



## **PRESIDENT'S CORNER**

**By Rowena Blackman-Stroud**

As Downstate chapter members, we have faced and overcome numerous challenges over the years. But more uncertainties await.

A listening tour for a state-funded feasibility study to recommend future health care delivery systems for Downstate and four other Brooklyn hospitals started in June and continues through the summer. The study is supposed to be ready for release in the fall.

There's uncertainty over what Downstate's role will be in the OneCity Health Performing Provider System (PPS), formed as part of New York State Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment (DSRIP) program. There is apprehension as UUP enters into negotiation with the state for a new contract.

And there is a leadership void at Downstate, which occurred when Downstate president Dr. John Williams stepped down at the end of the academic year. We await the announcement of an interim president, who will serve in that role while a search committee seeks candidates to fill the vacancy.

For these reasons, I have decided to invite all UUP bargaining unit members to attend a summer activation meeting from Noon to 2 p.m. on Tuesday, July 26 at The Grove. This meeting is meant to activate chapter members, to boost morale and to prepare for the struggles that lie ahead. So please put this date on your calendar – July 26 – and make plans to join us.

Let me take a moment and discuss in detail some of the challenges we face as a chapter, starting with the feasibility study.

Northwell Health received a \$500,000 state grant to fund a feasibility study to recommend strategies for the future health care delivery systems for Downstate, Brookdale Medical Center, Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center, Interfaith Medical Center, and Wyckoff Heights Medical Center. Northwell Health will recommend a structure and governance for a health care delivery model for Central and Eastern Brooklyn. The health care delivery proposal will tentatively be ready by Fall 2016.

In June, Northwell Health and state Department of Health began holding listening tours in the Central and Eastern Brooklyn regions. I spoke at the second listening tour, on June 13 at Downstate. Representatives from the faculty, professional staff and community were invited to attend and speak. However, due to space restrictions speakers and attendees were limited. Many faculty and professional staff were very disappointed that the meeting was not convened in the auditorium where space would not have been an issue.

At the forum, I talked about the importance of Downstate as a public hospital to the Central Brooklyn community and how Central Brooklyn residents depend on Downstate for medical care. We know and have seen what happens when a private interest manages the hospital. Recently, for three years, an out-of-state consultant ran UHB. They made a very good profit for themselves and reduced the number of employees by one-third, but did nothing to make the hospital any better. Even with the best intentions, any merger of UHB with a private organization will mean subsidizing the private interests before and in addition to the public interests. I also discussed Downstate's potential for playing an enhanced role in meeting the health care needs of Brooklyn's residents, such as assisting in producing more primary care doctors and expanding health care services throughout Brooklyn.

Some of these options are outlined in the UUP Brooklyn Health Care Plan, located on UUP's website at [www.uupinfo.org](http://www.uupinfo.org). The plan outlines an important role that Downstate could potentially play in communities in Central and Eastern Brooklyn.

Present on the dais were:

- H. Carl McCall, Chairman, SUNY Board of Trustees
- Paul Francis, Deputy Secretary for Health
- Dr. Howard Zucker, Commissioner, New York State Department of Health
- Yvonne Graham, Associate Commissioner, New York State Department of Health & Director, Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities Prevention
- William Walsh, Sr. Vice President, Hospital Affairs and Managing Director of University Hospital of Brooklyn
- Senator Kevin Parker
- Assemblyman Nick Perry
- City Councilman Mathieu Eugene

Sitting in the back of the hospital cafeteria, taking notes of their own, were the representatives from Northwell Health.

