

SPECIAL EDITION

2016 SPRING UUP ESC NEWS: EXCELLENCE IN UNITY



Pamela Malone, Chapter President

Richard R. Wells, Vice President for Academics

Dave Puskas, Vice President for Professionals

EMPOWER INSPIRE
ENERGY EQUITY FOCUSED
HEALTH LABOR RIGHTS
HELPFUL JUSTICE MARCH
LABOR-MOVEMENT
MIGHTY RIGHTS
REFORM COMMUNITY MOBILIZE
LABOR-MOVEMENT SUPPORT

WE ARE UUP

You, Me, Us: We Are UUP!

Pamela Malone, President

Sisters and Brothers,

We are UUP. It is a simple statement, yet in those three words lies the power we have as a union.

How can we claim more of that power? How can we work together in solidarity and strength? If we work together, what can we accomplish?

We know where we want to be—a force at the college treated with respect by the administration, with a voice that guides policies that we know are best for our students and ourselves. We have valuable careers and healthy workplaces, with strong relationships with our colleagues. We have the ability, without fear, to utilize the many protections and benefits that we have been earned and fought for.

A path to that place starts with the recognition that “We are UUP.” Can you identify with your union? Do you feel a part of it? Is your union part of *you*?

Some think of the union as an insurance policy: if things go bad, I’ll have someone to watch my back. And yes, the union is there for you and we have served many, many individual members in this way. Some think of the union as our voice with management; and yes, your chapter leaders serve in this important role. Others have said the union doesn’t do anything for them; and well, that is incorrect—and a very unfortunate view of the union that we are all working to overcome.

I’d like to tell you my thoughts about our union. Every time I hear one of our members speak about their work, their research, or their students, I feel a sense of pride. We are surrounded by enormous talent that serves our students, our college, our profession and the public good. I see people filled with passion about their work, compassion for their students, and loyalty to their principles. I’ve also been around the college and the chapter long enough to know that our dispersion can lead to a feeling of isolation and lack of interaction; and I long ago realized that people are doing a lot more work than anyone realizes.

It’s interesting as I write this report that when I think of our union, I think of you. Yes, our union is about fighting for our contract that will provide job security and benefits, and providing an avenue to enforce contract provisions. But we don’t say, “I am a contract” or “I am a grievance.” We don’t say “I am a discounted cell phone plan.”

We say, “I am a union member.” And together: **We are UUP.**

We know things are bad for a lot of us right now. We share your frustration with the way the college has changed and the way the changes have been implemented—often with complete disregard for college employees (I’m sure each one of us has at least one example). We know that the contract doesn’t prevent college administrations or administrators from making bad decisions or being bad managers. They can ignore

We Are UUP, continued

the stress on the college, its students and employees resulting from “building the plane in mid-air.”

So I again ask: If we work together, what can we accomplish?

There is no power of the union without the members. Our union’s strength comes only from our willingness to stand together and challenge the many injustices happening across the college. Our willingness to come forward when our rights are violated—and we know that it is happening. There may be many areas where we do not have a contractual say in matters, but can we work together to raise our voices? Support shared governance? Improve our working conditions? I believe that increasing our unity and the visibility of that unity will increase our power.

This month, we have launched a few initiatives to change our way of thinking. We are asking all members to sign a pledge to stand up for your rights regarding workload—a copy of it is in this newsletter and you can also sign up online at www.uupescchapter.com.

We are asking everyone to wear a pin declaring “I am UUP.” Take a moment to picture it—at every college meeting, our solidarity and strength are there for all to see.

Lastly, let’s call “**enough is enough**” in terms of enforcing our rights. I cannot tell you how many times a member has approached the chapter leadership with a really horrible story, but one that provides a lot of teeth in terms of what we can do (and we often have different strategies on how to resolve a problem). But sometimes that member shies away from taking action because he’s worried, or she is afraid of being targeted. Or they think it will get better—and I also hear from members down the road who wish they had taken action earlier. Every time this happens, management has rolled over our rights without challenge.

We have really come to a crossroads for our chapter. Of course, the job of the union—members and leaders—is to protect our rights, especially for those most vulnerable. But the source of a union’s power to do so is collective, for it is by coming together, looking out for one another and our union, that we secure our dignity and maintain our values.

We cannot do this individually. Let’s show our pride in our union, just as we show the pride we have in our work. Let’s stand up when our rights are being ignored. Let’s take advantage of all the benefits that we have fought for. Let’s work together for our union by volunteering to serve it.

Most of all, let the message ring loud and clear: We are UUP!

In solidarity,

Pamela

THE SOLIDARITY PLEDGE

As the administration continues to institute dramatic changes to the structure of the college, many concerns have emerged for the UUP chapter membership. The shift away from a regionally based structure to one based on disciplines has many ramifications. For example, your chapter leadership has begun the process to re-negotiate faculty review procedures that are currently center based. We have worked with many professionals regarding the changes to their specific roles. But there is much else.

The push to re-invent the college is embedded in wider context. The State's defunding of SUNY over time has made ESC and its sister SUNY campuses revenue-starved and enrollment-driven. Administrators across the system (and indeed across public Higher Education in the US) are therefore determined to get more bang for the bucks they spend on the various strands of labor that make the system work: Full-time, part-time and adjunct faculty, professionals, and support staff. Make no mistake; ESC 2.0 is about making the college a more efficient producer of college graduates.

