UUP goes to DC

Members build on new federal support for higher ed in Congress

VACCINATION MYTHS DEBUNKED

CAN YOU GET YOUR STUDENT LOANS FORGIVEN?
Over the summer, my wife and I hit the road on a long-awaited trip to Montana, a trip that took us to spectacular places and places that were spectacular in their own unique ways.

We drove on interstate and down winding back roads, into towns and villages where we found a bite to eat and a comfortable bed for the night. When we stopped, we couldn’t help but notice that most people weren’t wearing face masks in places where we wore face masks—and figured most people would be wearing them as we would.

In stores, shops, really in most indoor places, mask-wearing was optional at best and openly discouraged at worst. Yes, we got a few strange looks to be sure, but we don’t play around when it comes to COVID. We’re both fully vaccinated, we got our vaccines as soon as we could.

And we traveled in late August, just as Delta variants cases were starting to surge across the country—all the more reason, we figured, to protect yourselves and others by masking up. It was disconcerting and downright disheartening. In so many places across the country, people are not protecting themselves.

Too many people aren’t getting vaccinated for a myriad of reasons, a major contributor to why COVID still looms large at the start of yet another academic year at SUNY.

COVID is no stranger to UUP. We’ve been dealing with the effects of the pandemic since its first hit New York City in February 2020. Our colleagues at SUNY hospitals in Brooklyn, Stony Brook and Syracuse have been treating COVID patients since those first terrifying days when so little was known about it—except that it killed mercilessly. And we traveled in late August, just as Delta variant cases were starting to surge across the country—all the more reason, we figured, to protect yourselves and others by masking up. It was disconcerting and downright disheartening. In so many places across the country, people are not protecting themselves.

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CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

United University Professions’ elected Chapter Presidents are there to work for their members. If you’ve got an issue or comment, feel free to reach out to them.

WORKING FOR A BETTER WORLD

Brod Award honors retirees, one posthumously, for service above self

Jeanne Galbraith and the late Sandy Spier, UUP retirees members beloved for their quiet dedication to their union and their communities, are this year’s winners of the Pearl H. Brod Award. Spier, a former retiree officer at UUP’s Downstate Medical Center Chapter, died last spring just weeks after her Downstate colleagues, Chapter President Rowena Blackman-Stroud and Chapter Secretary Ellen McGugan, nominated her.

Spier: An advocate for Downstate

Sandy Spier was known as a highly effective political activist, and especially so earlier in the administration of former Gov. Andrew Cuomo, when UUP realistically worried that the state would try to close Downstate Medical Center. Under Blackman-Stroud’s leadership, the chapter rallied a coalition of community activists and faith leaders, and Spier was deeply involved in that effort. Blackman-Stroud described her as “...a dedicated, passionate advocate for organized labor who has selflessly given of her time to create positive change as a UUP member, and a member of the Downstate Chapter ... she was always advocating for our members.”

A longtime member of the First Unitarian Congregational Society in Brooklyn, Spier threw her considerable energies into social justice efforts in the borough, and she worked especially hard to build bridges among diverse religious and cultural groups.

Rita Pearl, Spier’s fellow congregant at First Unitarian, remembered “Sandy’s heartfelt commitment to a better and more equitable world for everyone,” in her nominating letter. Among Spier’s many projects at First Unitarian: organizing the yearly friendship dinner between the congregation and the local Muslim community.

Galbraith: Elections expert, mentor

Joanne Galbraith’s service to UUP has been at both the statewide and chapter levels. At Geneseo, she was an academic delegate and chapter secretary; at Stony Brook HSC, she was an academic delegate, chapter secretary, vice president for academics and an interim chapter president. She served on the statewide UUP Executive Board, and as state-wide secretary for three terms, from 1989 to 1995.

But it was through her continued work after her retirement for the UUP Elections and Credentials Committee—newly renamed the Constitution and Governance Committee—that many newer UUP members got to know Galbraith. As a member and then co-chair of Elections and Credentials, a role she shared with David Krue of Cortland, she directed elections at many delegate assemblies and was renowned for her knowledge of election procedures and protocol. Although she and Krue are no longer committee chairs, they remain members of Constitution and Governance.

