News you can use:

- Telecommuting Agreement Extended
- DSI/Compression increases delayed until February
- About those delayed 2% increases...
- Revenue Raisers to support SUNY!!
- Individual Development Awards 2020-21
- Spending 2020 HCAA, DCAA dollars in 2021
- Extension of accrued vacation time cap

Telecommuting Agreement Extended
GOER Extends Program to April 2, 2021

News arrived just before Christmas that the State would extend the current Telecommuting Agreement, originally scheduled to expire on December 31, until April 2, 2021. This came just days after our own New Paltz Administration had made its own decision to continue the program until March 1; the new GOER extension supersedes this local
We would like to offer our appreciation for the understanding of the Administration, expressed multiple times in meetings with UUP leadership, of their intention not to precipitously press employees who are successfully working from home to return to campus, recognizing the need to continue social distancing and to maintain the safety of the campus community through the pandemic. President Christian and the campus Administration have listened attentively to the concerns we have raised since the start of the COVID-19 crisis, and we have worked together to resolve most of them quickly. We look forward to continuing this productive relationship to ensure the safety and best interests of our members.

DSI/Compression increases delayed until February

While the dates for distribution are not yet finalized, at this time we anticipate that distribution of both the 2020 DSI and salary compression pools will occur some time in February. UUP and the State spent months working on adjustments to the changes in the compression formulae, in response to input we received from members after the first distribution of this new feature of the contract last year. The work (as with everything this year) took longer than anticipated, but the updated instructions for the data analysis were given to the campus HRDI office early in December, and they are working now to make the calculations.

We will provide you with updated information on when to expect payments of DSI
September depending on a member's obligation. But, the money -- added to base salaries -- is coming!

UUP statewide has provided this summary of the changes made to the 2020 salary compression process. Let us know if you have any questions regarding the process.

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**About those delayed 2% increases....**

As most of you know, we were due 2% across-the-board raises in 2019, negotiated in our Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). The state informed us in late September that they would continue delaying implementation of these increases until at least January 1, 2021; but there is no sign that we will see these raises at that time. Just as they delayed until the last possible moment extending the Telecommuting Agreement, we anticipate another late notification of continued delay in the 2% raises.

This delay involves approximately 80,000 New York State employees, including those in UUP, the Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA), and other state employee bargaining units.

UUP's July/September 2% increase is contractually provided for in the 2016-2022 NYS-UUP Agreement. After being notified by GOER in June of the first delay, UUP filed class action grievances covering the delayed raises as well as delays in implementing increases in minimum salaries scheduled to take effect in 2020. These include minimum salaries for adjuncts. UUP also filed an Improper Practice with the NYS Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) on behalf of residents working in facilities associated with SUNY's academic medical centers. Given the repeated delays in implementing our negotiated raises, we are considering our entire range of options.

While we did not agree with, or accept these delays, we understand that the state's decision is driven by the state budget crisis that has developed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. To address this crisis, it is critical that the federal government provide desperately needed assistance to state and local governments across the country, including New York. So, it is more critical than ever for New York State to pass an “Ultra-Millionaires’ tax” and a “Billionaires’ tax.” Additionally, we will be increasing our efforts to secure passage of the proposed reinstatement of the Tax on Stock Transfers. This option could generate over $1 billion in the first month! More
Join us to #makebillionairespay to support SUNY!!

There are common sense revenue enhancers that the Legislature and the executive should pursue. New York can raise money to fund our future and pay for essential state services. Smart and targeted revenue raisers will allow New York to make real progress for SUNY.

💰 New York’s Stock Transfer Tax has been levied on stock trades since 1905

💰 Since 1981, the tax has been rebated back to Wall Street

💰 If fully collected, the Stock Transfer Tax is estimated to raise between $14-$19 billion annually

💰 NYS Assemblymember Phil Steck and Senator James Sanders have introduced legislation to require the state to keep the proceeds from this tax (see: A.7791-B/S.6203-A)
Individual Development Awards 2020-21

The Individual Development Awards are back!!

The good news is that given the high number of awards from last year that were not used, as conferences, workshops, and other professional development opportunities were cancelled due to the COVID pandemic, GOER (the Governor's Office of Employee Relations) has decided to roll the unused funds into this year's pool of available money for distribution through this union-negotiated program. As a result, our local Joint Labor-Management committee, chaired by Maryalice Citera, will have a record $44,816 will be allocated to New Paltz for the period July 2, 2020 to July 1, 2021. This amount includes the reallocation of unspent funds of $17,871 from the 2019-2020 award period and $26,945 new allocation for 2020-2021 award period.

The statewide Joint Labor-Management Committee is currently in the process of finalizing the guidelines for the IDA program. As soon as these guidelines are available, we will sending out a call to all members to solicit applications.

You can spend 2020 HCAA, DCAA dollars in 2021
You can use up to $500 in unexpended funds for eligible expenses in 2021. And UUP members enrolled in the 2020 Dependent Care Advantage Account have more time to use funds leftover from 2020.

According to the Governor’s Office of Employee Relations, UUP-represented members can use up to $500 in 2020 HCSA funds, in part because of the many closures and health care cancellations caused by the coronavirus pandemic. The IRS allows for an employer to carry over remaining balances for use during the next year.

Click HERE to check your 2020 HCSA balances or call 1-800-358-7207 for more information. Email fsa@goer.ny.gov or call WageWorks/Health Equity at 1-800-358-7202 with questions about the extension.

**DCAA EXTENSION**

DCAA enrollees have an additional two-and-a-half months to use unspent 2020 funds for eligible expenses in 2021. Claims can be submitted for care provided between Jan. 1 and March 15, 2021; the claims must be filed by March 31, 2021.

The extension may help provide some financial relief, allowing you to use dollars set aside for dependent care costs that you couldn’t use due to coronavirus-related closures of services such as before school and after school programs, childcare centers and camps.

Click HERE to check your 2020 DCAA balance or call 1-800-358-7207 for more information. Email fsa@goer.ny.gov or call WageWorks/Health Equity at 1-800-358-7202 with questions about the grace period or your DCAA.
It's your vacation time -- you should get to use it, not lose it!

UUP has reached agreement with the Governor’s Office of Employee Relations to extend the January 1, 2020 vacation accrual cap.

Article 23.2(d) of our Collective Bargaining Agreement provides that employees who have vacation accruals in excess of 40 days at close of business on December 31, of each year of the agreement must forfeit that excess leave to bring their vacation leave credits down to 40 days on January 1. The new agreement with GOER provides that employees who have accrued vacation credits in excess of 40 days who have been unable to use that excess vacation leave due to ongoing COVID response efforts and will be given an additional year to close of business December 31, 2021 to exhaust that leave.

The new Memorandum of Understanding is attached here.