



Brockport Banter...Check your Check Edition!

PRESIDENTS ADDRESS

I consider it important, indeed urgently necessary, for intellectual workers to get together, both to protect their own economic status and also, generally speaking, to secure their influence in the political field. ~Albert Einstein

It is with much pride that I introduce this special “check your check” edition of the Brockport Banter. It arrives in your mailbox in part to celebrate the first paycheck where most members will see the first across the board raises of 4.5%. The contract took effect July 2nd 2026, for those on 12 month contracts the increases will be backdated to that time, 9 month employees will be backdated to the beginning of the fall obligation period. As you know this is just the first of many pay increases and benefits included in the contract – retention awards will increase starting next year, and the “higher-ed” differential for those with a masters degree commences in 2027 also. There is a complete summary of contract gains on the statewide web-page in the contract section <https://uupinfo.org/contract/>

For those of you who did not skip the epigram above – you will have noted that no less of an intellectual than Albert Einstein thought it was critical for academics to form unions to improve their economic well-being. Not only that – he urged scholars to raise their collective voices in politics too. As you know, none of the dues collected by UUP support political advocacy. Yet the strong gains in our contract that we are beginning to enjoy would not have been possible without the support of our allies in the state legislature and Governor’s office. That is why, at this time, I would like to appeal to everyone to make a donation of time or money to support our unions’ political actions. Our outreach committee is coordinating Labor Walks and phone-banking, see details below. If that is too much of a commitment UUP has a voluntary political fund, VOTE-COPE, which members can sign up to support through paycheck deductions. It may surprise you to know that while 98% of full-time employees are UUP members only 5% at Brockport contribute to VOTE-COPE. Now would be a great time to boost that number – a couple of dollars a paycheck from each of us, would make our collective political voice much stronger! A strong political voice can only help us as we continue to advocate for higher education in these turbulent times. <https://uupinfo.org/siteforms/VCFForm.php>

If you are a UUP Professional, another way we would like you to raise your voice, if you have not already done so, is to take the Professionals Survey. The survey is comprehensive - it asks about work-life balance, workload creep, and workplace support among other things. The survey is anonymous and any of the questions can be skipped if you feel your identity might be revealed by responding. Currently we have a response rate of about 30%, we would like to get closer to 50%. We will share the results of the survey at an aggregate level only (no individual results) with college administration and UUP leadership so that we can work together to make improvements.

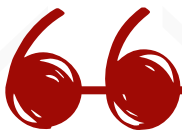
Link to the Survey is here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/UUPBrockportWORK>

To close this special edition of the Banter – I would like to ask everyone to consider joining fellow UUP members to share a little more banter at one of our upcoming socials. We have a U2 social with our CSEA colleagues TODAY October 7th in Lennon Hall, November 11th in Tuttle South, and December 9th in the Brown Building. We will also have our Annual Holiday Party on Thursday December 10th with Skating 5-6 and food, drinks to follow in the SERC lobby. We would love to see you all at these events – taking time to gather together, chat, laugh and have a little fun will surely make us stronger!



DR. SUSAN ORR

BROCKPORT CHAPTER PRESIDENT



BRET BENJAMIN

UUP CHIEF NEGOTIATOR

How did you become involved in UUP and your motivations to take on a statewide role?

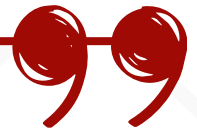
In 2010, UAlbany announced catastrophic program deactivations in the arts and humanities, suspending majors in French, Italian, Russian, Theatre, Classics, Judaic Studies, among others. Tenure-line faculty were threatened with retrenchment and pressed to resign or retire, while contingent faculty were non-renewed. I was part of coalition of faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community partners who organized to oppose the cuts, highlighting the disastrous consequences of the University's decision. In particular I worked to

STATEWIDE HIGHLIGHT

This edition of the Banter is so happy to have the opportunity to highlight Bret Benjamin, one of our UUP Chief Contract Negotiators who helped UUP achieve the newest contract. Thanks so much to Bret for being a part of our newsletter!

