



Meet your union



PLUS: THE SUNY BUDGET AND YOU · GETTING YOUR STUDENT LOANS FORGIVEN

uup



How your union works

**Welcome to UUP.
Now find out how it works for you.**

If you are already a UUP member, we are happy you have joined the union. We think you'll find this special issue of *The Echo* helpful.

If you're not yet a member of UUP, but you're reading this because a colleague showed it to you, that probably means you are member of the bargaining unit represented by UUP. You're one of the many thousands of SUNY employees for whom UUP bargains a contract.

So please, join UUP by signing a membership card. That's the most important way you can tell the state that you are committed to your union. This is a case of strength in numbers. The more people from the bargaining unit who join UUP, the stronger this union will be. The highest possible membership means that UUP is better positioned to provide you with on-the-job protections and terrific benefits. The state takes note of how many people in the bargaining unit sign a membership card, because that indicates an involved, committed and concerned bargaining unit. As a member you will pay dues to UUP. Those dues will go right back

to you through our union's constant work to achieve protections, benefits and a strong contract.

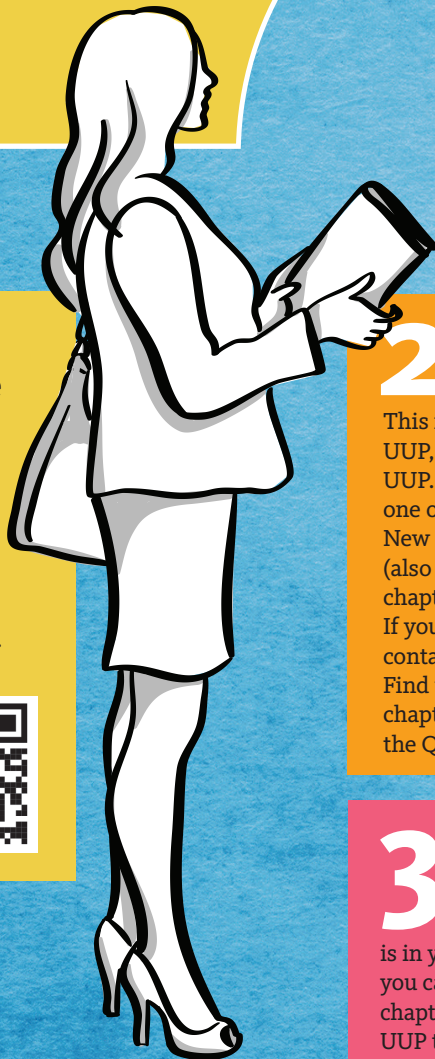
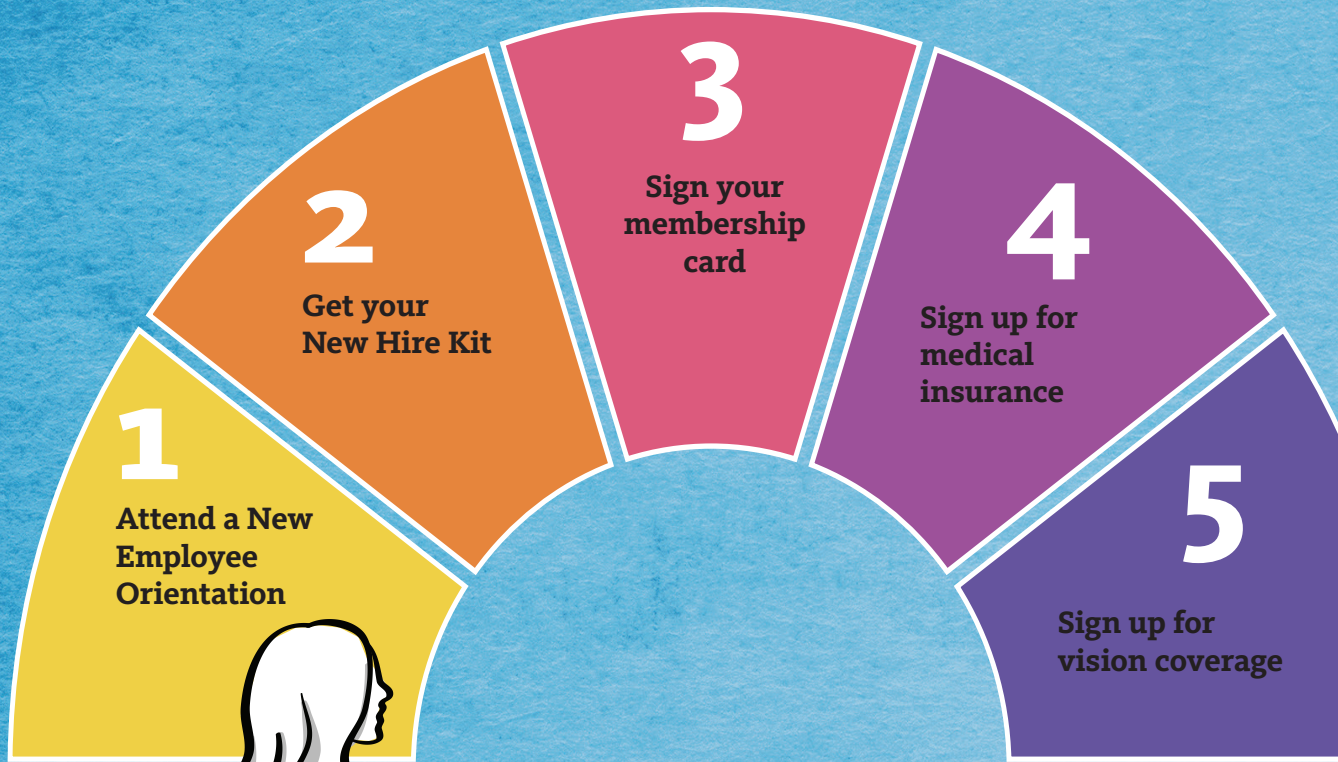
Membership also affords you some specialized rights. Only members can vote on a proposed contract, run for chapter or statewide office or become a delegate to the UUP's statewide policy-making gathering, the Delegate Assembly. Membership gives you a voice in UUP. We hope you start reading this issue as a future member of this union, and that you finish reading this issue as a new member of UUP.

