

## MINUTES

### Meeting of the Hunter College Senate

### 14 September 2005

- 1 The 457<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Hunter College Senate was convened at 4:10 PM in Room W714.
- 2 **Presiding:** Joan Tronto, Chair
- 3
- 4 **Attendance:** The elected members of the Senate with the exception of those listed in Appendix I.
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- 6 **Agenda:** The agenda was adopted as distributed.
- 7
- 8 **Minutes:** The Minutes of May 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup> were approved as distributed.
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- 10 **Report by the** A summary statement of President Raab's report to the Senate is attached as Appendix II.
- 11 **President:**
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- 13 **Report by the** The Chair presented the report as follows:
- 14 **Administrative**
- 15 **Committee:**
- 16 **Election of Committee Chairs:**
- 17 The floor was open for Chair of the Budget Committee.
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- 19 Professor Manfred Kuechler (Sociology) was nominated.
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- 21 It was moved that nominations be closed. The motion carried by voice vote. Professor Kuechler was re-
- 22 elected Chair of the Budget Committee.
- 23
- 24 The floor was open for Chair of the Master Plan Committee.
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- 26 Professor Elaine Walsh (Urban Affairs & Planning) was nominated.
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- 28 It was moved that nominations be closed. The motion carried by voice vote. Professor Walsh was re-elected
- 29 Chair of the Master Plan Committee.
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- 31 The floor was open for Chair of the Nominating Committee.
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- 33 Dr. Marilyn Rothschild (Physics & Astronomy) was nominated.
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- 35 It was moved that nominations be closed. The motion carried by voice vote. Dr. Rothschild was re-elected
- 36 Chair of the Nominating Committee.
- 37
- 38 The floor was open for Chair of the Charter Review Committee.
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- 40 Professor Richard Stapleford (Art) was nominated.
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- 42 It was moved that nominations be closed. The motion carried by voice vote. Professor Stapleford was re-
- 43 elected Chair of the Charter Committee.

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50 **Report by the**  
 51 **Ombudsman:**

Professor Kathryn Rolland, Hunter College Ombudsman, presented the following report:

52 In the 2004-2005 academic year, there were 44 visitors whose concerns and complaints required the  
 53 intercession of the Ombuds Officer and are thus “formal” visits. Records are kept only on these formal  
 54 visits. Of these visitors, 25 were undergraduates, 12 graduate students ( a total of 37 student visitors), 2  
 55 staff and 4 faculty visitors. (These numbers are in line with the recorded visits for 2000- 2004.) Each  
 56 visit may result in 2-5 more meetings, in addition to meetings, phone calls, and emails to others involved  
 57 in some manner.  
 58

59 An average of 2-4 informal visitors utilized the services of the office during weekly walk-in hours, or  
 60 through calls or email to the office. These “informal” visits can usually be addressed in 1-2 meetings or  
 61 phone calls, often referring them to the appropriate channel.  
 62

63 Student concerns and questions involved the following in descending order of frequency:  
 64

65 Grades, including grade appeals, No Credit rules, and academic dismissal  
 66 Financial aid, loans, and tuition payment (Including late fees)  
 67 Master’s thesis, comprehensive exams, and thesis supervision guidelines  
 68 Perceived disrespectful treatment by professor or fellow students, including email communications  
 69 Questions concerning syllabi: how binding is it?  
 70 Can a professor require students to sign a contract in class?  
 71 Transfer credit for Major  
 72

73 Staff concerns involved non-reappointment issues and missing retirement/pension credits. Faculty issues  
 74 concerned non-reappointment and interpersonal disputes.  
 75