ensure that the Albany UUP Chapter took an active, public role in fighting back, and building a sustainable institutional structure that could be effective in future. A group of us ran in elections to serve on the chapter exec board, and in the following years I took officer roles as Vice President for Academics and ultimately Albany Chapter President. My chapter-level work was a springboard to more state-wide UUP roles, and I was asked to serve on the Negotiations Team for what would become the 2016-2022 contract. I stepped into a leadership position in the final year of that round of negotiations, and was subsequently named by UUP President Fred Kowal as Chief Contract Negotiator on the 2022-2026 and the 2026-2031 contracts. I'm proud to have played a role in 15 years of UUP contracts.

STATEWIDE HIGHLIGHT, *CONTINUED...*



Tell us a little about your statewide role - primary responsibilities, most-liked and least-liked aspects of the job?

The Chief Negotiator is the UUP member granted the opportunity to represent our diverse union at the bargaining table. Our contract is unique. No other higher ed contract in the country represents a statewide bargaining unit with nearly wall-to-wall academic and professional titles across 31 chapters, including five hospitals and health science centers. It has been a privilege to lead two Negotiations Teams through all stages of bargaining: training team members, soliciting member feedback, developing contract proposals, bargaining with the NY Governor's Office of Employee Relations, organizing and communicating with members, and conducting contract ratification campaigns. Each round is a tremendous learning experiences. I have gradually developed a depth of expertise about our union and our contract, about NYS collective bargaining, about collective bargaining across higher ed, and more.

Most gratifying is the knowledge that I've been part of three contracts that have, in big and small ways, made a real difference in the lives of UUP members. In addition to the monetary gains we've made and the ability to protect our exceptional health benefits, I'm extremely proud

of the wins we've had for contingent faculty, for expanded parental leave (which is now among the best in the nation), for nationally significant AI protections, not to mention the dozens of gains that may affect fewer members but nevertheless make real, sometimes transformative differences in people's lives. The other most rewarding aspect of my role has been the chance to work closely with the members of the UUP Negotiations Teams and UUP staff involved with negotiations. These colleagues put a tremendous amount of effort, care, thought, and passion into bargaining the best possible contracts, and they do so selflessly on behalf of UUP's 42,000 members. These folks represent the very best of UUP.

As proud as I am of our many wins, I will readily admit that it can be frustrating to run up against a deeply entrenched set of historical and structural impediments that prevent us from winning even more. Decades of underfunding, consolidation of managerial control, the over-reliance on contingent employment, and the erosion of an educational mission mean that every round of bargaining is marred by those potentially transformative proposals that we cannot (yet!) win in full. I walk away from each round with a few scars.



That said, the sting left by proposals that we were unable to achieve energize me for the fights ahead.

Can you share a little bit about yourself and what you do outside of work?

I live happily in Albany with my amazing wife and 16 year old daughter. Few things bring me more joy than watching my kid play gigs at local venues with the Albany High Jazz Band--I'm smiling even as I think about it. As an English professor, I am, predictably, a lover of books. Fly fishing affords me focus, precision, activity, and solitude, all of which I cherish. How lucky was I to have landed in NY within an easy drive of the hallowed Catskill rivers that gave birth to American fly fishing? Since the pandemic, I have become an avid cyclist, and, again, feel fortunate to live in a beautiful part of the world with enough big hills to make me wonder why I do this, but not so big or so many as to prevent an old man like me from going back out again.

Anything else you would like to share?

I have so enjoyed my various campus meetings with Brockport members over the years! It seems to me a model chapter in many ways. In particular, I have appreciated the direct, open tenor of our past conversations. The gains you have made in converting full-time

Lecturers to Instructors is extremely important system-wide (even as there is always more work to be done). The work your chapter did in revising the instrument used for student surveys of teaching paved the way for some gains in bargaining this round. It's always a pleasure to visit (in person or by zoom) and I look forward to more conversations and collaborations in the future.



BENEFIT HIGHLIGHT

MET LIFE DENTAL PLAN OPTION

The new MetLife Dental plan is designed to mirror the same benefits as the Delta Dental PPO plan.