A gifted quilter, Galbraith belongs to a quilting club and one put her creative skills to good use for UUP by donating a quilt to an auction that supported the UUP College Scholarship Fund. The quilt quickly sold.

Galbraith’s colleagues Henry Flix, a Downstate retiree, and former UUP statewide Secretary Eileen Landy nominated her, with supporting statements by Krue and statewide Vice President for Professionals Carolyn Kube. Landy warmly described Galbraith in a nomination letter as a mentor with a sense of humor and vast institutional knowledge of the union.

“She was generous with her expertise and always willing to answer questions and explain policies and procedures,” Landy wrote. “Her generosity continued after her retirement; I relied upon her wisdom until I left office in 2017.”

The Pearl H. Brod Award recognizes UUP retirees who have provided outstanding service to their communities, to SUNY and to UUP after retirement. The award is named for the late Pearl H. Brod of Farmingdale, a longtime academic delegate who served as elected chair of what was then known as the statewide Committee on Active Retired Members (COARM) from 1999-2004. The committee is now known as the Retired Member Governing Board Committee. Brod was COARM’s Long Island Region representative 1995 - 2009. The award was renamed in her honor in 2011. The award was presented at the virtual UUP Fall Delegate Assembly on Oct. 15.
Mike Lyon and Wes Kennison receive Mitchell Award for decades of service to UUP

More than 60 years of combined activism by two deeply committed labor advocates, and dual nominations for UUP’s highest honor, mean that Mike Lyon and Wes Kennison are both recipients of this year’s Nina Mitchell Award for Distinguished Service to UUP.

Many parts; one strong union

Lyon, of Upstate Medical University, and Kennison, of SUNY Geneseo, are both known for their quiet leadership as chapter officers, statewide activists and stalwart supporters of topics especially close to their hearts—in Lyon’s case, the negotiated Joint Labor-Management Individual Development Awards and the wellbeing of the SUNY academic medical centers; for Kennison, a career of powerful advocacy for SUNY’s part-time employees.

“A union needs role models to remain vibrant and to encourage the next generation of activists,” UUP President Fred Kowal said of the award winners. “Both Mike Lyon and Wes Kennison have consistently demonstrated the all-too-rare art of consensus-building, by devoting their time to connecting different groups within the union. We are a union of full-time and part-time employees, of professionals and academics, and nationally known experts in health care as well as the humanities. Mike and Wes achieved something that’s all too rare: They bridged all of these different groups and helped UUP achieve contracts that represented all.”

Mike Lyon: An advocate for SUNY HSCs

Mike Lyon’s distinguished record of service includes stints as vice president for academics and as chapter president at Upstate; two terms on the UUP Negotiations Team, in 2011 and 2016; and more than a decade of service, which continues still, as chair of his chapter’s Joint Labor-Management Individual Development Awards Committee. His statewide service includes the UUP Executive Board, co-chairing the former UUP Board of Directors Committee on Health Sciences Center Concerns, ongoing service on the statewide Grievance Committee and as interim Membership Development Officer from 2015-2016. He was a delegate as an active member and continues as a retiree delegate.

A faculty member at the Upstate Medical Center Department of Otolaryngology and Communication Services for nearly 40 years, Lyon continues to chair Upstate’s Institutional and Animal Care Use Committee, an important compliance committee for federally funded animal research projects. Outside of his career and work for UUP, Lyon serves as an at-large trustee of the Greater Syracuse Labor Council, which has a proud history in Onondaga and Madison Counties that dates to 1899 and is part of the Central New York Area Labor Foundation of the AFL-CIO. He has used his avid love of cycling to raise money for regional charities.

“From when I first became an academic delegate in the 1990s, Mike has always been there,” Richard Veenstra, the current Upstate Chapter president, wrote in his nomination letter. “The many positions that Michael J. Lyon has held during his decades of service to the Upstate Medical Chapter and UUP statewide leadership are testimony to his dedication to United University Professions.”

