no one knows exactly how many federal criminal penalties exist. The regulatory state punishes too many people as it, ironically, erodes the moral underpinnings of criminal sanctions.

There’s plenty of room for reform that returns criminal law to its historic and common-sense roots, reserving punishment for intentional wrongdoing and placing it under the control of the communities that experience the crime. But there’s no room for “reform” that simply replays the crime-ridden failures of the past.

Also on Forbes:
New York, September 8, 2015 — Americas Society/Council of the Americas and the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs will launch the Americas Quarterly (AQ) 2015 Social Inclusion Index on Thursday, September 10, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. at the National Press Club in Washington, DC. Roberta Jacobson, Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, will deliver remarks. The opening remarks and panel discussion will observe the beginning of the International Decade for People of African Descent, a 10-year observance declared by the United Nations to raise awareness on issues of racial discrimination, as well as examine the rankings of 17 countries across 22 variables in the AQ Index. This event will be webcast live. Copies of the report will be available in English and Spanish.

The U.S. Department of State engages with historically marginalized populations in the region, including indigenous peoples, people of African descent, women and girls, LGBTI persons, and persons with disabilities, and collaborates with governments, civil society, and the private sector to address the underlying causes of social exclusion.

Speakers at the launch and public panel will include:* Roberta Jacobson, Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, U.S. Department of State; Susan Segal, president and CEO, Americas Society/Council of the Americas; Mauricio Vivero, CEO, Seattle International Foundation; Judith Morrison, senior advisor for the Gender and Diversity Division, Inter-American Development Bank; Elizabeth Zechmeister, Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP), Vanderbilt University; Carlos Quesada, executive director, International Institute on Race, Equality and Human Rights; and Alana Tummino, senior editor, Americas Quarterly, and director of Policy, Americas Society/Council.
of the Americas (moderator).

*Additional speakers to be confirmed.*

**Launch and Public Panel: Social Inclusion in the Americas**

**Thursday, September 10, 2015**

**9:00 to 11:00 a.m.**

**Registration:** 8:30 to 9:00 a.m.

**Opening Remarks, Presentation, and Discussion:** 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

National Press Club
529 14th Street NW
Washington, DC 20045
(View map)

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**About the Americas Quarterly 2015 Social Inclusion Index:**

Generously supported by the Seattle International Foundation, the *Americas Quarterly* Social Inclusion Index is a nuanced description of the region that seeks to address the most pressing needs under current economic conditions, looking at social inclusion as more than the reduction of poverty and inequality.

Notable findings of the Index’s fourth edition include:

- Uruguay remains in first place for the second straight year in the Index. The Southern Cone country is a champion in LGBTI rights and access to formal jobs and continues to make improvements in areas such as the portion of GDP spent on social projects, as well as financial inclusion.
- The United States went up two places from 2014 and ranks first across several indicators, including women’s rights and personal empowerment.
- In third place is Argentina, which outranks all countries but Costa Rica and the United States in indicators such as portion of GDP spent on social programs.
- At the lower end of the spectrum, high poverty rates, lack of opportunities, and gender and racial disparities paint a challenging picture for Guatemala and Honduras. That said, El Salvador shows gains in almost all categories. The majority of the countries in the Index improved in access to adequate housing overall—most significantly Paraguay—although in most places, minorities are still at a disadvantage. Poverty is also receding across the board.
- As for access to formal jobs, the picture is mixed: access improved in Bolivia and Ecuador in terms of both gender and race, while it decreased in Colombia and Peru.
- The region’s standard-bearers of women’s rights are the United States, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Argentina, and Colombia.
- When it comes to protecting LGBTI rights, Uruguay and Argentina rank at the top of the pack, along with Brazil, Colombia, and Ecuador. The exception in South America is Paraguay, which joins countries in the Northern Triangle, particularly Honduras and Guatemala at the bottom of the scale.

This year’s Index includes 17 countries from the region with scores on 22 variables and is calculated


**Press Inquiries:**
Adriana La Rotta at alarotta@as-coa.org or 212-277-8384.
Kariela Almonte at kalmonte@as-coa.org or 212 277-8333.