As dedicated employees committed to our students and our work, we may disagree about the general direction in which the college is moving, and debate the relative merits of a discipline versus regionally based academic structure. And we should. But we *must* stand together as a union, especially to preserve our rights. The Administration has the power to restructure the college. It cannot, however, in the process of the restructuring (or for that matter, any other time!), significantly add to our workload that has been established over time.

According to the Taylor Law, the legislation governing public sector labor relations in New York State, if a supervisor insists on an increase in responsibilities in one area of professional obligation, adjustments must be made in another area (or areas) to maintain the established balance. Of course, concerns about workload are perennial, and have been exacerbated by inconsistencies and lack of clarity when it comes to management's accounting of its myriad aspects at ESC, as well as management's unwillingness or inability to distribute it equitably. On top of that, we now have the move toward ESC 2.0, which, in addition to creating legitimate concerns about how, where, and in what mode we will be doing our work, seems to be foisting upon us new tasks associated with unfilled vacancies, governance committees, the catalogue project, and so on.

The chapter leadership has taken these concerns and others to management. We have asked and will continue to ask management about the impact of the changes on the work we all do and all deeply value and believe in. We have and will continue to insist that the rights of our members are protected as the changes move forward.

Indeed, in the months ahead we will demand that management work with the chapter to protect our right, through meaningful and regular consultation with supervisors, to manage our workload so that changes in responsibilities and expectations do not significantly add to established workload. We will also demand that management work jointly with the union to design and implement mandatory trainings for faculty, professionals, and supervisors so that the requirements of the Taylor Law are understood and fully absorbed into the workload management process.

These are accomplishments of the *union*, not the union *leadership*. We must stand together, and in order for the chapter leadership to be effective advocates we need to know you are behind us. More importantly, *management* needs to know. They approach the union as if it were represented only by the officers of the chapter—not the membership as a whole. They need to see that the union is us, *all of us*—that is solidarity! And to build solidarity, take the pledge now!

I'm taking the *Solidarity Pledge*! I pledge to:

1. **Read and follow** our *Principles of Change* that are posted on the Chapter website at uupescchapter.com and pass them along to my colleagues!
2. **Wear the button** boldly announcing “***I AM UUP!***” This sends a message to management that we are one, and allows us to make connections and build relationships with each other as UUPers.
3. **Engage in one conversation** with a colleague about the union and what can be done to make it stronger. I will document the conversation and send it to the chapter leadership at uupescchapter@gmail.com.
4. **Protect our rights** as UUP members by:
 - A. Requesting that my supervisor adjust my workload should new assignments significantly alter my established workload; and, in the event that my supervisor refuses to make an adjustment, I will contact the chapter leadership.
 - B. Should I accept significant and new tasks in one area of my professional obligation without any adjustments in other areas, I will communicate with my supervisor in writing that I am taking on such tasks in a *voluntary* and *temporary* capacity.
5. **Work together** with other UUP members and chapter leaders to ensure the most vulnerable among us—adjuncts, part-timers, the untenured—are not bearing the brunt of any shifts in workload due to short staffing or added service related to EC 2.0.

I took the Pledge!

I took the *Solidarity Pledge* on: _____

Encourage others to ***Take the Pledge***!

Share the Pledge cards and send to the Chapter Office at 111 West Ave!

Take the Pledge online on our chapter website www.uupescchapter.com!

Email the chapter at uupescchapter@gmail.com with your name and say “***I took the Pledge!***”

A Step by Step Guide for Professionals

Dave Puskas, Vice President for Professionals

Colleagues –

We've been receiving many questions from colleagues across the state regarding additions, modifications, and adjustments to one's duties—whether in real-time or envisioned as a part of ESC 2.0 restructuring. In response, we've created a flowchart that we hope will help guide individuals, answer a few questions about process, and potentially head off any concerns before they escalate. Some decisions in the flowchart refer one to read particular numbers; those numbers are outlined below. Without further ado:

#1 – One's performance program defines the expectations, responsibilities and criteria upon which one's formal, annual evaluation is based. Per our Contract's Appendix A-28: "The performance of each professional is evaluated in order to...serve as a guide to reevaluate job functions [and] provide a basis for career growth." With no current performance program, there is no baseline to answer any of the following questions in the flowchart!

#2 – The employee performance program is a dynamic document, and either you or your supervisor may initiate a discussion about actual or anticipated changes in your professional obligation. If your supervisor recognizes the great work you've been doing in regards to University service, and asks if you'd be willing to step up to take on an additional search committee or some governance work, it's okay to ask what would be pulled off of your program to make room for those new duties. If you'll be in a highly intensive search committee for 6 months, one can ask to be relieved of other center/program/college committee work until the search is concluded.

#3 – Instead of asking for a modification to one's program as per #2 above, one can also ask about additional compensation. Sometimes that's an understanding about comp time. Sometimes it's a stipend. Sometimes it's Extra Service pay.

#4 – If you are in the SL-2 salary range, it is not necessarily inappropriate to be asked to do the work of another SL-2 position. But let's say I've been assisting in the preparation and submission of grant requests, but now my supervisor is asking me to supervise and coordinate a department's grant initiative, including identification of funding sources, monitoring grant fund expenditures and compliance with grant requirements. Maybe I've been providing liaison between the Director/Department Chair and the professional staff of the institution with respect to administrative matters, but now I'm asked to provide departmental contact with regulatory agencies. These are examples of the differences between the duties and functions of an SL-2 Staff Assistant and an SL-4 Staff Associate. If you're being asked to perform duties that seem to fit a different salary level, you're being asked to do out-of-title work, and we'd like to hear about it. A fuller list of SUNY-wide titles and SL levels may be found at http://uupinfo.org/reports/5_2_1.php

Guide for Professionals, continued

#5 – Promotions are great, right? Pay increase, new title, and all that jazz. But there is a caveat for those who have not yet achieved permanency in their position. Permanency is 7 consecutive years of service, the last two of which have been in that title. If you’re in year six and your Supervisor asks if you want the promotion (they can’t bump your SL without your okay!), be sure to check to see if that may add any additional time on your path-to-permanency clock, and make your decision after being properly informed.

