

Minutes

The UUP Veterans Committee

The Desmond Hotel, Albany, NY

April 8, 2022

Members in attendance: Justin Culkowski: Co-Chair of the Committee; Kevin Moriarty, Stu L'Hommedieu, Brittany Profit-Rheinwald, Lisa Marie Anselmi-Iason to the Committee, Lizette Rivera, Barbara Warkentine, David Scholl, Tom Hogle. Guests: Charles Spector and Nancy Balkon

The meeting was called to order at 8:38 by Justin C.

The minutes of the virtual September 23, 2021 meeting were approved.

Justin welcomed the committee and thanked members for taking the time to attend. Members introduced themselves. Bill Borgstede was unable to attend and sent his regards.

The Committee honored deceased member, Bob Kasprak, with a moment of silence.

J. Culkowski reviewed the priorities of the Committee. The number one priority was to identify and resolve any problems faced by veterans who belong to UUP in the workplace. Number two has taken on added importance as we need to promote UUP to keep and obtain new members in UUP. Finally, the Veterans Committee should assist and honor all veterans but UUP employees and students of SUNY in particular. He noted there were no problems involving veterans in SUNY since the last meeting.

The budget for the Veterans Committee is \$5,500 with about \$930 spent thus far for the NYC wreath ceremony and the new veteran sticker project.

B. Warkentine, who is heading up the fundraising raffle at this DA, noted we had received several gifts and would probably have four or five gifts to raffle. Funds raised will be used for Ukrainian disaster relief via AFT which has collected funds from UUP already. (Note: \$173 was raised at this DA. A new paperless registration system resulted in very few UUP delegates visiting our table.)

T. Hogle, who is in charge of distributing honor cords indicated he has just over 100 cords left. He annually distributes 15 to 25 cords and this year he has sent cords to two campuses with one more trying to determine how many to order.

M. Knee was not able to attend but the committee was urged to review the website and make suggestions for improvement. Just google "UUP veterans committee" and it should appear.

Sarah Bataglia attended the NYC veterans parade but could not attend. In her place, K. Moriarty recounted his experiences there in 2019. J. Culkowski noted he wanted a better UUP presence there. Stu L'Hommedieu suggested three season jackets with UUP on them. J. Culkowski will explore that.

The veteran sticker project was discussed. J. Culkowski has mailed about 100 of them to various campuses. He is in touch with the SUNY Coordinator for Veteran Affairs hoping she can help get these distributed across SUNY. T. Hogle and K. Moriarty requested stickers to take back to their respective campuses. The stickers identify veterans who work at SUNY and note that UUP has a veterans committee.

L.M. Anselmi gave a brief report concerning the UUP Executive Committee. A key item is passage of a resolution to be done at the Business Meeting on Saturday.

Under New Business:

Increased dental coverage at the VA hospitals was a topic to be discussed but R. Wardlaw who made the request was not present. Much discussion followed about how the hospitals work but there could be no firm strategy developed by the committee to address this issue. Dental insurance via United Concordia was mentioned as a possible help for dental implants.

R. Celli had requested discussion of how to get veteran students to attend events with veterans employed by SUNY. He was not present but some suggestions: L. Rivera noted a "challenge coin" was developed at ESF to try to build camaraderie among the veterans. B. Profit-Rheinwald said they host a 5K race at Brockport to bring students together. L. Rivera hopes to secure a space on campus for veterans which might build cohesiveness.

J. Culkowski distributed three veteran shirts to members who did not have them.

In other items from the membership, K. Moriarty will investigate why there is no veterans committee in NYSUT- a fact most did not know. He also noted that some sort of award might be given by our committee annually to a veteran who works for SUNY. This may be discussed at a future meeting.

L. Rivera asked if a wreath could be placed at a people of color/Latino monument? J. Culkowski was not aware of any such ceremony etc. but is open to suggestions. She also noted we could, as a committee, develop a "challenge coin". There was limited enthusiasm for this proposal but more details would be welcome.

The meeting ended at 9:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Justin Culkowski

Co-Chair