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 343,000 confirmed cases in New York state; more than 188,000 cases in New York City

More than 27,600 deaths in New York state

More than 1.4 million cases in the U.S.; nearly 86,000 deaths

Globally, more than 4.4 million cases and more than 303,000 deaths

*From Johns Hopkins University (as of May 15)*

Click [HERE](http://www.icontact-archive.com/archive?c=983301&f=22432&s=25441&m=2071373&t=4c74620ebbe8348ab7a065879c25f5a022c3c23defa70e0f7730be2) to see the numbers.

NY stay-at-home order extended to May 28

Non-essential employees, including most UUP members, will work from home through May 28 under Gov. Cuomo's extension of his New York on PAUSE order.

The extension, part of the governor’s May 14 executive order, applies to areas that are not yet cleared to reopen under the first phase of the state's reopening plan. Those areas are the Capital Region, the Mid-Hudson region, Long Island, New York City and Western New York.

Nearly all UUP's bargaining unit members will continue to work from home, at least through May 28, said UUP President Fred Kowal.
There may be some exceptions affecting a small number of members at campuses in regions set to reopen and involved in approved work such as agriculture and campus construction, Kowal said. UUP is working with SUNY to clarify these exceptions and what may occur once areas of the state move to Phase 2 of reopening.

Counties approved for Phase 1 reopening are Broome, Cayuga, Chemung, Chenango, Clinton, Cortland, Delaware, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Genesee, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Livingston, Madison, Monroe, Montgomery, Oneida, Onondaga, Ontario, Orleans, Oswego, Otsego, St. Lawrence, Schoharie, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins, Wayne, Wyoming and Yates.

Click HERE to check UUP’s COVID-19 Q & A for more information.

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**More time to use comp time**

If you haven’t used holiday compensatory time earned for working on Memorial Day or Independence Day in 2019, don’t worry.

You’ve got several more months to use that time.

UUP, the state and SUNY have reached agreement to extend the expiration of holiday compensatory time earned for working on either or both of those holidays last year.

The Memorandum of Agreement allows UUP members until Dec. 31 to use comp time earned for working those holidays; normally, members would lose that time if it isn’t used within a year of earning it.

“It’s obviously very timely, as the agreement will provide employees who have been unable to use this holiday compensatory time because of recent COVID-19 response efforts with additional time to use this leave,” said UUP President Fred Kowal. “This is primarily, though not exclusively, a potential benefit for our members at the hospitals who have had leave plans, and in some cases previously approved leave requests, disrupted by the pandemic.”

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**Face shields for the front lines**

When UUP Stony Brook Chapter member Dave Ecker heard there was a need for plastic face shields for
It started in mid-March, when a Stony Brook University administrator asked Ecker if Stony Brook’s iCREATE Lab could produce the shields. Ecker, the lab’s director, said yes—even though he was a bit uncertain how to go about making them.

“I said, ‘I think it’s possible, give me a couple of hours,’” he said. “A couple of hours later, I sent him a photo wearing a prototype face shield.”

Since March 19, Ecker, Stony Brook Chapter member John Berwick and others at the lab have produced thousands of face shields, which have been sent to Stony Brook Southampton Hospital, the Long Island State Veterans Home and the coronavirus testing site and field emergency room on the Stony Brook campus.

On April 17, Ecker and company delivered 5,000 face shields to front-line employees at Stony Brook University Hospital.

“It’s so gratifying and rewarding to help these medical professionals, especially those on the front lines,” he said.

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**NYS Pension Fund safe**

Here’s some good news in these difficult times: The New York State Pension Fund is fine.

“Let me get straight to the point,” state Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli said in a May 8 message. “The New York State Pension Fund is safe and secure.”

DiNapoli issued the message to dispel rumors of a “raid” of the fund by the state due to the coronavirus pandemic. He said the pension fund “cannot be used for budget relief” by the governor or the state Legislature.

“The fund is secure,” DiNapoli said. “There’s no raid. Anything you hear to the contrary is false.”

Click [HERE](http://www.icontact-archive.com/archive?c=983301&f=22432&s=25441&m=2071373&t=4c74620ebbe8348ab7a065879c25f5a022c3c23defa70e0f7730be20f770) to read DiNapoli’s message.

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**TP worries? Binghamton UUPer says relax**

And yet more good news: America’s toilet paper shortage is wrapping up.
Binghamton Chapter member Donald Sheldon, a lecturer of supply chain management in Binghamton University’s School of Management, predicts that shelves will soon be bursting with toilet paper in stores near you.

“It’s almost a given,” Sheldon said in an April 28 Newswire.com press release issued by the university. “There will be too much home-use toilet paper in the marketplace soon.”