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This event is coorganized with

**Americas Quarterly** is the premier publication dedicated to politics, business and culture in the Western Hemisphere, with a focus on Latin America. Launched in 2007 and based in New York City, AQ’s award-winning magazine and website appeal to a broad audience interested in the region. Readers include top policymakers in Washington, DC, Brasilia, Mexico City, and beyond; executives at Latin American multinationals and Fortune 500 companies; opinion leaders in universities and the media; and a vast array of general readers who are passionate about Latin America. Editorial board members include former presidents Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Ricardo Lagos, Ernesto Zedillo, and Alejandro Toledo, as well as leading voices from business, journalism, finance, and academia. Americas Quarterly is an independent publication of Americas Society and Council of the Americas, which for more than 50 years have been dedicated to dialogue in our hemisphere.
Solo exhibition ‘In Medias Res’ features gun manipulations

GUTTENBERG – Roberto Visani, currently an artist in residence at Guttenberg Arts Gallery, is featured in the solo exhibition “In Medias Res,” on view at the gallery through Oct. 4. The opening reception takes place from 7 to 9 p.m. on Saturday, Sept 12, with an artist talk at 8 p.m. Guttenberg Arts is located at 6903 Jackson St.

Visani uses assemblage to create many of his sculptures. Using specific materials and objects, he creates visual metaphors which connect a gun to the circumstances surrounding its use and its relationship to the body. This is literalized in a sculpture titled “sextape” which conflates a mannequin arm, tripod, VHS camera, panties, and telescope into a futuristic weapon, simultaneously threatening, seductive, and humorous in its display.

Visani sees the gun as carrying both a physical and psychological relation to humanity. Ultimately, his works ask the viewer to move beyond the form of the gun to consider larger questions contained within their narratives. “They exist as a record of a time, place, a group, an individual,” he said. “It is less about the weapon itself and more about the circumstances surrounding its existence, but it’s also this iconic form which allows us to consider questions of power as well.”

The title “In Medias Res” refers to the Latin term meaning “in the midst of things.” Often applied in theater and poetry, the phrase describes a narrative in which the audience/reader enters not at the beginning but somewhere after things have begun. This is where Visani places the viewer within his exhibition. Influenced by both theatrical and literary storytelling, his selection of gun sculptures and related images creates an interwoven narrative in which each object and image possesses its own history and identity. Collectively the installation within the exhibition space begins to suggest additional layers of meaning.

Roberto Visani is a multi-media artist residing in Brooklyn, New York. He has exhibited his work internationally in such venues as the New Museum of Contemporary Art, NY; The Studio Museum in Harlem, NY; The Bronx Museum of Art, NY; Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, SF, CA; The Contemporary Arts Center, Cleveland, OH; Barbican Galleries, London, UK; and the Ghana National Museum, Accra, Ghana. Visani has been awarded artist residencies from the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council; Henry Street Settlement, NY; and Art Omi, to name a few. He is a former NYFA artist fellow in sculpture and Fulbright fellow to Ghana. As part of his Fulbright activities he began creating his iconic gun sculptures. These works have been reviewed in such publications as the New York Times, Art Forum, Art News, and Frieze. Since 2004, Visani has taught at John Jay College, CUNY where he is an associate professor of art.
'Effective Trial Techniques' to be explored by Kings County Columbian Lawyers on Sept. 8

Chuck Otey's Pro Bono Barrister  
By Charles F. Otey, Esq.  
Brooklyn Daily Eagle

Justice George Silver Will Be Guest Lecturer  
The Kings County Columbian Lawyers Association will kick off its fall season today, when members hear from Justice George Silver at the Rex Manor, 1100 60th St. This will be a Continuing Legal Education session on a timely topic, "Everything You Wanted to Know About Effective Techniques, but Were Afraid to Ask."

Justice Silver is one of the most eloquent and quick-witted jurists in our fair city, and Columbians can look forward to some interesting insights into what lawyers can do to improve their skills to the benefit of their clients. While he currently serves in the First Department, he is well known in Kings County, having spent several years on the Kings Civil Court bench.

Dinner will be served at 6 p.m., according to Columbians Executive Secretary Lucinda DiSalvo. Participation in the program will earn each barrister one hour of CLE credit.