#6 – If you’ve had a permanent, significant increase or change in your duties and responsibilities as a consequence of a permanent increase in the scope and complexity of function of your position, you should consider formally applying for promotion. The five criteria to be used in considering an employee for promotion are: effectiveness in performance; mastery of specialization; professional ability; effectiveness in University service; and continuing growth. These should sound familiar, as these are the five key criteria in one’s performance program! We cannot place enough emphasis on the necessity of having a current, up-to-date, accurate performance program.

#7 – After filing a Request for Salary Increase or Promotion form with your supervisor, should it be denied at the organizational level below that of the college president, you can appeal that denial to the College Review Panel. In some circumstances, one may even be able to appeal to the SUNY University Review Board. If your request is solid and you are denied, we encourage you to take that step towards contacting the CRP.

This is our first stab at a document such as this, and we know we can flesh this out further. If you have any additional branches off of this decision tree you feel should be included, please contact me and let me know, and we’ll attempt to incorporate those suggestions into a future iteration.

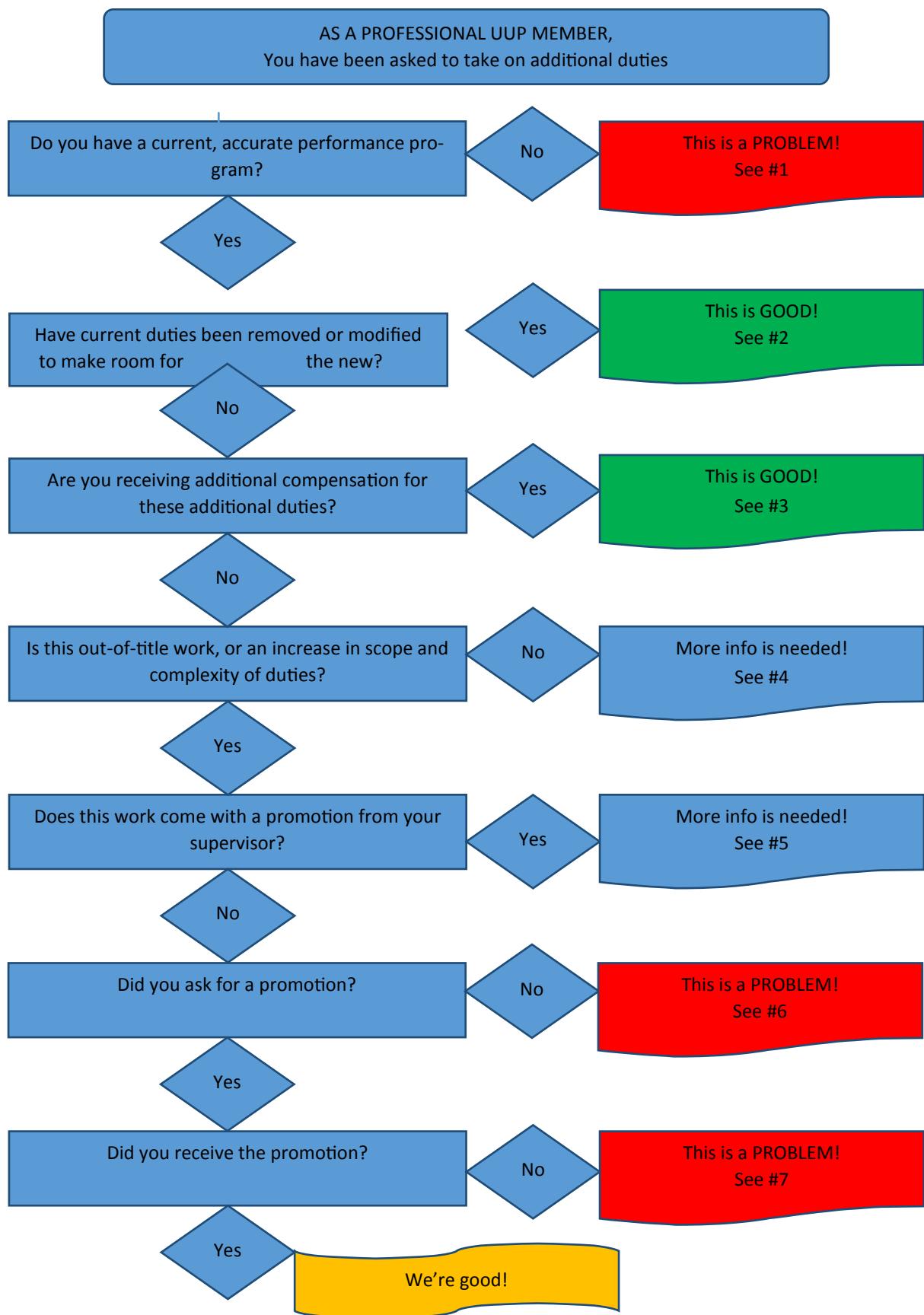
Should you have any issues or concerns about the actual PROCESS outlined, say you don’t have a performance program, or your supervisor won’t modify your program to account for particular duties, or you’ve taken on additional duties without appropriate compensation – it should go without saying, but PLEASE contact your Union representative. Contact your Center/program rep. Contact your Delegate. Contact a member of the Executive Board, or contact an Officer. Contact me directly. Contact *someone*. We can’t assist if we don’t know you need the assistance! Please consider attending the UUP Membership Meeting during All-College!

