

BULLETIN

EXCELLENCE IN UNITY



UUP ESC NEWS: SUMMER 2015

Pamela Malone, Chapter President

Richard R. Wells, Vice President for Academics

Dave Puskas, Vice President for Professionals

President's Message: Now is the Time to Contribute to Vote/Cope!

Sisters and Brothers,

Welcome to the summer bulletin of *Excellence in Unity*! I hope your summer is going well and you have a chance to rest before the new academic year begins.

As we have previously reported, the extractions for the Deficit Reduction Program have finally ended. Over the last 2 years, we have had the equivalent of 9 days' pay taken from our paychecks and we will be repaid for 7 of those days starting next summer. I hope you all use this as an example if you are ever confronted with the notion that state employees are overpaid drains on NYS taxpayers. We are **hard-working, dedicated public servants** who have all felt the pain of these deductions. No one can say that UUP members do not sacrifice for their jobs!

Our last paycheck this month will also include our negotiated raise of 2%. The \$500 on-base raise (prorated for part time employees) will be paid by the end of the year--although it too is effective July 1.

In this newsletter you will find a legislative update. Many UUPers worked tirelessly this legislative session to advocate for ourselves and our students. We were successful in getting several key pieces of legislation through the Senate and Assembly, with the help of legislators dedicated to higher education.

We hope that you use this opportunity to begin a contribution to Vote/Cope (or increase your current contribution). We could not have been successful without the funds to cover travel expenses for advocacy, television ads (that we know were very effective) and funding for research. All of these activities depend on voluntary contributions to Vote/Cope.

However, UUP has a low percentage of members who contribute to Vote/Cope, especially compared to other NYSUT locals across the state. I am convinced this is due to a lack of information about what Vote/Cope is and why we need it. **Our successes this legislative season were due to members donating not only time for advocacy but also money through Vote/Cope.** It can be payroll deducted, and this summer is an excellent time to begin.

I am asking everyone to fill out the Vote/Cope form in this bulletin and begin contributions today. If you are already contributing, please consider a higher amount. **Vote/Cope funds will be even more critical as we enter negotiations and face attacks on unions!**

Please know that any successes we reach are through the hard work of our union--which includes you. We, as union members, make up UUP. Our strength and power comes from our rank and file. In the last couple of years we have often asked for help in doing the work of the union, accomplishing our goals, and furthering our agenda.

Your involvement has never been more important!

Our Fall Edition of Excellence in Unity will be mailed to your home and we need you to read it closely.
Between the changes at the college, upcoming negotiations and dangerous assaults on unions across the country, we must stand united now more than ever.

Please take the time to read this Bulletin and keep aware of the important communications that we send you. Your hard work is appreciated!

In solidarity,



DRP and Salary Increase Reminders

Here are a few reminders regarding the Deficit Reduction Program (DRP):

- ♦ June was the last month for DRP extractions.
- ♦ We have had a total of 9 days extracted and 7 of those days will be repaid at the rate at which it was taken.
- ♦ Repayment of the 7 days will be over 39 payroll periods beginning in June 2016.
- ♦ Employees who separate from service prior to full repayment will have the balance of what is owed to them paid at the time of separation.

Reminders about this year's salary increases:

- ♦ 2% on base salary increase effective July 1, 2015
- ♦ \$500 on base salary increase, prorated for part timers, effective July 1, 2015 and payable by December 31.

Note: There also is 1/2 of a percent Discretionary Award pool, not on base, that must be paid by December 31.

Vice President for Professional's Message

Submitted by Dave Puskas

Colleagues –

Since the last newsletter, there have been several events of note I'd like to report out on, and several other items that have been noted previously that warrant another reminder.

