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 404,000 confirmed cases in New York state; more than 220,000 cases in New York City

More than 32,400 deaths in New York state; more than 71,800 people have recovered

More than 3.5 million cases in the U.S.; more than 138,500 deaths; more than 1 million people have recovered

Globally, more than 13.8 million cases and more than 591,000 deaths

*From Johns Hopkins University (as of July 17)*

**Keeping our members safe**

UUP has donated 20,000 isolation gowns to members at the Stony Brook School of Dental Medicine.

The gowns were delivered July 7. They will be used by Stony Brook HSC members who work at the school and in the Dental Care Center—the school’s teaching clinic. The Dental Care Center is Long Island’s largest oral health care provider.

Accepting the masks, in the photo at left, from left, are Stony Brook HSC Chapter VPA Stephen Walker, and
chapter members Rachel Vinci and Steven M. Zove. Vinci is assistant director of clinical operations at Stony Brook; Zove is associate dean for clinical affairs.

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**Downstate medical education during a pandemic**

Downstate Chapter member Teresa Smith is mentioned in a recent story in Crain’s New York Business about how the pandemic has reshaped medical education, with a strong focus on SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University.

The medical school at SUNY Downstate has a long record of educating physicians of color, and doctors who stay in New York when they begin their careers.

The school is one of several New York City medical schools making special adaptations for teaching its 820 students in a pandemic. The medical school has redesigned some of its programs so they combine virtual sessions with in-person learning.

Medical students are not allowed to work with COVID-19 patients, because they don’t yet have the training for this kind of clinical experience involving a contagious and potentially fatal disease, which not even experienced practitioners fully understand.

However, about 1,000 residents and fellows across more than 50 programs have been redeployed to emergency departments, ICUs and internal medicine floors to help ease some of the surge, said Smith, a physician who directs graduate medical education at Downstate.

"We need to anticipate another surge, whether that is when stay-at-home orders are rescinded or in October, when there could be another peak that coincides with influenza season," Smith has said in recent interviews. "We need to be able to go back to full redeployment at any point in time."

Out of those 1,000 residents, 3 percent contracted the disease, Smith said. She attributed the low infection rate to personal protective equipment and regular training.

UUP has contributed thousands of pieces of personal protective gear to Downstate, Upstate Medical University in Syracuse, and Stony Brook University Hospital on Long Island, as well as the Buffalo hospitals used by the University at Buffalo’s Jacobs School of
Upstate member helps with ambitious testing plan

Upstate Medical University Chapter member Frank Middletown has gained recognition for his innovative work on a coronavirus test in this story about the ambitious plan to test all 20,000 students at Syracuse University.

The testing plan is described in a story that appeared on Syracuse.com

Read the story HERE.

Trump administration reverses new rules targeting international students

UUP President Fred Kowal joined higher education leaders in a July 14 telephone press conference to support a lawsuit by state Attorney General Letitia James against new Trump administration rules to deport international students who only take online classes in the fall.

That afternoon, Kowal and UUP’s statewide officers got word that the rules, put in place July 6 by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, were rescinded.

“This is a victory for international students at SUNY and across America, said Kowal. “The Trump administration has backed away from its xenophobic, politically motivated policy, meant to force campuses to hold in-person classes during the coronavirus pandemic and without regard to the health and safety of students, faculty, staff and communities that host SUNY campuses.”

Attorneys from Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and ICE agreed to reinstate a March exemption from ICE’s Student and Exchange Visitor Program that allowed international students with F-1 and M-1 visas to remain in the U.S. while taking all or most of their classes online.

The agreement ended a July 8 suit filed by Harvard and MIT to block enforcement of the new ICE rules.
Campus reopening plans

College life will be different for SUNY students when campuses open for fall classes.

Reopening plans for all SUNY state-operated campuses have been approved by SUNY. While the plans vary from campus to campus, they all require students, faculty and staff to practice social distancing, wear masks and limit in-person class sizes.

UUP issued its reopening guidelines for campuses June 1. UUP’s guidelines are far more stringent; they call for mandatory and recurring COVID-19 testing for all and contract tracing and isolation. Read them HERE.

A list of links to campus reopening plans is below:

- University at Albany
- Alfred
- Binghamton
- Brockport
- Buffalo State
- University at Buffalo
- Cobleskill
- Cortland
- Delhi
- Downstate
- Empire State College
- SUNY ESF
- Farmingdale
- Fredonia
- Geneseo
- Maritime
- Morrisville

Read more HERE.
Take action!