This special issue of *The Echo* is the first of a series of four issues that will explain the basics of what UUP has negotiated for all of us, and will also explain the advantages of joining UUP. You see good explanations of why the state budget matters to UUP and what we suggest you do once you pick up a "new hire kit" for new SUNY employees.

You'll also find explanations of some of the terms, abbreviations and acronyms you might hear during orientation. And you will learn who's out there to help you if you ever need assistance.

So welcome to our union. We look forward to having you.

Getting started



1 Attend a New Employee Orientation

Learn about UUP benefits at a New Employee Orientation. Your campus orientation may include a talk by a UUP representative about the benefits of membership. Or, attend a virtual New Employee Orientation.

To register for one, scan the QR code.



2 Get your New Hire Kit

This is packed with information about UUP, UUP benefits and how to join UUP. You may get your new hire kit in one of several ways: in the mail, at a New Employee Orientation (also known as a “NEO”) or at your chapter office on campus. If you haven’t gotten one, contact your chapter office. Find the phone number and chapter address by scanning the QR code at right.



3 Sign your membership card

Your membership card is in your new hire kit, but you can also get one at your chapter office. You can also join UUP through its website by scanning the QR code at right.



4 Sign up for medical insurance

In most cases, you are automatically enrolled in medical insurance once you become a SUNY employee. If you are part time, you may also be eligible for health insurance, because UUP negotiated health coverage for many part-time employees. Your insurance is handled through the New York State Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP). To register for NYSHIP, visit <https://bit.ly/NYSHIP>. To find out if you qualify, visit <https://bit.ly/NYSHIPeligibility>

5 Sign up for vision coverage

Your vision coverage is provided by Davis Vision. However, once you become a SUNY employee, to be enrolled you must fill out the yellow card contained in your UUP new hire kit, or scan the QR code below to sign up for benefits.

6 Sign up for a dental plan

Coverage is provided by Delta Dental, and there is a choice of PPO or DMHO plans. (Click links for an explanation of each plan.) If a plan is not specified on the yellow card, the default is to the PPO plan. However, you can opt into the DMHO any time. See below for links.

7 Decide upon your retirement plan

If you work full time, you must join a retirement plan within 30 days of starting at SUNY. Part-time employees can join a retirement plan at any time. Visit www.suny.edu/retirement/ for an explanation of retirement plans.

7 Decide upon your retirement plan



Dental PPO

8 Know your rights

UUP has negotiated all the rights you enjoy as a member. See the Your Rights page for those.



Dental DMHO

9 Get to know your chapter



Sign up for benefits

uup
and you



You've just been hired as a SUNY employee who is represented by UUP.

There's a lot to know, not only about your new job, but also about your benefits, your retirement plan choices and your union.

Or, maybe you've just decided to join UUP and you want to learn more about your union.

To make this easier, start with the first item on Page 4 and follow the step-by-step instructions for joining UUP, for registering for benefits and selecting a retirement plan.

The easy suggestions here will tell you how to do all these things, and how to contact your UUP chapter on your campus.

8 Your single most important right

as a UUP member is your right to vote on whether to approve UUP's contract with the state. **Only members can vote on the contract.**

9 Get to know your chapter

Your campus UUP chapter is your best starting point for information, advice, help and involvement with your union. Scan the QR code to contact your chapter.



It's as easy as...