76 Communication issues, involving both written documents and/or verbal responses predominate, in both  
 77 informal and formal academic settings. In almost all cases, the parties involved in a formal matter, both  
 78 immediately and sometimes tangentially, were gracious and willing with their time and their  
 79 explanations. I very much appreciate this attitude, which understands that my role is not adversarial, and  
 80 which results in our often being able to resolve or at least explain how decisions evolved. Even when the  
 81 original issues that brought a visitor to my office remained unchanged, the visitor better understood both  
 82 the process and the criteria utilized in the decision. In all cases, the importance of the neutral role of the  
 83 Ombuds Officer, as well as the assurance of confidentiality of the meeting, seem to be greatly appreciated  
 84 by the visitors. While some visitors are under the misconception that they will find an “advocate” in the  
 85 Ombuds Officer, they quickly accept the explanation of the actual role and responsibilities of the office.  
 86

87 I believe we all are committed to a fair and just academy and, as part of that process, it appears that we  
 88 need to be vigilant and rigorous in assisting students (both undergraduate and graduate) to understand  
 89 what is expected of them and for faculty and staff to be willing to be creative and flexible, when  
 90 appropriate, in helping our students to move through and past mistakes as they assume greater  
 91 responsibility for their actions.  
 92

93 I have been pleased to find that an increasing number of students have reached the office through the  
 94 advice of other students as well as through the link on the Senate webpage. One of my goals for this  
 95 academic year is to provide informational materials that address both the responsibilities of the Ombuds  
 96 Office as well as initial steps that may be taken early on to prevent adversarial and/or disappointing  
 97 meetings prior to coming to the Ombuds Office.  
 98

99 I thank the many individuals throughout the Hunter College community who have assisted me  
 100 immeasurably as I too learn more about the awesome responsibilities of this position. As I begin my  
 101

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105  
106 third year in office, I am more aware than ever before of the importance of an Ombuds Office in our  
107 college and thank you for your trust in me.  
108

109 **New Business:** Professor John Wallach presented the following resolution:

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111 BE IT RESOLVED, that the Hunter College Senate express its appreciation to Provost Pizer for his  
112 service to Hunter College.  
113

114 The motion carried by acclamation.

115  
116 Professor Alcabes moved that the Senate's Computing & Technology Committee be asked to find out what  
117 can be done to improve the situation with Blackboard and access to the CUNY Portal.  
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119 The motion carried by voice vote.

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121 It was moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 5:10 PM.  
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125  
126 Respectfully submitted,  
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128  
129  
130 Stuart Ewen  
131 Secretary

## APPENDIX II Report by the President

The following is a summary statement of President Raab's report to the Senate on 9/14/05. She said:

"I would like to welcome you back this semester and I would like to start my comments today by introducing some of our new members of the Administration.

As all of you saw in the recent email, we were sad to lose our Provost, Richard Pizer, to an acting position at the Graduate Center. It is a wonderful opportunity and also a very strategic and really important position for Hunter College, because much of Richard's portfolio will be focusing on science in the university and the status of science graduate programs within CUNY. Richard will be starting in a few weeks. We are very lucky that one of our own leaders, somebody who has worked with so many of you in so many different capacities, Vita Rabinowitz, has agreed to be our Acting Provost as Richard begins his leave.

President Raab yielded the floor to Vita Rabinowitz, who said:

"I started teaching in Hunter College 27 years ago. This was my first academic job and I have always intended to spend the rest of my career here. The prospect of becoming the chief academic officer is for me thrilling. I am honored and humbled and want to thank the President for the great opportunity and for the confidence that she has shown in me.

Many of you know me as the chair of the psychology department or the co-director of the Gender Equity Project and those are surely two of my most cherished professional identities. But over the past several years I have participated at a number of college-wide and university-wide initiatives that I hope will stand me in good stead as your Acting Provost. As some of you know, I spent two years as Acting Associate Provost in 2000 and 2001. I hope that will also prepare me for the work I will be doing with you.

All of us here have a commitment to Hunter College, but the Office of the Provost and the Senate with their particular focus on academic affairs have a special relationship based on explicit academic responsibilities and shared academic values. I look forward to working collaboratively and collegially with the Senate on all matters related to academic policies and curriculum. Like you, I want to strengthen programs. I want to create an environment that fosters superb scholars and supports scholarship, and I want to ensure that our students get an education we can all be proud of. To do this I will need your support and you can count on mine. Thank you very much."