The only difference in the plans is that Delta Dental and MetLife Dental have different dental provider networks, e.g., you might find a dentist in the Delta Dental PPO network that is not in the MetLife Dental network and vice versa. See below for the links to find participating dentists and the applicable networks to search.

Delta Dental PPO - <https://www.deltadental.com/member/find-a-dentist/> (PPO network) (Premier network)

MetLife Dental PPO - <https://providers.online.metlife.com/findDentist?searchType=findDentistMetLife> (PDP network) (PDP Plus network)

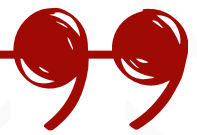
Effective January 1, 2027, UUP-represented employees have the option of choosing between two dental plans – Delta Dental PPO and MetLife Dental PDP.

1. If you choose to continue your dental plan through Delta Dental, you do not have to do anything for you and/or your dependents.
2. However, if you choose to switch your dental plan to the MetLife Dental PDP plan for you and/or your dependents, please see the website to fill out the form:
<https://uupunion.org/myuup/benefits/forms/btfdentalchange/>
3. Your Benefit Trust Fund ID is on your new Benefit Trust Fund card.

Please note that the open enrollment period to switch from the Delta Dental plan to the MetLife Dental PDP plan is September 1, 2026 – October 31, 2026.

If you are not currently enrolled in the UUP Benefit Trust Fund, enroll using the following link: <https://uupunion.org/myuup/benefits/forms/btfenrollment/> in order to access benefits.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact our Statewide Benefits Trust Fund: 800-887-3863



POLITICAL OUTREACH

ARTICLE BY BROCKPORT
VPA SARA DI DONATO



Hello Brockport Colleagues!

This is Sara Di Donato, Brockport UUP chapter Vice-President for Academics, and Political Outreach coordinator for our chapter. I need your help!

The upcoming election in November is one of the most important turning points in our democracy. Election Day—Tuesday, November 3—is only 50 days away. That means we have just six Saturdays left to shape the outcome of this election. I am desperately seeking volunteers to join "Team 53" to commit to participating in Labor Walks to canvass for labor endorsed candidates, participate in phone banking, and to attend Advocacy Day in Albany in February.

We need to elect statewide leaders who will defend public higher education and stand with the labor movement. The 2024 elections showed us that elections have real consequences for our institutions, our values, and our work. After two years of sustained attacks from Washington, now is the time to fight back!

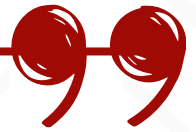
We can help shift the balance of power in Congress and strengthen our allies in the state legislature—but only if we take action NOW.

A strong UUP presence at these events will make a meaningful difference, so be sure to wear your red UUP T-shirt. If you need a shirt, email me at sara.didonato.ny@gmail.com with the size you need, and I will get a shirt to you.

You will find a calendar of local and statewide events as well as registration links listed [HERE](#)
<https://uupinfo.org/legislation/calendar/>

Registration for the events is important if you plan on participating so organizers can plan for materials. On the left side of the page are in-person canvassing events, and on the top right corner of the page, there is information and registration for phone banking, which you can do from your home.

I get it that most of us don't like to talk to strangers on the phone or knock on doors—I also am very hesitant and it takes all of my courage to lift my finger up and ring a doorbell, but this election is too important



not to try to pitch in to elect good candidates and turn the tides! And as it turns out, it was not that scary after all!

When you register to attend an event, please let me know, and fill out the following online form [HERE](#) or use this link:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdAVYj872xB1cd3eFqK7QAMylopTGtZSCfvqMiSYxdkkvCpDg/viewform>

This is incredibly important so we can track our contributions to our endorsed candidates this election cycle.

Take pictures of yourself and send them along so that we can see you defending our labor and our democracy!

If you are willing to commit to participating in more than one event, you'll become a member of "Team 53". Please send me your jacket size--we are getting red union jackets with "Team 53" (to commemorate 53 years of UUP) for those who can commit to participating in these events.