The Columbians are led this year by President Rose Ann C. Branda, First Vice President Dean G. Delanites, Second Vice President Linda LoCascio, Third Vice President Joseph Rosato, Treasurer Mark Longo, Corresponding Secretary Susanne Gennusa, Recording Secretary Hon. Frank Seddio and Historian George J. Simeone.

It should be noted that President Branda's reputation for leadership — she has also headed the Brooklyn Bar Association and the Bay Ridge Lawyers Association (BRLA) — is exceeded only by her high standing in the area of domestic law, of which she is one of the city's most respected practitioners.

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BRLA Leaders Borrino, Becker Take Time Out to "Light the Night" on Sept. 26

Now in its seventh decade, the BRLA is the most respected neighborhood bar association in the city and has a long history of service; it is known for its civic outreach into its community and beyond.

Continuing that worthwhile theme this year, BRLA members — led by President Grace Borrino — will take a leading role in the "Light the Night" observance, which will take place in Staten Island on Sept. 26.
The BRLA is highly motivated to back this cause, which aids the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, because immediate past president Lisa Becker is a lymphoma survivor and has been involved with the society for the past 12 years.

Incoming President Borrino, by the way, like Becker, has been associated with the respected Caruso, Caruso & Branda firm, where she started in 2005. Becker is senior counsel with the New York City Department of Education.

Borrino’s practice has focused on domestic relations clients. She handles these cases from “incipient of the case through completion of matrimonial trial and post-dispositional issues.”

Like her predecessor, she “worked her way up” in the BRLA, serving as corresponding secretary, treasurer, recording secretary and vice president before being sworn in as president last June.

Both of these barristers have established themselves as legal scholars and professionals dedicated to doing the best job they can for their clients and their communities.

Becker received her bachelor’s degree in criminal justice in 1987 from St. John’s University, where she interned in the Queens and Kings County Criminal Courts — often appearing in court on behalf of crime and domestic violence victims. She then received her J.D. degree in 1994 from CUNY Law School at Queens College.

She says she has “always been emotionally drawn to public interest law,” so, after graduating law school, she became an assistant district attorney with the Kings County District Attorney’s Office. While there, serving as a prosecutor in the Domestic Violence Bureau, she “felt most gratified assisting domestic violence victims … prosecuting their abusers.”

Her outstanding service in the DA’s Office was a major factor in earning her a position with the highly respected Caruso, Caruso and Branda firm in 1997. A past president, Branda (as noted above, one of the city’s top matrimonial lawyers) was an inspiration and a “valued mentor,” she told us, as was partner Mark Caruso, whose practice focuses on real estate law.

Attorney Becker — a mother of two — and her husband Ralph Mercante live on Staten Island, so it was no surprise that she volunteered to aid victims of the violent Superstorm Sandy back in 2012.

President Borrino, a graduate of St. John’s University who is currently affiliated with the Caruso, Caruso & Branda firm, received her J.D. from Brooklyn Law School, where she was active in the Phi Delta Phi professional fraternity and earned the prestigious Richardson Merit Scholarship.

She was selected for three consecutive years — 2013 to 2015 — by The New York Times as a “Super Lawyer Rising Star.”

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Justice Ash Reports: Kings County Civil Forum Set for Sept. 30

Justice Sylvia C. Ash has announced that the next Goldberg/Aronin Civil Forum, in which lawyers, jurists and court personnel get together to smooth the workings of the Kings County Supreme Court, will be held on Sept. 30 at 9 a.m. in the 11th floor boardroom of 360 Adams St.

The forum, named for the late Justices Richard Goldberg and Irving Aronin, was started back in the 1990s by then-Administrative Justice Michael Pesce to develop a “team approach” to handling conflicts on court calendars and other administrative matters.

Through the years, a number of justices have chaired the forum, including retired Administrative Justice Joseph Levine and Abraham Gerges. Justice Ash succeeds Justice Donald Kurtz, who handled the forum for several years. As was the tradition under Justice Kurtz and his predecessors, Justice Ash notes that “refreshments will be served.”

Lawyers with specific questions may submit them in advance to Justice Ash’s court attorney Hajin Suh at hajin@eyecourts.gov.
Eva Moskowitz weighs a de Blasio challenge

Moskowitz at a Success Academy in Manhattan. (Robin Hood)

By ELIZA SHAPIRO 6:04 a.m. | Sep. 9, 2015

Back in May, Success Academy CEO Eva Moskowitz delivered a campaign-style speech to hundreds of the city’s wealthiest business leaders.

