COVID-19: The Numbers

More than 400,000 confirmed cases in New York state; more than 218,000 cases in New York City

More than 32,200 deaths in New York state; more than 71,000 people have recovered

More than 3.1 million cases in the U.S.; more than 133,000 deaths; nearly 969,000 people have recovered

Globally, more than 12.3 million cases; more than 556,000 deaths

*From Johns Hopkins University (as of July 10)*

UUP donates isolation gowns to Upstate

UUP has sent 2,000 isolation gowns to Upstate Medical University to ensure that members on the front lines of the pandemic are properly protected.

“Thank you and UUP for the donation of 2,000 Level 2 isolation gowns,” Upstate Medical University Chapter president Rich Veenstra said in a July 10 email to Doreen Bango, UUP’s director of member benefits. “The Upstate leadership was really appreciative.”

Seated in the photo at left; from left, are Upstate Chapter VP for Academics Steve Grassl; Hospital CEO Robert Corona; Upstate Chapter member Jess Boulia;
and retired Upstate President Mike Lyon.

Standing, from left, are Upstate Chief Nursing Officer Nancy Page; Brian Pratt, Value Analysis Program director; Veenstra; and Upstate Chapter VP for Professionals Mindy Heath.

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New York widens coronavirus quarantine

Travelers from Oklahoma, Delaware and Kansas are the latest additions to the COVID-19 quarantine order issued last month by New York, Connecticut and New Jersey.


That self-quarantine was extended for travelers coming from Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas and Utah. Business travelers and people at vehicle rest stops or with layovers at airports, bus terminals and train stations are exempt.

While self-quarantine is voluntary, Cuomo has said that violators will face mandatory quarantine and could be fined thousands of dollars.

New York, New Jersey and Connecticut put the measures in place to limit the spread of coronavirus from states in the southern and western U.S. experiencing spikes in COVID-19 infection rates. States with 10 positive cases per 100,000 residents, or those states that have 10 percent of their total population infected, are eligible for the list.

Meanwhile, the governor announced this week the cancellation of the New York State Fair. This is the first time since 1948 that the fair has been cancelled; the fair didn’t run from 1942 through 1948.

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UUP stands with international students against new ICE rule

UUP vehemently opposes a new U.S. Department of Immigration and Customs Enforcement rule that will force international students who only take online classes
to leave the country or transfer to another school.

In a July 9 statement, UUP President Fred Kowal said that UUP supports SUNY’s nearly 22,000 international students and that the union will take actions to help them remain in the country in the fall. Read the release HERE.

“We are repulsed but not surprised by this latest attempt by the Trump administration to strong-arm colleges and universities to open in the fall, during a pandemic that is spiking across the country,” said Kowal. “UUP refuses to participate in the politicization of the pandemic and we will do all we can to allow our international students to complete their studies without fear of being pushed out of the country mid-semester.”

Later that day, Jamie Dangler, UUP’s statewide vice president for academics, was interviewed about the new ICE rules by Albany TV station WTEN.

View the interview HERE.

Take action!

UUP members can continue to apply pressure and advocate for support for SUNY, communities, students and patients by taking three quick actions:

- Urge colleagues to sign a petition for SUNY to hold a virtual public hearing in July to address concerns about reopening campuses in the fall. CLICK HERE to sign the petition.
- Volunteer to call NYSUT and UUP members who live outside New York and push them to press U.S. senators to pass the HEROES Act. CLICK HERE to volunteer.
- Send e-letters to your state legislative leaders telling them to tax the ultra-rich. CLICK HERE to send an e-letter.

Sign up for a virtual NEO webinar

UUP is hosting “UUP Benefits 101,” a series of new employee orientation webinars focusing on benefits and ways new members can maximize them.

The webinars, which begin July 9 and run through Aug.
26, will also cover the importance of becoming a UUP member. Director of Member Benefits Doreen Bango will lead the webinars.

New SUNY employees as of March 13 can attend the webinars. CLICK HERE to RSVP for the webinars; login information will be sent out the week of the event.

