

From: Mark Griffin <MGriffin@NYCCFB.INFO>
Sent: Monday, September 22, 2025 8:18 AM
To: elena@judgewatch.org
Cc: Timothy Hunter; Rhonda Gaskins

Subject: NYC CFB Freedom of Information Law Request

Attachments: [Sassower9.22.25.pdf](#)

Dear Elena Sassower,

Attached is a letter regarding your New York Freedom of Information Law ("FOIL") request, received by this office on September 15, 2025.

Mark Griffin
Senior Associate Counsel
New York City Campaign Finance Board
100 Church Street, 12th Floor
New York, NY 10007
Cell: (347) 404-8630

www.nyccfb.info | [@NYCCFB](#) | [Campaign Finance Handbook](#)

From: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) <elena@judgewatch.org>
Sent: Monday, September 15, 2025 4:39 PM
To: Paul Ryan <PRyan@NYCCFB.INFO>; Amanda Melillo <AMelillo@NYCCFB.INFO>; Amy Lebowitz <ALebowitz@NYCCFB.INFO>
Cc: Joseph Gallagher <JGallagher@NYCCFB.INFO>; Foil <Foil@nyccfb.info>

Subject: AGAIN & NOW ALSO PURSUANT TO FOIL: Request for Contact Info for the Executives of your Debate Broadcast Sponsors -- if not, additionally, their Media & Institutional Partners

TO: **NEW YORK CITY CAMPAIGN FINANCE BOARD**
Executive Director Paul Ryan, Esq.
First Deputy Executive Director Amanda Melillo
Director of Public Relations Amy Lebowitz

I have received no response to my below September 8th e-mail entitled "Request for Contact Info for the Executives of your Debate Broadcast Sponsors -- if not, additionally, their Media & Institutional Partners".

TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE, obviously. What is your response?

By copy of this e-mail to General Counsel Joseph Gallagher, who, presumably, also oversees FOIL requests, I am alerting him to the situation – and also now initiating a FOIL request for records containing the contact information sought by my September 8th e-mail.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)
www.judgewatch.org
914-421-1200
elena@judgewatch.org

From: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) <elena@judgewatch.org>
Sent: Monday, September 8, 2025 12:19 PM
To: 'pryan@nyccfb.info' <pryan@nyccfb.info>; 'amelillo@nyccfb.info' <amelillo@nyccfb.info>;
'alebowitz@nyccfb.info' <alebowitz@nyccfb.info>

Subject: Request for Contact Info for the Executives of your Debate Broadcast Sponsors -- if not, additionally, their Media & Institutional Partners

TO: NEW YORK CITY CAMPAIGN FINANCE BOARD
Executive Director Paul Ryan, Esq.
First Deputy Executive Director Amanda Melillo
Director of Public Relations Amy Lebowitz

Following up my below September 5th e-mails to you, kindly furnish me with the e-mail addresses and phone numbers for **“Sam Singal, GVP of News and Content at Spectrum News”**, **“Amy Morris, Senior Vice President of News for NBC 4 New York and Telemundo 47”**, and **“Chris McDonnell, Vice President & General Manager, Nexstar’s New York City Operation”**– these being the executives of your three debate broadcast sponsors whose comments about themselves and the debates are featured in your [August 26th announcement](#).

In my phone conversation with Ms. Lebowitz last Thursday, I understood her to say that it is the broadcast sponsors which select their respective “slate[s] of media outlets and New York City institutions” – and that the NYC Campaign Finance Board does not have specific contact information as to these “partners”. Is that correct? These “media outlets and institutions” are:

- WNYC/Gothamist, THE CITY, New York Law School’s Center for New York City and State Law, The Museum of the City of New York, Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism at CUNY, and John Jay College of Criminal Justice, partnered with Spectrum News’ NY1;
- Telemundo 47 New York (WNJU) and POLITICO, partnered with NBC;
- El Diario NYC, Schneps Media, and Audacy NY (1010 WINS, 94.7 WXBK, WINS Noticias), partnered with Nexstar’s PIX11.

Who are the contact persons for these – and what are their e-mail addresses and phone numbers?

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)
www.judgewatch.org
914-421-1200
elena@judgewatch.org

From: Elena Sassower

Sent: Friday, September 5, 2025 4:13 PM

To: pryan@nyccfb.info; amelillo@nyccfb.info; alebowitz@nyccfb.info

Cc: jere.hester@journalism.cuny.edu; graciela.mochkofsky@journalism.cuny.edu; greg.david@journalism.cuny.edu; errol.louis@journalism.cuny.edu; errol.louis@charter.com; gdavid@thecity.nyc

Subject: The partnering of the Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism at CUNY with NY-1 for three election debates in October, announced by the NYC Campaign Finance Board

TO: **NEW YORK CITY CAMPAIGN FINANCE BOARD**

Executive Director Paul Ryan, Esq.