She then yielded the floor to President Raab who said:

"After a search at the end of the school year we are very lucky to find someone from the CUNY community to come as our Associate Provost. I would like David Potash to come down and say hello. David comes to us from Baruch with a lot of wonderful ideas that he has already begun to put into action."

President Raab yielded the floor to Associate Provost David Potash, who said:

"I was at Baruch College for seven years, and started at Hunter on the 29<sup>th</sup>. I have admired what has happened at Hunter since I started at Baruch, and I am really delighted to be here. I have been very impressed with the conversations that I have had with people and I am really looking forward to getting to know the faculty and the students. Thank you very much."

He yielded the floor to President Raab who said:

"After a 2-year search which was made possible by the efforts of so many of you here today, we were lucky to recruit a true phenomenal candidate to be our new Dean of Education. David Steiner is here today with his new Acting Associate Dean of Education. This is a new position that we created at the very strong request of the School of Education during this search. Carla Asher comes to us from CUNY at 80<sup>th</sup> street where she has been working with us for years on all of our education programs. She has been a great friend to Hunter. We welcome Carla and David.

President Raab yielded the floor to Dean David Steiner who said:

“It is an absolute delight to stand before you. I could never have dreamt when I was at PS 41 many years ago - my first experience as a 12 year old of the American education system - that one day I would be entrusted with the very high responsibility of working with all of you to prepare tomorrow’s teachers. I need hardly say to you what a critical task this is, a task I undertake with humbleness but excitement knowing that I will work with each of you. The work of the School of Education is a collaborative enterprise with the School of Arts and Sciences and the other schools. We do not do this alone. We do this together. I think we all share a vision of teachers who are well prepared in their content, in their craft, and in their enthusiasm for their work. We take that responsibility very serious, and I am excited about it. I come to you from the National Endowment for the Arts, where I have been working to try to do something about the condition of arts education in this country which has suffered rather a lot recently. Prior to that I was chairing the Department of Educational Policy at Boston University’s School of Education where we worked with the Chelsea public schools. We were the only School of Education to be legally responsible for a public school district. Now I look forward to working not only with all of you, but with the wider community of public schools in the City, and with other communities that are involved in this great trust that we call public education. I am so very pleased that Dr. Carla Asher has agreed to join us.

He then yielded the floor to Acting Associate Dean Carla Asher who said:

“I am very excited to be joining Hunter College. I am particularly excited about this position because it is really part of my lifetime commitment to public education in this city. I am a graduate of the New York City public schools, and of CUNY’s City College. I taught in the New York City public schools for many years in the Bronx. Being part of Hunter and being part of the School of Education is an opportunity for me to contribute to the work of preparing wonderful teachers for the students of the New York City public schools, many of whom will become Hunter College students. I am very glad to be joining you.”

She yielded the floor to President Raab, who said:

“Finally, I’m very pleased to introduce our new Acting Associate Dean for Student Opportunities in the School of Arts and Science. This is a new position as well. It was created at the recommendation of the chairs of Arts and Sciences who felt that as we were going toward the dean’s search and thinking about the needs in the school that we needed a particular position to focus on student issues within the School of Arts and Sciences in terms of student development, pre-professional work, student fellowships and academic learning, and extracurricular academic work. The chairs were very passionate about this position and I was compelled after listening to them to ask Marcia Cantarella to join us on an acting basis. She has held this type of position in schools as different as Princeton and NYU, and most recently at the Audrey Cohen School where she was the Vice-President of Student Affairs. We are extremely lucky to have someone with such extraordinary experience who is so enthusiastic about coming to Hunter.”

President Raab yielded the floor to Acting Associate Dean Marcia Cantarella who said:

I, too, am delighted to be here and to have been offered this opportunity to really engage in work I very much love. When Jennifer and I had our first conversation and she asked me what I enjoyed doing she looked a little startled when I described that I want to work with students and with faculty to help them to bring out the best in students, and often students that others didn't believe in. It seems that I described the job that the faculty had asked for. I have a great affinity for Hunter. Of my three kids, my stepson and his wife, are both alumni, and I am really thrilled to be here because it allows me to do the things that I most enjoy.”