The webinar schedule is below:

- July 20: Noon and 3:30 p.m
- July 22: Noon and 6 p.m.
- Aug. 10: Noon and 3:30 p.m.
- Aug. 12: Noon and 6 p.m.
- Aug. 24: Noon and 3:30 p.m.
- Aug. 26: Noon and 6 p.m.

Your union, your direction

Plans are in the works for a statewide grassroots demonstration to send a strong message about the ensuring the health and safety of SUNY employees and securing financial stability for the university system.

But it will be up to UUP members and community groups and organizations that commit to take part in the event to decide what type of demonstration to hold.

You can commit to joining the statewide demonstration by clicking HERE.

“Protecting our health, safety, and jobs also protects our communities and our local economy,” UUP President Fred Kowal said in a July 8 email to members and union supporters. “We must come together, commit to joining in a grassroots demonstration and decide what type of action will have the biggest potential for change.”

Please share the event commitment link widely with family, neighbors, community and student groups and other associations you work closely with.

Social justice tops UUP Executive Board actions

UUP’s Executive Board passed a pair of resolutions June 26 that propels the union’s social justice initiatives.

One resolution lays out UUP’s detailed social justice
agenda, addressing systemic violence directed against communities of color, the coronavirus pandemic and climate change.

A second measure calls on SUNY to hold a “full, aggressive, nationwide search” for a new chancellor, and states that “every effort be made … to attract a significant number of qualified candidates from underrepresented communities of color.”

UUP President Fred Kowal said the social justice resolution “focuses on the wide spectrum of challenges that must be met and changes that are necessary for our state and nation to overcome our history of racism and violence.”

A nationwide search for a new chancellor—particularly a person of color or someone from an underrepresented community—is a way for SUNY to finally begin addressing a lack of diversity among faculty, administrators and staff, he said.

“At a time when New York is quickly becoming a state in which the majority of the population will come from communities of color, this step must be taken,” Kowal said. “It is long overdue.”

Read the resolutions HERE and HERE.

UUP virtual town halls

Assemblymember Patrick Burke is set to take part in a UUP virtual town hall July 13.

The events are open to all UUP members.

Burke (D-South Buffalo) will answer questions from UUP members from 6-7 p.m. Monday, July 13.

Email Celine Mell at cmell@uupmail.org to register for the town halls.

Returning to campus: concerns and questions

UUP member Anna Curtis of Cortland talks in recent interviews about her many concerns around a possible return to campus in the fall semester.

Curtis would prefer to teach remotely from home
because she has a 4-year-old son and worries about child-care issues during a pandemic.

She has also said that she considers the prospect of teaching in a classroom daunting because she cannot be sure that students will always comply with safety precautions, such as wearing masks.

Read about Curtis in The New York Times HERE and listen to her on WNYC radio HERE.

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**Opioid misuse, relapses linked to coronavirus pandemic**

UUP Downstate Chapter member Paul Landsbergis, an associate professor at the Downstate Health Sciences University School of Public Health, has co-authored a fact sheet about COVID-19 and opioid misuse that provides an overview of this problem.

The fact sheet is packed with information and statistics about the pandemic and opioid misuse, along with suggestions for employers and employees coping with this dual crisis.

The fact sheet is part of the COVID-19 Worker Training Program at the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, a division of the National Institutes of Health. Jonathan Rosen, former PEF health and safety director who’s now a trainer for the NIEHS, wrote the fact sheet, with help from Landsbergis.

Landsbergis specializes in the study of working conditions on worker health and safety, and he had already received a grant to evaluate the effectiveness of the NIEHS Worker Training Program’s efforts with training on opioids when the fact sheet opportunity came his way. He’s conducting his grant research with Eric Persaud, a doctoral student at the Downstate School of Public Health.

Download the fact sheet HERE.
The National Clearinghouse in Worker Safety and Health Training is another resource on COVID-19 and opioid abuse; see it HERE.

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**Sign the letter**

UUP members are urged to sign a letter from the SUNY Black Faculty and Staff Collective demanding that SUNY act immediately to eliminate racial injustice on state university campuses.

In the June 19 letter, the group demands that SUNY take “immediate and meaningful action to deconstruct the present system and rebuild an academic space that is rooted in anti-racist ideology.”