1 Attend a NEO

Your campus may hold an orientation for new employees, but UUP also regularly offers virtual New Employee Orientation (NEO) sessions. It's good to attend both. The campus orientation will tell you how your campus runs. The UUP NEO will explain benefits you get because UUP represents you. Go to the UUP website (uupinfo.org) to register for a NEO, or visit here:

<https://bit.ly/NEOwebinar>

2 Pick up your New Hire Kit

By the time you read this, someone will probably have handed you a UUP New Hire Kit, but if not, contact your campus UUP chapter office. Don't know where that is? See link below.

The New Hire Kit explains the structure of UUP and the benefits you get because UUP represents you, and it includes a membership form so that you can join UUP. To find your local chapter's contact info, go to:

<https://bit.ly/UUPChapters>



**New
Employee
Orientation**



**UUP
Chapters
information**



**Sign your
membership
card**

3 Sign your membership card

The fastest way to join UUP is sign up online by visiting the link below.

Membership affords you some great opportunities (we'll get to those soon) and the more people in the bargaining unit who sign up as members of UUP, the stronger your union becomes. Membership sends a strong message to the state that you care, that you are involved and that you want to see UUP thrive.

So please either sign up online, or by filling out a membership form. Look for the membership form in your New Hire Kit, sign it and get it back to your chapter office on campus, in person or by mail. Thank you.

<https://bit.ly/JoinUUPtoday>

4 Sign up for your health insurance coverage

Your health insurance as a SUNY employee represented by UUP is through the New York State Health Insurance Program, and the plan for UUP is known as the Empire Plan. UUP does not set the bi-weekly rates for health insurance coverage. But UUP does negotiate what share of the cost of Empire Plan Coverage that UUP-represented employees will pay, as well as how much their co-pays, deductibles and co-insurance maximums will be. For more information, go to the SUNY benefits page at www.suny.edu/benefits/ or contact your campus HR/Benefits office. Find out how to contact that office at www.suny.edu/benefits/contacts/

7 Choose your retirement plan

You've just started your new job at SUNY, and now we're telling you that you also have to pick your retirement plan? Yes, you do. If you are full time, **you must join a retirement plan within 30 days**. If you're part-time, you can join a retirement plan at any time. But you generally cannot switch retirement plans once you choose one, so make this decision carefully.

See www.suny.edu/retirement/ for an explanation of the different plans and eligibility.

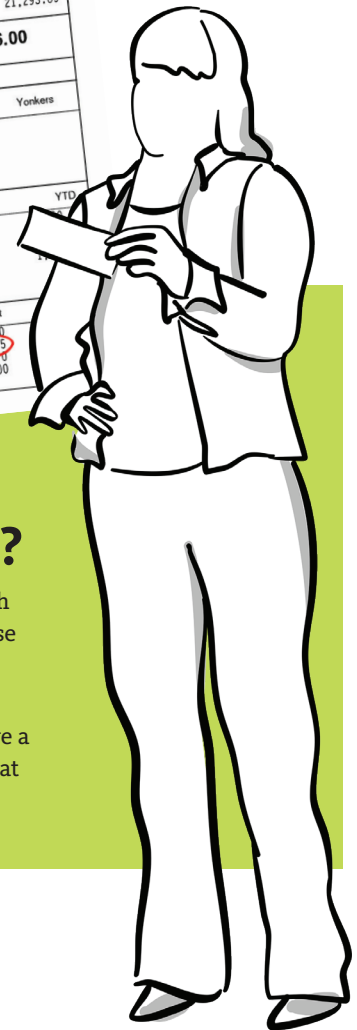
What's in it for me?

Your New Hire Kit contains:

- A letter of welcome from UUP President Fred Kowal
- UUP Benefits Guide booklet – which explains many of the benefits references listed below
- Membership registration card
- Benefit Trust Fund Group Term Life Insurance Beneficiary Card
- UUP Benefit Trust Fund enrollment card
- Benefit Trust Fund DeltaCare USA (DHMO) Enrollment Card
- A VOTE-COPE voluntary contribution card – VOTE-COPE is a political action fund that supports candidates who favor public education, and participating in VOTE-COPE is entirely voluntary. UUP union dues is NOT used for political action.
- An article about your union which is titled: “A primer: What is UUP?”
- An explanation of the Taylor Law, a New York state law that governs how the union's contract with the state is enforced.
- Several information sheets that explain additional benefits which are voluntary, and which are available to UUP members for a fee.



Thomas P. DiNapoli State Comptroller		JANE M. DOE		DEPTID 10001		Total Gross	Fed Taxable Gross
Advice #	32916007	NYS EMPLID	N01234567	Pay Start Date	03/30/2023	Current	3,004.96
Advice Date	04/26/2023	Pay End Date	04/12/2023	Negotiating Unit	08	YTD	27,110.64
		Retirement System	ORP/VDC			Net Pay	1,616.00
				Pay Rate	78,559.00		
EARNINGS				TAX DATA			
	Hrs/Days	Current Earnings	YTD Earnings		Federal	State	NYC
Regular Pay Salary Employee		3,004.96	27,110.64	Tax Status	\$ 0	\$ 0	
				Allowances	30.00	30.00	
				Add. Amt.			
BEFORE TAX DEDUCTIONS				TAXES			
	Current	YTD			Current	YTD	
SUNY 403(b)	275.00	2,475.00		Fed Withholding	324.00	324.00	
Health Care Spending Account	83.33	749.97		Medicare	38.19	38.19	
Regular Before Tax Health	287.98	2,591.82		Social Security	163.29	163.29	
				NY Withholding	137.75	137.75	
				AFTER TAX DEDUCTIONS			
	Current	YTD			Current	YTD	
				UUP Vote Cope	30.00	30.00	
				UUP Member 26P	19.19	19.19	
				UUP Hyatt Legal Services	15.00	15.00	
				Morrisville Ag/Tech Fund			