Highest Regards, and In Solidarity,

Dave Puskas

I am UUP! <http://uupinfo.org/defendunion/union.php>





Important Academic Updates

Faculty Review Procedures Negotiations

The team for faculty review procedures has been appointed and had their first meeting with management last week:

- Richard Wells, Van Arsdale
- Margaret Clark-Plaskie, Genesee Valley Center
- Peggy Tally, Graduate Studies
- Ralph English, Northeast Center
- Carol Carnevale, CDL

Please join me in thanking these members for agreeing to participate in these negotiations and representing our faculty!

Management's appointees to the negotiations are Marjorie Lavin, Mary Ellen Keeney, Tom Mackey, and Nikki Shrimpton.

The team is reviewing the numerous responses to the survey and additional input from faculty, and additional negotiations meetings have been planned. **Please continue to provide input to our VP for Academics Richard Wells!**

Catalog Project

The chapter repeatedly pressed management for answers related to the additional workload, in particular on the Area of Study Conveners, related to the development of the course catalog. The AOS conveners have been offered a stipend for the catalog work and the chapter was told by President Hancock “we heard you loud and clear.”

We have also pressed about the additional workload for those of you who are not conveners. Management stated that faculty should work with their deans related to an adjustment of their workload (in accordance with workload being a mandatory subject of bargaining) and stated that they instructed all deans to work with their faculty members on this. However, we believe that is easier said than done, given the timeframe for the project’s completion. How can we remove teaching responsibilities or service obligations in the middle of an academic or elected term?

If you are experiencing additional workload, **you should ask your supervisor for a stipend for the work if you cannot accommodate an adjustment in your workload elsewhere.** If you are denied compensation for this additional work, please reach out to the chapter immediately! Contact VP for Academics Richard Wells or Grievance Chair Tina Ungeheuer.

John Hughes Appointed Chapter Membership Representative

John Hughes, UUP member from Coordinating Center, has been appointed by the president and approved by the Executive Board as our Chapter's Membership Representative!

John will be working with center reps, officers, and members across the chapter to develop ways to increase our chapter membership and member engagement.

**Please join us in welcoming John to his role
and thanking him for answering the call to serve!**

SUNY ADJUNCTS DESERVE BETTER



Bentley Whitfield, Farmingdale

"I received SUNY's Excellence in Teaching Award."



Rebekah Tolley, Albany/Oneonta

"I have a master's in fine arts and I've exhibited worldwide."



William Lee, Cortland

"One hundred ninety-two students took my course in one semester."

Adjuncts make up one third of the faculty at SUNY and many have advanced degrees. However, their compensation falls far short of matching the important work they do.

Many are paid so little, they struggle to make ends meet.

Many others are forced to find employment at different colleges to earn a living wage.

Yet students pay more than ever before.

It's an economic injustice that can no longer be tolerated.

Stand with adjuncts in their fight for equitable treatment.

Share the ad—<http://goo.gl/DvTLkF>—on Facebook and Twitter.



United University Professions

President Frederick E. Kowal, Ph.D.

#adjuncts

Contingent Employment Committee Retreat

Mary Helen Kolisnyk, Officer for Contingents

Greetings! I am fresh from the statewide Contingent Employment Committee retreat, which preceded the Winter DA. Apologies for missing the ESC cohort at the DA – I could only make one day on that weekend, and I decided to make it the retreat day.

I indicated in the last newsletter what some of the committee's time would be devoted to at the retreat. Here's what we did:

We brainstormed what we might do to get the public statewide engaged.

The time to get statewide support for a just wage for SUNY contingents is now. Fred Kowal said that “public displays of pressure are welcome” in the coming months, citing the necessity of igniting widespread support for the situation of part-timers, contingents, and the public higher ed system as a whole. Together, the Contingent Employment committee considered the need to use UUP’s communications staff to help craft message that move beyond the kinds of personal stories about adjuncts that have already helped foreground the economic realities of contingency. We need now to continue to educate the public at large about the broader, more structural effects of contingency. To do this, focus might shift to stories that illustrate:

- The larger ‘gig economy’ we are part of
- The essential value contingent faculty contribute to towns that rely on SUNY campus communities
- The burgeoning effort to assure justice for ALL workers

I hope to be able to provide an update on how this communications effort is proceeding later in the semester. All of our stories matter, but the more we can use our knowledge and experience to reveal how SUNY’s low wages affect the public at large, the more forceful the picture of inequity will be.

We finalized a survey to provide much-needed data to the negotiations team.

Jamie Dangler provided an informative overview of how negotiations for part-timers’ compensation have fared for the past 3 contracts (back to 2003); she reported that the proposal to set a minimum for adjuncts has been included in all 3 rounds of negotiations, and the pro-rata proposal has been included in the last 2 rounds. SUNY has consistently stonewalled on these proposals, without any real explanation, opting instead for campus control over wages. And we know that those wages – as well as practices around evaluation, peer review, job retention – also vary significantly statewide.

The upshot of Jamie’s presentation was that the current negotiations team needs to have the information about adjunct pay and evaluation practices statewide, and a very short survey will be coming to part-timers to secure this information. I’ve already forwarded to the chairs of the statewide Committee ESC’s lamentable pay schedule for employees paid-by-assignment. But I encourage everyone who gets this short survey to fill it out – social justice is data-driven, and without the facts of your situation, UUP’s picture will be less complete. More to come on all of this, I hope!