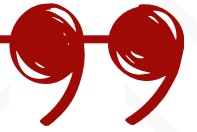
Hope to hear from many of you and to see you at events to get out the vote for candidates who share our values!



HIGHER ED
ACTION FUND PAC



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Troy Norton

I'm the Assistant Director of Student Conduct. I manage student conduct cases through each step of the process - from receiving reports, to investigating incidents, to assigning and adjudicating cases. I view working with students when they "mess up" as a key part of education, so I'm delighted to do exactly that for a living.

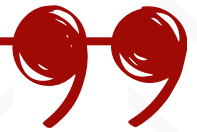


Before starting at SUNY Brockport in January 2026, I worked at Binghamton University since August 2021. I was an active member of their UUP chapter, serving as a member of the College Committee on Professional Evaluation; editor of the semesterly newsletter, Connection; professional delegate; and Vice President for Professionals.

Unionism is paramount to me. It is a vehicle toward economic, political, and social progress - perhaps the most salient one we have. (To anyone interested in a deeper dive on this, I recommend Jaz Brisack's Get on the Job and Organize: Standing Up for a Better Workplace and a Better World.) Looking out for one another improves everybody's lot. UUP embodies this spirit, and I'm proud to be a member.

Outside of work, I enjoy WWE (I never grew out of it), Nintendo (I'm currently replaying Super Mario Galaxy on the Nintendo Switch 2), and existentialist philosophy. Over the summer, I started playing pickleball with some colleagues; pretty much all of them have my number, but I'm getting better, little by little, and more than that, it's been a great way for me to meet new people.





EVENTS

SEPTEMBER: LABOR DAY PARADE, *Rochester NY*



The Brockport and Geneseo Chapters joined together in the annual Rochester City Labor Day Parade on 9/7/26

Upcoming U2 Socials for Fall 2026...

October: 10/7 noon-1:30pm Lennon Hall

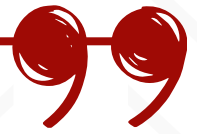
November: 11/11 noon-1:30pm Tuttle South

December: 12/9 noon-1:30 Brown Building

Follow us on socials for details about our social events

Instagram @brockport_uup | Facebook @BrockportUUP





EVENTS

Upcoming UUP Professional Pulse Socials...

October: 10/9, noon-1pm

November: 11/13, 8:30am-9:30am

December: 12/11 noon-1pm

Location: Seymour Union Room 185

Follow us on socials:

Instagram @brockport_uup | Facebook @BrockportUUP

Hosted by Chapter Vice President for Professionals Garrett
Roe, any question? Contact Garrett:
groebrockportuup@gmail.com

STAY INFORMED. STAY CONNECTED. STAY INSPIRED



CONNECT

Build relationships and
strengthen our community.



ENGAGE

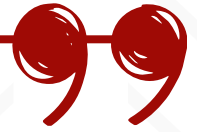
Share ideas, spark conversations,
and stay in the know.



INSPIRE

Empower each other to
make a difference.

Solidarity Forever



WORKSHOPS

Brockport Chapter Workshops Fall 2026

● **November:** 11/4/26 | “Know Your Rights” | 11-12:30pm

WHO CAN ATTEND? All UUP Members

HOW YOU GET THE ZOOM LINK: The link will be sent to the email you provide in this registration form, and will be sent out 12-24 hours prior to the workshop!

ABOUT WORKSHOP:

What do you do when they come for you?! What is counseling? What is discipline? What are your rights in these, and other situations related to actions taken by the college. This workshop will provide valuable information to UUP members regarding what is counseling vs. discipline, what rights you have in each situation, and other items to be aware of when facing these situations during your employment. Our NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist, Jamie Guilian, will be sharing her expertise and insights at this workshop. **Registration link below:**

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1q41A09qGhqw_i9zE-0lp8HCBI2k5OAX6VOHYkqVph-c/edit

● **December:** 12/2/26 | “Promotions & Salary Increases” | 11-12:30pm

WHO CAN ATTEND? UUP Professional Members

HOW YOU GET THE ZOOM LINK: The link will be sent to the email you provide in this registration form, and will be sent out 12-24 hours prior to the workshop!