“We, the SUNY Black Faculty and Staff Collective, join this lament and demand that SUNY address its own systemic racism and involve SUNY’s Black faculty and staff in all its decision-making processes,” the letter said. “We demand that the SUNY system ensures that we are as diverse, equitable and inclusive as we vocalize. There is no room for hollow platitudes. People’s lives are at stake. Our students' lives are at stake.”

The letter requests that SUNY make changes in administration, curriculum and campus life.

CLICK HERE to sign the letter.

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**Amazon and union organizing**

The difficulty of forming a union at Amazon is the focus of an online forum tonight sponsored by the Hudson Valley Area Labor Federation.

The forum, “Exploring the Amazon in our Backyard,” starts at 6 p.m. tonight. The panel discussion will discuss Amazon’s proposed warehouse in Montgomery, Orange County.

Speakers include:

- Staten Island Amazon worker Chris Smalls;
- Rene Mejia Jr., Nobody Leaves Mid-Hudson;
- Dan Maldonado, President, International Brotherhood of Teamsters Local 445;
- Nick Moran, Mid-Hudson Democratic Socialists of
America;
  - Mike Neidl, Legislative Director, NYS AFL-CIO; and
  - State Sen. James Skoufis (D-Cornwall).

Register for the forum [HERE](#).

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### Oneonta Chapter slates virtual town hall

SUNY Oneonta’s reopening plan is the topic of a July 15 virtual town hall hosted by the Oneonta Chapter.

The two-hour event starts at 10 a.m. Oneonta Chapter President David Lincoln, NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist Darryl Wood and other Oneonta Chapter leaders will answer questions and members’ concerns.

RSVP to Kerry at [oneuup@oneonta.edu](mailto:oneuup@oneonta.edu); log-in information will be sent the day before the meeting.

Members can submit questions anonymously; the deadline is noon July 14. [Use this form to submit questions.](#)

View SUNY Oneonta’s reopening plan [HERE](#).

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### NYSUT: Put school safety—not politics—first

NYSUT called the Trump administration’s push to reopen schools in the fall “out of touch” because it fails to put the health and safety of students, family and faculty first.

In a July 8 media statement, NYSUT President Andy Pallotta said that the health and safety of students and educators must be “top priorities” as schools prepare to reopen for the 2020-21 school year.

“The federal government’s demands that schools reopen without concern for health, safety and equity are simply out of touch,” said Pallotta. “Thankfully here in New York, we know the governor, the Regents and fellow education stakeholders are taking this seriously.”

Read the NYSUT media release [HERE](#).

Pallotta talks about what school might look like in the fall on the latest “Union Strong” podcast, produced by the NYS AFL-CIO. Listen [HERE](#).
Meanwhile, Johns Hopkins University has launched its new eSchool+ Initiative education tracker, which examines states' K-12 reopening plans. The site lists state plans in 12 categories, from academics to protecting kids from coronavirus.

View the tracker HERE.

PSC/CUNY sues over layoffs

The Professional Staff Congress/CUNY, the union that represents CUNY academics and professionals, has sued the City University of New York, claiming the university system violated its obligations under the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

The suit contends that the CUNY failed to meet a condition of the CARES Act mandating that higher education institutions, to the "greatest extent practicable," keep employees on payroll.

CUNY colleges have laid off nearly 3,000 adjunct faculty and staff; CUNY has informed the union that 422 adjuncts will lose health insurance because of layoffs or reduced assignments.

“The PSC will not stand by as CUNY lays off adjuncts and eliminates classes for students when Congress named job protection at colleges as one of the purposes of the stimulus bill,” said PSC/CUNY President Barbara Bowen.

UUP In Memoriam webpage

UUP remembers the active and retired members of our union family that we’ve lost to the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you know of a UUP member who has died due to COVID-19, please click the link below to enter their information on UUP’s In Memoriam webpage.

CLICK HERE to fill out the In Memoriam form.

Enter the decedent’s name (first name, middle initial and last name), select their campus from a pull-down list, and include your email. You may also leave a short personal note about the deceased.

We will never forget our colleagues who were lost to the
vicious virus known as COVID-19.

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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.

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