She then yielded the floor to President Raab who said

“I just want to make clear from this discussion that we have extraordinary staff in our Office of Student Service. It was clear that this would be a complementary relationship between Student Services and an associate level position within the School of Arts and Sciences, and that they would work together on student development and student support was really an optimal solution. Marcia has already been working very closely with Eija and Eija’s staff as well as with people within Arts and Science. I think it is going to be a really wonderful relationship.

I want to thank and welcome another great citizen of our community, the Acting Dean of the School of Social Work, Paul Kurzman. Paul stepped up to the plate when our dean resigned last semester. Paul, we really thank you.

I wanted to spend a minute talking a little bit about what we have been doing to respond to the crisis of hurricane Katrina. As most of you have already seen we have had announcements on our website inviting any students in need to please come in and talk to us to see how we can help. We have also been working with CUNY and with a number of national educational organizations to reach out to students. We have been seeing students who came to talk to us. At this time we have already enrolled fourteen students. We reserved five rooms for emergency situations and five students have been given those rooms. We are going to continue to do what we can and if anyone has any particular knowledge of needy students please speak to Eija and let her know. If anyone has other ideas in going forward, we are very interested in talking to everyone about how we can respond. We are also thinking about the issue of displaced faculty. We have not had any official requests, and although we have our own logistical issues of space and hiring we want to be extremely supportive. We are open to any suggestions, and would be very happy to respond and continue to reach out and see what we can do.

I want to urge all graduate students here, and all faculty that work with graduate students, to have your students apply through our STARS scholarship system for graduate aid. As all of us know, there was a large and unexpected tuition increase of \$1,000.00 that became effective this semester. To soften the blow and help make sure that we did not lose students, we reached out at the end of May and early June, and wrote to every graduate student asking them to please come and talk to us about financial aid. The first step is to file an application online through the STARS system. We had a hundred and fifty requests which we are now beginning to respond to, and we will have support for them. Our ability to support these students is greatly enhanced by the fact that CUNY has also agreed to put forth very significant resources in support of our graduate students. There is money available and for next semester we do not expect it to be a recurring source from the CUNY system. But it is certainly there this year, and we really want the students to take advantage of it. We have asked the chairs to try to talk to you about this and I want to underscore that today. All of you working with graduate students please tell them to file an application on the STARS system and it will be processed. There are funds to support our graduate students. The tuition for full time in-state students increased five hundred dollars a semester, but the funds are also available for students who are not full time students. There will be pro rated awards. We will use the CUNY money and to the extent necessary our own scholarship money to help support students, and we need you to help us identify them. The Graduate student organization was very proactive and worked with us and just put out an e-blast to all graduate students reminding them of these resources.

To all other students who are here, if you do have a need and you have not filled out an application in the STARS system, you should do so as well. This is the major way in which we can find out what your financial needs are. There are a variety of scholarship resources in this school, and sometimes they are very limited.

President Raab concluded her report by responding to a question raised by Professor Clarkson.

*Q: I was just wondering if you could put a list of the administrators with their contact information and titles on the website in one place. Sometimes you introduce a lot of people here, but then they leave and we don't necessarily know about it. It is a little embarrassing.*

A. That is a good point, and it is something that we are going to talk about in the next few weeks. We are about the launch the new website. So, to the extent that has not already been done, this is the perfect time to make sure that it is done.

The President next responded to a question raised by Professor Hausman.

