



The Cortland Cause

UUP CORTLAND CHAPTER, B-5 MOFFETT, CORTLAND, NY 13045, 607-753-5991
WWW.UUPHOST.ORG/CORTLAND

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From the editor

Several years ago a particularly annoying public service announcement on television, titled "What you need to know" (or something like that) showcased known and unknown actors, for 30 seconds each, who briefed us, amid animated shooting stars and sparkles, on things we should know. One such thing we should know was happily delivered by actor Helen Hunt regarding teachers "working for free" because, as she reminded us, there so often isn't enough money in the state coffers for education. She was bubbly and delighted that her teachers had worked for free, because of their love of students, and she took the 30 seconds of the PSA to "thank" them on air. I have remembered that PSA ever since it aired, sometime in the 1980s, not only because of its disingenuousness, but also because I knew at the time, and know now, that Helen Hunt would never work for free. No matter how much anyone "thanked" her.

Dentists don't work for free; grocery clerks don't work for free; government workers don't work for free, as proven by the latest government shut down. Yet, for some reason, it is a

given that teachers will work for free if times are dire. In fact, any faculty member at SUNY Cortland who has conducted an independent study with a student has already worked for free, if the independent study is held during the academic year, and not the summer. (The unpaid Independent Study during the academic year is eligible to be compensated through DSI; the problem is that such extra work often becomes the norm, and is therefore not DSI worthy.)

Such benevolence on the part of teachers, as opposed to that of dentists, may have derived from the home-spun ideas regarding the first teachers of schoolchildren so many years ago-teachers were the moral compass of the town or city, and strayed from that compass at their own peril. Teachers, who were primarily women in the days of the early school-house, were considered not to be in need of money because they were either living at home with family or were being taken care of financially by husbands. Dentists never went through the same mythology, so nobody ever expects a dentist to work for free.

The current slant on teachers working for free is the DRP

Karla Alwes, English



(Deficit Reduction Program). As other articles in this newsletter make clear, it is imperative that we do not work for free during this new era of finding paths to economic parsimony. And we must not work for free precisely *because of our* regard for our students. To send our students out into a world that feels no compunction about telling them their education was achieved, in part, through faculty "volunteerism" is to do their future professional lives a disservice, as well as our own.

The state "insisted on yielding savings for SUNY through the Deficit Reduction Program," our UUP contract information tells us. These savings yielded for SUNY are from funds that are being extracted from the paychecks of SUNY workers. The irony is too ominous to be ignored..

Anne Wiegard,
Chapter Secretary



"It is not acceptable for SUNY to hold us hostage to our concern for our students, nor is it acceptable for colleagues to undermine the union's efforts to ensure that members are paid for all of the work they do."



Campus Equity: Let's Not Be Our Own Worst Enemy

I am writing this article on the eve of Campus Equity Week and the implementation of the Deficit Reduction Leave days mandated in our new contract. I see a strong connection between these two events.

While the major state employee unions were negotiating their contracts, the governor's favorite catch phrase was "shared sacrifice." The problem with that phrase is that the sacrifice has not been shared equally. In general, public employees have been forced to shoulder an unfair share of the economic burden brought about by mismanagement in the private sector. In particular, within SUNY, the UUP members are being punished for the gross financial mismanagement of SUNY administration with regard to Downstate HSC.

We've all taken a significant hit to paychecks due to the "Deficit Reduction" giveback the State insisted on extracting from UUP in the new contract. Our administration seems to believe that since SUNY did not want the DRL provision imposed by the State, SUNY should not bear its consequences, and it expects that many of us are going to carry on with "business as usual" and

do all of our work despite the provision in the contract to take off the days we won't be paid for. I strongly urge everyone to truly take those days off.

Taking a day off does not mean postponing work and doing it later; it means that work won't be done, ever. The State cannot be allowed to hold back the wages of our 900+ employees without some consequence to the operation of the institution. If the collective work of 900 people for two days does not amount to any noticeable operational difference for students, then what's to stop the State from expecting a similar or greater giveback in the next contract? We simply cannot work on the days we have the right to not work on. We can't strike in New York State, but when the State tells us not to work on days we won't be paid for, then by god, we shouldn't work.