Aren't I already a UUP member?

If you are reading this, you are already in the bargaining unit of UUP—which means that you are in the group of more than 37,000 SUNY employees whose contract with the state is negotiated by our union, UUP.

So to become a member of UUP, in addition to being part of the bargaining unit, you will need to sign a membership application (see Page 6) and receive a membership card. Your paystub will tell you if you are a UUP member; look at the bottom-right corner.

SUNY Budget and you

Making sausage: *How SUNY is funded ... or not*

You're going to hear a lot about the SUNY budget. It's a year-round concern for UUP, which works hard to get SUNY as much money as possible in the state budget each year.

Money flows into SUNY several ways: from the state budget, from student tuition and even from the federal government. But most SUNY funding comes from the state.

The state funding first goes to the central SUNY administration, which then divides it among the campuses. UUP does not represent the employees at the SUNY community colleges, but they also get a share of that state money.



Ways you can influence the process

You can affect the budget process to help SUNY, your students, and your colleagues. Start by joining UUP; the more members, the better. Get involved in talking to lawmakers about the budget; UUP calls this effort “advocacy” and it matters. UUP and campus chapters work year-round meeting with lawmakers in their district offices and in Albany. Many voices make a difference. Add yours.

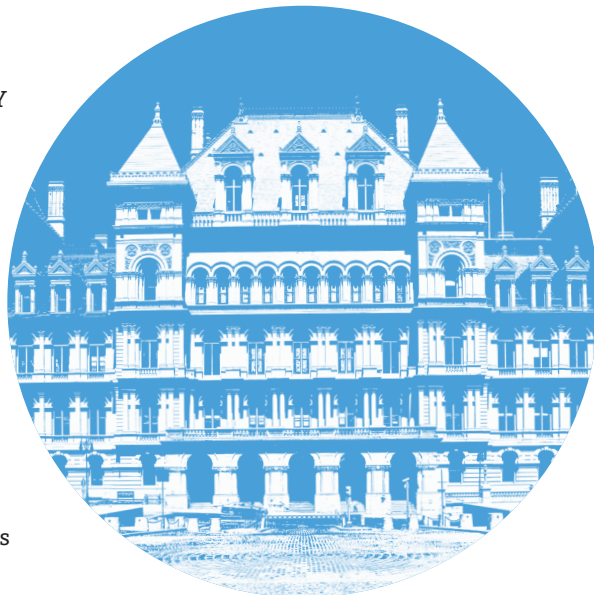
Why it matters to you

As someone who has chosen to work in public higher education or at a SUNY teaching hospital, you've made a special commitment to students and patients. The state budget matters to UUP and UUP members.

Strong funding for SUNY means there are smaller classes and more faculty and staff. It means that there are enough academic advisors, counselors and financial aid staff. It means that health services are there for students, without long waits. It means that patients can be seen in the ER quickly, and clinics and other community services can reach people who can't always reach the hospital.

Strong funding means that science labs have up-to-date equipment, that students have access to the technology they need and the experiences that enrich lives: trips abroad, concerts on campus, special forums, exhibits, talks and events.

All this takes money. That's why member advocacy — and your advocacy — is so important.

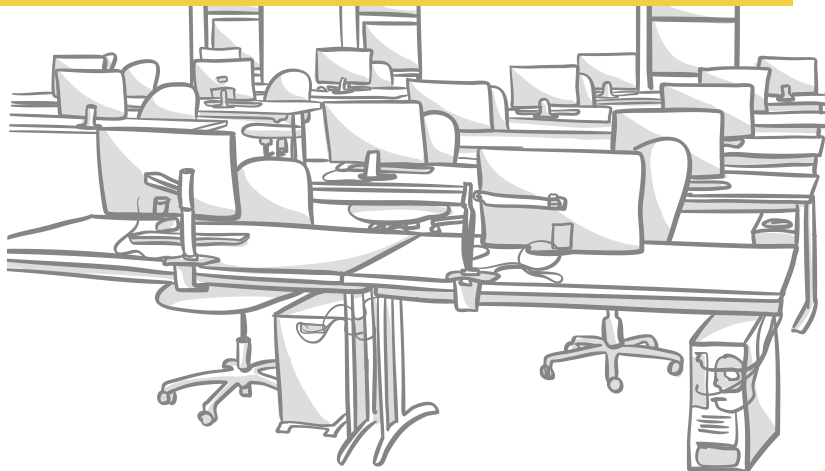


» Action Days

Sometimes, UUP is out there in public, holding rallies and news conferences to demand full funding for SUNY. Other times, UUP is in lawmakers' offices, making the case for why they should support a stronger SUNY in the state budget.