Wes Kennison: Landmark achievements for contingent members

In his nomination letter, Joseph Dolce, the vice president for professionals at the Geneseo Chapter, noted that the lump-sum bonus “...ended management’s longtime refusal to include money for part-timers in the statewide contract, thus helping to remove a major obstacle to later successes in establishing statewide minimum salaries for part-timers.”

Kennison’s community service includes two terms as Geneseo town supervisor, as chair of the board of directors for the SUNY Geneseo InterFaith Center, and as chair of the board of directors of Catholic Charities of Livingston County.

The Nina Mitchell Award would normally be presented in person at the UUP Fall Delegate Assembly. This year’s Fall DA was a one-day virtual event held Friday, Oct. 15, and the award was presented to Lyon and Kennison during the virtual plenary.

“All of us owe a great deal of gratitude to these two outstanding members for their incredible dedication,” Kowal said. “I hope that all UUP members will join me in extending thanks to Mike Lyon and Wes Kennison for their effort in helping to make UUP the richly diverse, wide-reaching and inclusive union that it is today.”

The award is named for the late Nina Mitchell, a beloved substance abuse counselor at the UUP Downstate Medical Center Chapter who died in 1988 and who was known for her belief in the power of mentorship, team building, compassion and community leadership.

The award is typically given to a member who has devoted many years—often decades—of service to UUP at the chapter and statewide levels, as well as service to their community.
For decades, and for better or worse, UUP built its entire legislative agenda around the state budget.

At the beginning of each legislative session, the union eagerly watched for the Executive Budget Proposal, worked hard for the next two months as it awaited the inevitably insufficient funding for SUNY four-year campuses and academic medical centers, and held private meetings with legislative leaders who always pledged to do their best by SUNY. And then, year after year, when it became clear that those efforts had made little difference, UUP picked its words carefully in public statements on the final enacted budget—or said nothing at all.

Something had to change, and as with so many other norms that played out the same way year after year, it was the coronavirus pandemic that finally pushed the “change” button for UUP’s legislative agenda. Earlier this year, and for the first time in its 50-year history, UUP developed a federal legislative agenda, and spent as much time working toward its goals with the New York congressional delegation as it did with state lawmakers.

UUP goes federal

A new focus on a federal agenda and closer ties with New York state’s congressional delegation are part of a new strategy to yield results.

By Darryl McGrath
The extraordinary difficulty time that SUNY has faced during the pandemic has made it clear that UUP needs to do things differently," Kowal said. "Our effort to convince state lawmakers that the federal pandemic aid for higher education is a one-time special situation, not a permanent solution to SUNY's chronic underfunding, did not have the results we expected. Our congressional delegation, however, understands that public higher education is the key to rebuilding New York for the long haul, not just in the aftermath of this crisis."

That new focus on federal connections started with direct contact between UUP President Fred Kowal and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer as Schumer worked late last winter to steer The American Rescue Plan through Congress. That bill was President Biden's first major legislation, and it set the tone for the country's gradual economic recovery from the pandemic. The bill included a massive infusion of cash for higher education, including $915 million for SUNY.

Shortly after the Schumer meeting, the state released its final enacted budget. Although SUNY got some gains, including a plan to close the "TAP" gap in campus budgets and more money for SUNY's opportunity programs, the hospitals did not get a cent in state funding.

And despite UUP's repeated reminders to state lawmakers that the federal pandemic funds represented a one-time boost that could not be substituted for adequate state funding for SUNY, it appeared that those reminders made no difference. The 2021-22 state budget allowed campuses to avoid crushing budget shortfalls, but that was largely because of the federal aid. Around the federal aid, the final enacted budget included $915 million for SUNY, or who have SUNY campuses in their districts. Since then, UUP has held virtual Town Halls with four Upstate House members: Antonio Delgado, Joe Morelle, Tom Suozzie and Brian Higgins, a former UUP member.

The meetings came at a good time, as UUP is now pressing for funding for SUNY to be included in The American Families Plan, which is the service part of that deal—which is packed with services and money to help families and working people—come next.

Higgins told UUP members during his Aug. 24 virtual Town Hall that their help is essential in making sure that funding for SUNY and four-year public higher education in general is included in The American Families Plan.

