

## Cornell University Student Assembly

### Cornell University Student Assembly

Agenda of the Thursday, November 12, 2020 Meeting  
4:45 – 6:30 on ZOOM

#### **I. Call to Order**

#### **II. Land Acknowledgement of the Gayogohó:nq̓ (Cayuga Nation)**

#### **III. Announcements and Presentations**

- a. Anuli Ononye – Update from the Student Advocate

#### **IV. Open Microphone**

#### **V. New Business**

- a. Resolution #10: [Calling on the President's Office to Respond to 2020 SA Resolution #30: Urging Cornell University to Contribute Financial Support for the Summer 2020 Student Contribution Pilot Program](#)  
[4:55 – 5:20]
- b. Resolution #11: [Calling For the Disarmament of the Cornell University Police Department](#)  
[5:25 – 5:50]
- c. Resolution #12: [Temporary Amendment of Appendix B of the Student Assembly Charter](#)
- d. Resolution #13: [Approving the 2020-2021 Student Assembly Budget](#)

#### **VI. Adjournment**



# Cornell University Student Assembly

Originally Presented on:	11/12/2020
Type of Action:	Legislation
Status/Result:	New Business

## S.A. Resolution #10

Calling on the President's Office to Respond to 2020 SA Resolution #30: Urging Cornell University to Contribute Financial Support for the Summer 2020 Student Contribution Pilot Program

ABSTRACT: This resolution asks for the Student Assembly to support the People's Organizing Collective's (POC-USAS3) call for the President's Office to respond to SA Resolution #30: Urging Cornell University to Contribute Financial Support for the Summer 2020 Student Contribution Pilot Program, which was passed in the Spring 2020 semester.

**Sponsored by: Cat Huang '21, Yana Kalmyka '20, Kataryna Restrepo '21**

**Whereas,** the People's Organizing Collective-USAS Local #3 had brought a resolution to the 2019-2020 Student Assembly that urged Cornell University to contribute financial support to create a pilot program that would assist in waiving the student contribution fee for low-income students for Summer 2020;

**Whereas,** this resolution had been a result of a year-long campaign and multiple conversations and collaborations with the office of Financial Aid;

**Whereas,** SA Resolution #30 passed the 2019-2020 Student Assembly unanimously with a vote of 19-0-0 on February 20th, 2020;

**Whereas,** per Article III, Section III, lines 57-58 of the Student Assembly Charter, the University President is required to respond to all resolutions and legislation within 30 days;

**Whereas,** the President's Office has not yet provided a response to SA Resolution #30;

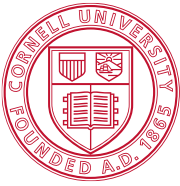
**Whereas,** the People's Organizing Collective understands that the COVID-19 crisis interrupted normal university proceedings mid-March but also recognizes that the pandemic has exacerbated existing income inequality across the country and it is more important than ever to address unequal student access to opportunities;

**Be it further resolved,** the People's Organizing Collective has penned the letter as included in *Resolution #10 Appendix A* and conveyed it to the the President's Office;

**Be it further resolved,** the Student Assembly recognizes and thanks the People's Organizing Collective for their hard work in organizing for this pilot program

**Be it therefore resolved,** the Student Assembly will endorse the letter written by the People's Organizing Collective as included in *Resolution #10 Appendix A* and support their call for the President's Office to respond to Resolution #30 from Spring 2020;

**Respectfully Submitted,**  
Cat Huang '21



## Cornell University Student Assembly

*President, Student Assembly*

Kataryna Restrepo '21  
*The People's Organizing Collective-USAS Local #3*

Yana Kalmyka '20  
*The People's Organizing Collective-USAS Local #3*

Uche Chukwukere '21  
*Vice President for Finance, Student Assembly*

Lucy Contreras '21  
*First-Generation Student Representative, Student Assembly*

Noah Watson '23  
*Executive Vice President, Student Assembly*

Laila Abd Elmagid '21  
*Vice President of Internal Operations, Student Assembly*

Maria Silaban '21  
*Executive Archivist, Student Assembly*

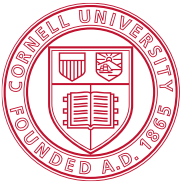
*(Reviewed by: Executive Committee, 5-0-2, 11/11/2020)*