Both types of events unfold on UUP Action Days, when our union speaks up to help every member have the best-funded campus possible.

There are many ways to help on Action Days. Watch the UUP website (uupinfo.org) for announcements. Watch for announcements from your campus UUP chapter on upcoming events. And remember: there is strength in numbers.



UUP across NYS



Who is UUP?

United University Professions is a public-employee union which represents 37,000 employees at 29 state-operated campuses of the State University of New York. These employees work in dozens of different jobs.

This collective group of UUP-represented employees is known as the bargaining unit, and UUP is authorized by state and federal law to negotiate with New York state for a contract and other terms and conditions of employment on behalf of these employees.

UUP has been doing this since 1973.

Members of the bargaining unit perform a diverse range of jobs throughout SUNY. They teach students, they work in the three SUNY hospitals as medical staff and they help students with financial aid, health care needs and academic and mental health counseling.

They care for livestock at SUNY colleges with agricultural programs, and they care for crops grown as part of these programs. They help wildlife biology professors teach outdoor labs, and they conduct research in campus labs in the areas such as engineering, computer science and medicine.



<https://bit.ly/YouAreUUP>

And where is it...?

United University Professions covers the statewide SUNY system, from major university centers to specialized schools, and also the SUNY system administration.

UNIVERSITY CENTERS

University at Albany • University at Buffalo • Binghamton University
Stony Brook University

STATE-OPERATED CAMPUSES

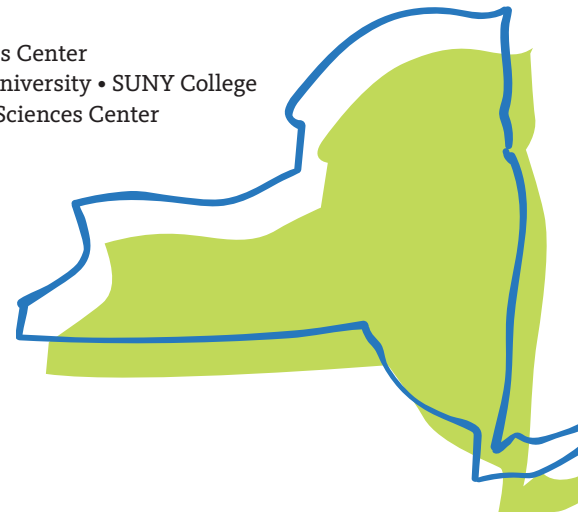
SUNY Brockport • SUNY Buffalo State University • SUNY Cortland
SUNY ESF • SUNY Farmingdale • Empire State University • SUNY Fredonia
SUNY Geneseo • Maritime College • SUNY New Paltz • SUNY Old Westbury
SUNY Oneonta • SUNY Plattsburgh • SUNY Polytechnic Institute
SUNY Potsdam • SUNY Purchase

HEALTH SCIENCES CAMPUSES

University at Buffalo Health Sciences Center
SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University • SUNY College
of Optometry • Stony Brook Health Sciences Center
Upstate Medical University

TECHNOLOGY CAMPUSES

Alfred State College • SUNY Canton
SUNY Cobleskill • SUNY Delhi
SUNY Morrisville



Vital contacts

• YOUR CAMPUS UUP CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

Start here, and if you need more help, your chapter leaders will know where you should go. This is an excellent starting point for all questions UUP. Find your chapter location, leaders and phone numbers at <https://uupinfo.org/directory/chapters/>

• YOUR UUP STATEWIDE OFFICERS

There are five statewide officers, who are elected to three-year terms by delegates from the membership of UUP. Your chapter leaders are still a good place to start for basic questions or problems, but the statewide officers are also here to help members. They are:

UUP President Fred Kowal, at fkowal@uupmail.org

Two statewide vice presidents represent UUP academics and professionals: Carolyn Kube, vice president for professionals, at ckube@uupmail.org and Alissa Karl, vice president for academics, at akarl@uupmail.org

The statewide secretary-treasurer oversees the union's finances and budget and chapter elections.