I attended our College's Governance Retreat as a co-chair of PPC along with Lisa D'Adamo-Weinstein. There are two main items to report. The first is that our Senate Chair and Vice-Chair were elected; faculty members Mary Mawn and Thalia MacMillan respectively. Congratulations to you both! The second was a resolution passed thanking outgoing Chair Tom McElroy for his leadership on Governance. Tom has spent his time in the Union trenches helping to hammer out your Professionals' Handbook, and his dedication to serving the College on Governance has overlapped with our Chapter's mission and values, and to Tom we'd like to express our thanks for your selfless work on Governance.

Immediately after Governance was our Chapter's annual Executive Board Retreat. The meat and potatoes of the retreat came in two workshops held that Wednesday morning: one on Conflict Management presented by the Executive Director of Mediation Matters, an organization serving the six-county area around the Capital region; and a discussion on Member Organization, presented by UUP's Statewide Membership Development Officer, Arty Shertzer, and NYSUT's Statewide Higher Ed Political Organizer Nicki Richardson. These two are invaluable resources, and our Chapter leadership plans on taking advantage of their offers of assistance to help us grow and develop our Chapter.

Speaking of Member Organization, have you downloaded NYSUT's Member Action Center app for your smartphone or tablet yet? I'm going to sound a bit like a commercial here for a moment, but in all honesty, it is VERY easy to use. After adding your name and address, the application auto-generates emails and faxes to legislators, Senators, members of the Board of Regents, and more. There are many issues affecting Higher Education that will be decided by lawmakers, and spending 30 seconds in this app (and that's really all it takes) allows you to speak up and make your voices be heard on dozens of various issues. It's free and it's on both the App Store and Google Play.

<https://mac.nysut.org/get-the-nysut-mac-smartphone-app>

Richard Wells briefly mentioned SUNY Maintenance of Effort during our retreat, and it reminded me, "Oh yeah, that's an item I can fax my Senator about in the MAC app" – a couple taps and it was sent out. It takes hardly any time at all to use, and it sends a powerful message to our lawmakers.

Okay, enough about the app, let's close this out, shall we?

I put a note out last newsletter about our Chapter's Professional Concerns Committee, a committee of and by Professional Employees of our college community that works to identify issues, discuss opportunities, and formulate agendas around bettering our working conditions. Please, if you are interested in serving on that committee (we'll have a phone call every month or so), please send your name to me via email.

I will probably repeat this paragraph many, many times in these newsletters, but it's one of the most important reminders I could provide. Professional Employees should have accurate, up-to-date performance programs on file. If you do not, please let us know! In the best of circumstances it is important to have this document in place; as we transition into ESC 2.0, it is imperative. If you do not have an accurate, up-to-date performance program, CONTACT US. If you have not had your performance evaluation done on time, CONTACT US. If you have ANY questions or concerns about your program or the evaluation process, CONTACT US.

On that note - please do not hesitate to contact me at David.Puskas@esc.edu or at dpuskas.uup@gmail.com if you need any kind of assistance that our Union may provide. Please let us know how we can continue to serve you best.

Highest Regards, and In Solidarity,

Dave Puskas

Student Intern Nadia Amin

Submitted by Pamela Malone

The Empire State College Chapter of UUP welcomes student intern Nadia Amin, a Psychology major at SUNY Cortland.

Nadia will use her skills to research motivation and how people identify with organizations. She attended the Central New York Advocacy Day on Wednesday, June 10 and spoke with legislators about the importance of SUNY funding. Nadia also attended the chapter Executive Board workshops and meeting on June 24, and will combine her experiences and research into a report on member organizing.



Photo by Pamela Malone

In true Empire State College fashion, Nadia is conducting her internship like an independent study and is collaborating with President Pamela Malone on the direction of her research project.

"We are so pleased to have Nadia interning for the chapter this summer," said Malone, "Her skills and experience are an excellent match for the chapter, and the Executive Board is looking forward to her report."

Nadia will finish her work by the end of July and will return to Cortland in the fall for her senior year.

Affirmative Action Committee

Submitted by Brenda Henry-Offor, Ph.D.