Also at the hearing, several Downstate faculty members spoke and made a powerful argument regarding the importance of the hospital to the workings of the school. Faculty members who spoke included

## President's Corner (Continued)

Dr. Daniel Beckles, Chief Surgeon, Cardio Thoracic Surgery; Dr. Moro Salifu, Chair, Department of Medicine; Dr. Jack DeHovitz, Distinguished Service Professor, Director, STAR Clinic; Dr. Devon John, Chief, Transplant Surgery; Dr. Fasika Tedla, Transplant Nephrologist; Dr. Pascal James Imperato, Distinguished Service Professor, Dean of School of Public Health; Dr. Pamela Sass, Chair, Family Medicine; Dr. Miriam Vincent, Executive Director for Health Care Innovation & DSRIP, Director of Ambulatory Care, Professor; Dr. Carlos Pato, Dean of College of Medicine, School of Medicine; and Dr. Alan Lewis, Dean and Professor, College of Health Related Professions.

The next listening tour took place July 11. Staff from the Department of Health, elected officials, UUP representatives, faculty and professional staff from SUNY Downstate, and community residents participated in a discussion on their vision for the health care system in Central Brooklyn. For future updates on the Northwell Health listening tours, please monitor the UUP bulletin boards on campus.

UUP will continue to monitor all of the listening tours and advocate for Downstate playing an enhanced role in meeting the health care needs of Brooklyn's residents as outlined in the UUP Brooklyn Health Care Plan. You can learn more about the plan by going to UUP's website, at [www.uupinfo.org](http://www.uupinfo.org).

So yes, as we look toward the start of the fall semester, we face a number of challenges. Rest assured that we will surmount these obstacles and become stronger for it. **If your department does not have a union representative, please consider volunteering.**

But we must be ready. That is why I encourage you to join us at Downstate's summer activation meeting from Noon to 2 p.m. on July 26. Together, we will succeed.

### Deficit Reduction Program Repayment

Questions have arisen regarding the state's Deficit Reduction Program repayment to UUP members. For UUP members currently on payroll, the first DRP repayment appeared in the June 29 paycheck. There has been confusion over the appearance of "FINAL 08 DRP REPAYMENT" on pay stubs. That is a NYS Office of the Comptroller Code intended to reflect that the DRP is now in its FINAL repayment phase. It is not a notation reflecting a single repayment. Full repayment will continue occur on a pro-rata basis in each pay check across 39 pay periods.

### **SUNY Downstate Presidential Search Update**

The position for the campus president has been finalized advertised in the following locations:

- Chronicle of Higher Education Vitae
- National Hispanic Medical Association
- National Medical Association
- Association of American Medical Colleges
- American Public Health Association
- JAMA Career Center
- Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine

### UUP MEMBERS: KNOW YOUR DISCIPLINE RIGHTS

Article 19 of the UUP contract addresses the **DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES** to be followed when members are referred for discipline. We have broken up the procedures so that our members will understand their rights.

The disciplinary process is triggered when there are allegations of misconduct in the workplace.

Prior to disciplining an individual, management directs the individual to appear in the Labor Relations Office to answer questions about the allegations. **ALL MEMBERS HAVE A RIGHT TO UNION REPRESENTATION.** This is explicitly stated in your interrogation letter. Should you choose to attend this meeting alone, you waive your right to union representation. If you choose to enter into a settlement agreement with Labor Relations, please understand that that the decision is *final, binding and irrevocable*.

UUP member(s) must have at least six (6) hours' notice prior to the interrogation.

*Again, UUP members are entitled to union representation.*

If the matter can be resolved, the UUP member and management may enter into a settlement agreement in lieu of discipline.

If the matter cannot be resolved, management will issue a Notice of Discipline ("NOD").

The NOD spells out the specific charges against the individual.

The UUP member has ten (10) working days to file the disciplinary grievance form. (The disciplinary grievance form is used by the member to contest allegations of misconduct and any proposed penalties.)

The charges and penalty can be imposed if the disciplinary grievance form is not filed within ten (10) working days.

If you select union representation, a NYSUT attorney will be assigned to represent you before an arbitrator. This is an administrative hearing where Management has the burden to prove the charges against you.