"I realize Mayor de Blasio sometimes gets picked on unfairly," she said, to laughter from the crowd of Manhattan Institute donors clad in black tie. "For example, he's been criticized for traveling to Iowa and the like, but I don't think his traveling to those places causes any harm. Coming back to New York, well, that's a different story."

The speech mocked the mayor for his foreign travel, his opposition to charter schools, and his inability to deliver on core political promises, and signaled an admitted "interest" by Moskowitz in unseating de Blasio in 2017.

"I believe I would have a lot to offer as mayor but the question for me is whether I could contribute more than I am now by running Success Academy," she told POLITICO New York in a statement on Tuesday.

MORE ON POLITICO
- City Hall Pro: De Blasio's homeless challenge, by the numbers; Mark-Viverito beyond New York
- Affordable housing lender taps former lieutenant governor

Circumstances would seem to be working in favor of Moskowitz, who has been positioning herself for the possibility of a run for years. De Blasio has looked vulnerable in recent polls, Republicans don't have an obvious champion, and her self-styled profile — as a ruthless
managing a program that restores benefits for school bus drivers.

Manager who gets results — stands in stark contrast to the prevailing caricature of the incumbent as a well-meaning but hapless executive. The former councilwoman is essentially an out-of-the-box challenger, having had the experience of running and (sometimes) winning elections. She also has experience in beating de Blasio, if her high-profile tussle with City Hall over co-locations last year was any indication. And, as she regularly proves at the Success network’s rallies, she can call upon a built-in, racially diverse network of supporters to amplify whatever point she’s making at a given time.

On the other hand: Moskowitz is not exactly what political consultants would call "relatable."

In 2005, when she gave up her seat on the City Council to run for Manhattan borough president, the New York Times editorial board praised her as "smart and driven and an expert on education issues," but ultimately concluded "her style — often described by those who have worked with her as abrasive — would not be well suited to this office." (The paper endorsed Scott Stringer, who won with 26 percent of the vote to Moskowitz’s 17 percent.)

As an employer, Moskowitz straddles the line between exacting and oppressive. She’s infamously demanding of her teachers and employees, rattling off a constant stream of emails about school improvements and test scores, and current and former Success teachers have described anxiety and fear in their schools when Moskowitz has come to visit.

Moskowitz has selectively embraced her reputation as a demanding boss, using it to cast herself as a passionate advocate for low-income children, rather than a dictatorial boss. She has defended her schools’ high standards and has railed against the city’s de-escalation of discipline policies that led to skyrocketing rates of suspensions for minority students. It’s all in the service of creating a world-class education, she says, for students who would otherwise be trapped in “failing schools.”


Lori Hall Armstrong, a consultant who ran Moskowitz’s 2005 borough president race, acknowledged that the campaign had to contend with perception about Moskowitz’s temperament was “a little bit,” even then.

But Armstrong said Moskowitz is largely misunderstood.

"Eva is just this kind of quiet nerdy kid who grew up in Harlem," she said.

**THE FORMER CITY COUNCILWOMAN, WHO LEFT ELECTORAL politics after her failed borough president bid, has hinted at her interest in the mayoralty for years.**
One colleague of Moskowitz’s said, “It’s the job she wants most in the world.”

“She’s always wanted to be mayor,” said Kenneth Sherrill, a professor of political science at Hunter College. “And this may be the best shot she’s ever going to have at it.”

The idea of a Moskowitz campaign became more urgent after the election of her old Council colleague de Blasio, who ran for mayor on a platform that sought to limit charter schools, and promised to curb her influence in particular.

And it may have become more appealing as Moskowitz handed de Blasio a series of political defeats.

She embarrassed the administration during a public fight over charter school space in the spring of 2014 by enlisting the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo, and she undermined the mayor on his frustrating bid to extend mayoral control over city schools in the latest legislative session. She has repeatedly accused de Blasio and city schools chancellor Carmen Farinó of being late to approve deals concerning her network, and has threatened de Blasio administration staffers with press conferences and open letters when she perceived that City Hall was dragging its feet in finding space for her growing charter network.