Sheldon said people, figuring they’d be home for a while, began buying large quantities of toilet paper in mid-March, when the coronavirus outbreak began to take hold in the U.S. That cleared shelves and caused others—who feared being in their homes for weeks without essentials—to shift into panic-buying mode, he said.

“People are using more toilet paper at their homes than ever before,” he said. “Prior to the shelter-in-place orders, people were using toilet paper at their office or in restaurants and stores more frequently.”

Paper companies have been working around the clock to keep up with demand, which will gradually decrease as people begin to return to work and begin to feel more comfortable shopping in grocery stores. That will cause a surplus of toilet paper, which means consumers can expect lower prices and great deals as stay-at-home orders are slowly eased.

“The likely short-term fix will be to discount home-use toilet paper in commercial sales, which could move inventories back to equilibrium,” Sheldon said.

Click HERE to read the media message.

**NYSUT elects, re-elects leaders at virtual RA**

NYSUT delegates re-elected President Andy Pallotta to a second three-year term and chose a new second vice president at the federation’s first-ever virtual Representative Assembly May 14.

Ronald Gross, a teacher in the William Floyd School District in Mastic Beach who serves on the New York State Teachers’ Retirement System Board, was elected to a three-year term as second vice president. He replaces Paul Pecorale, who chose not to seek re-election.

Also re-elected to three-year terms were UUP member and former statewide Vice President for Professionals J. Philippe Abraham and Executive Vice President Jolene DiBrango.
Kowal was re-elected as an at-large director of NYSUT’s Board of Directors. Statewide Vice President for Academics Jamie Dangler, Vice President for Professionals Tom Tucker and Downstate Chapter President Rowena Blackman-Stroud were re-elected as election district directors.

“I’m proud of what my union sisters and brothers are accomplishing together in this unprecedented time and look forward to working with them in the years ahead,” Pallotta said in a May 15 NYSUT media release.

The RA was hosted virtually due to coronavirus social-distancing restrictions.

Click HERE to read a story about the NYSUT RA on the NYSUT website.

Click HERE to view a full video of the NYSUT RA; users must have a NYSUT member identification number to access the site.

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**AFL-CIO’s PPE guide**

Can’t tell the difference between a surgical mask and a surgical N95 mask?

The AFL-CIO can help.

The AFL-CIO’s Safety and Health Team has created a guide sheet on personal protective equipment, including common types of masks, respirators and face shields.

The guidance provides descriptions, uses, certification requirements and OSHA requirements for each type of facial protection, from homemade masks to powered air-purifying respirators.

Click HERE to download the guide.

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**Free mindfulness webinars**

The Mohonk Mountain House is offering free “Mindfulness in May” webinars to help people cope with the coronavirus pandemic.

The New Paltz-based resort, which is closed due to the pandemic, has slated a series of free 30-minute seminars with Nina Smiley, Ph.D., Mohonk’s director of mindfulness programming. Smiley, an author, taught psychology at the University of Maryland. Her writings
The forums are free. They will be held at 2 and 8 p.m. Mondays for the rest of the month.

The webinars help participants become familiar with mindfulness, defined by Harvard Health Publishing as the practice of purposely focusing your attention on the present moment—and accepting it without judgment. Mindfulness has been found to be a key element in stress reduction and overall happiness.

Each session is limited to 500 attendees. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email about joining the webinar.

You can register for these forums:

- **Mindful Eating / Mindful Drinking: The Simplicity of Self Care**
  
  May 18 – Learning to make skillful choices regarding food and drink can be simple if we allow it to be. Moment-to-moment awareness paired with curiosity and some simple self-questions can help you work toward lasting change.

- **Exploring a Mindful Approach to Uncertainty**
  
  May 25 – Calling these times "uncertain" barely begins to describe the layers of thoughts and feelings that can arise at any moment.

  Developing a practice mindfulness meditation is a way to learn to clear the mind and calm the body again and again, as needed, as wanted.

Click [HERE](#) to register for the seminars.

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**Contingents, share your stories**

UUP’s statewide Contingent Employment Committee is collecting information about how the coronavirus pandemic is affecting our contingent faculty.

To add your voice, Click [HERE](#) to open a Google doc titled "Campus Experiences During ‘Distant Learning’ Covid-19 Crisis.” Then, share your experiences in the document and click the blue Share button at top right.

You can also email your comment to Committee Chair Anne Fearman and she will post it in the document.
AFT to host basic needs webinar

Hunger and homelessness were problems that too many students struggled with before the coronavirus.

With the pandemic, achieving a deeper and more coordinated focus on delivering these basic needs—and how unions will be part of this strategy—is needed.

AFT member Sara Goldrick-Rab, founding director of the Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice, and Michael Rosen, Local 212 FAST Fund director, will speak about ways to respond to these insecurities and will discuss evidence-based advocacy tactics in a free May 21 AFT webinar.