Hello Friends:

Empire State College provides clear information about Equal Employment Opportunity Affirmative Action Policy on its website: <http://www.esc.edu/policies/?search=cid=37413>. United University Professions (UUP) encourages all of its members to familiarize themselves with these policies.

In its statements, the College shares its goal to provide equal employment opportunity, address unlawful discrimination and harassment in the workplace, as well as contribute to the diversity of the college's workforce. As union members we should all endeavor to help in diversifying our workplace thereby enriching our communities. We are all responsible for our actions and, as such, educating ourselves about affirmative action and diversity should be an important goal as employees of Empire State College.

Did you know that: "It is the college's obligation to take appropriate action under this policy should it be determined that applicable federal and state equal employment opportunity laws and regulations have been violated. Employees and applicants are protected from coercion, intimidation and interference or discrimination for filing a complaint or assisting an investigation under Executive Order 11246, as amended?" (<http://www.esc.edu/policies?search=cid=37413>).

Until next time.....

Upcoming Events

- * ESC Chapter Officer's Conference Call August 5, 2015 at 3:00 pm
- * Communications Committee Conference Call August 18, 2015 at 12 noon
- * Labor Management Meeting August 19, 2015 at 2:00 pm
- * Center Representatives/Committee Chairs Conference Call August 24, 2015 at 11:00 am
- * UUP Fall Delegate Assembly October 2 and 3, 2015 in Buffalo

Visit our website for a complete listing of Upcoming Events:

www.uupescchapter.com

Legislative Committee

Submitted by John Valetta

Visibility makes all the difference.

Hi, my name is John Valetta and I am your chapter's newly appointed legislative representative. I've had a life-long interest in progressive politics and labor. I came to volunteer for my position after a few impromptu discussions with our Chapter President Pamela Malone on how best I could serve the chapter knowing my interest in public service and our political process. My initial foray in this endeavor was to participate in a local successful campaign (Coordinating Center/Saratoga County) for first-time New York State Assembly member Carrie Woerner, a strong supporter of public education and SUNY. Pamela, I and several others in our unit participated in phone banking and attended rallies in support of her candidacy. It was a challenging but ultimately very rewarding experience.



After my baptism by fire (I'm personable by nature but not necessarily a public person by inclination), this past Spring UUP and other supporters of our public university spent a day in our state's capital reaching out to Senate and Assembly members. We discussed the current condition of the university and the pressing issues before them as representatives, their constituents and children, and us, as providers of this valuable public resource. A most interesting day was spent in the halls and offices of these men and women who have chosen to spend their lives in public service. As a newcomer to this type of advocacy I can sincerely tell our members that I have a new appreciation and respect for those who chose to put their personal efforts and reputations to the American political process. One blinding truth came through to me as a newbie, our representatives want and appreciate our participation. Whether we call, write, text, email or attend town halls, they want and need to hear from us. It becomes even more important as Union members that we speak out on our own and on the university behalf now that the influence of money-politics has become the law of the land. Our personal resources may be limited but our right to voice our beliefs, support our positions and gain influence through these combined efforts will not be ignored. I look forward to joining my colleagues, possibly you, for another legislative outreach endeavor as we approach the beginning of our negotiating season.

In solidarity,

John

Photo by Pamela Malone

Support our political action fund.



Support your union's efforts to protect

public education

access to health care,

labor rights

fairness for working families

A contribution to Vote-Cope, NYSUT's political action fund, helps ensure **your voice will be heard** on issues, large and small, that effect **you!**

United University Professions

The union that makes SUNY work

(518)640-6600

(800)342-4206

Fax: (866)812-9446

www.uupinfo.org

UUP VOTE/COPE Voluntary Contribution • United University Professions • P.O. Box 15143, Albany, NY 12212-5143

Last Name _____ First _____ MI _____

Address (Include Street, City, State, ZIP) _____

Campus _____ Department _____ Non-SUNY Email _____

AUTHORIZATION FOR VOLUNTARY DEDUCTION

Effective no earlier than _____ (enter date), I hereby authorize regular payroll deductions from my earnings in the amount specified below as a voluntary contribution to be paid to VOTE/COPE, to be used in accordance with applicable law for the purpose of making political contributions in connection with federal, state and local elections. My contribution is voluntary, and I understand that it is not required as a condition of employment, and that I may revoke this authorization at any time by giving written notice to the Treasurer of United University Professions.

