



President's Corner

By Rowena Blackman-Stroud

UUP is urging all UUPers to send e-letters to their legislators immediately. The Legislature is aiming to have a completed budget by April 1 – which is why it's important to get as many e-letters to legislators in the next few days. UUP's legislative agenda for 2016 is the most forward-looking plan for SUNY and public higher education in New York. It will help SUNY accomplish its mission of providing affordable, accessible, and quality higher education to all New Yorkers. It includes several health science center issues outlined below. There are several e-letters discussing these issues that we'd like you to send. They are on the UUP website (uupinfo.org) or you may access them by typing <http://uupinfo.org/legislation/advocate.php>.

SUNY Downstate Community Plan (E-Letter)

Please send an e-letter to your legislators telling them to support legislation that would provide a new model in comprehensive ambulatory care at the medical center over a three-year transition period. UUP is asking the Legislature to dedicate \$160 million of the \$1.2 billion Health Care Capital Restructuring Financing Program funding to develop four SUNY Downstate ambulatory care centers.

Support SUNY and Higher Education in New York (E-Letter)

UUP is urging lawmakers to:

- Increase state operating aid to the SUNY four-year campuses and hospitals. This would ensure that the SUNY system is properly funded and financially stable.
- Address the problem of diversity in our educator workforce by implementing Recruiting and Educating Teachers for All (RETA).
- Stand behind the SUNY teaching hospitals and support the Brooklyn Health Care Plan and the Buffalo Health Care Teaching Fellows Program.
- Invest in the development of renewable energy courses at SUNY campuses through the Green Energy Intellectual Capital Fund.

State aid for these proposals is necessary to allow SUNY to continue to provide vital health care services and an affordable, accessible, and high quality education. Members can send e-letters to their legislators asking for their support to help SUNY continue to grow and move forward.

HSC Advocacy Day

Members from the Downstate chapter joined other UUP members from around the state for HSC Advocacy Day on March 1 in Albany. They met

with legislators and made the following requests:

- Restore the governor's proposed \$18.6 million cut to the hospitals' subsidy; and
- Support true Maintenance of Effort to cover negotiated salary increases and mandatory costs at SUNY hospitals; and
- Support legislation to return delinquent fees, tuition, and hospital charges to SUNY health science centers; and
- Provide proper capital funding for SUNY's health science centers.

Throughout the day, UUP members reminded lawmakers that the hospitals do not only provide critical medical care in underserved areas, but thousands of jobs.

The day ended with a strong gesture of support by Assemblyman Joseph Lentol (D-Brooklyn), who chairs the Brooklyn Democratic Committee and has been a longtime Downstate advocate. A month ago, he convened a meeting between the Brooklyn Assembly delegation and UUP in his Albany office to discuss Downstate's needs in the upcoming budget.



Assemblyman Joe Lentol with Rowena Blackman-Stroud, Pervez Mirza, Abe Gerech, and Alithia Alleyne.

CHAPTER MEETING NOTICE ALL UUP MEMBERS ARE INVITED

Date: Monday, March 28, 2016

Time: Noon - 12:50 p.m.

Place: Auditorium - Education Bldg.

Lunch will be provided after the meeting.

The agenda will include:

- ◆ Discussion of the 2016-17 Chapter Budget
- ◆ Update on Negotiations
- ◆ DSRIP/One City Health Update
- ◆ Grievance Report

**ADVOCACY FOR PROSPECTIVE AND ACTIVE
RETIREES (E-Letter)**

UUP is concerned about retirees, who are facing reductions to their insurance premiums in the proposed Executive Budget.

Specifically, the budget proposes:

- Tiering state contributions to retiree health insurance premiums based on years of service for state workers who retire as of Oct. 1, 2016. This would impact employees with less than 30 years of service.
- Capping monthly Medicare Part B reimbursements at \$104.90 for state retirees covered through NYSHIP. As Medicare Part B premiums increase, retirees would pay more.
- To end state reimbursement of increased Medicare Part B costs for higher-income retirees under IRMAA. Higher-income retirees pay escalating rates for Medicare Part B based on retirement income. Currently, retirees earning between \$85,000 and \$107,000 pay \$170.50 per month for Medicare Part B. This proposal would end state reimbursement of these higher premiums.

UUP members are speaking out against these initiatives, and are urging legislators to take action to ensure that they do not become part of the state's enacted 2016-17 budget.

Members are calling on lawmakers to:

- Support income security for retirees by increasing the maximum earning allowance for public employees from \$30,000 to \$35,000.
- Support a pension credit for all veterans.
- Allow retirees to make automatic, voluntary contributions from their Optional Retirement Program accounts to union political action committees.

CONGRATULATIONS PD WINNERS

Congratulations to all of our members who were awarded Professional Development Grants for their projects and activities in the current round of the program (July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016).

Funding for the awards program was negotiated by UUP and is outlined in Article 42 of the 2011-2016 union contract.

Awardees were selected by the campus Professional Development Committee, which is comprised of four members appointed by UUP and four members appointed by Management.

The list of recipients is posted on UUP bulletin boards throughout the campus.

NEWS BRIEFS

Mary Doherty

UUP was saddened to hear of the passing of the former Downstate chapter secretary, Mary Doherty, on Jan. 22, 2016. The UUP chapter is asking members to make contributions to the UUP College Scholarship Fund in Mary's name by contacting the UUP Administrative Office at 800-342-4206.

One City Health/DSRIP

Members are encouraged to visit the One City Health website at <http://www.onecityhealth.org/> to keep apprised of the next steps of their Performing Provider System (PPS) since Downstate is a major medical partner in their Brooklyn hub. One City Health is comprised of hundreds of healthcare providers, community-based organizations, and health systems, OneCity Health is the largest PPS in New York City.

Contract Negotiations Update

UUP's Negotiations Team has entered the next phase of negotiations: turning the list of contract priorities into a set of conceptual proposals to present to the state.

A formal start date for negotiations has not been set. UUP's five-year contract expires July 1.

The union's 18-member Team, led by Chief Negotiator Philippe Abraham, worked to craft proposals during a three-day session that began Feb. 17. The proposals will come from a list of priorities developed at a meeting in January, after months of data collection through venues such as chapter visits, membership suggestion forms and an online survey.

"Members should have no doubts that their comments and suggestions are the basis of what will be discussed at the bargaining table, said Abraham, statewide VP for professionals"

The Negotiations Committee will reconvene in April to review the conceptual proposals written by the Team. According to the UUP Constitution, the Negotiations Committee must accept the proposals before the Team can sit down with the state to hammer out a successor agreement.

Next steps

The Team has a full schedule of meetings into April to prepare specific language to present to the state.

UUP Chapter at Downstate

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