"I would encourage UUP members to communicate with their members of Congress to go to those writing the bill and tell them to add these provisions," said Higgins, a Democrat who represents more than 4,500 Western New York UUP members in New York's 26th Congressional District. "The last thing we want to do here is create a situation that pits community colleges against four-year colleges."

More than 720 UUP members have sent e-letters to their congressional representatives calling on them to extend the American Family Plan's free tuition proposal to all public colleges and universities. Visit https://actionnetwork.org/letters/tell-support-higher-ed-in-afp to send the e-letter.

UUP is part of a multistate coalition of higher education unions advocating for the initiative. Public four-year colleges and universities could see a drop in enrollment due to increased competition with tuition-free community colleges—an unintended but realistic possibility.

"I think that's where this provision falls short," Higgins said. "The last thing anyone wants to do here is hurt four-year colleges and universities."

Hospital programs in line for federal help

But even if the American Families Plan aid comes through, it would still leave the SUNY hospitals in need of help that they clearly will not get from the state.

Kowal sees another path to helping the hospitals, given that the Biden administration has clearly demonstrated that it wants to expand health care services to Americans. The federal government is unlikely to replace the direct state operating funding for the SUNY hospitals that stopped three years ago, so Kowal plans to advocate for federal funding for programs that the Biden administration has already indicated it will support, and which could directly benefit the hospitals. If the hospitals can get additional federal funding for new or existing programs, that would allow them to steer their limited resources into areas that used to benefit from the state funding.

Kowal plans for UUP advocacy at the federal level to focus on three areas that could help the hospitals: more beds and increased enrollment due to increased competition with tuition-free community colleges—an unintended but realistic possibility.

"We're looking for federal support to grow medical education and take that burden off the hospitals," Kowal said.

Watch the UUP website for updates on the union's federal advocacy.
Heather Shalhoub didn’t believe what she saw, so she logged out and back into her student loan account, just to be sure.

But there it was: a big, round, black zero where her $84,000 federal student loan balance was supposed to be. Her balance was zero. Her loan had been forgiven.

“It was well after 11 p.m. and I received a (federal loan) notification that I had a new message in my inbox,” Shalhoub said. “I figured it would be another letter to resubmit my application again. But when I opened the letter, I just stared at it. I didn’t trust it, I thought it was a scam. And when I saw the zero balance, I freaked out.”

After waking up her roommate and a friend on the West Coast to share the good news, Shalhoub celebrated. “I put on headphones and had a dance party by myself,” she said. “I kinda danced it out.”

After years of trying, Shalhoub, an Empire State College Chapter member and ESC librarian, finally qualified for the federal Temporary Expanded Public Service Loan Forgiveness program, available to qualified for the federal Temporary Expanded Public Service Loan Forgiveness program, available to full-time employment who meet a list of other stringent requirements—not to mention correctly filing College Chapter member and ESC librarian, finally qualified for the federal Temporary Expanded Public Service Loan Forgiveness program, available to full-time employment who meet a list of other stringent requirements—not to mention correctly filing.

Since 2019, UUP has held dozens of student debt clinics at UUP chapters across the state, helping more than 2,200 members with information about federal debt programs that are out there but that few people are aware of—even fewer people know how to navigate.

The clinics, offered virtually every payday, provide members with information, tips and tools they can use to reduce their monthly loan payments or completely forgive their debt. People who come to the seminars carry an average of $73,000 to $94,000 in student debt. Members report shaving nearly $250 a month off of their student loan payments after taking the course and using the tips and tricks they learned there.

Bringing it home
Statewide Secretary-Treasurer Jeri O’Bryan-Losee started the UUP student debt clinics in 2019 after hearing about debt clinics run by the AFT—and an APT offer for affiliate leaders to become trainers and lead sessions for their own members.

She was among the first UUP members to become a certified clinic trainer and has trained more than a dozen trainers since then—including Pamela Malone, an Executive Board member and Empire State College Chapter president.

“What we’re really finding is there is lots of emotion attached to their debt,” said O’Bryan-Losee. “They’ve been made to feel guilty for holding debt for trying to better themselves through higher education. It’s a very emotional piece that I try to alleviate that.”