I Am UUP

Brenda Henry-Offor, Affirmative Action Officer

I Am UUP!

I am the face of the United University Professions (UUP). A few years ago, I knew very little about unions; but, today, I am a union official and I am learning a lot about why unions are important, what unions do and why we need unions. I am happy to say that I am UUP. Organized labor/UUP has enriched my relationship with my co-workers, college, friends, and with my family. I understand that unions protect workers' rights, demand work benefits from employers and make the workday bearable for its members. Not so long ago, the workday went well beyond eight hours. Unions fought for many years and they finally gained the right, as a united front, for a forty-hour work week for their members, on January 1, 1948. I enjoy an eight hour work day with a lunch break, thanks to our unions.

Today, the UUP is no longer fighting for a 40-hour work week. It is fighting for, among other things, that its members be paid respectable wages and I embrace that cause. I vocalize, where and when necessary, my right to earn living wages. I embody the ideas that my union, UUP, fights for and I am proud that the UUP protects the rights of its members and stands behind us. My membership in the UUP is important to me because a united workforce can prevail against anti-union forces. When we band together united in one voice for a cause then, we all become UUP. The union is not an abstract; it is its members.

As a UUP member I can count on the leadership to defend me when my rights are impinged upon. The UUP defends the dignity of its workers by advocating for better working conditions and fair pay. When the UUP asks its members for input in up-coming negotiations, it is because every voice is important to the leadership. I know that my voice is heard and I stand with my union because I am the UUP.

As a new officer in the UUP, I am in close contact with my chapter President and other officers in the union. Together, we are making changes and striving to serve our membership the best way that we can. I am learning union regulations and receive lots of help from the leadership in interpreting those regulations. I am never alone in my union and I believe that I am UUP. Every worker should be a union member.

Brenda Henry-Offor
bhoffer@gmail.com



Brenda @ New Advocates Training



UUP ESC Members at the NYC Labor Day Parade

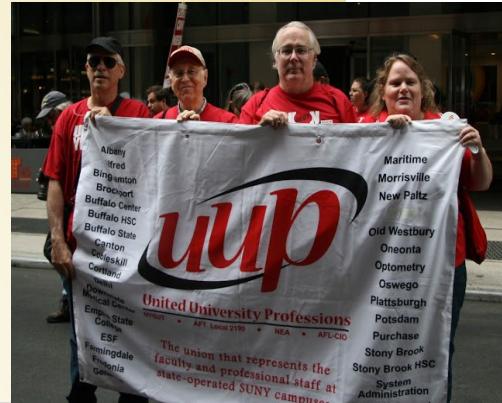
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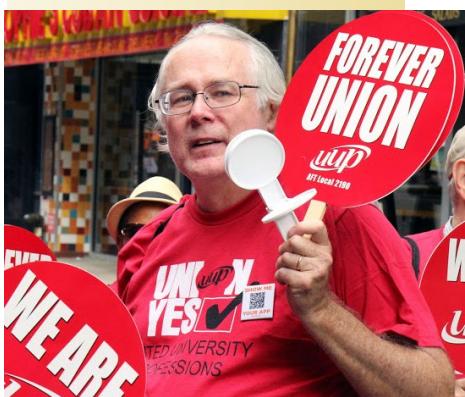
(above)
Joyce Haines
and others
singing
“SOLIDARITY
FOREVER” at
the 2015 Fall
DA



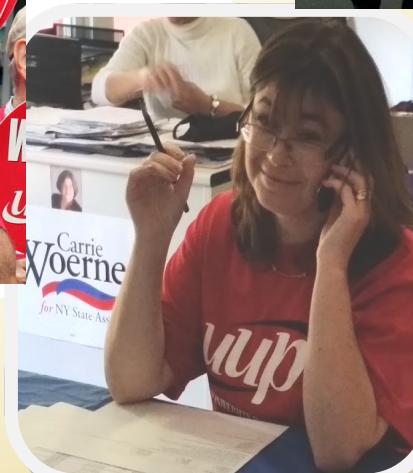
Dave Puskas at New Advocates Training Fall DA



Meiklejohn, Gilbert, Hughes and
Malone NYC Labor Day Parade



John Hughes @ NYC Labor Day Parade



Sherri Newell @
Phone Bank

Below, Alec Meiklejohn shares union values
during the NYC Labor Day Parade



WE ARE UUP



Your Union Working for You: Protecting Part Time Health Insurance Benefits!

Mary Helen Kolisnyk, Officer for Contingents

As a result of a few keen-eyed members, UUP has served a class action grievance on behalf of all part-timers statewide who may be paying higher premium shares for their health insurance than they should. A few members noticed their premiums go up, and they reached out to the leadership and asked about it.

Your premium is supposed to be based on your actual salary, not on the salary you would make if you were full-time. But on January 1, the state started calculating the premium shares as if we were all earning a full-time salary!

Our union is working to make the state turn over the names of those affected, but if your premiums have gone up since December, please should share your name with the chapter at uupescchapter@gmail.com. Please use 'insurance premium grievance' in your subject line.

If members hadn't stepped forward, we could not have acted.

AS WE SOMETIMES SAY IN New York City:
'IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING'



Your Union Working for You: ESC Contact Now on Employee Assistance Program Website

The NYS Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is “a peer assistance program jointly sponsored by labor and management. NYS EAP provides confidential information, assessment, and referral services to NYS employees, their family members, and retirees.”