### *Resolution #10 Appendix A:*

Dear President Pollack,

We, the People's Organizing Collective-USAS Local #3, are writing to you on behalf of Cornell University's working class students to follow up on a Student Assembly resolution to create a summer 2020 pilot program waiving the Student Contribution for low-income students pursuing unpaid opportunities over the summer, which was passed [unanimously](#) with a vote of 19-0-0 on February 20, 2020. Per Article III, Section III of the Student Assembly Charter, your Office was meant to respond to this Resolution within 30 days. We understand that this is a trying and difficult time for everyone and that the unforeseen COVID-19 crisis likely bumped this off your radar, but we think that the ways in which this pandemic has exacerbated existing income inequality across the country have made this an even more pressing time than ever to address unequal student access to opportunities.

Ever since Cornell University's inception, our institution has strived to hold itself to the motto of "Any person, any study." With respect to the plight of Cornell's low-income students, our university and its administration have faltered in their commitments to this motto. The existence of the Student Contribution is an example of how low-income students are marginalized as a result of



## Cornell University Student Assembly

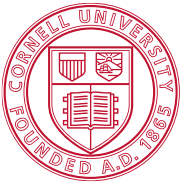
University financial aid policies. In comparison to their higher-income counterparts, low-income/low-SES students have few resources in financially supporting their education. They often rely on taking out loans and plummeting themselves into student debt, which staggers their economic advancement. In 2012, Cornell and private loans had risen [516% and 78% respectively](#), which shows that even prior to the virus, there was a financial burden as a result of existing Cornell financial aid policy.

Now, in the era of COVID-19, the pandemic and subsequent economic upheaval have exacerbated these existing issues. Many Cornell families are facing furlough or unemployment and are struggling to pay semesterly tuition. Furthermore, finding temporary employment as a student is difficult at best and unsafe at worst due to the public health crisis, especially for immuno-compromised students and low-income students who may struggle to pay for necessary healthcare.

At the same time, student access to work opportunities is more important than ever, especially for working-class students whose families may need extra support as a result of COVID-related job loss or inability to work due to health concerns. Many students already struggle to meet their Student Contribution each semester because of the unrealistic summer savings expectation which cannot be met by students who are using money earned over the summer to support themselves and/or their families. The added stress of the global health and economic crisis has only made the Student Contribution more burdensome to low-income and working-class students. Moreover, low-income students seeking careers in the government, the nonprofit sector, the arts, and others which may frequently offer unpaid summer internships are already at a disadvantage relative to higher income peers looking to pursue these same careers since many low income students cannot afford to take unpaid work opportunities, and this issue, like all other economic divides, has been heightened by the pandemic. While we know that COVID-19 has placed financial strain on Cornell University operations, it has also placed great financial strain on Cornell's working-class students, and the institution needs to take greater action with the pilot program that we at POC-USAS Local #3 called for last semester.

Over the past several years, we have worked to organize working-class students around our Student Contribution campaign. According to University leaders, the Student Contribution exists because Cornell believes that students must have "a stake" in their education. However, the Student Contribution poses cumbersome expectations on low-income students, many of whom work multiple jobs or forego unpaid internships that would advance their desired careers to afford their Contribution. Meanwhile, higher-income peers do not actually experience the Contribution as a "stake" in their education as, for many, their families are able to pay this sum. This has become clear through our many [conversations with students](#), as year after year our higher-income peers do not even recognize what the Student Contribution is when asked on campus, but our working-class peers almost always have a story to share about the undue burden caused by this class tax.

We have held various sessions in collaboration with the First Generation Student Union in which we have brought together students to share grievances about the unfairness of the Student Contribution and we have also led initiatives to aggregate student opinion regarding the negative effects of the Student Contribution. Furthermore, we have also had a series of meetings with Vice Provost



## Cornell University Student Assembly

Jonathan Brudick and Executive Director of Financial Aid Diane Corbett and we have earned their support in implementing a pilot program that would have removed the burden of the Student Contribution for low-income students taking unpaid internships during the Summer of 2020. As mentioned above, we also gained the approval of the full Student Assembly for this pilot program in the form of an SA resolution. However, due to COVID-19, this program was put on hold and we never received a response from your Office.