It is not acceptable for SUNY to hold us (both Academics and Professionals) hostage to our concern for our students, nor is it acceptable for colleagues to undermine the union's efforts to ensure that members are paid for all of the work they do. Everyone who is aggrieved about the imposition of Deficit Reduction "Leave" should

confront any of their colleagues who declare that they work here for the love of it and will work on the DRL days because they don't want the students to be affected. Being affected is how students will learn what public higher education means to New York State and what's at stake in collective bargaining.

There's another insidious consequence of "business as usual" afoot here. As long as any UUP members make public declarations that they love their work so much they'd do it for nothing, the administration will not be persuaded to pay faculty what they deserve. Nor will the administration be motivated to raise the salaries of part-time academics to an equitable rate. The State's negotiator told us that SUNY's Academics don't need sick leave because they work even when they're sick. It's only a short step to concluding that no one needs more than \$2600 to teach a three-credit-course because the part-time faculty are willing to work for that amount. Should we be saying we don't even need that much?

I won't believe that there are faculty who truly do not want a salary until I see one of them endorse their pay checks over to SUNY.

Continued on page 3

Campus Equity: Let's Not Be Our Own Worst Enemy *Continued from page 2*

They don't realize they are instrumental in depriving their colleagues who have to survive on a teaching salary of a living wage. Honestly! All UUP members are professionals who believe in public higher education or we wouldn't be here, but that doesn't mean everyone who works at this college doesn't deserve a living wage.

The annualized starting salary of a SUNY Cortland adjunct is \$20,720. Is that a living wage? Maybe when you're twenty-two, but not when you're forty. Many of our "part-time" faculty teach more than full-time and still make significantly less than their full-time colleagues. There is no way to justify the absurd injustice of this inequity. To live with this fact requires one to live in denial, to fabricate absurd rationalizations such as "I teach for the love of it and the money doesn't matter." Right. Maybe we should pay SUNY to let us work here. That way, 100% of tuition can go toward non-instructional costs.

How much money are students currently paying for their education that their professors are NOT getting? The salaries of many people are subsidized by the labor of those paid the least. As Officer for Contingents Jackie Pittsley pointed out at the recognition luncheon for part-time faculty on October 22, the entire starting salary of an adjunct professor who teaches a three-credit course is more than paid for by the tuition from only three students in that class. If that lecturer teaches thirty students in that one three-credit class, the college is pocketing ten times the salary of the person teaching the course. Isn't there something wrong with this picture? SUNY would have the public believe that it's using every taxpayer dollar wisely, but the truth is that SUNY has wasted a lot of money on illegitimate expenditures while grossly exploiting the labor of the new faculty majority that does the yeoman's work of the university.

Less and less of our students' tuition is going directly toward classroom instruction. More and more, SUNY is acting like it does not need the faculty. All it takes to offset the concerted efforts of this union to improve the terms and conditions of our employment is one person publicly proclaiming that he is willing to work for free. Please don't be that person. ■

Pictures below of students, faculty and staff signing petition to increase the per-course teaching starting salary of all part-time academics to \$3,000 instead of the current \$2,590.



980 Signatures were collected!!!



Thank you to everyone who took time out of their busy schedule to volunteer for this very important cause!

Volunteers: Karla Alwes, Ross Borden, Bill Buxton, Marc Dearstyne, Jen Drake, Dan Harms, Nancy Kane, Kathy Lattimore, Ricki McClure, Jackie Pittsley, Henry Steck, Randi Storch, Dawn VanHall, Joe Westbrook & Anne Wiegard

Photos by Dawn VanHall, Library & Don Feldstein, UUP Communications

Jo Schafer,
 Art and Art History Emerita
 COARM elected Southern Tier Rep



From the Far Side

After my long career as “one of you” at Cortland, I have turned my energies into the retiree mode of activity. I really can’t believe that it has been almost 17 years since I was last considered an active member of UUP. During that time I have continued to be deeply involved in UUP and union issues albeit with an emphasis on retiree issues. Active and retired are not at different ends of our issues.

Continuing the struggle to preserve and protect, enlarge and solidify retiree benefits for my class is doing the same to make sure that the benefits I enjoy will be there for you to have when you move on and out!!

