A Future that HEALS
United University Professions (UUP), with our 37,000 active members and 6,000 retirees across New York, are committed to advocating for a cleaner, fairer, more just community for all New Yorkers. We are a solutions-driven union that is proposing an ambitious agenda for 2021-22, focused on the access and delivery of health care for all, raising revenue through a just and progressive tax system, and making SUNY a dynamic vehicle for economic, social, and environmental change. We must rise to meet the many challenges of 2021 and beyond.

UUP members work at....

**COMPREHENSIVE COLLEGES**

- SUNY Brockport
- Buffalo State
- SUNY Cortland
- SUNY Fredonia
- SUNY Geneseo
- New Paltz
- SUNY Old Westbury
- SUNY Oneonta
- SUNY Plattsburgh
- SUNY Oswego
- Purchase College
- ESF
- Farmingdale State College
- SUNY Empire State College
- SUNY Polytechnic Institute

**ACADEMIC MEDICAL CENTERS**

- Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences
- Downstate Health Sciences University
- Stony Brook Medicine
- SUNY College of Optometry
- Upstate Medical University

**TECH. CAMPUSES**

- SUNY Canton
- SUNY Cobleskill
- SUNY Delhi
- SUNY Morrisville

**UNIVERSITY CENTERS**

- University at Albany
- Binghamton University
- Stony Brook University

United University Professions
President Frederick E. Kowal, Ph.D
www.uupinfo.org

Contact Daniel Brown, Political Director - dbrown@uupmail.org, about UUP’s legislative agenda
HEALTHCARE

- With three SUNY hospitals serving on the front lines of the maternal health crisis, UUP urges support for the Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act (HR 959 and S 346). Supported by more than 190 organizations, the bill will make critical investments in social determinants of maternal health like housing, transportation, and nutrition. It also provides funding for community organizations, studying maternal health risks facing certain populations, growing and diversifying the workforce, and a host of other tools and programs that respond to every dimension of the issue. In addition to its commitment to delivering excellent maternal healthcare at our hospitals, SUNY is prepared to train the providers and support staff needed to address the Black maternal health crisis in New York and across the country.

- **UUP supports forgiving the CARES Act loans (Medicare Accelerated/Advanced Payments Program) to public and safety-net hospitals.** The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services’ (CMS’) accelerated/advanced payment program provides necessary funds (advanced Medicare reimbursement) when hospitals and other health care providers face disruptions in cash flow typically during an emergency. The CARES Act expanded the program. Accelerated payments function as a loan and must be repaid to CMS in full. These loans provided crucial funding for SUNY hospitals as they carried the burden of both the financial and physical cost of the pandemic. Requiring the hospitals to begin the repayment process as they begin the process of recovery and rebuilding to overcome the financial stress placed on them by COVID-19, is setting public hospitals and our communities up for failure. While Congress passed a short-term Federal funding bill that included limited repayment relief, more must be done. UUP urges Congress to grant full forgiveness of Medicare Accelerated/Advanced payments so that these essential health care providers can continue to provide our communities with quality care.

- **UUP urges Congress to protect hospital-specific Medicaid DSH funds by restoring Medicaid dual eligible enrollees in the federal hospital DSH cap calculation.** Section 203 of the Consolidated Appropriation Act of 2020 eliminated inclusion of services provided to Medicaid dual eligible enrollees in the federal DSH cap calculation beginning October 2021. This change in the federal DSH cap formula will reduce the total amount of DSH funds public hospitals, including the three SUNY academic medical centers can receive, compelling these hospitals to provide care to Medicaid dual eligible enrollees at a significant financial loss. These public hospitals already operate on incredibly thin margins. Any reduction in DSH funding impacts the ability of these safety-net hospitals to continue to provide services to vulnerable patient populations.
• UUP urges for the creation of a Public Healthcare Professional Recruitment & Retention Initiative. There are national shortages of health care professionals, including respiratory therapists, radiology technologists, dosimetry technicians, medical technologists, nurses and others, and it is becoming increasingly difficult for public hospitals to recruit these highly skilled workers. Federal funding is needed to create programs aimed at recruiting students to these fields, with financial support while they are in school and student loan repayment once they graduate.

