

President's Report – February 2025

SUNY Oneonta Health and Housing Survey and Results

The following communication and [graphics](#) were forwarded to Senator Oberacker, Assembly Member Miller, and relevant personnel at UUP Statewide:

As the President of the Oneonta Chapter of the United University Professions (UUP), I am writing to bring to your attention critical issues in Health and Housing that require immediate attention and improvement in our rural Oneonta area. It is my intention to ensure that these concerns are highlighted and adequately addressed to foster positive change for the community.

The SUNY Oneonta Health and Housing Survey, distributed to 1,394 SUNY Oneonta employees (current and retired), received a 33% response rate, with 461 total responses. Of those, 83.7% fully completed the survey. Respondents had a range of experience at Oneonta, with 35% having been at the institution for less than 5 years, and 21% for more than 20 years. Most respondents (94%) were not retired, with 82% identifying as part of United University Professions (UUP).

Regarding health insurance, 83% of respondents were covered under The Empire Plan, and 58% had family coverage. A majority (71%) reported an increase in their medical expenses over the years. When rating their health insurance, coverage received generally high ratings, though costs were a concern, with 32.9% of respondents rating overall medical costs as a 4 (out of 5).

Dental insurance was predominantly through Delta Dental (82%), with most participants having family coverage. Similar to medical costs, 61% of respondents saw an increase in their dental expenses, and coverage satisfaction varied, with many citing concerns about costs and availability of care.

In terms of housing, the majority (78%) owned their homes, and 41% lived within 5 miles of the campus. Although 34% of respondents had looked for housing closer to Oneonta in the past two years, 66% had not. The primary reasons cited for not finding housing nearby included the availability, quality, and cost of housing. Despite these challenges, 83% of those who had searched would move closer if the housing conditions improved.

Overall, respondents expressed a high level of satisfaction with their current living situations, with 40% being very satisfied and 38% satisfied, indicating that housing is a significant concern for a portion of the population.

This survey highlights the diverse experiences and concerns of SUNY Oneonta employees regarding health insurance and housing, with cost and accessibility being a common theme across medical, dental, and housing issues.

Of particular concern in bringing this to Statewide's attention is the fact that many of our employees with Delta Dental insurance are being notified that their dentist can no longer afford to remain a "participating" or "in-network" provider.

The following link will take you to the actual Health and Housing Survey Results:

https://www.oneontauup.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/12-2-24-FROM-SUNY-ONEONTA-PRESIDENT-AND-BILL-UUP-Survey-Summary_2024_11.25.2024.pdf

I look forward to the opportunity to schedule a meeting with you in the near future to discuss these matters in greater detail.

Sincerely,

Shirley A. Clark
Oneonta UUP Chapter President

Special Thanks to Jessie Simpauco and Ethan Fox

I want to extend my deepest appreciation to **Ethan Fox** for his diligent and comprehensive analysis of the ***Health and Housing Survey***. His work has been invaluable in understanding the pressing concerns of our fellow employees and was also employed into the graphics we sent to Legislators and Statewide personnel. I also want to give a special thanks to **Jessie Simpauco** for her creative and powerful [graphics](#) that vividly illustrated the issues our SUNY Oneonta colleagues are facing in their day-to-day working lives. These visuals serve not only to inform but to mobilize support around these critical issues.

Noted Appreciation to Gary Wickham and William Simons

A huge thank you to **Gary Wickham** and **William Simons**, for the countless late-night Zoom sessions we had, working tirelessly to craft and fine-tune the ***Health and Housing Survey***. These efforts weren't just about data collection but about ensuring that the voices of UUP members are heard and understood. We came together with the shared goal of identifying and addressing the systemic issues that SUNY Oneonta employees may be experiencing in terms of work-life balance, health, and affordable housing.

A heartfelt thank you also goes to all the UUP members who took the time to complete the survey. Your feedback is vital to our ongoing collective bargaining efforts and strengthens our position as we advocate for better working conditions, health benefits, and housing solutions. Without your input, our union would not be as well-equipped to address these issues head-on and push forward with tangible results that reflect the needs of the membership.

This survey isn't just a one-time project—it is a tool for empowering our collective strength and ensuring that our union solidarity leads to meaningful change. With your participation, we are in a much stronger position to advocate for improvements with administration and push for the contract improvements that will benefit all workers at SUNY Oneonta!

Finance Committee Report – Submitted by Michael McAvoy, Chair

TO: Shirley Clark, UUP Oneonta President

FROM: United University Professions Oneonta Chapter Finance Committee

DATE: February 7, 2025

RE: UUP Oneonta Chapter 2026 Fiscal Year Budget Proposal

The UUP Oneonta Finance Committee met on February 7, 2025, at noon, with the Chapter President and the Chapter Treasurer to consult for the 2025-2026 chapter budget. Your chapter finance committee members include Charlene Foley-Deno, Michael McAvoy (committee chair), and Christine Storrie. The Finance Committee expresses thanks to Shirley Clark – President – for important input and feedback, Rich Tyler – Treasurer – for preparing the draft of the budget proposal, and Teresa DeSantis – Chapter Assistant – for providing support.

The Finance Committee discussed with the chapter's President and Treasurer each of the budget lines and where appropriate, careful consensus resulted in line item adjustments to reflect chapter needs and initiatives. The committee observed that a greater number of chapter meetings and programs to engage membership and build community have resulted in positive reception as evidenced by increasing member attendance. The budget proposal reflects the importance of continuing this momentum with a similar number of board meetings, membership meetings, committee meetings, sessions, and workshops, and therefore shows similar or increased budget line amounts which reflects the greater number of members in attendance at chapter events.

As explained by the Treasurer, the chapter's obligations for release time support and chapter assistant additional hours will exhaust the allocations received and the chapter's regular spending will eventually reduce the amount of funds in our bank account. The chapter must maintain the momentum its leadership has advanced. The chapter is not a business that is required to balance its books or earn a profit. The chapter must continue to engage its membership and to build community. UUP offers a budget process to fund approved chapter budget requests via other UUP budget allocations. With board approval of the budget proposal and its shortfall, the chapter will be able to maintain its active and engaging agenda and grow its community.

Your chapter Finance Committee makes the following recommendations:

- The Finance Committee voted unanimously to approve the chapter budget proposal developed by the chapter's President and Treasurer in consultation with the finance committee. The budget proposal includes a shortfall of \$14,282.20. The Finance Committee recommends the Executive Board approve the 2026 fiscal year budget proposal.
- After investigating its feasibility, the Finance Committee recommends the Treasurer to invest an appropriate amount of surplus chapter cash funds by purchasing a short-term certificate of deposit.
- The Finance Committee recommends the Treasurer to review whether the chapter bank account can accept Venmo payments for the purposes of receiving reservations to chapter meetings when necessary and then to reimburse such payments when appropriate.

- The Finance Committee recommends that the President review the need for a dedicated phone line provided by the University. If such a need is present, to review the feasibility of a web phone, including its expected expense and service quality.