



President's Corner

By Rowena Blackman-Stroud

On behalf of the Downstate Medical Center chapter officers of UUP, I'd like to welcome you to the 2014-2015 academic year. I look forward to working with you and facing the challenges of the upcoming year together.

Your hard work and dedication, along with UUP's collaboration with the community and other unions, was what led to a number of victories for SUNY Downstate Medical Center once the state wrapped up its legislative session in June.

In March, we celebrated the state Legislature's decision to reject an Executive Budget plan that would have allowed private corporations to run Downstate Medical Center and SUNY's other public hospitals.

The relentless advocacy of our members and the SUNY Downstate Coalition of Faith, Labor and Community Leaders was significant in stopping a Senate proposal to establish a "firewall" around the hospitals, separating funding for the hospitals from SUNY. There was also more state aid for SUNY public hospitals in the state's 2014-15 budget; the enacted budget sets aside \$87.5 million for the hospital subsidy; the governor proposed \$69 million.

You, as members of the Downstate Chapter of UUP, helped make this happen. Dozens of you routinely gave up your lunch hour to attend rallies for Downstate. You got on buses and traveled to Albany to tell state legislators to stand up for jobs and services at Downstate. You stood up and fought back, and I am grateful for that.

The faith-based leaders from the SUNY Downstate Coalition of Faith, Labor and Community Leaders were also instrumental in achieving these successes. A half-dozen clergy fasted for two days in March to bring attention to Downstate and the importance of the medical center to hundreds of thousands of patients in Central Brooklyn.

I'd like to take this opportunity to personally thank the Coalition and its leaders: Bishop Orlando Findlayter, chairman of Churches United to Save & Heal (CUSH); Pastor Shane Vidal, Maranatha 7th Day Adventist Church; and Pastor Gilford Monroe, president of the 67th Precinct Clergy Council, and Pastor Will Seaton. As a member of the Coalition, UUP has worked closely with these faith-based leaders and other Coalition members, such as the Brooklyn NAACP, Brooklyn For Peace, community boards and DC 37 retirees.

I must thank AFT President Randi Weingarten, who spoke forcefully for Downstate at every opportunity. She attended our rallies, wrote op-ed pieces that were published in Brooklyn newspapers, and put Downstate's plight in the national spotlight.

Thanks also go out to our labor sisters and brothers—CSEA, PEF, New York State United Teachers, Professional Staff Congress/CUNY and the United Federation of Teachers—who worked closely with UUP and the Coalition to keep Downstate a fully operational, state-run public hospital.

That teamwork extended to the New York City Labor Day Parade, where PSC/CUNY President Barbara Bowen and her members carried signs that said "Support SUNY Downstate." For years, the Downstate Chapter carried the banner for UUP in the parade, and we were certainly there again this year. But we weren't alone; this time, more than 300 UUPers from across the state marched with us.



Yes, we have accomplished much. But there is still much more to do.

Downstate is still under attack and we cannot stop fighting to save our jobs and the health services we provide to so many in Central Brooklyn.

SUNY Downstate is worth fighting for. The vital health care services we provide are worth fighting for. Downstate's Medical School is worth fighting for. Our jobs are worth fighting for. OUR UNION IS ALL OF US.

We invite all UUP members to get involved in the fight to keep SUNY Downstate viable, fully operational and public:

- If your department does not have a UUP representative, please volunteer to serve as your Department Representative.
- Attend chapter membership meetings.
- Volunteer to serve on union committees.
- If you haven't done so, please submit your personal email address to Brooklyn@uupmail.org so can keep you up to date on what's happening.
- Encourage your faith leaders to join the SUNY Downstate Coalition of Faith, Labor and Community Leaders.
- Provide us with information on community organizations that you're involved with.

UUP Chapter at Downstate

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Officers

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Lisa Mouscardy Willis

**Downstate DSRIP (Delivery System Reform
Incentive Payment) Update**

In August, SUNY Downstate Medical Center received a \$333,000 Planning Grant through the federal Delivery System Reform Initiative Payment, allowing the facility to move forward with plans to transform how it provides care and improves how it delivers those services.

The DSRIP is designed to promote community-level health care collaborations, with a focus on system reform, clinical improvements and population-wide projects. Its goal: to achieve a 25 percent reduction in avoidable hospital use over five years.

SUNY's other hospitals, Stony Brook University Medical Center and Upstate Medical University, received \$333,000 in DSRIP funds. In western New York, the Eric County Medical Center received \$1 million; Catholic Medical Partners in Buffalo got \$500,000.