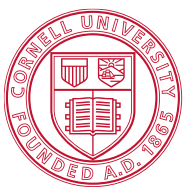
In light of the aforementioned financial hardships imposed by the ongoing pandemic, POC-USAS3 demands that the University institute the pilot program this summer in order to provide much-needed relief for low-income students. We understand the financial burden placed on the University by expanding financial aid in a time of economic calamity. That said, such a decision would not be without precedent. In the wake of the 2008 financial crisis, the University eliminated need-based loans for families making less than \$75,000. At the time, President Skorton noted that such a program marked a “proud day for Cornell.” Indeed, the University should pride itself not on siphoning funds from its most vulnerable students, but rather on promoting access irrespective of any student’s ability to pay.

With regard to the burden of the Student Contribution, the present situation may be even more dire than 2008. Millions of parents and guardians remain unemployed, and widespread hiring freezes have obfuscated any possibility of meaningful, remunerative summer work experience. This is precisely the kind of work experience the Student Contribution is, at least ostensibly, designed to encourage. The late Peter Meinig remarked in 2008 that Cornell’s founding mission remains “to provide a superb liberal education across the full range of disciplines to the best and brightest students from all walks of life, *regardless of resources*.” In 2008, faced with dire economic circumstances, the University demonstrated magnanimity. We believe that an even bleaker economic outlook, with its concomitant effects on students’ financial well-being, requires a more sympathetic approach on the part of the administration. So we urge you: be the Cornell we know you aspire to be

Our pilot program would provide great financial relief for students in need. Furthermore, this pilot would help retain students because of the temporary assistance that this program would provide to low-income students. Vice Provost Burdick has remarked multiple times in our meetings with him that the summer internship is becoming increasingly crucial to a Cornell student’s education and indeed should be seen as a vital aspect of a robust Cornell experience. Many students have already been denied parts of their educational experience that they will never get back because they were unable to return to campus this semester, and the ability to return seems to have been largely split along lines of privilege and wealth. We ask that you help us ensure low-income students are not robbed of another important opportunity in their Cornell careers when the summer of 2021 comes.

We would greatly appreciate a response by November 13, 2020 at 4 pm EST as we gear up for another meeting with our program design partners, Ms. Corbett and Mr. Burdick. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
People’s Organizing Collective, USAS Local #3



Originally Presented on:	11/12/2020
Type of Action:	Recommendation
Status/Result:	New Business

S.A. Resolution #11

Calling For the Disarmament of the Cornell University Police Department

**Sponsors:** Uche Chukwukere '21, Shaun Roberts '23, Tyler Brown '22, Angeliki Cintron '22, Valeria Valencia '23, Kat Restrepo '21, Cat Huang '21, Selam Woldai '23, Lucy Contreras '21, Sherell Farmer '22, Estefania Perez '21, Moriah Adeghe '21, Tomás Reuning '21, Meshach Boyce '21

**ABSTRACT:** This resolution is calling for the disarmament of the Cornell University Police department.

**Whereas,** The policing system in America is rooted in racism, slavery, corruption, and violence, particularly against Black and Brown people, which has been commonplace since the institution's inception;

**Whereas,** American law enforcement as we know began as slave patrols and union busters where squadrons of white volunteers that enforced laws related to slavery by capturing and returning enslaved people who had escaped, crushing uprisings, and punishing enslaved workers believed to have violated plantation rules;

**Whereas,** Police have upheld and enforced racist laws since slavery, the black codes, and the Jim Crow laws;

**Whereas,** *Ugly Laws* were enacted as early forms of policing that primarily targeted low income and people with disabilities;

**Whereas,** Ugly Laws essentially "prohibited people with noticeable physical disabilities from visiting public spaces;"

**Whereas,** Ugly laws disproportionately targeted folks at the intersection of race, income, and disability status;

**Whereas,** After the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment, slavery took on the form of prison labor camps, several of which were located on the grounds of former plantations;

**Whereas,** The prisoners in these camps were not safeguarded by the Fourteenth Amendment thus denying any type of protection from the harsh, unpaid labor that characterized these prisons;

**Whereas,** Policing was henceforth racially motivated, preying on almost exclusively young Black men, causing these prisons to be filled based on the racist predispositions that remained during the Reconstruction era;





## Cornell University Student Assembly

**Whereas,** This exploited workforce soon after were subjected to “convict leasing” which allowed for plantation owners to buy back previously enslaved peoples for a small fee that went to the state;

