COVID-19: The Numbers

More than 409,000 confirmed cases in New York state; nearly 223,000 cases in New York City

More than 32,500 deaths in New York state; more than 72,400 people have recovered

More than 4 million cases in the U.S.; more than 144,400 deaths; more than 1.2 million people have recovered

Globally, more than 15.5 million cases; more than 634,000 deaths

*From Johns Hopkins University* (as of July 24)
You can email questions and concerns to mlisi@uupmail.org and/or jdangler@uupmail.org.

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**UUP to testify for safe campuses**

UUP President Fred Kowal will testify July 28 at a virtual public hearing on the impact COVID-19 has had on higher education.

The 11 a.m. hearing is being convened by the Senate and Assembly standing committees on higher education. You can view the hearing by clicking HERE.

At the hearing, Kowal will call for mandatory baseline and surveillance testing of students, faculty and staff at SUNY campuses, contract tracing, mask-wearing and social distancing, and expansion of the telecommuting agreement with the state.

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**Stony Brook HSC members rally for ‘COVID pay’ for essential workers**

UUP joined with three other statewide unions to demand hazard pay for members working at Stony Brook University Hospital and its two Long Island hospital affiliates during the coronavirus pandemic.

UUP members marched with union colleagues from CSEA, 1199SEIU and the Public Employees Federation at a July 22 lunchtime rally at Stony Brook University Hospital, which includes Stony Brook Southampton and Stony Brook Eastern Long Island hospitals. The unions are asking the SUNY Board of Trustees to provide “COVID-19 pay” of a $2,500 bonus for essential hospital workers.

“Our essential workers are heroes and they deserve to be treated as such,” said UUP President Fred Kowal. “They put their lives on the line every day, working double shifts and extra shifts to care for thousands of COVID-19 patients that flooded downstate hospitals in the spring when New York City was the epicenter of the coronavirus.”

Read more about the rally in UUP’s release on the
Several hospitals in New York City and those run by Northwell Health in the New York City region gave such a bonus to their essential employees, noted UUP Stony Brook HSC President Carolyn Kube.

The workers got support from two Democratic Long Island lawmakers: state Sen. Monica Martinez, from the 3rd Senate District, and Assemblymember Steve Englebright of the 4th Assembly District, which includes Stony Brook University. Englebright is also a UUP member and a Stony Brook graduate who teaches at the university.

Tell your senators: Support the HEROES Act!

The House of Representatives has already approved the HEROES Act, which would provide more than $100 billion for K-12 schools and public colleges and universities to reopen safely and help them recover from the financial hit delivered by the coronavirus pandemic.

Now it's the Senate’s turn.

Tell your senators to support the HEROES Act and to urge their Senate colleagues to do the same. SUNY desperately needs this federal funding and we need our members and supporters to make their voices heard.

CLICK HERE to tell your senators to support the HEROES Act.

You can also 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.

New York’s coronavirus quarantine list keeps growing

As the number of coronavirus infections around the country grows, so does the list of states on New York’s quarantine list.

Or, as several news stories have noted, the residents of and travelers to more than half of the United States are now required to go into quarantine for two weeks if they want to enter New York, New Jersey and Connecticut.
As of July 23, 31 states were on the quarantine list, with 10 recent additions.

The newest additions are Alaska, Delaware, Indiana, Maryland, Missouri, Montana, North Dakota, Nebraska, Virginia and Washington. They join Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, New Mexico, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah and Wisconsin.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy and Connecticut Gov. Ned Lamont agreed last month to start the quarantine requirement for states that exceed a 10 percent daily test positivity rate, or 10 new cases per 100,000 residents in a seven-day rolling period.

How easily the quarantine requirement can be enforced remains an open question. Motorists in private vehicles traveling into New York, for example, are expected to voluntarily obey the quarantine order and submit a form that provides their contact information and their quarantine location. Violators face a possible $2,000 fine, a hearing and mandatory quarantine.

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**Regents set shortened semesters**

The Board of Regents has adopted guidance to shorten semesters next academic year without impacting student financial aid.