To do that, O’Bryan-Losee tells her own story; a first-generation college graduate, O’Bryan-Losee carries significant student debt. Using what she’s learned and what she’s taught, she’s planning to file for federal debt forgiveness once she reaches her 10-year public service anniversary.

“There’s no shame in student debt,” said O’Bryan-Losee. “We talk about that during (the sessions) and we’re here to help you through the process. You are not alone.

Financial freedom
That’s how Kate Spaulding, an ESC Chapter member and adjunct instructor at Empire State College’s Harry Van Arsdale Jr. School for Labor Studies, felt before going to one of UUP’s debt clinics. Spaulding, who’s worked full-time for the New York City Criminal Justice Agency for more than a decade, owed about $120,000 in loans that were forgiven after attending a UUP debt clinic.

“It was another thing I didn’t feel comfortable talking about with other people,” she said. “I felt ashamed.”

After earning her undergraduate and master’s degree, Spaulding found herself saddled with $163,000 in loans—$110,000 in loans and an extra $50,000 or so in interest. Not one dime of the $46,000 she paid on her loan went to paying off principal.

“It was like an albatross that hung around my neck and impacted every single decision I’d make,” Spaulding said. “I’d never even look for a private sector job because I wanted to get rid of the debt. When I got a raise, my loan would go up, so the raise would be negated.”

“I really took the wind out of my sails because other things, like my rent, would go up and I never felt like I could get ahead,” she said.

After attending a UUP student debt workshop, Spaulding put her new knowledge to use; she kept a meticulous spread sheet, found a Google student loan group that provided support and paid her exact loan payment on time each month. After submitting her loan application paperwork, she was relentless, calling federal loan representatives to find out where things were at with her loan application.

Spaulding, who said her parents co-signed for her student loans. “The system now is literally not sustainable. You have to be privileged to take out this kind of debt.

If you’re a UUP member saddled with student loan debt and are looking for advice, it’s worth investing an hour or two in attending a UUP student loan debt clinic, Shalhoub and Spaulding said.

“What’s one or two hours out of your life?” Shalhoub asked. “The worst thing is that you think you don’t qualify for (loan forgiveness) and the best thing is that you learn that you do.”
VACCINE MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS

SUNY has many renowned experts on infectious diseases, pediatric illnesses and the effectiveness of vaccines. UUP recently asked four of these experts to address common misconceptions about the coronavirus vaccine. Here are their answers.

**Q** The vaccines were developed so fast — how could they possibly be safe, if they were developed and approved into people’s arms in less than a year?

**A** DR. PHILIP GLICK: The vaccine technology had been in development for over a decade. The apparent fast tracking of the mRNA vaccines was also in part due to various phases of the clinical development (human trials and manufacturing) being done in parallel rather than as a series. This unique approach was taken because of the urgency of the pandemic and the capital advance the federal government made to the manufacturers. Emergency authorization for the vaccines was granted only after tens of thousands of doses were given to human volunteers, and safety and efficacy data were analyzed. Still, the long-term data for safety and efficacy are still being studied from millions of doses given to get final FDA approval; this is expected by Labor Day or sooner for the Pfizer vaccine. [Editor’s Note: The FDA approved the Pfizer vaccine Aug. 23, after Dr. Glick submitted his answers.]

**DR. STEPHEN THOMAS and DR. KATIE ANDERSON:** These vaccines were not developed fast; in fact, mRNA vaccine technology has been in development for more than 30 years, with clinical trials for multiple infectious diseases occurring over the past 10 years (for influenza, HIV, Zika, and Ebola viruses). These vaccines were adapted for SARS-CoV-2, given their proven track record of being safe and effective in humans.

The reader is not wrong that the vaccine was able to get approved, manufactured, and into people’s arms more quickly than is typical. This is because of multiple factors. Due to the nature of the pandemic (i.e., a global emergency), there were ongoing and high levels of engagement with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Manufacturers took great financial risk and many steps and studies were often overlapping rather than step-by-step. It is important to emphasize that while the timeline was faster, the levels of scrutiny and evaluation have been the same as for other vaccines; no corners were cut. Finally, and unfortunately, because there was so much COVID-19 in the U.S. and other countries where the vaccines were tested, it was very easy to collect the number of cases required to show a difference between the vaccine and placebo.