UUP members can advocate for support for our SUNY, our communities, our students and our patients by taking three quick actions:

· Urge colleagues to sign a petition for SUNY to hold a virtual public hearing as soon as possible 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.

Virtual NEOs series

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 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 who started March 13 or later 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 22: 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.

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**New York’s coronavirus quarantine list grows again**

Travelers from Minnesota, New Mexico, Ohio and Wisconsin are the newest additions to the COVID-19 quarantine order issued last month by New York, Connecticut and New Jersey.

Gov. Cuomo made the announcement July 14, the same day he ordered travelers to New York from states under the 14-day self-quarantine order to submit forms detailing their travels.

The changes push to 22 the number of states on the 14-day self-quarantine list. Those states are Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, North Carolina, New Mexico, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah and Wisconsin.

Delaware has been removed from the list, which means that travelers from that state no longer must quarantine in New York.

The governor’s new travel order requires travelers landing at airports in New York, or who enter the state by train, bus or car, to fill out a form that asks, among other information, for the traveler’s recent contacts. Although failure to fill out the form carries a potential fine, it remains unclear how the state can enforce the
order, especially for travelers who enter New York in their own vehicles and are expected to complete the form online.

The expanded order comes as several problematic developments have occurred in the pandemic. New outbreaks of the coronavirus and record-setting numbers of COVID-19 cases are being reported in states that had, up to now, largely avoided major infection rates.

New York has also seen a spike in small but worrisome outbreaks, attributed to out-of-state travelers entering New York from known hot spots, and people not complying with social distancing and the wearing of masks in public. And, there is now strong evidence that the virus can be airborne, increasing the risk of infection indoors.

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**Mask up, New York**

Businesses in New York that allow customers without face coverings in their stores and shops face fines, as do customers who don’t comply with new state Department of Health regulations.

Last week, DOH revised its emergency regulations to levy $1,000 fines on businesses that fail to enforce state mandates requiring the wearing of face masks and social distancing in public areas. Customers would also be fined for refusing to wear masks or practice social distancing.

DOH or county health department officials would investigate before fines are issued, DOH spokesperson Erin Silk told the Rochester Democrat & Chronicle newspaper. Businesses that are fined can challenge violations by requesting a hearing before an administrative law judge, she said.

Complaints alleging violations may be made on the state’s New York on Pause website or by calling (833) 789-0470.

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**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. Please share this link widely with family, neighbors, community and student groups and other associations you work closely with.

“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.”

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**Virtual film fest starts July 31**

The [Workers Unite! Film Festival](https://www.workersunitefilmfestival.org) will host its second Virtual Film Festival July 31 through Aug. 4.

The virtual film fest, which is free, will feature films that honor and salute the Black Lives Matter movement.

One of the films to be screened is “To Be Us: To Work,” which focuses on the experiences of #workingwhileblack in America. The movie features interviews with working people of color from different professional backgrounds.

Other films will be added to the film fest; go [HERE](https://www.workersunitefilmfestival.org) to check as movies are added. Online question-and-answer sessions will follow film screenings.

“We are dedicating this next virtual film festival to highlighting several films about race in America, overzealous policing, and racism at work,” according to an email from festival organizers.

Films will be available to view on the Workers Unite! Film Festival website starting at midnight July 31. Groups of films will be posted every 12 hours.

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**AFT coronavirus resources**

The AFT has a new “Know Your Rights” primer to help union members push for the safe reopening of
The primer outlines employee rights and reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act during the pandemic. You can download a copy of the document on UUP’s COVID-19 Resource page.

More AFT coronavirus resources can be accessed HERE.

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 SUNY 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.

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 disease known as COVID-19.

The Kicker: Cuomo’s new poster


Times Art Critic Jason Farago said the poster, which tells the story of New York’s fight against coronavirus earlier this year, “appears like a lysergic imitation of a Victorian public reform campaign—translating the nightmare of the pandemic into an equally nightmarish vision of an island mountain, festooned with icons of death and decline, overlaid with text flying in every direction.”

The state is selling the 22-inch-by-28-inch New York Tough posters for $11.50 each. Get more information HERE.

Read the New York Times review HERE.