The guidance details the amendment to Section 145-2.1(a)(i) and (ii) of the Commissioner’s Regulations that permits NYS Colleges and Universities to shorten the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 semesters from a minimum of 15 weeks to no less than 12 weeks without impacting a student’s eligibility for NYS financial aid.

Read more [HERE](#).

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**AFT report details coronavirus impact on education**

Education job losses could reach 1.4 million due to the coronavirus pandemic, according to a new AFT report, “A Time to Act: The Importance of Investment in Public Education and Other State and Local Services in the Time of COVID-19.”
The analysis reveals that hundreds of billions of dollars in urgent assistance are necessary to stop record layoffs at public schools and colleges and to protect students and educators from the coronavirus.

The report calculates the need to fill a $93.5 billion preK-12 funding gap and $45 billion higher education funding shortfall caused by the country’s economic slump. It also identifies an additional $116.5 billion to keep schools and colleges as safe as possible from the coronavirus.

Read the report [HERE](#).

**Employee group webinars: submit your ideas**

UUP has held webinars on reopening campuses with members from four employee groups to help them address common concerns on campus and find ways to work together to deal with coronavirus-related issues.

If you think that a webinar on reopening could help answer questions that you or your colleagues might have, your union wants to hear from you.

You can submit suggestions for employee group webinars via UUP’s COVID-19 comment/question portal link [HERE](#).

Union President Fred Kowal, Secretary/Treasurer Jeri O’Bryan-Losee and other statewide officers met virtually with members working in residence life (June 17) and student health and counseling services (June 24), and with academic department chairs (June 25) and academic librarians and library professionals (July 13), to allay fears, answer questions, share information and provide direction.

The sessions, which have attracted more than 100 members per webinar, have helped colleagues at different campuses connect, allowing them to work on shared problems together.

“We began this webinar series in response to requests and suggestions from members at various campuses,” Kowal said in a July 20 email to members. “Based on and feedback from participants after the webinars, we believe it could be very helpful to provide similar opportunities to other employee groups—or to hold additional webinars with those groups we’ve already met virtually with.”
Get in the know! Join UUP’s social media email list

Do you use social media? Do you want to share information with your friends, families and colleagues about the important work of your union?

Help UUP share important updates with your community by adding your name to UUP’s social media email list.

By adding your name and email, you will be the first to receive social media resources including:

• Sample posts and photos;
• Calls for action related to SUNY funding, letter-signing and more
• Training materials; and
• Information about upcoming events

Social media helps UUP connect with members of our community. Sharing updates and information on your personal pages keeps our community informed of the important work of UUP members and invites them to join us in our fight to protect our campuses, our community and our SUNY.

Sign up for UUP’s social media email list HERE.

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.

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**AFT’s 2020 Convention goes virtual**

AFT’s virtual 2020 Convention starts next week.

The fully virtual event, the AFT’s 86th annual convention, is set for July 28-30. Delegates will elect AFT officers by mail ballot after the convention.

Links to live-streamed events at the convention can accessed HERE.

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**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
Stony Brook COVID-19 news

If you’re teaching in person at Stony Brook University in the fall, you should visit your classroom to ensure that it is large enough for your students to practice social distancing.

If it isn’t, you still have time to request a room change through your department.

The Stony Brook Chapter will have representation on Stony Brook’s COVID Pandemic Operation and
Academic Year 2020-21 task forces and planning groups. See it HERE.

Chapter members interested in serving on the task forces can volunteer by filling out a Google form HERE.

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**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 and Services 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:

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

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**Virtual film fest starts July 31**

The [Workers Unite! Film Festival](http://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 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.

“Union Strong” podcast

Workplace safety in the office and retail industry and how we can be safe on the job and as customers is covered in the latest “Union Strong” podcast by the New York State AFL-CIO.

The podcast features interviews with Geraldine Stella, PEF’s health and safety specialist; David Mertz, assistant to Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union President Stuart Appelbaum; and Charlene Obernauer, executive director of the New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health (NYCOSH).

Listen to the podcast HERE.

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.