What an important benefit! To begin, members are instructed to contact an EAP Coordinator, and the chapter leadership noticed that no one was listed for ESC under SUNY! We are happy to report that is now taken care of—ESC members can call the main EAP office at 1-800-822-0244 to connect with a coordinator in your area or visit <http://worklife.ny.gov/eap/index.html>.

What (and who) is an EAP Coordinator? An EAP Coordinator is trained by NYS EAP to identify, assess, and refer employees in need. Employees or family members experiencing problems are referred to qualified community providers. The program addresses whatever problems are affecting an employee's productivity. Individual problems can range from a need for information about child care to serious difficulties with alcohol or drugs.

Did you know that the EAP program also provides orientations and training for all employees, managers, supervisors, and union representatives on benefits and use of EAP? **We would love to become more involved in this program, and need volunteers to help with EAP at Empire!** Please contact the chapter at uupescchapter@gmail.com if you are interested!

New York City Bus Trip

John Hughes, Membership Representative



The Empire State College Chapter Coordinating Center is looking in to member interest for a bus trip to New York City on May 7, 2016. Anticipated price is about \$30.00.

If interested please let John Hughes know at jfhugesus@yahoo.com

UUP Visits To Our Elected Officials

Barbara Tepper, Delegate

If you did not join us on February 2 in Albany, you really missed out on a great experience. Several of us delegates went to visit our own elected officials in their Albany offices. Our State representatives represent us, and it is important that we, teachers of students at SUNY schools, let our representatives know how important the SUNY system is to the future of the Empire State.

You don't need to be political, you are actually representing your students. All you need to be is sincere. Our elected officials know that there is a ratio of how many people believe in a platform based on the number of letters they receive on that particular issue. They also know that when their constituents take the time to visit them in their office, whether it be in Albany or within the district they represent, the numbers are higher.

You don't need to be nervous about speaking to your elected officials. Just remember that they are regular people, just like us, who are doing the job they want to do. We had a novice in our group. She was so nervous about speaking, that we had her take notes on what everyone was saying. By our fourth visit, to State Senator Andrew Lanza, she was actively involved in the conversation!

So go online now, find out who is your State Senator and Assemblypersons, and set up an appointment, at your convenience, to speak with them in their local district office.

And next year, take the day and join us in lobbying in Albany. It is a gratifying experience!



*Barbara Tepper:
knitting scarves and
hats to donate*

In Solidarity,
Barbara Tepper

United University Professions

2016 Legislative Agenda

Budget Priorities

- ✓ **Increase SUNY operating aid:** State support for SUNY campuses has fallen nearly 40 percent since 2008. Increase SUNY operating aid to cover continuing mandatory cost increases.
- ✓ **Restore the state subsidy for SUNY hospitals:** The executive budget cuts the SUNY hospital subsidy by \$18.5 million, on top of cuts in excess of 30% since 2010. Restore this subsidy for the hospitals' ability to provide vital health care and quality medical education.
- ✓ **Increase funding for SUNY's Opportunity Programs:** SUNY's EOP and EOCs help thousands of low-income, underserved students succeed in college. Increasing state support is crucial to maintaining and expanding these necessary programs.

Support SUNY hospitals and Health Sciences Centers

- ✓ **Support funding to develop SUNY Downstate ambulatory care centers:** Dedicate Health Care Refinancing Program funding to develop four SUNY Downstate ambulatory care centers. Improve access and continue providing health care to thousands of under- and uninsured patients each year.
- ✓ **Introduce legislation to establish the “Buffalo Health Care Teaching Fellows” program:** Physicians who train Buffalo HSC residents depend on clinical income, limiting time to teach. Create “Health Care Teaching Fellow” positions to employ them at Buffalo HSC, reduce reliance on private practice, and allow the focus to be on training medical residents.
- ✓ **Support legislation to ensure return of back tuition and hospital charges to SUNY hospitals:** Delinquent SUNY hospital charges and tuition and fees collected by the attorney general are swept into the General Fund. Return these funds to SUNY hospitals to support hospital operations.

Invest in Public Higher Education

- ✓ **Support creation of the “Public Higher Education Quality Initiative Endowment”:** This legislation would create an endowment to generate investment income, which would be used to rebuild SUNY and CUNY academic departments depleted by chronic underfunding.
- ✓ **Support full, permanent Maintenance of Effort legislation:** To provide quality, affordable, accessible education SUNY must receive state support for continuing increases in unavoidable mandatory costs. Use tuition dollars solely to fund student education and services.
- ✓ **Oppose SUNY’s Investment and Performance Fund:** SUNY’s expanded Investment and Performance Fund pits departments and programs against each other. Research shows that performance-based funding does not improve student or campus performance.
- ✓ **Support a SUNY Student Loan Refinancing program:** The average SUNY student graduates \$22,575 in debt. Allow SUNY graduates to refinance student loans at a lower fixed interest rate.
- ✓ **Support Loan Forgiveness for SUNY adjuncts:** Allow SUNY adjuncts, facing low pay and few benefits, to apply for partial loan forgiveness after teaching at least two courses at SUNY.