**Whereas,** To this day, the exploitation of prison labor is continually perpetuated, predominantly targeting Black neighborhoods to sustain these racist systems which disproportionately police and incriminate Black individuals;

**Whereas,** Police in the Jim Crow Era were integral in the mandatance of separate public spaces for blacks and whites, such as schools, libraries, water fountains and restaurants. Police routinely subjected Black Americans in violation of such laws, or who dared to deviate from social norms, to intense beatings and other forms of police brutality;

**Whereas,** Police actively subjected peaceful protesters during the Civil Rights era to violence through acts involving use of police dogs, fire hydrants, batons and other means of physical violence, with the goal of suppressing protest and maintaining the existing racial status quo;

**Whereas,** Policing on college campuses started as a way to break up student movements before they grew large enough to effectively pressure the administration to win change;

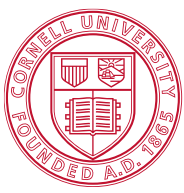
**Whereas,** Recent incidents suggest that policing in higher education continues to utilize the violent tactics used to suppress the Vietnam War and civil-rights activists;

**Whereas,** Recent incidents include campus police pepper-spraying a row of passive, seated students, unlawfully detaining students, murdering innocent unarmed people (including one during a period of distress due to mental illness);

**Whereas,** The need for weapons has increasingly come into question as a result of the violent crime rate on college campuses decreasing 27 percent from 2004-2010. Despite such a decrease, more sworn officers with firearms (94 percent), chemical or pepper spray (94 percent), taser-like devices (40 percent), and in some cases military-grade equipment, have been simultaneously added to college campuses;

**Whereas,** The most common crimes at peer institutions, such as Harvard University, appear to be mostly (95%) property related as opposed to those crimes requiring campus police to be heavily armed. Further, at schools like SUNY Cortland, school administrators condemn an armed police force for creating an unnecessary aura of power and domination on campus, as opposed to a role of helpers, protectors and problem solvers;

**Whereas,** Unarmed police officers are similarly effective as armed police officers in deterring crime through patrol ([American Society of Criminology’s Director of the Division of Experimental Criminology](#));



## Cornell University Student Assembly

78 **Whereas,** Unarmed uniformed private security guards have a crime deterrent effect through patrol  
79 ([ASA DEC](#));

80  
81 **Whereas,** An alternative solution to policing can take the form of [targeted community investments](#),  
82 such as investing into more CAPS staff and making mental health services more accessible to the  
83 campus community;

84  
85 **Whereas,** The police [should not respond to calls concerning mental health crises](#) or medical  
86 emergencies, which should fall under the jurisdiction of EMTs and social workers, who are more  
87 equipped and trained to handle these situations;

88  
89 **Whereas,** Decriminalization helps reduce crime. CUPD should not respond to situations  
90 concerning alcohol and drug abuse, including patrolling parties or being called to dorms when RAs  
91 smell marijuana. Rather, alcohol and drug use should be decriminalized so that medical professionals  
92 will instead respond appropriately when students require support related to substance abuse;

93  
94 **Whereas,** Such alternatives target and prevent the roots of crime rather than what police forces do,  
95 which is merely reacting to and reproducing crime;

96  
97 **Whereas,** [Portland State University](#) disarmed their campus police this fall. Their officers will now  
98 conduct patrols without firearms, but are still permitted “non-lethal” tasers. The university has a  
99 “Reimagine Campus Safety Steering Committee” dedicated to providing recommendations on  
100 campus safety without armed officers. This policy change was in response to the fatal shooting of  
101 Jason Washington on the PSU campus. Cornell should not wait for a tragedy to disarm CUPD;

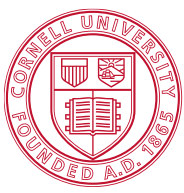
102  
103 **Whereas,** [The Massachusetts College of Art and Design](#) has an unarmed police force, and the  
104 Board of Trustees voted to keep their campus police unarmed in 2019. The MassArt campus police  
105 tried to regain their firearms, but a petition of over 550 students and community members urged the  
106 Board of Trustees to keep campus police officers unarmed;