The hard-won victories have made Moskowitz the public face of the school-reform movement, and given her access to a national network of donors eager to support her cause.

She has appeared on the covers of national magazines and has criss-crossed the country to speak before sympathetic audiences, from the United States Congress to the prestigious Sun Valley conference.

“She is very much the Joan of Arc of the movement right now,” said Rees, the C.E.O. of National Alliance for Public Charter Schools. “If there’s one person that a lot of people [in the sector] can rally around, it’s her.”

Success Academy recently netted an $8.5 million donation from hedge fund manager John Paulson, and Success’ board of directors is famous and much-coveted in New York’s education circles for its influence.

Financier Roger Hertog compared Moskowitz to Alexander Hamilton at a recent awards dinner for Moskowitz, before describing her as “attractive, [with] lovely red hair.” He alluded to a “great war” between Moskowitz and the mayor, saying, “whether or not Eva Moskowitz started it, she’s out to win it.”

The financial backing could help promote Moskowitz’s managerial talents, in contrast to the mayor, and Republicans have already signaled they would welcome a credible challenger with the backing to run a competitive race.

“She’s a C.E.O. now,” said Armstrong, her former campaign manager and aide. “She’s good at managing volume very well.”

Sherrill envisioned her platform as a kind of “fusion do-gooder,” promoting the management skills that have allowed Success to grow so quickly and marketing herself as a champion for low-income, minority families in search of better schools.

Her record at Success would likely to stake her the early backing of the city’s tabloids,
along with the families in her charter school network who are typically Moskowitz supporters, as well as other parents of children in charters across the city.

But charter parents do not constitute a significant voting bloc, and turnout is often low among charter families, leaving observers to wonder whether she can cultivate a base of support outside the reform movement.

At the most recent Sun Valley conference — an annual gathering of the country’s most influential CEOs and financiers — Moskowitz described herself as a “single-issue” voter, focused on the issue of education reform.

“Can she translate success as a charter school operator into a broader education agenda, let alone other issues?” asked David Bloomfield, a professor of education at CUNY’s Graduate Center and Brooklyn College.

MOSKOWITZ’S MOST DAUNTING OBSTACLE, APART from the Democratic incumbent himself, may be the same one that thwarted her bid for borough president in 2005: the city teachers’ union.

That year, Moskowitz ran on a platform of improving education options and opposing MTA fare hikes, and adopted campaign rhetoric about inequality reminiscent of de Blasio’s 2013 bid.

“Our borough has become a place of the haves and the have-nots,” she said during her campaign kickoff on the City Hall steps in February of 2005.

She showed a penchant for raising money and a willingness to hustle.

She notched campaign contributions from Herbert Allen III, the CEO of Allen & Company, real estate heir Douglas Durst, Daniel Tishman of Tishman Speyer, Ralph Schlossstein, then-president of BlackRock Financial Management, and several executives at the Estee Lauder Company, according to records from the New York City Campaign Finance Board. (Dan Garodnick, who now occupies Moskowitz’s old Upper East Side council seat, donated $50.)

Armstrong described Moskowitz as a dogged candidate.

“She’s not fearful of hard work, long hours, or an uphill climb. Those obstacles do not deter her,” she said of Moskowitz. “She did everything right,” Armstrong said, describing twelve hour field operation days in the months before the primary.

“That’s gold,” Armstrong said. “You have to have that stamina.”

But Moskowitz had already waged war against the union in a series of contentious City Council hearings, and the union resolved to defeat her bid for higher office, supporting her competitors and enlisting its allies in organized labor.

The Working Families Party sent out mailers reading, “It’s hard enough for families like us to get by. And Eva Moskowitz is just making it harder.”

Moskowitz finished second in the Democratic primary, losing by 14,000 votes to current city comptroller Scott Stringer, who was bolstered by the union support.

Teachers’ union leaders still refer to her as “Evil Moskowitz” and say they would the chance to defeat the new leader of the reform movement.
"The teachers of New York City would like nothing better than to be part of a political campaign against Ms. Moskowitz," Michael Mulgrew, the president of the United Federation of Teachers, told POLITICO New York in a statement.

The hope among Moskowitz supporters is that the union's power has waned in the intervening years.