Teacher Education Programs

- ✓ **Introduce legislation to create the Recruiting and Educating Teachers for All program:** Teacher education program enrollment has fallen nearly 40 percent in five years, compounding lack of diversity. Provide financial and other assistance to students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds to assist with degree completion and certification requirements.
- ✓ **Introduce legislation to require an independent assessment of teacher certification exams:** Ill-conceived changes in the teacher certification exams have resulted in unprecedented roadblocks for new teachers seeking initial certification, exacerbating the growing teacher shortage. Require an independent assessment to assure these new exams are educationally sound.
- ✓ **Introduce legislation to prohibit educational vendors from profiting from test administration fees:** The state contracts with vendors such as Pearson to develop and assess tests, and pays nothing. The vendor receives exam fees from students, for exams they take and retake, regardless of the accuracy or validity of the test. Make SED responsible for exam administration and fee collection.

Protection of Retirees

- ✓ **Oppose reduction of the state contribution to retiree health insurance premiums:** The Executive Budget proposes to reduce state contributions to retiree health insurance premiums based on years of service at retirement. Civilian employees retiring on or after Oct. 1 with less than 30 years of service will see reductions in hard-earned benefits crucial to their income security.
- ✓ **Oppose the cap on state reimbursement of Medicare Part B premiums:** State retirees with NYSHIP health coverage must enroll in Part B to generate savings for the state. Oppose the proposed \$104.90 cap on Part B reimbursement. This cap will immediately impact new and higher-income retirees who pay higher rates. Over time, it will erode benefits for all civilian retirees.
- ✓ **Support income security for public retirees:** The latest maximum earnings rate increase for public retirees came in 2007. This legislation would raise the maximum earning allowance from \$30,000 to \$35,000 to help ensure income security for all public retirees.
- ✓ **Support pension credit for military veterans:** All military personnel should receive retirement service credit in New York's public retirement systems. This legislation would allow public employees to receive retirement service credit for service during any conflict or in peacetime.
- ✓ **Allow retirees to make automatic contributions to VOTE-COPE:** CUNY and SUNY retirees who participate in the Optional Retirement Program cannot set up voluntary automatic deductions from their retirement accounts to union political action committees. Support legislation to allow this.

Transparency and Accountability

- ✓ **Support transparency at the SUNY and CUNY research foundations:** The Research Foundations receive millions in public funds each year to support SUNY and CUNY research, but resist public disclosure, citing their private corporate status. Compel annual reports of all contracts for services, foundation employees and compensation received. Require financial disclosure by foundation employees consistent with that required of SUNY employees.

The Value of NYSUT Membership

You may not be aware that your NYSUT membership allows you to enjoy the benefits of the more than 40 programs & services endorsed by NYSUT Member Benefits, including a variety of quality, competitive insurance plans.

Member Benefits strives to provide the highest-quality programs for NYSUT members and closely scrutinizes all proposals from reputable vendors before any endorsements are given.

While we work continuously to maintain quality benefit programs at competitive prices, you are encouraged to shop and compare before making any purchasing decisions.

MetLife Auto & Home®



Call MetLife Auto & Home to learn about the special savings and discounts you may be eligible for.

1-866-NYSUT-22

If you are looking for potential savings on your auto or homeowners insurance, consider enrolling in the NYSUT Member Benefits Trust-endorsed MetLife Auto & Home Insurance Program.

This program offers special group rates on personal property and liability coverage not available to individual MetLife policyholders. NYSUT members can choose from a variety of coverages that include auto, homeowners, boat, renter's, and much more.

Policyholders can earn extra discounts for good driving, multiple policies and anti-theft devices. MetLife Auto & Home recently raised the multi-policy discount on its homeowners insurance with auto from 7% to 15%. The multi-policy/multi-product discount on auto insurance with home remains at 8%.

Visit the NYSUT Member Benefits website at memberbenefits.nysut.org or call 800-626-8101 for specific details about this program or other Member Benefits-endorsed programs & services.

MetLife Auto & Home is a NYSUT Member Benefits Trust (Member Benefits)-endorsed program. Member Benefits has an endorsement arrangement of 5.5% of total premiums for this program. All such payments to Member Benefits are used solely to defray the costs of administering its various programs and, where appropriate, to enhance them. Member Benefits acts as your advocate; please contact Member Benefits at 800-626-8101 if you experience a problem with any endorsed program.

Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.



For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.

Mar./Apr. '16

Benefits News

Karen LaBarge, Communications Committee Member



Empire Plan Enrollees: Find the Best Prescription Drug Value\$

The annual update of the Empire Plan Flexible Formulary Drug List is now available in the Benefits section of the UUP website. The list is compiled to help enrollees find the best values when it comes to prescription drug spending. A PDF of the list can be found at: <http://uupinfo.org/benefits/pdf/2016EmpireFlex.pdf>.

The list includes commonly prescribed generic and brand name drugs, as well as newly excluded drugs for 2016 and suggested alternatives. As mentioned on the list, "Generics should be considered the first line of prescribing." But when a generic is not available and choosing a brand name drug is necessary to treat a particular condition, the list helps to identify the most cost-effective choices.

As an enrollee, you or a covered family member can **share this list with your health care provider(s)** so that a preferred or brand name drug can be identified when needed.

More information about Empire Plan prescription drug coverage and copays can be accessed at <http://www.cs.ny.gov/empireplanrxprogram/> or by calling 1-877-7-NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447), Option 4.

I AM UUP



Above left:
UUP press
conference
with Valetta,
Malone, Amin



Above right:
Richard Wells
at 2015 Fall
DA

Center: Jay
Gilbert, for-
mer UUP ESC
Chapter Presi-
dent

United University Professions

I AM *uup*

Jay Gilbert
Empire State College

"Being union means we can work collectively, we can do things together. And despite the attacks on unions that we've seen, we've also seen an upsurge of interest, especially among people who are not in unions and would like very much to work out a way to get themselves into unions."



uupinfo.org/defendingunion/union.php



UUP LEAD Institute

UUP is pleased to offer members and chapter leaders this series of online based workshops as supplemental learning tools to introduce and reinforce union concepts necessary to maintain and grow a vibrant labor union, and assist members in developing their careers.