Contribution Per Pay Period (Circle One) \$1 \$2 \$5 \$10 Other \$ _____

Signature _____ Date _____

End of Legislative Session—Update

Submitted by UUP President Fred Kowal

The New York State Senate and Assembly concluded the 2015 legislative session early in the morning of Friday, June 25. This legislative session was like no other, given the number of high-profile leadership and committee changes that occurred.

Still, UUP was successful in advancing a number of our priorities. The Legislature passed several of our key bills, including the Maintenance of Effort bill—which, if signed by the governor, will bring the state closer to paying its fair share to fund public higher education.

I am also pleased to report that the advocacy efforts of UUP and its coalitions resulted in these wins during the 2015 legislation session (includes budget issues):

- * Passage of a bill that allows public employees who served in the military to receive pension credit for military service, regardless of when they served;
- * Passage of a bill requiring the governor to submit to the Legislature, as part of the annual Executive Budget, five-year capital plans for the SUNY state-operated campuses and CUNY senior colleges;
- * Passage of a bill that prohibits the state from sweeping outstanding SUNY hospital accounts receivables, such as tuition, fees and hospital charges into the general fund;
- * The Legislature rejected a proposed 10 percent penalty to campus funding, which would have occurred if campuses failed to submit an approved performance-based funding plan;
- * Maintained support for the DREAM Act, which passed the Assembly;
- * Defeated the governor's proposal to cut the SUNY Hospital State Subsidy by nearly \$19 million;
- * Defeated damaging language that would have opened the door for the privatization of SUNY's hospitals;
- * Increased the funding for the Educational Opportunity Program, Educational Opportunity Centers and ATTAIN Labs; and,
- * Increased SUNY capital program funding.

This session was filled with challenges, but together we were able to successfully advocate for bills that will improve the financial security of our campuses. Despite our hard fought victories, the battle continues.

I want to thank you for your advocacy efforts and ask that you continue this fight with us. We must monitor the implementation of the SUNY Investment and Performance Fund and continue an aggressive organizing campaign. We must take action now to counter the U.S. Supreme Court's recent decision to hear the anti-union case, *Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association*.

We must redouble our efforts to organize and grow this great union. The time to prepare is now.

Together, we can make a difference.

In Solidarity,

Fred



Building a Network One Advocate at a Time

Submitted by Pamela Malone

My friend Jim Cupicha, who lives in a small town in Western New York, does not work in the field of education, nor does he have any family members currently in college. He does recognize, however, the importance of education in our culture, society and economy. We've had many talks about the importance of properly funding higher education in our state.

Towards the end of the legislative session, we needed people to contact their elected leaders to support the Maintenance of Effort legislation to begin to restore SUNY funding to its former levels. When he heard of this, Jim jumped on the phone with his senator's office.

"I told them that this bill is addressing the foundation of our future--the state university system," Jim reported. "The bill is about the nuts and bolts of recovery and it will grow from there. We cannot ignore the needs of the next generation in this state."

I wasn't surprised that Jim responded so quickly, but recently I asked him about his motivation to contact his senator. "There has to be an awareness of what's happening in our state," Jim said. "How can we not see what's going on around us? The repair of our state has to start, and we have to look towards our future--which is our students."

Jim demonstrates that we must build our allies not just within our chapter, or within UUP but within our families, our circle of friends, and our neighbors. There are a lot of people out there who see what we do, recognize the importance of it, and are willing to talk about it. We cannot be afraid to ask them for support! **Let's build our network of allies that will reach from one end of the state to the other.**

And let this small article serve as a big "thank you" to Jim for his efforts on behalf of UUP and SUNY!