*Q: I hope that something can be done about access to blackboard. I have two hundred and forty students trying to get onto blackboard and they are having a very difficult time. They are trying the side door, the back door, and the trap door. One student told me today that every time she goes on blackboard, it destroys her identity, takes away her ID and her password, and she has to start all over. This is a serious problem and an 80<sup>th</sup> Street problem because...*

A. Let me ask Len to talk a little bit about it. She called on Vice President Zinnanti who added:

“We had been invited to participate in blackboard through the CUNY Portal last year, and we declined the invitation figuring that things needed to settle down. Unfortunately, they did not settle down and this is a persistent problem. Anand had issued an email earlier describing the side doors, trap doors and back doors, all the doors to get in. We are in constant communication with them. It is just an overwhelming problem for them right now.”

*Q: Is there a way we can withdraw from the CUNY portal and go back to our old blackboard system?*

A: No.

*Q: Are there any alternative sites that we might be able to use, other than blackboard?*

A: I'm not aware of anything because it would be interfaced with SIMS. We really are an integrated university.

President Raab next responded to a question raised by Professor Wallach:

*Q: Recently a lot of concern was expressed on Hunter- L concerning the presence of banks on campus. It gave the impression that we were selling them space and...*

A: We didn't sell it, and Len is prepared to explain. This is actually something that Hunter has done for years.

*Q: They have never taken over that space inside the college for the commercial exploitation of students. And if the college was involved in making money out of that or allowed them to come inside...*

A: John, you asked a question, so let us answer it. The college is not involved in making money. The concept in having banks here is to support students in terms of direct deposit and other efficiencies. If the student body feels that this is something that they don't want, we are certainly willing to discuss this with them...

*Q: Were they consulted?*

A: This has been a long term thing, and I want Len to talk about the history of it. No credit cards were pushed, and we get no revenue from it. It is done as a support for students to help them create checking accounts and direct deposits, and things that students have to know. If it is a bad idea we can certainly have a conversation about it, but it is not done to raise money and it is not done to try to exploit anyone. It is done to support students. It has been going on for years.

President Raab called on Vice President Zinnanti who added:

“Doing this at the beginning of classes and past the first day has been a collaborative effort between the Hunter Business Office and Student Services as a service to students. There was very explicit language in the invitation to each of the banks who came to not offer credit cards to students. We did have a very good turn out of banks this year, and we actually spot-checked to ensure that was not going on here, and it was not. The college made no money from it. It was something that was a service to students. Direct deposit has a lot of features for students, and financial aid and refunds can be done a lot easier. Simple banking services that students might not be aware of are introduced in this format. Again, the college made no money from this.”

President Raab added:

“It is not an unusual thing for colleges in the city and in the country to provide this service, and I have asked Eija to put on her agenda to talk to the student governments. If students find that this is something they find unappealing or somehow coercive, there is no need for us to do it. “

*Q: It has never gone on before on the third floor or inside, and I have been here for fifteen years. I just asked a question on Hunter-L about what I regard as a very offensive presence on my first day of teaching. And other people also mentioned their concern about it, and there was never any response from the administration.*

A: “Hunter-L is a discussion forum. But if you want an answer from me or Len or Eija, or anyone in their offices, you have my email. And you know that you have gotten responses from me. A discussion on Hunter-L is not necessarily a way to get an answer from the administration. You know where we are and we read our emails way too much.”

President Raab called on Vice President Ayravainen, who added:

“I just want to answer part of your question. To the best of my knowledge it has never occurred on the first day of classes, but it has occurred for a number of years inside the third floor on that walkway island either on the north side or else on the west side. I spot-checked outside as well as inside about whether they had anything to do with credit cards, because that was my concern. And I did not see any credit card solicitation. However, students often wait way too long to get their refund checks or other things that they stand on line for when they don't have direct deposit. And it is direct deposit that I am concerned about, and giving students the opportunity to know how to do that.”

*Q: Does that mean it is going to continue? Because judging from everyone's shocked reaction, I wonder if it is...*

A: "You are a student and this is a service to students. My suggestion was that we ask the student governments to consider this question. Students have signed up for direct deposit, and we can find out from the business office how many students are on direct deposit. If I were a new student and for the first time got a financial aid check, or a refund, I would be very happy to know that this was available to me. I feel it is our responsibility to have a discussion, and I think it is appropriate for the student government to lead that discussion. If people feel they were coerced and it is an unfriendly thing, we don't have to do this."