**Q** My 16-year-old daughter wants to get the vaccine. I’ve heard that particles from the vaccine can lodge in her ovaries and may affect her fertility. How could she be able to have children if she gets the vaccine?

**A** DR. PHILIP GLICK: Analysis of safety and efficacy data in pregnant women or women who may want to become pregnant in the future suggests there are no reasons not to get vaccinated. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) states: ACOG recommends that all eligible persons, including pregnant individuals, receive a COVID-19 vaccine or vaccine series. Claims linking COVID-19 vaccines to infertility are unfounded and have no scientific evidence supporting them. ACOG recommends vaccination for all eligible people who may consider pregnancy.

**DR. STEPHEN THOMAS and DR. KATIE ANDERSON:** A big problem throughout the COVID pandemic has been the propagation of misinformation on social media. There is a false myth widely circulating that the COVID vaccine is associated with infertility. In fact, with long-standing ties to anti-vaccination groups wished to delay approval of the Pfizer vaccine and suggested that the vaccine could cause the body to make antibodies that could attack the placenta and cause issues with pregnancy loss. This “theory” was picked up by anti-vaccination blogs and spread quickly on social media.

To be clear, there is no evidence that the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines cause any issues with infertility or pregnancy. There are several reasons that we can be reassured about this:

- The spike protein and any proteins in the vaccine are so different that there is no reason to think that the same antibodies may lock onto both the SARS-CoV-2 virus and the placenta.
- Further, millions of people in the United States have been infected with COVID and to date and we have not observed an increase in pregnancy loss or issues with fertility following natural infection. The immune responses generated after ‘getting COVID’ and getting vaccinated are, by design, similar, so this is reassuring.
- Next, the FDA requires vaccine manufacturers to perform studies of reproductive toxicity and pregnancy outcomes and they have reported no adverse effects in animal studies.
- Finally, while pregnant women were excluded from the vaccine trials (as is typical), some women did become pregnant following vaccination and they have not reported adverse outcomes.

**DR. SHARON NACHMAN:** There is no truth to any of these myths concerning the vaccine and fertility. Let’s talk about these one at a time.

A: The vaccine lasts about six hours in your body, it is known as messenger RNA, also called mRNA. Your body makes mRNA all the time and has many processes to read the message and then destroy it. When the mRNA enters your cells, it starts on its own path of destruction, and it’s gone in a flash. Your cell then reads the message and, like when you read letters, to understand a sentence, it makes a protein inside your cell. Then, because your cells are very useful to doing this, and do it all the time, it kicks that protein out to go and do its job somewhere outside of the cell. So, no mRNA enters the nucleus of the cell (it’s the wrong alphabet) and is gone after being read. So, long story short, it can’t sit in ovary cells or any other cells.

R: We have (unfortunately) too much data now that shows that the COVID infection itself interferes with fertility in both men and women. Decreased sperm counts and lack of ovulation are common side effects of COVID infection, similar to many serious viral illnesses. On the good news side, we have excellent data from the CDC database of thousands of women who did take the vaccine and either got pregnant or took it while pregnant and showed no difference in fertility, and no difference in the outcome of the baby or mom related to the vaccine.

**Q** I’ve just learned that I’m pregnant. My best friend tells me that 75% of pregnant women who get the vaccine during their first trimester miscarry. How could this possibly be safe for my baby and me?

**A** DR. PHILIP GLICK: False! See the above answer and reference.

**DR. STEPHEN THOMAS and DR. KATIE ANDERSON:** As above, there are multiple sources of strong evidence that should reassure that the vaccines do not increase issues with pregnancy loss or infertility. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), our national medical authority on matters related to pregnancy and fertility, recommends that pregnant women receive the COVID-19 vaccine. This is based upon the vaccines’ safety for use in pregnant women, as well clear evidence that pregnant women are at increased risk of severe COVID-19 disease. We would strongly recommend that you get vaccinated as soon as possible; in addition to protecting you, the antibodies generated by the vaccines will pass to your baby and protect it in the womb. Remember that you will not be fully protected until 3-6 weeks after your first dose, and you should continue to take precautions to protect yourself from infection in the meantime.