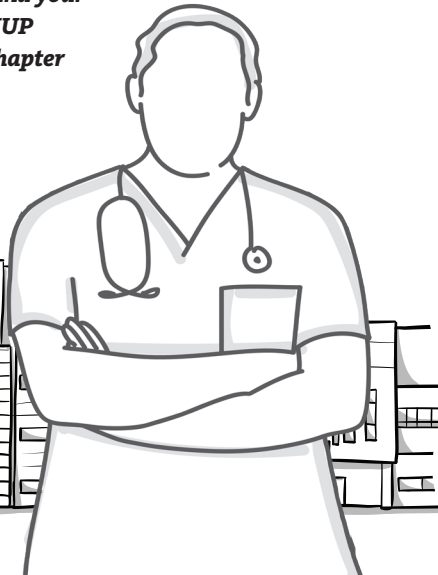
Jeri O'Bryan-Losee, at jobryan@uupmail.org

The statewide membership development officer holds a part-time elected position to work with chapters to grow UUP's membership.

Patrick Romain, at promain@uupmail.org



*Find your
UUP
chapter*



What is the Taylor Law?

The Taylor Law is formally known as the **Public Employees' Fair Employment Act**, and it is a labor law that governs most public employees in New York.

The four core parts of the Taylor Law state that public employees have the right to organize and be represented by a union; that governments—be they state or local—should negotiate with recognized unions; that there will be a way to resolve labor disputes; and that public employees will not go on strike.

• LABOR RELATIONS STAFF (LRS)

Jeremy Ginsburg: NYSUT staff director for UUP

Labor Relations Specialists —

William Capowski: Maritime, New Paltz, Optometry, Purchase
Michelle Couture: Albany, System Administration, Cobleskill, Empire State

Jamie Gullian: Alfred, Brockport, Geneseo, Morrisville

Matt Kibler: Buffalo Center, Fredonia

Tammy Mays: Farmingdale, Old Westbury, Stony Brook HSC

Chris Sielaff: Binghamton, Cortland, Delhi, Oneonta

Nicholas Whitman: Buffalo HSC, Buffalo State

Kathleen Briggs Renadette: Canton, Oswego, Plattsburgh, Potsdam

Brent Underwood: ESF, Polytechnic, Upstate Medical

Lisa Willis: Downstate HSC, Stony Brook

*For Labor Relations staff
contact information,
visit <https://bit.ly/LRSstaff>*

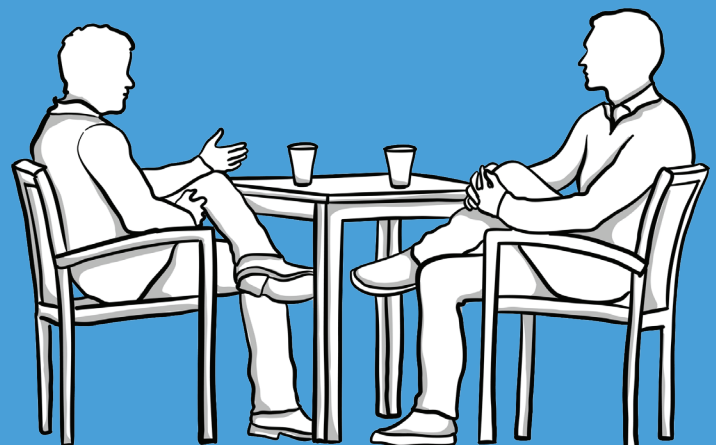


A helping hand: Who is an LRS?

Labor Relations Specialists are employees of NYSUT, UUP's statewide affiliate union. They are experts in the UUP contract with the state, and also experts in the interpretation of the Taylor Law (see top right).

Ten Labor Relations Specialists represent the 32 UUP chapters, with each LRS representing a group of chapters in one of 10 regions.

Jeremy Ginsburg is the NYSUT Staff Director for UUP, and he supervises the 10 Labor Relations Specialists assigned to the UUP chapters.



Your rights

{and how you got them}



Basic rights of UUP members

UUP is a democratic organization that welcomes participation by all members. The UUP officers and staff work with you, the member. Here's a rundown of your other basic rights:

The right to be active in your chapter

Your first and most important right as a member is your right to be active in your chapter. Activism and involvement start at the grassroots level, with the chapter.

Through their chapter, members can: provide input on what the union should negotiate for in a new contract; represent their colleagues by holding elected office as a delegate or chapter officer (chapter elections happen every two years); vote in

>> Your rights are bargained by UUP

Voting on the proposed UUP contract with the state is your first and most important right as a UUP member.

The contract sets out the terms and conditions under which you will work at SUNY.

UUP's first and most important responsibility is to negotiate that contract. Sometimes, the contract expires before UUP and the state reach a new agreement. If that happens, most of the previous contract stays in effect until a new agreement is reached. UUP is negotiating a new contract right now.

In exceptional circumstances, such as the coronavirus pandemic, UUP and the state may meet to negotiate special terms and conditions of employment during an emergency. One recent example: At the beginning of the pandemic, UUP negotiated the right for most members to telecommute.

union elections—including electing statewide and chapter officers; and address campus issues by helping their chapter advocate for state and federal funding and policies that will help their colleagues, patients at SUNY's public teaching hospitals, and SUNY as a whole.

The right to a fair contract

You are protected by the terms and conditions of the contract that UUP has negotiated for you with the state.