Workshops can be taken in learning tracks by theme, designed for chapter leaders who assist members directly, for prospective chapter leaders, or as individual workshops that are of interest to individual members.

All workshops are planned and presented by NYSUT Labor Relations Specialists assigned to UUP and guest presenters.



Help us spread the word!

Let your colleagues know about workshops that maybe of professional or personal interest

Latest Workshop:

Member Engagement:

Having a one-to-one conversation with a prospective UUP member.

One-Demand Workshops Available:

- ◆ Dealing Effectively With Difficult People
- ◆ Grievance Investigation, Filing and Presentation
- ◆ Introduction to Collective Bargaining
- ◆ Motivating Members to Action
- ◆ Performance Programs:
How to Use Them to your Advantage
- ◆ Permanent Appointment:
Freedom after 7 Years of Indentured Servitude
- ◆ The Path to Continuing Appointment

How do I sign up??

1. All of the previously recorded webinars are available on-demand anytime by selecting a workshop link <https://uuphost.org/leadinstitute/>
2. Fill out the required info and you will be emailed a code and link to access your selected workshop

It's that simple!

Union Membership—Are you a Member?

**You can now sign up
online!**

Visit:

www.uupinfo.org

and click on

JOIN UUP!

“And what have our unions done? What do they aim to do?

To improve the standard of life, to uproot ignorance and foster education, to instill character, manhood and independent spirit among our people, to bring about a recognition of the interdependence of man upon his fellow man.

We aim to establish a normal work-day, to take the children from the factory and workshop and give them the opportunity of the school and the playground.

In a word, our unions strive to lighten toil, educate their members, make their homes more cheerful and in every way contribute an earnest effort toward making life the better worth living.”

Samuel Gompers (McClure's Magazine Feb. 1912)

ARE YOU A MEMBER?

CHECK PAY STUB TO MAKE SURE

In order to be a member of the union, your paycheck **must** say "UUP Member." If it says "UUP Agency Fee," then you are included in the Professional Services Negotiating Unit, but are *not* a member of the union.

UUP Membership Entitles You To:

- Vote on collective bargaining agreement
- Hold union office
- Attend union meetings
- Elect union leaders on your campus and choose your representatives at the state and national levels
- Maintain UUP membership after retirement and be eligible for benefit programs
- Upon separation of service, obtain Associate Membership with NYSUT and be eligible for benefit programs

Please contact your chapter officers for a membership card.

CHAPTER OFFICERS

President

Pamela Malone
pmalone.uup@gmail.com

Secretary

Jane Cudmore
mizj_1999@yahoo.com

Vice President for Academics

Richard Wells
Wellsrr1@gmail.com

Treasurer

Donna Carey
donnamcarey@nycap.rr.com

Vice President for Professionals

Dave Puskas
dpuskas.uup@gmail.com

Grievance Officer

Tina Ungeheuer
tungeheuer2@gmail.com

Officer for Contingents

Mary Helen Kolisnyk
mhkuup@gmail.com

Affirmative Action Officer

Brenda Henry-Offor
bhoffor@gmail.com

CHAPTER CENTER REPRESENTATIVES

Center for Distance Learning

Himanee Gupta-Carlson at HGUPTACARLSON@gmail.com

Central New York Center

Sheryl Coleman at shrlclmn@gmail.com

Coordinating Center

Michelle Paine at mpaine@nycap.rr.com

Genesee Valley Center

Dave Puskas at dpuskas.uup@gmail.com

HVA Center for Labor Studies

Kate Spaulding at katherine.spaulding@gmail.com

Hudson Valley Center

Martin Knowles at martinknowles@earthlink.net

Long Island Center

Matt Schmidt at mattschmidt@optonline.net

Metropolitan NY Center

Gennaro Bonfiglio at gbonfiglio@hotmail.com

Niagara Frontier Center

Jane Cudmore at mizj_1999@yahoo.com

Northeast Center

Ralph English at ralph@fastmail.net

School for Graduate Studies

Jason Russell at jason.russell@esc.edu

Upcoming Events

- ✿ March 16 @ 2:00 pm—Labor Management Meeting
- ✿ March 21 @ 11:00 am—Center Representatives/Committee Chairs Conference Call
- ✿ March 22–23 All College—Workshops, membership meeting and the Hospitality Suite!
- ✿ March 23 @ 8:15 am—UUP Meeting/All College
- ✿ March 30 @ 3:00 pm - Officers Conference Call

Visit our website for a complete listing of Upcoming Events:
www.uupescchapter.com

CONNECT With Your Chapter!



EMPIRE STATE COLLEGE CHAPTER

Chapter Office Location:
111 West Avenue, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

Hours:
Monday – Friday 10:00am – 1:00pm

Phone:
(518) 580-4094 or Ext. 2571

E-mail:
uupescchapter@gmail.com

We're on the Web!

www.uupescchapter.com

Editorial Policy: Opinions expressed in *Excellence in Unity* are solely those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of the UUP or its Empire State College Chapter, who are not liable for any errors or inaccuracies.

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.



UUP Empire State College Chapter
111 West Avenue
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866



RECIPIENT NAME
STREET ADDRESS
ADDRESS 2
CITY, ST ZIP CODE