**DR. SHARON NACHMAN:** This is a complete untruth.
and has no basis in reality. The most recent recommendations from the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology recommend that all pregnant women should get vaccinated. https://www.acog.org/.../acog-stuff-i-rec-...comment-19-vaccination-for-pregnant-individuals.

If the risk of miscarriage was that high, the ACOG would have never recommended it. The numbers that the ACOG reference in the above news release are a snapshot of information, but do not tell you the whole story of the actual number of women followed in that database.

**Dr. Sharon Nachman:** I'm sorry that you feel that you cannot trust the CDC and FDA. However, there are risks of openaccess information as well as other countries that are performing their own clinical trials of COVID vaccines. All data for each product is submitted and peer-reviewed by people who have to claim up front if they have a conflict of interest. So, the data from COVID vaccines in the United Kingdom, Israel and other countries have been reported. And interestingly, the adverse-event profiles and illness reports pretty closely match what has been reported to the CDC and FDA. And both of those groups share open meeting forums where anyone can and does ask questions. So, while it is important to ask questions, it’s also important to listen to the answers, especially across the different countries and see how they match up.

**A colleague got the vaccine and was horribl...**

**Dr. Philip Glick:** Mild, transient and self-limited side effects can occur from any vaccine, including COVID vaccines. They include: pain, redness or swelling of the injection site or arm, and can also include system symptoms such as: tachycardia, headache, muscle pain, chills, fever and/or nausea. Allergic reactions, anaphylaxis, have been reported, but usually occur immediately after injection. If you have had a previous allergic reaction to a drug or vaccine, tell your doctor or other vaccine provider, so any required care will be available.

**Dr. Stephen Thomas** and **Dr. Katie Anders...**

**Dr. Philip Glick:** The FDA is led by the Commissioner of Food and Drugs, appointed by the president with the advice and consent of the Senate. The commissioner reports to the Secretary of Health and Human Services. The Food and Drug Administration is responsible for protecting the public health by ensuring the safety, efficacy, and security of human and veterinary drugs, biologic products, and medical devices; and by ensuring the safety of our nation’s food supply, cosmetics, and products that emit radiation. When a scientific, technical, or policy question arises on whether a product is safe and effective, FDA often relies on advisory committees to provide independent advice. Committee members include scientific experts—such as physician-scientists—within the FDA, and members of the public, including an FDA Patient Representative.

**Dr. Stephen Thomas** and **Dr. Katie Anders...**

**Karl, Kube elected to three-year terms**

Wo retirements, two unopposed candidates and two single ballots cast by UUP statewide Secretary Jeri O'Bryan-Losee.

That series of events, which occurred over the summer, resulted in two new statewide officers for UUP—Vice President for Academics Alissa Karl and Vice President for Professionals Carolyn Kube.

Karl and Kube were each elected to three-year terms, beginning Aug. 1. Because they ran unopposed, UUP’s statewide Executive Board voted to allow O’Bryan-Losee to cast a single ballot July 30 to elect Karl and Kube.

Karl takes over for longtime Vice President for Academics Jamie Dangerl, who retired after more than three decades as a union activist—serving nearly a decade as statewide VPA.

Kube replaces Vice President for Professionals Tom Tucker, who chose not to run for another three-year term after serving nearly 5 years as VPA.

We will certainly miss the hard work and determination that Jamie and Tom brought to their jobs, day in and day out,” said UUP President Fred Kowal. “They served our union with distinction and honor, and we sincerely admire their service to our profession.

“At the same time, we welcome Alissa and Carolyn, two dedicated, energetic individuals who believe in unions and the positive things unions can accomplish,” Kowal said. “They care about our members and they won’t be shy when it comes to standing up for them.”

**No stranger to union service**

For Karl, becoming statewide VPA is the next step in a long activism—and it’s an opportunity she’s excited about.

“I think that if you want a great, strong, effective union, you get involved,” she said. “This is really the time to be hands-on, to look ahead and see what might be coming, and do everything we can as a union to be strong in that change.”