Participants can learn why their institutions should join the #RealCollege survey, how to advocate to include faculty and staff in the survey, and what unions should do with the information when they get it.

The webinar, “Basic Needs Solidarity: Why Addressing Hunger and Homelessness is in Everyone’s Interest,” will be held 2 p.m. Thursday, May 21.

Click HERE to register.

EAP can help

Looking for help coping during the coronavirus pandemic?

You’ll find some answers on your campus’ 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. It also provides orientations and training for all employees, managers, supervisors, and union representatives on benefits and use of EAP.

EAP web pages on the University at Albany, Binghamton University and SUNY Geneseo websites offer information and extensive lists of coronavirus-related links to help members with stress management and mental health.
Click HERE to view SUNY Geneseo’s EAP page and COVID-19 support information.

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**Tele-town Hall a success**

It’s not too late to take part in one of UUP’s Tele-town Halls.

Registration is still open for the online forum at 11 a.m. Thursday, May 21. The May 19 event has reached capacity and is closed.

The union is hosting the conference-call discussions so members can share ideas, ask questions and propose solutions during this uncertain time. UUP has already held two successful Tele-town halls May 7 and 13 that drew nearly 1,000 members.

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

Click HERE to read a UUP article about the May 13 event.

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

Look for UUP’s "We Are New York" ad on Facebook and Twitter.

The 30-second ad, which followed a one-week television and YouTube run last week, 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 ad was seen by more than 378,000 cable TV viewers on select news stations in Brooklyn, New York City, and Albany and Nassau counties.

On YouTube, where the ad appeared before YouTube videos, more than 1.3 million people saw at least five seconds of the ad. More than 337,000 people viewed the entire 30-second ad.

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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Not on the list? We can fix that

If you’re reading this newsletter and it’s not being emailed to you, that’s a problem.

Fortunately, it’s a problem we can easily fix.

To receive the UUPconnect: Coronavirus newsletter, email UUP Media & Publications Director Mike Lisi at mlisi@uupmail.org.

We will add your email to our distribution list. In the meantime, you can Click HERE to read past coronavirus newsletters.

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Kowal talks coronavirus on radio, in newspapers

UUP President Fred Kowal was in the media this week.

Kowal’s latest radio commentary, “Our Day, Our Future,” aired May 12 over Albany public radio station WAMC.

Click HERE to listen to the commentary.

He was quoted in coronavirus-related news stories in The Wall Street Journal, the Chief-Leader, Oneonta Daily Star, and Niagara Gazette.

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Take the 2020 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 neighbors to complete their 2020 Census from home has never been more important.
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 your form and for more information.

Stony Brook Chapter speaks out

The Stony Brook Chapter executive board has passed a resolution condemning the rise in anti-Asian rhetoric in connection with the coronavirus outbreak.

In the April 29 resolution, the chapter rejects the categorization of COVID-19 as a “Chinese virus,” “Wuhan virus,” or “Asian disease. The chapter also vowed to “stand by members, students and the community in pushing back against intimidation, harassment, and hate speech or acts aimed at individuals of Asian descent now and in the future.”

Click HERE to read the resolution.

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.
Pat Purcell, the executive director of Greater New York LECET (Laborers-Employers Cooperation and Education Trust), talks about what it will be like once New York state begins to reopen, on the latest installment of “Union Strong,” the NYS AFL-CIO’s podcast.

Click HERE to listen to the podcast.

Collective Bargaining Conference webinars

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

Here’s what’s slated for May:


  Speakers: Stephanie Hall, The Century Foundation; Anthony G. Picciano, Hunter College and CUNY Graduate Center; Di Xu, University of California Irvine; William A. Herbert, National Center, Hunter College.

  Click HERE to register for this forum.

· 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.

· The Meatpacking Industry and COVID-19: 1:30-2:30 p.m., Thursday, May 21.

  Speakers: Debbie Berkowitz, National Employment Law Project; Mark Lauritsen, United Food and Commercial Workers; Sheriff Tony Thompson, Sheriff, Black Hawk County, Iowa; Steven Greenhouse, New York Times

· Global Governance During Pandemic: Implications of Force Majeure and National Emergency for Worker Rights Protections: 10 a.m., Thursday, May 28

  Speakers: Karen Curtis, ILO; Jeffrey Vogt, Solidarity Center; Cleopatra Doumbia-Henry, World Maritime University; Paula Tavares, World Bank; Auret Van Heerden, Sustainable Business; Desiree LeClercq, Cornell University
Thursday, May 28

Speakers: Peter Cipparulo, CWA Local 1038; Adrienne Eaton, Rutgers; Eric Meyer, FisherBroyles LLP; Patrick Westerkamp, Westerkamp ADR, LLC; Jonathan F. Cohen, Plosia Cohen LLC.

Click HERE to register for one or more of the seminars.