ABOUT WORKSHOP:

For professional title employees at Brockport, there are opportunities for promotions and salary increases. BUT..... where do you go and how do you do it? The Professional Promotions and/or Salary Increases Workshop will answer these questions and provide UUP members with important information that every UUP professional member should know. Topics covered will be: Where do I get the information from, what do I need to be aware of, how do I do it and more. If you are a professional title UUP member, this workshop is for you regardless of your title and how long you have worked at Brockport. Our NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist, Jamie Guilian, will be sharing her expertise and insights at this workshop.

Registration Link Below:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1Ei8uf8X7Lfs8Z_QYdhiYe6r9xpBCfTx1evpstjH2-lk/edit



**SUNY
BROCKPORT**

Save the Date

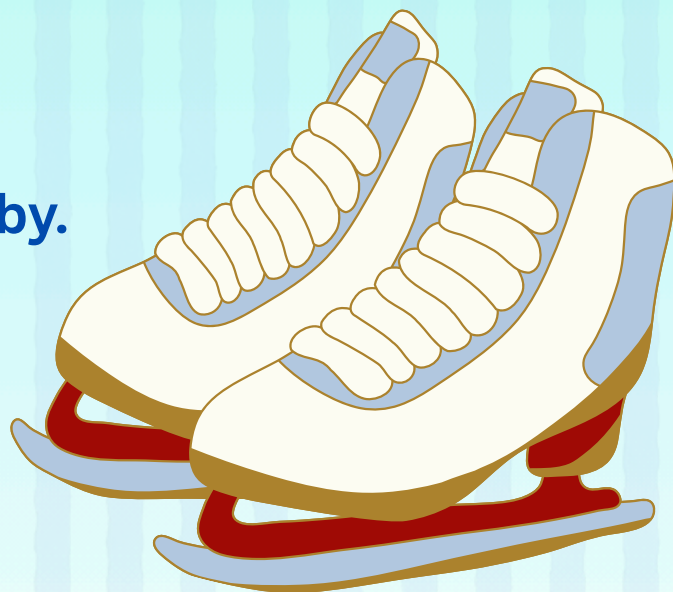
UUP Holiday Party

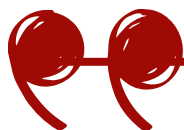
Thursday December 10th
Wegmans Ice Arena
in the SERC
5pm-7pm

Open skating 5pm-5:50pm
Join us for food, drinks and
conversation in the SERC lobby.

Parking available in Lot V

RSVP COMING SOON!!





Contact Information from Statewide & the Chapter at Brockport:



UUP STATEWIDE

🌐 UUPINFO.ORG
☎ UUP BENEFITS: 800 887 3863
🌐 [HTTPS://UUPINFO.ORG/BENEFIT](https://uupinfo.org/benefit)
🏠 [S/BTF/](https://uupinfo.org/benefit)

P.O. BOX 15143 ALBANY, NY
12212-9954

BROCKPORT CHAPTER

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📷 BROCKPORT_UUP
📘 BROCKPORTUUP
☎ 585 395 2208
🏠 SUNY BROCKPORT, COOPER HALL
SUITE B4G

QUICK FACTS

+UUP STATEWIDE HAS WORKSHOPS REGULARLY

- PSLF
- RETIREMENT
- BENEFITS
- UUP 101 COURSES
- [HTTPS://UUPINFO.ORG/C ALENDAR/](https://uupinfo.org/calendar/)

+OUR CHAPTER HAS WORKSHOPS MONTHLY

+VOTE COPE

- THIS PROGRAM GIVES MEMBERS A CHANCE TO DONATE TO POLITICAL ACTIONS.
- FOR MORE INFO VISIT [HTTPS://UUPINFO.ORG/V OTECOPE/](https://uupinfo.org/votecope/)



Please check out our chapter website for news and events!
<https://uuphost.org/brockport/>