UUP is recognized by the state and federal governments as the legal representative of the SUNY employees in the UUP bargaining unit. The negotiation of a fair contract with the state, which establishes the terms and conditions of your employment, is the union's most important obligation. Only UUP members can vote to accept a proposed contract.

UUP's most recent contract expired in July 2022, but its protections and terms and conditions of employment remain in place during the ongoing negotiations for a new contract.

The right to a safe workplace

A safe workplace is one of the core tenets of the labor movement. Both UUP and SUNY have policies that protect you from discrimination and harassment. UUP members also have the right to a workplace in which machinery and chemicals are safely used by properly trained people.

All is forgiven

Send your student loan into the sunset

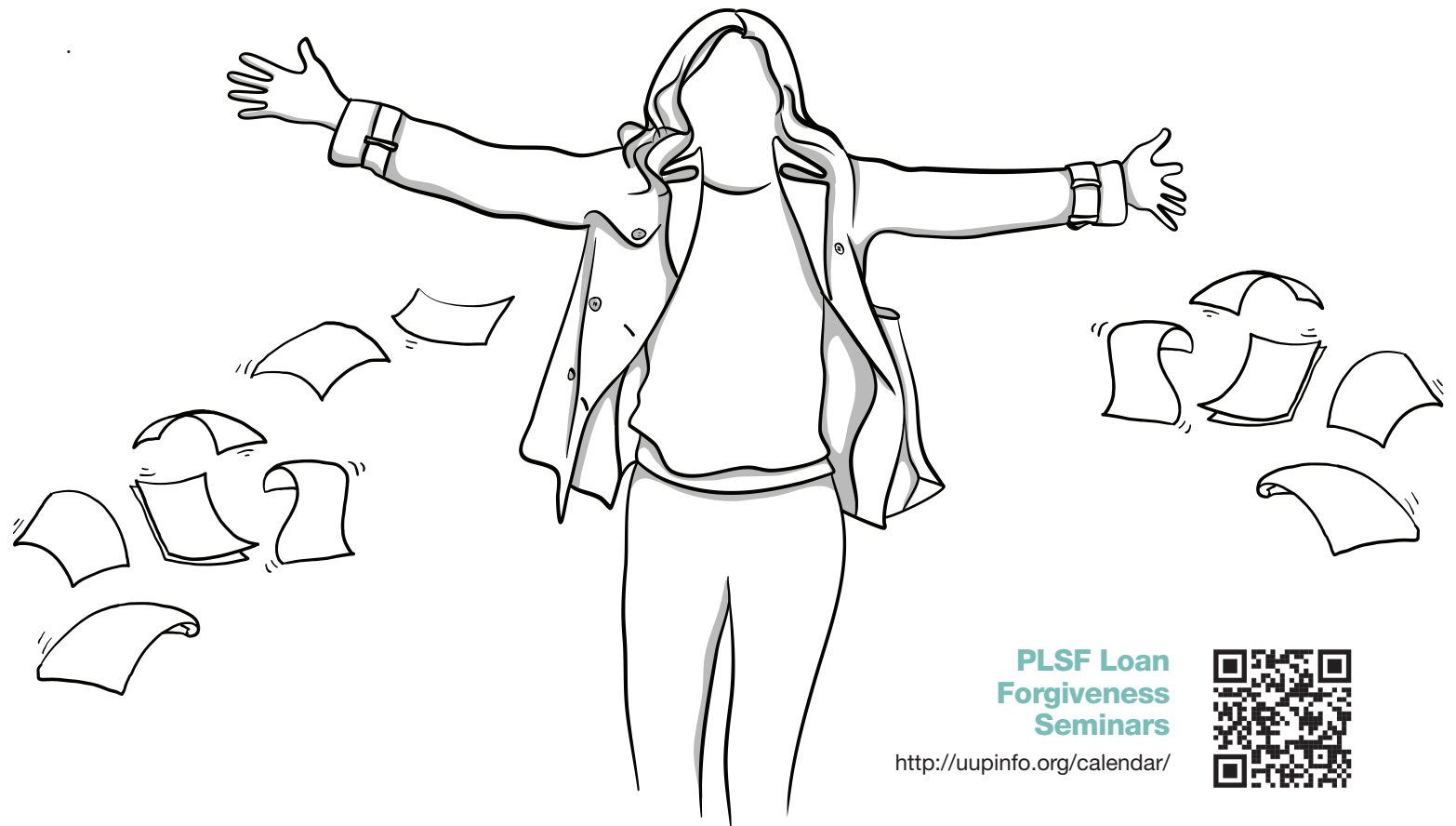
Can UUP help get my student loans forgiven? What is PSLF?

In answer to the first question: Yes, UUP definitely can help you get your student loans forgiven. In answer to the second question: Well, you're going to hear a lot of acronyms in the world of student loan repayment, and you'll hear this one more than any other: PSLF. That stands for "Public Service Loan Forgiveness." If you are a SUNY employee and you have outstanding federal student loans, you qualify for this federal program that can help you achieve forgiveness on the balance of your student loans after 10 years of timely payments.