To that end, I would ask that you pay attention to the fight to make sure that Social Security is not diminished. In no way, no matter what the media

reports, is the national debt linked with Social Security. You pay in during your active years and you collect when you reach your age requirement for collecting on that investment. It is not an entitlement; it is an earned benefit. There are those in Congress who would also try to tie, and thus reduce, the COLA, cost of living increases to Social Security with a weird recalculation called a chained CPI. The chained CPI would be a radically determined way to link the index not to basic goods but to the higher costs to seniors of their medical expenses. It is a proposed cut in benefits that would substantially reduce income to those who are the oldest and sickest! Your congress persons need to hear from you to protect Social Security as it goes forth in its 80th year of existence.

In the next issue, I will address some of the Medicare issues that we UUP retirees have experienced and would like to pass on to you to consider before you retire.

Finally, Fred Kowal, in restructuring the political and advocacy committees in UUP, has worked closely with Judy Wishnia of Stony Brook, State-wide chairperson of COARM (UUP’s Committee on Active Retiree Membership) to make sure that retirees are included in proposed outreach activities in support of UUP and public higher education. He noted that we retirees have more unrestricted and discretionary time as well as the advantage of conveying to our elected representatives that we are not just interested in bread and butter issues but also in protecting the concept of public higher education. ■



IT’S YOUR NEWSLETTER!

We welcome articles and letters submitted by members of the SUNY Cortland Community.

Please share your thoughts with us— we want to hear from you!

Opinions expressed in *The Cortland Cause* are those of the individuals and are neither endorsed by nor represent the views of UUP.

Please note: The Cortland Cause will generally not print anonymous submissions.

We reserve the right to edit submissions for grammar, space limitations, accuracy, etc.

Send contributions to the Chapter Office, uup@cutland.edu
and to the editor, Karla Alwes, karla.alwes@cutland.edu

Deficit Reduction Leave: What It Means for You

Dan Harms,
Chapter VP for
Academics,
Library



Your paycheck is a bit smaller now – but why? Here's some information on the leave.

Q. HELP! The Leave is having a serious impact on my family's finances. What should I do?

A. This is a serious situation, and we are committed to helping you find a way through it. I recommend the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), accessible at <http://worklife.ny.gov/eap/resources.cfm#BudgetingFinanceLinks>.

Q. Why did the union make us do this?

A. It was the state of New York that "granted" you these days, in the same way as you might be "granted" a traffic ticket or an ulcer. In fact, you were to be "granted" nine days without pay, but through tough negotiation, UUP convinced them to pay you back for seven of the nine days.

Q. So I will be getting much of this money back?

A. Yes, at the end of the two-year period, starting July 27, 2016. They will pay it back slowly, just as the money is being extracted from you slowly. No, they aren't paying interest.

Q. When are the DRL days for professionals and full-time faculty?

A. At SUNY Cortland, professionals and full-time faculty should take BOTH of the following:

* Either Wednesday, November 27, 2013 OR Wednesday, November 26, 2014

* Either one day between Thursday, December 19 – Friday, December 27, 2013, OR one day between Thursday, December 18 – Friday, December 26

Always coordinate your leave with your supervisor.

Q. When are the DRL days for part-time faculty?

A. If you a part-time member of the faculty with a teaching obligation, you may take two teaching days over this period for your DRL leave. You should contact your department chair to discuss how to handle your absence.

Q. What should I do on a DRL day?

A. Nothing work-related. Visit your family. Go fishing. Read a good book. Catch up on your DVR. Watch *The Lord of the Rings* Trilogy again. (Maybe that's just me.)

Q. I've got a lot to do here, though.

A. Just remember, if you start working for the state of New York for free, they'll try to do it more often. Let's not encourage them.

Q. But the work keeps piling up. And I don't want this to affect my evaluation or CTEs.

A. You should work with your supervisor to make what accommodations you can. It would be appropriate for a faculty member to insert a line into his or her portfolio mentioning that the DRL days had an impact on them.

Q. Can I say anything about it?

A. Sure! Please feel free to educate others about the leave and its impact on the campus and the state. For instance, you might consider leaving an away message on your email or phone stating that you are on deficit reduction leave for the day. Your contribution to our students is important – make sure people know it!

A financial safety net for NYSUT members & their families

Long-term care insurance pays for services that aren't covered by Medicare or traditional health insurance but are important when you can't fully take care of yourself.