It is unclear exactly how Downstate will use the funds to streamline health care services in Brooklyn. A union-backed plan, the SUNY Downstate Community Care Plan, isn't under consideration at this time. Downstate officials haven't released their plan, other than to say it will meet requirements for DSRIP funding.

DSRIP in Review

In April, New York State reached an agreement on a federal waiver that allows the state to use \$8 billion in savings generated by Medicaid Redesign Team (MRT) reforms. The DSRIP is the primary mechanism that will be used to provide Medicaid waiver funds to hospitals and health systems. Of the \$8 billion, \$6.42 billion will be allotted as DSRIP funds.

A PPS is a network of health care providers and community organizations within a service area that would work together to qualify for the DSRIP program. The partnerships will be required to design and implement five to as many as 10 selected DSRIP improvement projects.

DSRIP-eligible providers include major public hospitals and private/not-for-profit safety net providers such as hospitals, nursing homes, federally qualified health centers, behavioral health providers, and home care agencies.

Fifty (50) DSRIP Design Grant applications were submitted from across the state. Six of those applications were from Brooklyn-based providers requesting a total of \$15.2 million.

Department of Health officials said in a public hearing that setting up Performing Provider System in Brooklyn would be difficult, but added that providers have little means for survival without waiver funds.

Waiver language requires workers and their representatives to be included in DSRIP projects. UUP will be included throughout the DSRIP process. Project plans must contain a comprehensive workforce strategy and provide evidence of public involvement, including documentation of collaboration with local public health departments, public stakeholders, and consumers.

Already, UUP has submitted correspondence calling for a "clear business relationship between the component providers" and for them to demonstrate a joint-governance strategy. UUP also wants clear language in the waiver that requires unions to be considered as active partners in the planning, development, and implementation of the overall DSRIP program.

Important dates:

- Sept. 22 – Draft project plan application will be released
- September – Preliminary network attestation
- Nov. 14 – Final project plan application will be released
- November – Final network attestation
- Dec. 16 – Project plan application due
- March 2015 – DSRIP Project Plan awards made
- April 1, 2015 – DSRIP year one begins

IAAF (Interim Access Assurance Fund) Funds for Downstate

In July, Downstate received \$20.4 million from the state's Interim Access Assurance Fund; these are temporary, time-limited funds for providers that apply for DSRIP. The IAAF funding is for providers to continue access to key health care services while the state assesses DSRIP project for approval and funding.

In its IAAF application for Downstate, SUNY stated that IAAF (funds were necessary to "provide financial relief and allow the University Hospital to remain financially viable while planning for restructured services with Brooklyn facilities as envisioned in DSRIP."

Joint Labor Management Grant Programs

Detailed information on the Joint Labor Management Grant Programs can be found on the UUP website at uupinfo.org. Click on *JLM Grant Programs* at the bottom of the UUP homepage. This will direct you to the NYS/UUP website on the Joint Labor Management Committees.

Joint Labor Management Grant Programs include:

- Employment Grants
- Professional Development Grants
- Safety and Health Grants
- Technology Grants
- Campus Grants

There were 131 recipients for the last round of the campus Professional Development Awards program.

If you haven't done so, please submit your private email address to Brooklyn@uupmail.org; we will notify you once the application window is announced. Also, check the UUP campus bulletin boards later in the fall for dates of the next round for awards. Those awards cover activities taking place from July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015.

Awards in previous years have ranged from \$300 to \$1,000 depending on the amount of funding allocated by the State for that year and the number of eligible applications.

Guidelines and applications will be available once the application window is announced.

CHAPTER MEETING NOTICE ALL UUP MEMBERS ARE INVITED

Date: Monday, Oct. 27, 2014
Time: Noon – 1 p.m.
Place: Auditorium

Lunch will be provided from
12:50 p.m. – 1 p.m.

The agenda will include:

- ◆ Individual Development Awards
- ◆ DSRIP Update
- ◆ Update of the proposed affiliation between University at Albany and Downstate Medical Center
- ◆ Update on DSA Distribution

IMPORTANT CHAPTER WORKSHOP YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND A PRE-RETIREMENT WORKSHOP

DATE: Monday, Sept. 29, 2014

TIME: Noon – 1:30 p.m.

PLACE: Education Building
Lecture Hall 1B
395 Lenox Road

Lunch will be provided

AGENDA

- Steps to Retirement
- Health Insurance in Retirement
- Dental and Vision in Retirement
- Membership in Retirement