There are more details than what you've just read here, of course, but that's the gist of it. The main takeaway here: If you work for SUNY, and you have outstanding federal student loans, you qualify for forgiveness of those loans within a decade of enrolling in the program.

How do I get it?

The easiest way to get help enrolling in Public Service Loan Forgiveness is to attend one of the regularly scheduled free virtual clinics that UUP offers. To register for a clinic, go to <http://uupinfo.org/calendar/> and select the date for the "UUP Virtual Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) Clinic" on the calendar. Statewide Secretary-Treasurer Jeri O'Bryan-Losee runs these informative, helpful clinics. UUP members have had more than \$10 million in student loans forgiven through these clinics.



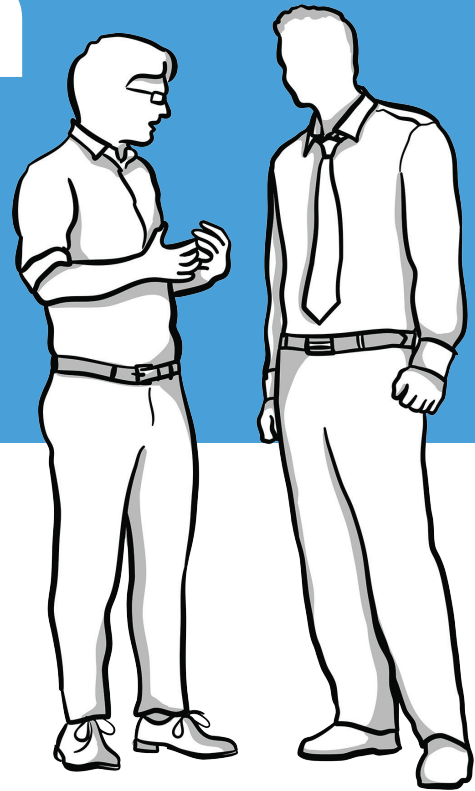
**PSLF Loan
Forgiveness
Seminars**

<http://uupinfo.org/calendar/>



Your union contract

{and how you get it}



THE UUP CONTRACT with New York state sets the terms and conditions of your employment with SUNY, and negotiating that contract is one of the most important tasks your union does for you.

In turn, voting on that proposed contract is one of the most important tasks UUP members will do for their union. Only members can vote on the contract.

Our Negotiation Team

The UUP president appoints the UUP Negotiations Team. The team represents all UUP members, and team members are drawn from the many different types of SUNY employees in the UUP bargaining unit.

So whether you are full time or part time, whether you work in a SUNY hospital or in a technical program at a campus, whether you are a professional or an academic, tenure-track or contingent, you have someone on the Negotiations Team speaking up for you.



NYS's Negotiation Team

The state's negotiations team consists of a chief negotiator, who works with the following people...

From the New York State Governor's office of employee relations:

- Director
- Acting deputy counsel
- Assistant director, Contract Negotiations and Administration Unit
- Acting director, Employee Benefits Management Unit
- Employee relations associate, Employee Benefits Management Unit
- Acting director, Research Unit

From SUNY:

- Associate vice chancellor and chief counsel for Employee Relations
- Assistant vice chancellor and senior counsel for Employee Relations
- Associate vice chancellor for University-wide Human Resources
- Director, University-wide Human Resources

STAY CONNECTED!

UUPConnect is the newsletter that collects union happenings, current events and issues that affect you, your field and your career each week.

From Supreme Court decisions to issues in education, from changes in the health care profession to the latest news from the SUNY system, UUPConnect keeps you connected.


To receive UUPConnect in your inbox, email UUP Communications Director Mike Lisi at UUPconnect@uupmail.org.



As small colleges struggle, so do their towns

This is becoming a sadly familiar story in many college communities around the country: As enrollments shrink and small colleges merge or close, how do the communities around these campuses always easily, as this story explains.


Read more [HERE](#).



At last: A focus on diversifying medical professions

In a topic related to that of encouragement in the mental health professions, a new focus also draws attention on the difficulties of increasing the number of physicians of color in the United States.

This also has been an important issue for UUP, which promoted the idea of the Pre-Medical Educational Opportunity Program at SUNY, and which backed the state's decision to create that program.



Want to get rid of student loans?

If you work for SUNY, and have federal student loans, you are eligible to apply for the federal Public Service Loan Forgiveness program. And if you're a UUP member, you don't have to go it alone; your union will guide you through the application process.

Attend a free, virtual UUP clinic on PSLF and Income-driven Repayment Plans, led by statewide Secretary-Treasurer Jodi O'Brian-Lopez, and get the help you need.



KEEPING YOU CONNECTED.
www.uupinfo.org

Working for your quality of life.



Work/life balance



Fair raises



Child and elder care



Job security



Telecommuting

Dignity, respect and agency in our workplaces.