Photo by Jim Cupicha

Outreach at the NYS Legislature: Not What I Expected!

Submitted by Nadia Amin.

As an undergraduate Psychology major, I did not know what to expect when Pamela, UUP Empire State College Chapter President, approached me with the idea about speaking to New York State legislators about issues important to UUP and SUNY. I said yes, thinking that it would be a good experience to add to my resume. However, as the day progressed, I realized that I knew nothing about politics. I didn't know who our Senators and Assembly members are. And I had never petitioned for my rights or the rights of others.

I felt intimidated when I entered the Capitol. All I could contemplate was "You're an amateur, why would you simply hand yourself over to a pack of hungry lions?" I, a Psychology major, who knew absolutely nothing about politics, was going to urge politicians to promote change that could benefit thousands of people? The pressure was intense, but I made it this far, so I saw no other option but to continue.

The members of the UUP Chapter made my legislative experience less frightening. They were all kind-hearted, wonderful people who lightened my mood. But, what really struck me was how intrepid they were. These select few were fighting for the rights of thousands. None of them were fearful or nervous. Instead, they were united with a common purpose: we need change, and we need it now. My admiration for all of them grew tenfold, and my apprehension faded.

Previously, when I heard the words "lobbying" or "petitioning," I immediately pictured hostile politicians and lobbyists quarreling with one another. Anger, criticism, and insults come to my mind. But what I experienced was the complete opposite! The atmosphere was pleasant, and the staff was kind. There was no bickering or arguing whatsoever. We were treated as equals, and with respect. The senators and Assembly members and their staff held eye contact with us, and jotted notes when we voiced our opinions. Not once did they interrupt our conversations. It boggled my mind because this was the complete opposite from what I saw in the media. When people say "don't judge a book by its cover," they really aren't kidding.



I am so happy that I was given the opportunity to lobby for my rights, and for the rights of others. Anyone can petition, you don't have to be big in politics to stand up for what you believe in. But, the biggest lesson I learned was to never assume that information you obtain from one outlet is necessarily true. There are many sides to one story. If you only look at the first page, you will never get an accurate description of the whole book.

Nadia Amin, UUP ESC Chapter Student Intern (student at SUNY Cortland)

Photo by Pamela Malone

Rally at the Million Dollar Staircase—
Capital Building



More than 300 UUP members, along with family members and friends, marched proudly up Fifth Avenue, in the 2014 New York City Labor Day Parade.
Photo by Unknown



Pamela Malone, Rich Bonnabeau & Kathy Cole
at Carrie Woerner Headquarters

Photo by Unknown



Amsterdam Labor Walk on October 25, 2014: from left to right is Carrie Woerner, Paul Tonko, Cobleskill President Bill Tusang, UUP Secretary Eileen Landy, and Reynolds Jones with his own special advocate!



Benefit News

Submitted by Karen LaBarge**Think SUMMER! Think Fun in the Sun!**

UUP members have the added benefit of membership in NYSUT (New York State United Teachers), which provides access to more than 40 endorsed programs and services. Here are a few offers to take advantage of this summer and beyond.

Theme Park Tickets and Park/Hotel Travel Packages

The Member Benefits Corporation provides 30 percent off theme park gate ticket prices (*Walt Disney World, Universal Studios, Sea World, Discovery Bay or Aquatica, anyone?*), ⁰ 4 percent off select hotels, and special combo packages through the OrlandoVacation.com program. In addition, the Working Advantage savings portal, and Wyndham Hotels and Endless Vacation Rentals, offer even more travel and entertainment (movies, museums and attractions) options. Details can be found at <http://memberbenefits.nysut.org/news-events/theme-park-tickets>.

MLB Baseball Game Tickets

Working Advantage also offers discounted tickets to New York Yankees, New York Mets and Boston Red Sox games for the 2015 Major League Baseball season. Go to <http://memberbenefits.nysut.org/news-events/news/2015/april/working-advantage> for details and ordering instructions.