First Deputy Executive Director Amanda Melillo

Director of Public Relations Amy Lebowitz

Upon sending my below e-mail to CUNY's Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism, cc'ing you, I received an immediate e-mail stating:

"Server "172.253.63.26:25" returned an error:

* graciela.mochkofsky@journalism.cuny.edu
greg.david@journalism.cuny.edu jere.hester@journalism.cuny.edu
errol.louis@journalism.cuny.edu]: 550 5.7.1 The user or domain that you are sending
to (or from) has a policy that

5.7.1 prohibited the mail that you sent. Please contact your domain
5.7.1 administrator for further details. For more information, go to
5.7.1 <https://support.google.com/a/answer/172179> 6a1803df08f44-
72229da46f3si34297886d6.540 - smtp

* sarah.bartlett@journalism.cuny.edu]: 550 5.2.1 The email account that you
tried to reach is inactive."

The rejection reflects the block that was placed on my professional e-mail address, after I filed the [November 3, 2022 conflict-of-interest/ethics complaint to Dean Mochkofsky against Mr. Louis](#) – the same complaint as is referred-to and linked by my below e-mail. A week after filing it, without acknowledgment or response, I sent a [November 10, 2022 e-mail](#). The response to this was a block on my e-mail address – which I only discovered the following week, in sending a [November 17, 2023 e-mail](#), which immediately bounced back reflecting the block.

You can examine the depraved odyssey of my important November 3, 2022 complaint, as it is posted on [webpages I created to document the otherwise unbelievable conduct of CUNY's Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism](#). Its culmination was [my June 2, 2023 e-mail to CUNY's General Counsel and Senior Vice Chancellor for Legal Affairs Derek Davis](#) entitled "OVERSIGHT REQUIRED OF J-SCHOOL -- Nov. 3, 2022 conflict-of interest/ethics complaint, FOIL requests -- & the 2023 elections for NYC Council & for Bronx, Queens, & Staten Island D.A.", reciting what had taken place over the previous seven months. The response was a [June 15, 2023 letter](#), in which Mr. Davis falsely purporting that what was before him was nothing more than a FOIL appeal, which he as denying.

The following week, I sent and then re-sent, due to the block, my [June 23, 2023 e-mail](#) to Mr. Hester, *et al.* – and it was my last e-mail to the J-School until my below e-mail today. To enable its receipt by the J-School recipients, herein cc'd, I am sending this e-mail from an alternate e-mail address.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)
www.judgewatch.org
914-421-1200
elena@judgewatch.org

From: Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA) <elena@judgewatch.org>
Sent: Friday, September 5, 2025 2:08 PM
To: 'jere.hester@journalism.cuny.edu' <jere.hester@journalism.cuny.edu>;
'graciela.mochkofsky@journalism.cuny.edu' <graciela.mochkofsky@journalism.cuny.edu>;
'greg.david@journalism.cuny.edu' <greg.david@journalism.cuny.edu>;
'errol.louis@journalism.cuny.edu' <errol.louis@journalism.cuny.edu>; 'errol.louis@charter.com' <errol.louis@charter.com>;
'gdavid@thecity.nyc' <gdavid@thecity.nyc>;
'sarah.bartlett@journalism.cuny.edu' <sarah.bartlett@journalism.cuny.edu>
Cc: 'pryan@nyccfb.info' <pryan@nyccfb.info>; 'amelillo@nyccfb.info' <amelillo@nyccfb.info>;
'alebowitz@nyccfb.info' <alebowitz@nyccfb.info>

Subject: The partnering of the Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism at CUNY with NY-1 for three election debates in October, announced by the NYC Campaign Finance Board

TO: **[CRAIG NEWMARK GRADUATE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AT CUNY](#)**
[Jere Hester](#), Director of Editorial Partnerships & Local Accountability Reporting
& [overseer, with Dean Graciela Mochkofsky, of the NYCity News Service](#)

It appears that you and [Dean Mochkofsky](#) are overseeing [the J-School's NYCity News Service](#), whose website is even more shocking than it was when I brought it to your attention, more than two years ago, by a [June 23, 2023 e-mail](#) addressed to you and to then NYCity News Service Director John Mancini, without response. [The website](#) now has no "election" tab. Clicking on the "Politics" tab, there are no

dropdowns – only the posting of journalism, in reverse chronological order, December 13, 2023 being the most recent. For all of 2023, there are only 14 posted “Politics” entries – the third of which was on July 5, 2023 – with no fourth until October 9, 2023, “[Signs of Support for Palestinians](#)”, and then a fifth, on October 14, 2023, “[Anti-Arab Rhetoric on the Rise](#)”. Three more of the same persuasion follow: on October 26, 2023 “[Pro-Palestinian Protest Fills Bay Ridge Streets](#)”, on November 16, 2023 “[Looking Back at Week of Protests for Gaza](#)”, and December 8, 2023 “[Common Ground at Gaza Protests](#)”. None of this is investigative journalism, ascertaining true facts, as opposed to amplifying anti-Israel falsehoods and propaganda – and there are no balancing entries focused on pro-Israel rallies, such as I myself attended on [November 6, 2023 in Central Park](#), or pro-Israel perspectives.