*Q: I found, as a student, that the location on the third floor is very much in the way, especially in the beginning when everybody is trying to get to their class. Then there were these raffles that had a lot of students just standing around. There were so many people just standing around that it was really hard to get to class.*

A: "That is an argument for not doing it on the first day or not doing in that place. That is a point well taken."

*Q: I am a student, and I think that it is great information for students about bank accounts and to show them what different banks are. But there were people that couldn't walk back and forth without having a bank person trying to bring them over to their table. So, if they could just tone it down a bit it would be a lot more acceptable.*

A: "That's absolutely fair."

President Raab then responded to a question raised by Professor Mills.

*Q: I want to spread the word. I know it has happened in the past when I have taught in this room that some guy showed up the first day of school and said that he was from Student Service and wanted to make an announcement to my class.*

A: About what?

*Q: I have no idea. I said I didn't know who he was, and I asked him to leave. He then got pretty aggressive with me and I asked him to exit my classroom now. I know this has happened in the past. We should be notified.*

A: President Raab called on Madlyn Stokely who said:

"These individuals are not from the Office of Student Services. They are some outside group of people that are soliciting students for a comedy show. We communicate ahead every time someone comes to a class."

President Raab called on Professor Sproul who said:

*Q: The presence of the banks was intrusive, loud, physically in the way, they had banners. They looked like we were supporting them, and they were competing with each other. They were soliciting for credit cards and they solicited me and students. I know, because I stopped at both desks and asked "by what authority are you here?" The message that we gave our new students and our returning students was that this is what we do. If it is to provide direct deposit, surely financial aid can give people a leaflet with information that they can take out and check themselves. But they have never in Hunter's history been on the third floor in the west building, and I know because I have been here for a very long time. The message was: welcome to Hunter, sign up for a bank. And it was offensive to students and especially to teachers. There is so much more that we want to say to our students on the first day than sign up for Washington Mutual."*

A: "We know we should not be doing it on the first day."

President Raab next responded to a question raised by Professor Clarkson.

*Q: The administrative offices are looking pretty spiffy but there are some places in the buildings, like the 9<sup>th</sup> floor in the east building where the carpet really looks terrible. There are bathrooms in the east building and on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor of the west building where one of the stalls has no door. I just want to know what the plan is for taking care of fixing this. Because one of the messages that we do give students who come to places looking like they are falling apart is that we don't care about them.*



A: "I couldn't agree with you more. I have spent a great part of my first year here discussing toilet paper here because I think people felt they wanted me to make the point that these are important things. I feel that we have been very proactive on public spaces to try to make them safer, healthier, and more attractive. It is always useful for us to hear about specific places that we are not hearing about which are these common spaces. In terms of academic space, we have asked every chair, every year, in their annual report to put forward specific needs of their department/school. This year we went even further and Len designed a form which he asked people to fill in, to let us know what the problem is and what needs to be done to be corrected. In terms of common spaces Len can talk a little bit about how we have been working on the bathrooms, but at the end of the day it is very useful to let us know if there is a particular problem that has not been address. It is our goal to really try to address whatever we can as best as we can."

President Raab called on Vice President Zinnanti who added:

"Obviously, we cannot be everywhere all the time. Tamara Green identified a restroom yesterday, and we are repairing it. As always Sandi, please feel free to let me know what is broken and what needs to be fixed. We are trying to systematically take care of the maintenance issues here."

*Q: Linda Carlson is leaving today. She was in Student Services and she has been very helpful to a lot of us. I think we should tell her goodbye and wish her well.*

A: "We are very sad. Is she here? I am so sorry we missed her. This has been devastating. We have all come to rely on Linda, but she got an offer that she could not refuse for many reasons. It is terribly unfortunate, and I am sorry that we missed the opportunity. I wish we had thought of it a few minutes ago. She has been very special. Thank you."