#### **UUP Chapter at Downstate**

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#### **Officers**

**President: Rowena Blackman-Stroud**

Academic VP: Karen Benker

Professional VP: Paula White

Secretary: Ellen McTigue

Treasurer: Fred Houston

Grievance Chair: Simon Abe Gerecht

Officer for Contingents: Donovan Lorde

Dept. Rep. Coordinator:

Rowena Blackman-Stroud

**UUP/NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist**

Lisa Mouscardy Willis

**Chapter Assistant**

Jacqueline Bourgeois

## *Negotiations Update*

Paula White, VP for Professionals  
Negotiations Team Member

Our current contract with the State of New York expired on July 1, 2016.

UUP's 18-member Negotiations Team is readying for **July 15**, the date they are scheduled to exchange contract proposals with the state and start the bargaining process for a new agreement.

Contract proposals were crafted by the Negotiations Team after gathering and diligently correlating member input over the past 18 months. In April, the conceptual proposals were approved by the Negotiations Committee, made up of chapter presidents statewide. Since then, The Negotiations Team has met almost weekly to develop rationale to support its conceptual proposals and to prepare for opening talks with the Governor's Office of Employee Relations (GOER).

Chief Negotiator Philippe Abraham, announced the July 15 meeting at the 2016 Spring Delegate Assembly in Saratoga Springs May 13-14. He stressed the need for a "unified membership if the union expects to negotiate a contract that meets the need of all members," since negotiations may take a long time. The current contract provisions (except for those that sunset) will remain in place until a successor agreement is reached.

## *Update on DSRIP<sup>1</sup>*

Dr. Karen Benker, VP for Academics

DSRIP is the federal program to change the way it distributes Medicaid money. It creates financial incentives to improve care so that people have less need to be hospitalized. All organizations that bill Medicaid have joined large collaborative groups to improve ambulatory care and social services. Downstate UHB joined the group led by the municipal hospital system (now renamed H+H rather than HHC). This collaborative is called *OneCity Health*. UUP is actively participating in OneCity Health committees at the city and Brooklyn level.

Keeping people out of the hospital is a worthy goal. What does it mean, though, for the jobs of current hospital employees at UHB? The short answer is: *No one knows yet*. DSRIP is now in its 3<sup>rd</sup> year. Planning and implementing the shift to the new form of reimbursement is taking place very slowly. The basic plan has 2 parts:

Build out primary care ambulatory services extensively so that early treatment lowers some of the need for hospitalization. In the remaining two years of DSRIP, it is unlikely that the numbers of hospital admissions in Brooklyn will drop.

Change the way primary care services are organized. DSRIP encourages primary care services to form health care teams that includes mental health and substance abuse professionals as well as health coaches, community health workers, and others.

There is a severe shortage now in primary care professionals so that these changes will happen slowly. In the meantime, UUP is working actively with DSRIP and with the NYS Labor-Management Committee to create new educational pathways for members as new job opportunities evolve. The focus is especially on current hospital employees who may be at risk through DSRIP.

The fate of Medicaid funding depends on the outcome of the November national elections. We'll keep you posted on ways that you can take action to protect public funding for health care and the jobs of UUP members.

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<sup>1</sup> Delivery System Reform Incentive Program

**THIS EVENT IS FOR UUP BARGAINING UNIT MEMBERS ONLY  
YOUR ID WILL BE CHECKED AT THE DOOR**

## The UUP Downstate Chapter

*Cordially Invites All UUPers to Our*



# Summer Activation Meeting & Picnic

- Meet & Greet with statewide president, Dr. Fred Kowal and chapter leaders
- Strategize for the challenges ahead



### **CHECK YOUR PAYROLL STUB**

**If it says Agency Fee, please stop at the membership booth and sign a membership card. There is no additional fee to become a member.**

**Tuesday, July 26, 2016**

**Noon – 2 p.m.**

**Location: SUNY Downstate Grove**

**Coordinators: Chapter Action Team, Chapter Officers & Chapter Governing Board**