



## Hooked! DA launches ACORN probe

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## Swayze loses brave battle

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# LAB RAT

## Lovesick Yale tech suspect in murder

It was a case of unrequited love. Cops investigating the murder of brilliant Yale grad student Annie Le were zeroing in last night on a lab technician obsessed with the beautiful bride-to-be after he flunked a lie-detector test and couldn't explain fresh scratches on his chest. The report came as a coroner confirmed that the body found in the lab was Le's.

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## LENO: CRITIC'S REVIEW

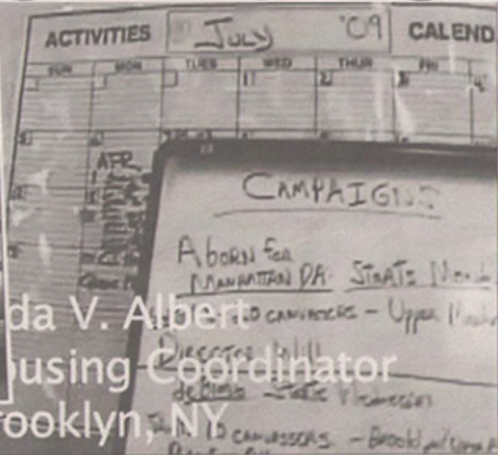
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# DA LOOKING TO ROAST ACORN



**WALL OF SHAME:** A secret video of ACORN's Brooklyn office (inset) shows a dry-erase board with forbidden political endorsements of Richard Aborn for Manhattan district attorney and Bill de Blasio for public advocate.



## 'Nonpartisan' B'klyn group caught playing poli-tricks

By JEREMY OLSHAN

On the same hidden-camera video in which loan counselors at ACORN's Brooklyn office helped a hooker skirt the law, a list of the supposedly nonpartisan group's primary-election endorsements can be seen in the background.

As a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) nonprofit, ACORN is not permitted to endorse candidates or host political events.

But on a prominently displayed dry-erase board visible in the video, ACORN backs Bill de Blasio for public advocate and Richard Aborn for Manhattan district attorney.

These are the same candidates backed by the Working Families Party,

which shares office space with ACORN.

Under each candidate's name is a list of canvassers working in the campaigns.

The community organizing group is flagrantly violating tax law, much the same way ACORN's loan counselors advised a prostitute to lie and cheat the system, said Kyle Olson, editor of the blog ACORNcracked.com.

"Local authorities should look into whether the local ACORN office — which, by the way, also houses the national ACORN CEO and chief organizer Bertha Lewis — is engaging in political activity with tax dollars," said Olson.

"The videos released over the last several days appear to display a pat-

tern of extremely questionable activities and dubious advice from morally-depraved ACORN employees in several cities. If this evidence doesn't warrant a closer look from local and federal authorities, what will?" Olson asked.

ACORN insists it is not doing anything wrong because the primary endorsements and campaigning are being done by the group's political action committee, spokesman Scott Levenson said.

The group's political wing has backed de Blasio, but has made no endorsement in the district attorney race, Levenson said.

ACORN has also been under fire for raking in hundreds of thousands of

dollars in earmarks through a second nonprofit called the New York Agency for Community Affairs.

The two nonprofits are virtually indistinguishable, said state Sen. Stephen Saland (R-Poughkeepsie).

"It is troubling that ACORN, an organization deeply entrenched in promoting political candidates, is receiving member items from the same politicians who benefit from ACORN's campaign assistance," Saland wrote in a letter to Attorney General Andrew Cuomo.

"To ignore the need for an investigation of these member items would be a gross injustice," Saland added.

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## Launches investigation as Senate votes to nix funds

By GEOFF EARLE and

DAPHNE RETTER in Washington and BRENDAN SCOTT in Albany

The Brooklyn District Attorney's Office yesterday launched a criminal probe into ACORN, while the Senate overwhelmingly voted to ban federal funding for the nonprofit group after two New York workers were caught on video aiding a couple posing as a pimp and prostitute.

A spokesman for DA Charles Hynes confirmed the investigation but would not comment further.

On the Senate floor last night, in a stunning turnaround from votes earlier this year supporting ACORN, lawmakers passed a bipartisan measure, 83 to 7, to strip its funding.

The vote opened up the first split between Sens. Charles Schumer, who sided with the majority, and Kirsten Gillibrand, whom Republicans immediately slammed for backing the organization.

In the hidden-camera sting first revealed by The Post, two employees of ACORN Housing's Brooklyn office were taped giving tax advice to activists James O'Keefe and Hannah Giles, who were costumed as a pimp and hooker.

"Don't say that you're a prostitute thing or whatever," housing coordinator Volda Albert is heard telling Giles.

The ACORN employees also instructed her on how to launder the ill-gotten earnings so they couldn't be traced.

"The events of last week are not isolated," fumed Republican Sen. Mike Johanns of Nebraska, who sponsored the amendment and referenced yesterday's Post exclusive on ACORN on the Senate floor. "They magnify a troubling, systemic and criminal pattern. They serve as a public window into an organization besieged by corruption, fraud and illegal activities."

Republicans blasted Gillibrand for being one of only seven senators to vote in favor of keeping ACORN's funding.

"Even an outspoken liberal



**STUNG:** Brooklyn ACORN worker Volda Albert is caught on tape giving advice to "pimp" James O'Keefe and "ho" Hannah Giles (left).

like Senator Schumer voted against ACORN, so why did Kirsten Gillibrand vote to protect them? New York's appointed senator owes every New York taxpayer a thorough explanation," said Brian Walsh, a spokesman for the Senate campaign arm.

Gillibrand's office said she found the actions of certain ACORN employees "reprehensible" but added, "The truth remains that thousands of New York families who are facing foreclosure depend on charitable organizations like ACORN for assistance."

Meanwhile, The Post has learned that ACORN got at least \$436,000 in grants from state lawmakers funneled through its tax-exempt sister agency, the New York Agency for Community Affairs.

The biggest member item, for \$175,000, came from Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver (D-Manhattan), with another \$10,000 grant from Senate Democratic Leader John Sampson of Brooklyn.

"Speaker Silver is very concerned about the conversation depicted in the video and has asked ACORN for a full explanation of how the incident occurred and what policies and procedures ACORN has in place to ensure that nothing like this happens again," Silver spokesman Dan Weiller.

The tax-exempt New York ACORN Housing Company reported \$226,000 in grants as of last June, including \$96,000 from the city Department of Finance, \$60,000 from the New York Energy Research and Development Authority and \$70,000 from federal housing lender Fannie Mae and its New York counterpart, SONYMA.

According to its most recent federal filing, the national ACORN organization got \$11 million in direct public support and government grants nationwide in 2007 — a \$3 million increase over 2006.

An ACORN spokesman yesterday commented on The Post's report.

"ACORN has absolutely condemned this behavior. We've put in place procedures to ensure that this doesn't happen again," said Jonathan Rosen.

Rosen said the workers were "under review" but hadn't been fired. He said that what was caught on tape was an "informal conversation" and that no one had filled out loan or tax documents.

Additional reporting by Laurie Kamens in New York

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