Families for Excellent Schools, a charter advocacy group that has effectively served as a political PAC for Moskowitz's schools over the last two years, broke state records for money spent on lobbying last year, and spent $9.7 million total on a blizzard of largely anti-de Blasio advertising in 2014.

And last year, education reform groups — led by FES — did what was once unthinkable and outspent the state and city teachers' unions on lobbying.

Moskowitz, who has pledged to build out the Success network to 100 schools, is likely to continue on the warpath against de Blasio, accusing him of depriving poor and minority students of educational opportunities, as she will do at a march over the Brooklyn Bridge in a few weeks. (Asked about the possibility of a Moskowitz challenge, a spokesman for the mayor referred to de Blasio's recent comments encouraging challenges to "come one, come all.")

In the meantime, she is expected to begin intensive internal polling and carefully track de Blasio's favorability in the coming months, her allies say privately.

If those numbers seem insurmountable, Moskowitz can simply say she wants to supervise Success' expansion plans. But even the sliver of an opening could prove tempting.

"At some point," said Kenneth Sherill, "ambition can cloud the reason of even the most professional politicians."
Primaries approach, put heat on area incumbents

By Joe Mahoney Staff Writer | Posted: Tuesday, September 8, 2015 10:00 pm

In towns or regions where one political party rules, the contests to watch are the primary elections, as they often underscore the time-worn adage uttered by late House Speaker Thomas "Tip" O'Neill.

"All politics is local."

In Delaware County, political activists are already mobilizing for three big town supervisor primary races that will be held Thursday.

Much is at stake in Harpersfield where the county government's most powerful official, incumbent Harpersfield Supervisor James Eisel Sr. hopes to withstand a challenge for the GOP line from construction company operator Edward Pick Jr.

In Walton, town Supervisor Bruce Dolph enjoys the backing of the local GOP committee as he seeks to take the Republican line while being challenged by a village trustee, Charlie Gregory, a retired Air Force officer.

The third local race generating attention in Delaware County has Middletown Town Supervisor Marge Miller defending her job from a challenge mounted by code enforcer Patrick Davis for the Democratic line.

In Otsego County, there are four intriguing races — two of them in the town of Hartwick, one in Richfield and another involving the District 10 seat of county representative.

The latter is for the small but not insignificant Conservative line, and could be the last hurrah for county Rep. Betty Anne Schwerd, C-Burlington, a former Republican who now has no shot at one of the two major party lines. To survive until November, she will have to fend off Dan Wilber, a state Department of Transportation staffer who recently served as an Edmeston town justice and is the endorsed candidate of the local Republican committee.

Schwerd said Tuesday that regardless of what happens Thursday, she will be a factor in the general
election in November, as she plans to back the candidate she thinks will do the best job for the district.

"If I don't win, I'm not going to pick up all my marbles and just go home," Schwert said. "If I don't win, I am going to help the candidate I think will do the best job for the people of the four towns I represent."

County GOP Chairman Vincent Casale predicted Schwert will throw her support in the general election to Russ Bachman, a political independent who has the endorsement of the county Democratic Party.

"She has made it no secret that she is running as a spoiler for the Democrats," Casale said.

Casale and other local political party leaders said they are expecting turnout to be very low Thursday for the off-year primary. Many towns will have no primaries at all, meaning voters can just stay home.

The Conservative and Independence Party voters of Delaware County will get to pick from the two major party candidates who have been courting their support. Gary Rosa, a Democrat, and Porter Kirkwood, a Republican who is now the county attorney, will face each other in November no matter what happens in the minor party races, though having an additional ballot berth or two often provides a big boost for candidates in competitive races.

Delaware County Republican Chairwoman Maria Kelso said voters are understandably frustrated with their tax bills, but need to understand the reason behind them are unfunded mandates enacted in Albany, not inefficient local government.

Insisting she is staying neutral in local primaries, Kelso said Eisel has "a proven record" and has worked hard to manage the town.

Baruch College political science professor Doug Muzzio, a part-time Harpersfield resident and keen observer of New York politics, said the town has benefited from Eisel's leadership of the county Board of Supervisors.

"The fact that he is in such a very influential position at the county can only be helpful to the town," said Muzzio, a Democrat whose does not vote in the county.