You may think it's unnecessary since you have no plans of ending up in a nursing home or requiring assistance for basic daily activities. The fact remains, though, that none of us can predict what's going to happen in the future.

This is where long-term care insurance comes into play – helping to pay the high cost of custodial care and other long-term care expenses that a long-term illness or injury can bring.

That's why the NYSUT Member Benefits Trust is excited to be back in the long-term care business with the endorsement of New York Long-Term Care Brokers.

With this endorsed program, NYSUT members and their eligible family members have the opportunity to receive a 5% to 10% discount on various plans.

With regional representatives throughout New York state and beyond, eligible individuals have access to long-term care insurance plans from multiple highly-rated insurance companies – including the New York State Partnership for Long-Term Care.

And with Americans living longer than ever today, the need for a financial safety net has never been greater. Through this endorsed program, eligible individuals can get a long-term care insurance plan designed with their specific needs in mind.



And don't automatically discount the cost of this type of insurance as it may be far more affordable than you may think.

If you or a loved one has been previously declined for long-term care insurance, you may still be insurable with a different company.

NYLTCB represents numerous long-term care insurance companies – all with different medical underwriting guidelines. Make sure to ask your long-term care insurance specialist for more details.

We encourage you to look into the cost of a long-term care plan tailored to your specific needs.

For more information about this endorsed offering, please contact **NYLTCB toll-free at 888-884-0077**. You can also contact Member Benefits with any questions at **800-626-8101** or visit **memberbenefits.nysut.org**.



For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.

UUP CORTLAND CHAPTER — EXECUTIVE BOARD 2013-2014

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We're on the Web!
See us at:
UUPHOST.ORG/CORTLAND

Become a Department or Building Representative

Want to get more involved with UUP? Please consider becoming a Department or Building Representative!

We still need "reps" for many campus departments and/or buildings, and we would welcome your participation. Contact the Chapter Office (ext. 5991, uup@cortland.edu) to express interest or to find out more!

Save the dates

Union Matter Chapter Meetings

Nov. 20th, Feb. 11th, Mar. 26th, Apr. 25th

Executive Board Meetings Schedule

Nov. 21st, Dec. 5th, Jan. 23rd, Feb. 6th & 20th, Mar. 6th & 21st,
Apr. 4th & 17th, and May 1st & 15th

Labor Management Meetings Schedule

Nov. 14, Dec. 9th, Jan. 30th, Feb. 27th, Mar. 27th, Apr. 22nd, and
May 22nd

UUP HOLIDAY GATHERING
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2013— 4-7 pm
Corey Union Function Room

Alan G. Hevesi New York State Comptroller		JOHN DOE		Total Gross Total Taxable Gross	
Advice # 12345678		Pay Start Date 05/16/2005		Current 3456.78 1234.56	
Advice Date 07/13/2005		Pay End Date 05/29/2005		YTD 45,678.90 34,567.89	
Department ID 1234		Negotiating Unit IIS		Net Pay 1,234.56	
		Retirement System TIAACREF		Pay Rate 78,910.11	
EARNINGS		Current	YTD	TAX DATA	
Regular Pay Salary Employee	3456.78	45,678.90	Earnings	Federal	State
Location Tax	56.78	678.00	Medical/Health	N	N
			Affordable	1	9
			Final Am't		
				TAXES	
			Current	YTD	
			Fed Withholding	3456.78	1234.56
			State Tax	45,678.90	34,567.89
			Social Security	3456.78	1234.56
			NY Withholding	45,678.90	34,567.89
BEFORE TAX DEDUCTIONS		Current	YTD	AFTER TAX DEDUCTIONS	
Medical/Health	456.78	1234.56	UUP Member 25%	34.56	456.78
Supplemental Executive Prog.	678.90	5,678.90			
TIAACREF Retirement Before Tax	56.78	1234.56			

Check your most recent paystub to find out if you are a member. If it says "UUP Agency Fee" you are not yet a UUP member.

Are you a UUP member?

JOIN TODAY so you can vote!

Go to www.uupinfo.org and click on "Join UUP" at the top (right) of the home page. Or simply contact the Cortland Chapter Office to request information or a membership application form (campus ext. 5991, e-mail uup@cortland.edu)