107  
108 **Whereas,** Students at the [University of Chicago](#) founded the #CareNotCops campaign in 2018  
109 with the intention of disarming, defunding, and disbanding the UCPD. The campaign started after  
110 the UCPD shot a student on campus who was experiencing a mental health episode; once again,  
111 Cornell should not wait for a tragedy to occur to make change. When the University of Chicago  
112 refused to engage with students, activists occupied UCPD headquarters for 20 hours. Students are  
113 still actively petitioning the University of Chicago to disarm, defund, and disband the UCPD;

114  
115 **Whereas,** Students at [Harvard University](#) are also calling to disband their university police force.  
116 Their demands were reinvigorated over the summer when [HUPD officers](#) were spotted in Boston  
117 monitoring a demonstration after George Floyd’s death. This resulted in the University releasing an  
118 [official statement](#) announcing an independent review of HUPD;

119  
120 **Whereas,** The [Black Students for Disarmament at Yale](#) organization sent an [open letter](#) to the Yale  
121 administration asking for the disarmament and dismantling of the Yale Police department.  
122





## Cornell University Student Assembly

**Whereas,** This letter came after a Yale police officer fired 16 shots into the car of Stephanie Washington and Paul Witherspoon- two unarmed, Black youth- in 2019. Cornell should not wait for gun violence to occur to disarm the CUPD;

**Whereas,** Prior to 2005, the SUNY Cortland campus, as well as two other SUNY campuses, did not permit their University Police to carry lethal weapons;

**Be it therefore resolved,** Supporting data and trends overwhelmingly show that police on college campuses should not have access to lethal weapons as it is unnecessary and proves to increase the likelihood of danger/use of lethal force rather than decrease;

**Be it finally resolved,** Cornell University must take action by immediately disarming the Cornell University Police department of all lethal weapons.

**Respectfully submitted,**

Uche Chukwukere '21  
*Vice President for Finance, Student Assembly*

Lucy Contreras '21  
*First Generation Students Liaison At-Large, Student Assembly*

Selam Woldai '23  
*Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion, Student Assembly*

Kat Restrepo '21  
*Director of Finance, Office of the Student Advocate*

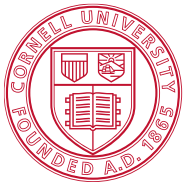
Amber Haywood '21  
*Co-Founder, DoBetterCornell*

Estefania Perez '21  
*Arts and Sciences Representative, Student Assembly*

Tomas Reuning '21  
*LGBTQIA+ Representative At-Large, Student Assembly*

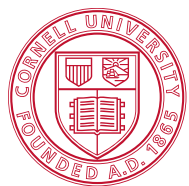
Meshach Boyce '21  
*MGFC Ex-Officio Representative, Student Assembly*

Sherell Farmer '22  
*Co-Founder, CornellStudents4BlackLives (C4BL)*



## Cornell University Student Assembly

- 166 Valeria Valencia '23  
167 *Minority Students Liaison At-Large, Student Assembly*  
168  
169 Tyler Brown '22  
170 *Co-Founder, Cornell Abolitionist Revolutionary Society*  
171  
172 Angeliki Cintron '22  
173 *Co-Founder, Cornell Abolitionist Revolutionary Society*  
174  
175 Shaun Roberts '23  
176 *Cornell Abolitionist Revolutionary Society*  
177  
178 Cat Huang '21  
179 *President, Student Assembly*  
180  
181 Moriah Adeghe '21  
182 *Co-Director of Elections, Student Assembly*  
183  
184 *(Reviewed by: Executive Committee, 4-1-2, 11/11/2020)*



Originally Presented on:	11/12/2020
Type of Action:	Recommendation
Status/Result:	New Business

S.A. Resolution #12

Temporary Amendment of Appendix B of the Student Assembly Charter

**ABSTRACT:** This resolution seeks to temporarily suspend Appendix B of the Student Assembly Charter that in-part outlines the off-year reporting duties of the Appropriations Committee for the 2020-2021 academic year.

**Sponsor(s):** Uche Chukwukere '21

**Whereas,** Appendix B of the Student Assembly Charter contains “Student Assembly Guidelines for Funded Organizations”

**Whereas,** the Student Assembly is tasked with reviewing Appendix B every year even during a non-fee setting year

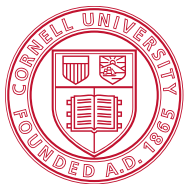
**Whereas,** due to the uniqueness of this academic year because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the undue stress, disruption, and pressure it has placed on the Cornell community and by extension, the byline funded organizations and their regular operations.