As for the November 2023 NYC electoral races, which exigently required investigative reporting by the NYC News Service – the very purpose of my June 23, 2023 e-mail – there is NOTHING posted in “Politics”. Using the website’s “search” feature and typing in “2023 NYC elections”, “2024 NYC elections”, and “2025 NYC elections” produces the most negligible of results and even less of quality.

Serendipitously, I found a November 13, 2024 video “[New Yorkers Start to Shift Focus to the Mayoral Election](#)”. It did not turn up when I typed in a search for the “[2025 NYC mayoral election](#)”, which produced only two articles, the first on May 7, 2025 and the second on May 29, 2025 – with the May 7th article being “[‘A City We Can Afford’: Zohran Mamdani Hosts First Mayoral Rally](#)”. Doing a search of the name “[Mamdani](#)” produced those two articles, plus a third, from March 26, 2025. “Searches” turned up no articles for the 2025 elections for NYC public advocate, for NYC comptroller, for Manhattan borough president, for Manhattan district attorney, and for Brooklyn district attorney.

In view of this incomprehensible dearth of political and electoral journalism by J-School students for the NYC News Service, it is equally incomprehensible that the [New York City Campaign Finance Board announced on August 26, 2025](#) that the “Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism at CUNY” is partnered with NY-1 to assist it for the October 9th debate for NYC public advocate, the October 14th debate for NYC comptroller, and the October 22nd debate for NYC mayor.

Please advise who are the J-School’s faculty and students involved in this assistance to NY-1. Presumably, [J-School adjunct Errol Louis](#) is among such faculty, as he is NY-1’s political anchor and host of “Inside City Hall”, teaching [the J-School’s course on “Covering City Government and Politics” that is mandated for the “Local Accountability Reporting concentration”](#), of which you are director. Presumably, too, [Greg David, as the J-School’s director of Business and Economics Reporting](#), would also be involved.

Meantime, above-attached and here linked is my [September 4th NEWS TIP/ALERT](#) summarizing Mamdani’s corruption as a NYS assemblyman – involving the massively policy-stuffed and larcenous NYS budget, the legislative budget, and his own legislative salary – the EVIDENCE of which, when reported, will END him as a mayoral candidate, as, likewise, mayoral candidates Cuomo, Adams, and Sliwa – necessitating cancellation of the October 22nd mayoral debate. The same EVIDENCE also ENDS [NYS Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal](#), running to be Manhattan borough president, and NYC re-election-seeking incumbents [NYC Public Advocate Jumaane Williams](#), [Brooklyn D.A. Eric Gonzalez](#), and [Manhattan D.A. Alvin Bragg](#).

The starting point of the EVIDENCE, as relates to Mamdani, is my [June 9, 2020 grand jury/public corruption complaint to Queens D.A. Katz](#), which I e-mailed to him for the first time on [June 14, 2020](#) and then, again, on [September 28, 2020](#) – and which I first e-mailed to you on [September 7, 2020](#) and then, again, on [September 8, 2020](#), when you were editor-in-chief of [The City](#), cc’ing staff who then included, as now, Mr.

David, and which I first e-mailed to the NYCity News Service, *via* Mr. Mancini and [Sarah Bartlett, the J-School's then-dean](#), on [September 8, 2020](#).

Consequently – and not to mention my prior and subsequent e-mails to you over the years – you already know how DISPOSITIVE that complaint is. So, too, [Mr. Louis, a lawyer, who has had it at least since 2022 and the EVIDENCE leading up to it since August 2018](#). Based on this “head-start”, you and Messrs. David and Louis will have no problem – other than huge conflicts-of-interest – in guiding J-School students **to take the LEAD in reporting this fully-documented major, major news story, *via* the NYCity News Service**. Or do you, Mr. David, Mr. Louis, Dean Emerita Bartlett, and Dean Mochkofsky – who is fully-familiar with the situation from my [November 3, 2022 conflict-of-interest/ethics complaint against Mr. Louis](#) – dispute that the EVIDENCE furnished by [the June 9, 2020 grand jury/public corruption complaint and the 61 materially-identical grand jury/public corruption complaints to NY's 61 other D.A.s](#) is open-and-shut and *prima facie*, mandating indictments and assuring convictions? By the way, here's my identically open-and-shut, *prima facie* [July 18, 2024 grand jury/public corruption complaint to NY's 62 D.A.s](#), supplementing and reinforcing the 62 grand jury/public corruption complaints of four years earlier.

Fortunately, J-School students, who presumably you instruct as to what constitutes EVIDENTIARY PROOF, can EASILY obtain expert evaluations from TWO of the other “New York City institutions” with which NY-1 is partnered for the debates: [CUNY's John Jay College of Criminal Justice](#) and [New York Law School's Center for New York City and State Law](#). Don't you agree?

Please advise – including to the New York City Campaign Finance Board, herein cc'd, which I have already apprised of the situation.

Thank you.

Elena Sassower, Director
Center for Judicial Accountability, Inc. (CJA)
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914-421-1200
elena@judgewatch.org