Shopping and Travel Programs

In addition to the OrlandoVacation.com program, the Member Benefits Corporation also offers access to the Member Shopping Program powered by PayCheck Direct, which allows members to purchase name-brand products and make interest-free payments over 12 months. The Grand Circle Cruise Line/Grand Circle Travel offers a variety of group tour vacations designed for travelers over age 50, at a savings of up to \$100 per person. More information can be found at <http://memberbenefits.nysut.org/news-events/shopping-and-travel-programs>.

Complete details about these offers, as well as other programs, are available at

<http://memberbenefits.nysut.org/> or by calling 800-626-8101.

For more information on all UUP benefits, go to <http://uupinfo.org/benefits>

Chapter Officers and Center Representatives 2015-2017

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Gennaro Bonfiglio at Gennaro.Bonfiglio@esc.edu

Niagara Frontier Center

Jane Cudmore at mizj_1999@yahoo.com

Northeast Center

Ralph English at Ralph.English@esc.edu

UUP ESC Chapter Committees

Get Involved – Join a Committee!

Grievance Committee

Advise members of their rights under the contract, represent them in grievance hearing and assist the Grievance Officer in processing grievances. Contact Grievance Officer David Puskas at david.puskas@esc.edu.

Legislative Committee

Plan & coordinate activities that inform legislators of Chapter or UUP needs; educate the Chapter membership about legislation of interest to UUP Legislative Committee and coordinate the annual Vote/Cope. Contact Pamela Malone at pmalone.uup@gmail.com

Professional Concerns Committee

Identify & discuss issues of concern to Empire State College professionals. Contact VPP Dave Puskas at dpuskas.uup@gmail.com.

Safety and Health Committee

Identify & review safety-related issues affecting employees; recommend plans for the correction of such matters. Contact Cindy Rybaltowski at rybal429@gmail.com and Timothy Cosgriff at tcosgriff.uup@gmail.com.

“Coming TOGETHER is a **beginning**;
Keeping TOGETHER is **progress**;
Working TOGETHER is **success**.”

Henry Ford

Committee Members Needed

Communications Committee

Work on the newsletter, website and other forms of communication with members. Contact Kathy B. Cole at kcole.uup@gmail.com and Kathy Farrell at KLFarrell419@gmail.com

Contingent Concerns Committee

Work to encourage & promote membership & activities of contingents; make recommendations with regards to organizational structures wherein contingents work. Contact Contingent Officer Mary Helen Kolisnyk at MaryHelenKolisnyk@esc.edu.

Academic Concerns Committee

Identify & discuss issues of concern to Empire State College academics. Contact VPA Richard Wells at wellsr1@gmail.com.

Affirmative Action Committee

Assist in monitoring campus Affirmative Action programs & policies; recommend actions designed to implement & enforce Affirmative Action goals. Contact Affirmative Action Officer Brenda Henry-Offor at bhoffor@gmail.com.

Membership Committee

Assist in recruiting new members; organize membership drives; maintain up-to-date lists of members; and disseminate literature to the membership. Contact Pamela Malone at pmalone.uup@gmail.com.

CONNECT With Your Chapter!



EMPIRE STATE COLLEGE CHAPTER

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We're on the Web!
www.uupescchapter.com

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UUP ESC Chapter's Purpose

Scripted from our Chapter Bylaws:

The purpose of the ESC Chapter shall be:

To promote the aims of UUP

To improve the terms and conditions of employment

To defend the civil, professional, and human rights of those it represents

To promote mutual assistance and cooperation among the members of UUP

To advance education in a democracy and democracy in education

To promote the principle of unity and collective bargaining in higher education

To monitor local compliance with the Agreement between UUP and the State of New York

To promote **public higher education,**

academic excellence, and

to strengthen the college and university community.

The Chapter will organize and support activities associated with its campus responsibilities as a union and shall cooperate with other Chapters, UUP, UUP affiliates, and other appropriate organizations in furtherance of these objectives.



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