• UUP proposes a new federal Infectious Disease Medical Coverage Program, aimed at addressing the costs incurred by the healthcare system, to increase treatment rates and minimize spread of infectious disease through the population. To address the current pandemic, as well as future outbreaks of infectious diseases, UUP calls upon the Federal Government to initiate a universal Infectious Disease Program to ensure diagnostics and treatment of infectious diseases for all residents of the United States. This program would cover medical costs incurred by those afflicted by COVID-19 and future pandemic diseases. Early diagnosis and treatment are critical in curbing infectious disease outbreaks and spread through the population. Knowledge that these costs are fully covered will dramatically enhance individuals seeking early-stage diagnosis and treatment.

• UUP supports the Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2021 (S 834) and its goal of expanding the physician workforce and access to quality care across New York and the country. Addressing a predicted shortage of up to 139,000 doctors by 2033, the bill will grow the number of medical students funded by Medicare at teaching hospitals like the three SUNY facilities. Over seven years, a total of 14,000 new Medicare-supported graduate medical education positions will be created under a program that had been capped at extremely low levels for nearly 25 years. Rural hospitals and those serving officially designated health professional shortage areas will be among the facilities targeted for these positions. This proposal also launches a study on strategies for increasing diversity in the healthcare workforce.

EDUCATION

• UUP supports the College for All Act, which would guarantee tuition-free community college for all students and allow families earning under $125,000 – nearly 80% of all households – to attend public colleges tuition- and debt-free. SUNY stands ready and welcomes the opportunity to provide more students a world-class education. Under this bill, SUNY faculty ranks will strengthen, and instruction will improve with a provision that requires participating public colleges to increase the share of tenured/tenure-track faculty to 75%. The College for All Act also expands Pell Grants to cover non-tuition expenses and requires that the costs of this transformational bill are not borne by working families, but through a tax on Wall Street speculation.
ACCESS

• UUP supports the Biden administration’s American Families Plan, which calls for a historic investment in our children and our families. This package will help families cover the basic expenses that too many struggle with now, lowers health insurance premiums and continues a dramatic reduction in child poverty. The American Families Plan will:
  • limit childcare expenses for most households, saving the average family $14,800;
  • provide three- and four-year-old’s access to universal, high-quality preschool;
  • guarantee workers 12 weeks of parental, family and personal illness leave by year 10 of the program, which will cover up to $4000 per month, replacing 2/3 to 80% of average weekly wages for workers;
  • provide every American with two years of free community college, significantly expanding access to higher education and strengthening the on-ramp to a four-year SUNY degree;
  • protect the budgets of working households, by extending middle-class tax cuts while stepping up IRS enforcement and lifting income and capital gains taxes for the top 1% of earners; and
  • provide new funding established to address teacher shortages and improve teacher training and preparation.

• UUP supports the expansion of the voting rights act (For the People Act: S 1 and HR 1; John Lewis Voting Rights Act: No Bill Number). UUP supports passage of HR 1 which aims to solve problems around (1) voting accessibility, (2) gerrymandering of the US House of Representatives, (3) the influence of big and dark money on elections, (4) election security, and (5) ethics in the federal government. HR1 is endorsed by nonpartisan good-government nonprofit groups, such as the Brennan Center for Justice and Common Cause. UUP also urges Congress to pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Act. The federal government last reauthorized the 1965 Voting Rights Act in 2006. Sadly in 2013 the Supreme Court struck down the formula for determining if state and local governments were required to get Justice Department preclearance for voting and election changes which we now see in state legislatures limiting access to the ballot box. The John Lewis Voting Rights Act would revive the formula and try to strengthen the 1965 law. Previous reauthorizations of the Voting Rights Act have received bipartisan support and UUP strongly believes this reauthorization should as well. UUP strongly believes in free, fair, and accessible elections.
LEADERSHIP

• UUP calls on Congress to pass HR 842 and S 420, the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act. This law will ensure that UUP members, alongside all workers, can push for changes we want to see at our workplaces without fear of retaliation, and strengthens the right to form a union and negotiate for those changes should we choose to do so. With outdated labor laws and no penalties for employers who illegally retaliate against workers for collective action, the PRO Act is necessary to have our voices heard as working people. This bill helps employees advocate for improvements at work by (1) holding employers accountable for violating workers’ rights, (2) including most workers under the National Labor Relations Act’s protections, (3) protecting collective action and removing barriers to worker voice, (4) strengthening employees’ bargaining rights, and (5) modernizing processes for union election and enforcement.