Pick has sought to capitalize on the frustration of some town residents with litigation concerning the operation of the New York Safety Track, located at the site of a former rural air field. The town has no zoning laws, and Muzzio said there was little that town officials could have done to impede the development of the site.

In Otsego County, the races being closely tracked by political activists include the primaries for town supervisor in Hartwick. Incumbent David Butler is battling Robert O'Brien, the county's new Emergency 911 center director, for the Republican line. Meanwhile, O'Brien is facing councilwoman
Julianne Sharratt in the Democratic primary.

In Richfield, incumbent Supervisor Fran Enjem is being challenged for the Republican line by Paul Palumbo, a councilman.
Died August 31 2015 in Albany, NY. Born January 5, 1931 in Queens, NY he attended the CUNY. He had a long and distinguished career in market research most notably at BAI Global, the company he founded. He was a dedicated father and friend, who took great pleasure in helping those he loved and exploring the natural world. Passionate in his beliefs, he was witty, smart, creative and generous. He is survived by his children, David, Barbara, Jonathan and Leonore, 6 grand children, and dearest friend/ partner Kathy. In lieu of flowers consider donating to Stonehouse Wood Sanctuary.
Fact Checker

Chris Christie's misleading argument against New York City's 'safest summer' claim

By Michelle Ye Hee Lee  September 9 at 10:00 AM

"No, it's not the safest summer in some time if you are a murder victim in this city [New York City], and the mayor admitted this morning there were more murders this year than last year. So I don't know how that's the safest summer for those families who lost their loved ones. I don't think they thought it was a safer summer. So you can cut thesestatistics 18 different ways. We will give you a comparison, okay? In Camden, New Jersey, where we fired the entire police force because of a bloated, awful union contract in an ineffective police force — three years ago, we did it. Three years later, the murder rate in Camden is down 61 percent. When the mayor can give those kinds of statistics, then he can come and talk to us about [a decrease in crime]."


The GOP presidential hopeful's windy claim offers two rebuttals to New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio and the New York City Police Department's announcement that 2015 was the city's safest summer in two decades.

Christie first disputed the statistic, noting that the number of murders in 2015 is up compared to last year. Then he pointed to successes in Camden, N.J., in decreasing the murder rate by restructuring the police force. We checked out the data.

The Facts

New York City data

In a segment prior to Christie's, de Blasio touted 2015 as the safest summer in the city in 20 years, according to NYPD data from June through August. Summer months tend to be more violent, with more people and activity outdoors that increase the chance of crime. On Sept. 2, 2015, NYPD announced that the number of shootings and murders were the lowest since the department began using its crime data tracking system, CompStat, in 1994.
A Christie campaign spokeswoman said he was referring to the uptick in murders so far in 2015 compared to same period in 2014 in many U.S. cities, including the 8.3 percent increase in New York City. De Blasio also noted this increase in his interview: As of Aug. 30 this year, there were 17 more murders in 2015 than there were the same period last year (205 in 2014, 222 in 2015). So Christie and de Blasio are referring to two different time frames.

When looking specifically at summer months, there were fewer murders this year (85) compared to last year (96), NYPD data show.

A review of data from the eight largest cities by the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University’s School of Law showed that despite the uptick in New York City murders in 2015, overall crimes (including violent crimes of murder, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary and motor vehicle theft) decreased in the city and in most other major cities compared to last year.

“People are beginning to feel like it’s not as safe because we’re starting to notice some spikes in certain places. But generally speaking, it’s still getting safe and safer for the average citizen across the country,” said Nicole Fortier, counsel for the Brennan Center’s Justice Program. This graph shows the larger crime trends in New York City, per NYPD data:

Criminal justice experts warn against comparing crime trends from short periods of time, which can be misleading. An annual trend can show a trajectory of where the trend might be headed, but still does not give a full picture. Many criminal justice experts say crime trends are determined over at least five years, preferably 10 or 20 years, of data.

A crimes-per-capita representation would show an even sharper drop in the crime numbers in the city, because the city’s population grew over the 20-year period in NYPD data, said Candace McCoy, professor at City University of New York’s John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

Camden data

Christie often cites the Camden success story on the campaign trail. In 2012, there were record-high 67 homicides in Camden (population 77,000), where violence soared amid budget cuts to the city police department and fights between the city and public safety unions. The department shrank after rounds of layoffs, and absenteeism grew to 30 percent. The remaining officers became overwhelmed and stopped responding to certain crimes.