**Whereas,** Appendix B, Section 3, part H (623-629) states that, “ **Off-Year Reporting:** During the fall of even-numbered calendar years each organization shall provide the Appropriations Committee with a written account of the use of its fee allocation and operations for the previous academic year, and an oral summary of its activities, including usage statistics and future programming plans. The SA Vice President for Finance will conduct an unofficial vote regarding the committee’s recommendation on whether or not the organization should receive an increase in funding, a decrease in funding or maintenance of funding at its current level. The SA Vice President for Finance shall then provide a written summary report of these meetings to the SA.”

**Whereas,** in order to decrease stress and pressure on byline funded organizations during this time, the requirement of an oral summary of their activities shall be made optional.

**Be it therefore resolved,** that the Student Assembly approves the following amendments to Appendix B, Section 3, part H (623-629) of the Student Assembly Charter for the 2020-2021 academic year

**Off-Year Reporting:** During the fall of even-numbered calendar years each organization shall provide the Appropriations Committee with a written account of the use of its fee allocation and operations for the previous academic year, ~~and an oral summary of its activities~~ **and an optional oral summary of its activities (unless mandated otherwise by the Appropriations Committee),** including usage statistics and future programming plans. The SA Vice President for Finance will conduct an unofficial vote regarding the committee’s recommendation on whether or not the organization should receive an increase in funding, a decrease in funding or maintenance of funding at its current level. The SA Vice President for Finance shall then provide a written summary report of these meetings to the SA.”



# Cornell University

## Student Assembly

45

46 **Respectfully submitted,**

47

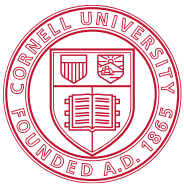
48 Uche Chukwukere '21

49 *Vice President for Finance, Student Assembly*

50

51 *(Reviewed by: Executive Committee, 5-0-2, 11/11/2020)*

52



Cornell University  
Student Assembly

Originally Presented on:	11/12/2020
Type of Action:	Recommendation
Status/Result:	New Business

S.A. Resolution #13

Approving the 2020-2021 Student Assembly Budget

**ABSTRACT:** This resolution approves the Student Assembly Operating Budget for the 2020-2021 Academic Year

**Sponsor(s):** Uche Chukwukere '21

**Whereas,** the Student Assembly Vice President for Finance must propose an operating budget for the Student Assembly each academic year

**Whereas,** According to the Student Assembly Standing Rules, Section 8, Sub-Section A, Rule 2, “The Student Assembly budget must be reviewed and approved by the SA by the conclusion of the second meeting of the academic year.”

**Be it therefore resolved,** that the Student Assembly approves and adopts the attached Operating Budget and reserve allocations for the 2020-2021 Academic Year as outlined in Appendix A

**Respectfully submitted,**

Uche Chukwukere '21  
*Vice President for Finance, Student Assembly*

*(Reviewed by: Executive Committee, 5-0-2, 11/11/2020)*



## 2020-2021 Operating Budget

FY21	Expense Category	2020-2021 Budget
10000	Administrative	\$3,216.60
10001	Executive	\$1,000.00
10002	Communications	\$1,000.00
10003	Internal Operations	\$1,000.00
10003	Initiatives	\$2,000.00
10004	Appropriations	\$2,500.00
10006	Elections	\$2,513.45
20003	Dining	\$250.00
20005	Diversity	\$2,500.00
20012	Infrastructure Fund Commission	\$250.00
20013	Environmental	\$250.00
20014	Academic	\$250.00
20022	Student Health Advisory	\$500.00
20023	Research and Accountability	\$250.00
20015	Health and Wellness	\$250.00
20016	City and Local Affairs	\$1,023.89
20017	Office of the Student Advocate	\$1,000.00
20018	Office of Student Government Relations	\$1,000.00
30001	Special Projects	12,000
30005	Summer Experience Grant (Activity Fee Allocation)	\$12,000.00
	Total Budget w/o Special Projects Funding, SEG, 20-	20,753.94
	Total Budget w/SP but without SEG, 20-21	32,753.94
	<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>44,753.94</b>
	RESERVE	\$0