This is the latest in a special series of UUPconnect issues dedicated to sharing important coronavirus-related information with UUP members.

COVID-19: The Numbers

More than 330,000 confirmed cases in New York state; more than 181,700 cases in New York City

More than 20,000 deaths in New York state

More than 1.2 million cases in the U.S.; more than 76,300 deaths

Globally, more than 3.9 million cases and more than 272,000 deaths

From Johns Hopkins University (as of May 8)

Click HERE to see the numbers.

UUP delivers PPE to front-line providers

UUP sent needed personal protective equipment to members on the front lines of the coronavirus pandemic in Brooklyn and Stony Brook.

On May 4, UUP sent 4,000 N95 respirator masks to SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University and Stony Brook University Hospital; the hospitals received 2,000 masks each.

The next day, 25,000 isolation gowns purchased by UUP were delivered to SUNY Downstate, along with 5,000 Nitrile medical gloves. The union obtained 100,000 isolation gowns in April; the rest will be distributed to members at Stony Brook, Upstate Medical University in Syracuse and Buffalo HSC Chapter members working at community hospitals in the Buffalo area.
On May 6, UUP sent 6,000 Nitrile gloves to members at the Long Island State Veterans Home at Stony Brook University.

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**Albany Chapter member working on new, faster coronavirus test**

Albany Chapter member Ken Halvorsen has been awarded funding from the National Science Foundation for new research that could produce coronavirus test results faster and at a lower cost.

Halvorsen, a senior research scientist at the RNA Institute at the University at Albany, received the funding from the NSF’s Rapid Response Research program to develop a DNA nanoswitch to detect SARS-CoV-2, the virus strain that causes COVID-19.

“With the COVID-19 outbreak, we are working to address the need for additional and alternative testing by re-engineering our own DNA nanoswitch technology into a coronavirus test,” Halvorsen said in a May 7 UAlbany press release. “Due to the urgency, we are putting a big effort into squeezing a 1 or 2-year project into about 2 or 3 months, at which point we will test clinical samples with our collaborators at the Wadsworth Center. The ultimate goal is a commercially viable test that can positively impact the current pandemic.”

Halvorsen’s lab, working in collaboration with the Wong Lab at Harvard’s Wyss Institute, has dual goals of delivering COVID-19 test results within one hour and without the use of a laboratory.

Click HERE to read the press release.

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**Tele-town hall a success**

The most difficult challenge that UUP has ever faced—that of working in the country’s hardest-hit state during a pandemic, with all the accompanying tragedy, loss and uncertainty—could also be a time of unprecedented strength for members.

UUP President Fred Kowal sounded that note of hope during his sobering introduction to the first of four planned “Tele-town Hall” forums hosted by UUP May 7. The union is hosting the conference-call discussions so that members can share ideas, ask questions and propose solutions in this most uncertain time that SUNY has also ever faced.
Nearly 400 UUP members took part in the forum, the first of four slated for May.

Registration is open for Tele-town Halls at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 19; and at 11 a.m. on Thursday, May 21. Registration is closed for the May 13 forum; it has reached participant capacity.

Click HERE to register to participate in one of the tele-town halls.

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**New UUP ad calls on Congress to help New York**

UUP this week released a new television and social media ad that honors our members on the front lines of the coronavirus pandemic and calls on Congress to send emergency funds to help New York and other states hit hard by COVID-19.

The 30-second ad, titled "We Are New York," started its TV run May 5 and will wrap up May 11. It is airing on cable news stations in New York City, Brooklyn, and Albany and Nassau counties, and on YouTube in Albany, Buffalo, Syracuse, New York City and Nassau County.

As of May 8, the ad has been viewed 206,000 times on YouTube.

A one-week social media campaign on Facebook and Instagram is set to start May 12.

The ad dovetails with UUP's e-letter/phone campaign, which urges UUP members and supporters to tell New York's congressional delegation to push for funding for New York in forthcoming coronavirus mitigation packages.

Click HERE to view the ad.

Click HERE to send the e-letter.

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**Do the census**

Looking for something to do while you're at home these days? How about filling out and filing your 2020 Census forms?