The city disbanded its police department, and county police took over in May 2013. The county added police officers, hired 120 civilians (which cost less than hiring sworn officers) to handle operations like crime scene analysis, forensics and monitoring surveillance cameras. Moreover, the new police force made a cultural change in an attempt to improve its relationship with the community.
The number of crimes did decrease since 2012, though it's not entirely clear where Christie got his 61 percent figure (his campaign did not respond when we asked). Camden County Police Department data show that in 2012, there were 67 murders. In 2014, there were 33 murders — a 51 percent decline from 2012. Christie may be referring to the number of murders from Jan. 1 through July 19 in 2015 compared to the same period in 2012, which results in a 60 percent decline.

John Roman, senior fellow in the Justice Policy Center at the Urban Institute, said the situations in Camden and New York City represent "monstrously different" versions of crime trends in America. New York City, and other major cities, are bellwethers that signal larger crime trends across the country, he said: a consistent decline in violent crimes in the past two decades. There were 1,927 murders in New York City in 1993, and 2,262 in 1990. In 2014, the number of murders (333) declined by 85.3 percent compared to 1990.

Meanwhile, Roman said cities like Camden are indicators of "how we solve the really intractable problems around poverty and violence in America," when the economy fails in industrialized cities, leading to higher poverty, a decreased tax base, cuts to city resources, and increased crime.

The Pinocchio Test

As Christie says, there are many ways to present crime data. But the way he uses New York City murder numbers in this interview is one of the most misleading ways to make a point about crime trends.

De Blasio and NYPD declared summer 2015 the safest summer in 20 years using the number of shootings and murders over two decades. But Christie rebuts the label by saying more people have been killed so far this year, compared to the same time period last year. Those are two different measurements; NYPD data show fewer people were murdered this summer compared to last summer, and every summer since at least 2010. Annual fluctuations in crime data can vary widely, and comparisons like Christie's contributes to public hysteria over upticks in crime that are not reflective of the overall trend: the number of murders and other violent crimes has declined significantly and consistently in New York City and other major cities.

Camden has seen a decrease in murders since 2012. It's not clear exactly what time frames he is using with his 61 percent figure, but the data do support his point. When comparing murder numbers from 2012 and 2014 — two full calendar years before and after the county police took over — the figure comes out to a 51 percent decline from before the change in department structure.
No, Protests Against Police Brutality Are Not Increasing Crime

http://www.truthdig.com/eartotheground/item/no_protests_against_police_brutality_are_not_increasing_crime_2015/  

Posted on Sep 8, 2015

In a recent piece for The Nation, Alex S. Vitale—a professor of sociology at Brooklyn College—disproves claims that the Black Lives Matter movement has caused an uptick in crime.

He writes:

Much has been made in recent months of a series of isolated crime increases in a handful of US cities. Breathless accounts of a new crime wave have appeared in both liberal and conservative media. Right-wing pundits and some police leaders have claimed that there is a “Ferguson effect”—a significant crime increase due to the “Black Lives Matter” protests against
police violence. This is both junk science and political opportunism.

The New York Times recently reported that a couple dozen US cities have experienced increases in murders, and a few others some increase in other violent crimes. While any uptick in serious crime should be of concern, short-term changes in a few crime categories is thin evidence of a sustained national trend. In fact, in most parts of the country, crime in general, and murder rates in particular, continue to go down. While New York City, one site of ongoing protest, had a spike in homicides in the early part of the year, the city just completed the “safest summer in 25 years” according to Commissioner Bill Bratton. In addition, a new report by the Sentencing Project shows that in St. Louis, the uptick in homicides actually was well underway before the death of Michael Brown.

Even in cities that have experienced some increase in homicides, there has been no increase in other crimes. Why would a reduction in policing (as claimed by proponents of the “Ferguson effect”) result in more homicides but fewer robberies, burglaries, and auto thefts? The fact is that while homicide numbers are considered very accurate, they are such rare occurrences that it is very dangerous to draw any conclusions about broader crime trends from limited periods of time. Six months of homicide data is not enough to predict what year-end numbers will look like, and it’s bad journalism and worse science to do so.