• UUP advocates for the passage of President Biden’s American Jobs Plan. This needed investment in the nation’s economy will fix highways and rebuild bridges while upgrading ports, airports, water supplies and transit systems. The plan seeks to strengthen infrastructure throughout our economy by creating jobs and raising wages and benefits for skilled workers, including essential homecare providers and workers in advanced manufacturing. This jobs proposal will ensure safe and healthy workplaces and support the free and fair choice to organize, join a union, and bargain collectively with employers. It also addresses systemic racism by offering Americans who have endured discrimination and exclusion a fair shot at a good paying job. SUNY and its local communities will benefit mightily from these provisions, including a long overdue expansion of broadband internet. President Biden proposes to fuel these investments by restoring the corporate tax rate to previous levels, eliminating tax loopholes, and increasing IRS audits in the corporate sector.

SUSTAINABILITY

• UUP urges the passage of the THRIVE Act, HR 2523, to create millions of good jobs and protect labor standards and wages. This bill provides $1 trillion each year over a decade to achieve 15 million jobs and full employment while also addressing racial inequality in past federal legislation – 50% of funds will go to communities harmed by racist or unjust practices. Indian and Alaskan Native tribes will receive expanded funding and regulatory protections as well. Millions of public sector jobs will be generated in education and the care economy, as well as in upgrading infrastructure, transportation, and energy systems. The THRIVE Act builds the power of workers to fight inequality by supporting unionization rights, ensuring high-road labor standards, expanding apprenticeship programs, guaranteeing family-sustaining wages and benefits, protecting communities hurt by economic transitions, and preventing privatization of public sector jobs and resources.
• UUP supports President Biden’s climate and clean energy plans, which call for the US to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50% from 2005 levels by 2030 and achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. By adopting an “all of government” approach and assembling a National Climate Task Force, the Biden administration will use the full strength of the executive to enforce new energy standards, promote sustainable practices, and prepare the green economy of tomorrow. On top of this, the American Jobs Plan proposes trillions of dollars in critical investments for electric vehicles, public transit, green housing, climate research, infrastructure resiliency and the Civilian Climate Corps. This legislation will kickstart the green economy and prime the nation for a series of additional investments needed to meet America’s climate and energy goals. SUNY will play a vital role in conducting research, supporting green public works projects, and training the workforce to drive these plans forward.

• UUP supports HR 2307, the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act. In support of the Biden administration’s commitment to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, this bill imposes a fee on the carbon content of fuels, including crude oil, natural gas, coal, or any other product derived from those fuels that emit greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

• UUP supports the federal Green New Deal. New York passed historic legislation and set important goals with the CLCPA, but federal action will be needed to make those goals a reality. A federal Green New Deal will be an important step in creating a greener future for all.

• The Child Care for Working Families Act, which would address the current childcare crisis by capping costs for working families; improving the quality and supply of childcare for all children; expanding access to high-quality preschool programs; and supporting higher wages for childcare workers.

• UUP proposes a new Federal Student Debt Relief Program, aimed at addressing the devastating impact of student loan debt on graduates’ credit scores. Carrying large amounts of student loan debt can drastically impact graduates’ credit scores and ability to obtain loans needed to progress with life and career. High compounding interest rates on their student loans makes it harder for students to pay back their debt. UUP’s proposal would require the federal government to buy public and private loans and hold students’ debt. This would allow the government to suspend all (or most) interest (zero) and declare these debts as non-commercial debt. In this model, debt amounts would not be reported to crediting agencies. The government would also provide an extended repayment term of 25 years.

• Comprehensive immigration legislation that creates a pathway to citizenship for 11 million migrants living in the U.S. illegally, including a pathway to citizenship for people commonly known as DREAMers, who are part of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program (HR 1177 and S 348).