UUP launched our 2020 Census awareness campaign in March to help ensure a complete count of all New Yorkers. As we continue to fight the coronavirus, encouraging our colleagues, families, friends and
Just 51 percent of New Yorkers have completed their 2020 Census from home via the web, phone or mail. We need to do better than that. The census results will determine how billions of federal dollars are allocated. Ensuring a complete count in our communities is essential to our advocacy work.

Click HERE to fill out the form and for more information.

Special UUP DA on tap

UUP will convene a Limited Special Delegate Assembly to vote on the union’s 2020-21 budget and to discuss temporary amendments to its constitution that would allow outstanding business to be conducted.

The union’s Executive Board approved the special DA April 24.

Delegates must approve emergency amendments to UUP’s constitution before they can hold statewide nominations and elections and consider other business. A limited DA must be held to make the necessary constitutional changes that would allow that to occur.

UUP officers are working with co-chairs of the Constitution and Governance committee and the Executive Board to develop a plan to make necessary constitutional changes.

Delegates will receive temporary and emergency constitutional amendments—with explanations and supporting documentation—prior to deliberations during the special DA.

The Executive Board will resume discussions about the DA May 22.

UUP, SUNY agree on MOU

UUP and SUNY have agreed on a Memorandum of Understanding that addresses members’ concerns about the potential impact of COVID-19 on teaching, research, scholarship and other work that could impact upcoming reviews for tenure, permanent appointment, reappointment or promotion.

The agreement provides for clock extensions and possible exclusions of certain types of evaluative
The clock extension for tenure track academics requires amendment of the relevant Board of Trustees Policies. The Trustees passed the necessary resolution to accomplish this at its May 6 meeting.

Click HERE to read the MOU.

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**Recovered from COVID-19? Donate blood**

SUNY's three public teaching hospitals are seeking patients who have recovered from COVID-19 to donate blood to help others who are severely ill with the virus.

SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University in Brooklyn, Stony Brook University Hospital in Stony Brook, and Upstate Medical University in Syracuse are accepting blood donations, which will be used as convalescent plasma for COVID-19 patients.

The blood donation program is part of a national effort being led by the Mayo Clinic. The clinic reports that one 200 ml dose of convalescent plasma has helped severely ill COVID-19 patients improve and eventually recover from the virus.

To donate blood at SUNY Downstate, email Maxine Easy, coordinator of Downstate's Convalescent Plasma for the Treatment of Patients with COVID-19 study. Maxine.Easy@Downstate.edu

Click HERE to donate blood at Stony Brook University Hospital.

To donate blood at Upstate Medical University, call 315-464-9869 or email Trials@upstate.edu to arrange a screening appointment.

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**Help your local food bank**

Food banks across the country are struggling to keep their shelves full as they deal with skyrocketing demand during the coronavirus outbreak.

Tens of millions of working-class Americans who are out of work due to COVID-19 shutdowns and quarantines are struggling to make ends meet and put food on the table. Many have turned to food banks for help.
If you're in need of food assistance, you can go to FeedingAmerica.org to find a local food bank or food assistance program. Please consider donating to a local food bank if you’re able to do so.

Click HERE to go to FeedingAmerica.org.

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**Gillibrand is “Union Strong”**

New York Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand talks about the next federal stimulus package, the Every Worker Protection Act, and shares her thoughts on rebuilding our state and country post-COVID-19 in the latest episode of “Union Strong,” the New York AFL-CIO’s podcast.

Click HERE to listen to the podcast.

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**Collective Bargaining Conference webinars**

The National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education and the Professions has slated a series of webinars focused on higher education, collective bargaining and the impact of COVID-19.

Here’s what’s slated for May:

· Higher Ed Collective Bargaining and Shared Governance in Responding to COVID-19: Noon-1 p.m., Thursday, May 14
  
  Panelists: Theodore H. (Terry) Curry, Michigan State University; William A. Herbert, National Center, Hunter College; and Risa L. Lieberwitz, Cornell University ILR and AAUP

· Low-wage and Gig Work During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Noon-1 p.m. Thursday, May 21

  Panelists: Janice Fine, Rutgers; David Lewin, UCLA; Sarah Thomason, University of California, Berkeley; David Weil, Brandeis University; Tashlin Lakhani; Ohio State University; Xiangmin Liu, Rutgers

Click HERE to register for the webinars.