An associate professor of English at SUNY Brockport, Karl won a statewide convention president term in 2017 and a statewide convention president term in 2019 to 2021 and an Executive board member from 2020 to 2021; she left the Executive board mid-term to become statewide VPA. She was a Brockport Chapter delegate as well.

A first-generation college student from a working-class family, Karl grew up in a public employee union household. In 1999, she joined the organizing committee for teaching and research assistants at the University of Washington—a union drive that successfully established United Auto Workers Local 4121. She also worked on organizing campaigns around the country with the UAW.

Karl holds a BA in English from George Washington University, an MA in English from the University of Manchester, and a PhD in English Language and Literature from the University of Washington at Seattle.

**A voice for professionals**

Kube said she hopes to bring recognition to UUP members who are professionals for the work they do—sometimes in the most challenging of circumstances.

“Especially with the pandemic, a lot of our professionals felt very much in the background and unrecognized for their contributions to keep the university functioning,” she said. “One of the things I want to do is to bring awareness to what our professionals do and how they are a vital part of our hospitals and our university.”

Kube has been active in UUP for more than 20 years; she served nearly three terms as Stony Brook HSC Chapter president and was elected to the statewide Executive board in 2011.

“Especially with the pandemic, a lot of our professionals felt very much in the background and unrecognized for their contributions to keep the university functioning,” she said. “One of the things I want to do is to bring awareness to what our professionals do and how they are a vital part of our hospitals and our university.”

Kube has been active in UUP for more than 20 years; she served nearly three terms as Stony Brook HSC Chapter president and was elected to the statewide Executive board in 2011. Kube is a first-generation college student from a working-class family, and she was instrumental in helping to negotiate new contracts between the state of New York and UUP. She also co-chaired the statewide Outreach and Cons...
Chief Negotiator Bret Benjamin is an associate professor of English at UAlbany. A past chapter president, he is a member of the UUFuture of Public Higher Education and Grievance committees. He served as a member of the 2016-2022 contract Negotiations Team.

Redetha Abrahams-Nichols is the assistant director of nursing at SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University in Brooklyn. She is an UUFaculty Medical Programs committee.

Jennifer Drake is the associate director for online academic support at SUNY Cortland and co-founder and interim director of the college’s Sharing Technology and Academic Resources-New York (STAR-NY) Consortium. She is a chapter vice president for professionals and serves as co-chair of UUP’s Grievance Committee. Drake was a member of the 2016-2022 contract Negotiations Team.

Mindy Heath is a physical therapist at Upstate Medical University’s College of Osteopathic Medicine and was the University of Rochester’s 2016-2022 Negotiations Team member. She is a member of the University of Rochester’s Faculty Governance Committee.

Shoshana Hershkowitz is an Artist-In-Residence at Stony Brook University and conducts the Stony Brook Chorale and Camerata Singers. She is the chapter’s officer for academics. She is on UUP’s Future of Public Higher Education and Technology Campuses committees.

Jude Jayatilleke, a senior academic advisor at SUNY Buffalo State College, is chapter vice president for professionals and a member of UUP’s Opportunity Programs Committee.

Aaron Major is an associate professor of Sociology at UAlbany. He is Albany Chapter president.

Pamela Malone is the strategic advisor to the chief financial officer at Empire State College in Saratoga Springs. She is a UUFaculty Board member, ESC Chapter president, and is the Executive Board liaison to UUP’s Solidarity Committee. She was a Negotiations Team member for the 2011-2016 contract and served as assistant chief negoti-ator for the 2016-2012 Negotiations Team.

Jackie Pittsley is an English lecturer at SUNY Cortland. She is a Cortland Chapter president and a member of UUP’s Women’s Rights & Concerns and Contingent Employment committees.

Benita Roth is a professor of Sociality and History at Binghamton University, and director of the University of Syracuse Gender and Sexuality Studies. A past chapter president, Roth now serves as the chapter’s vice president for academics. She is on UUP’s Future of Public Higher Education and Technology Campuses committees.

Idalia Torres is a senior security analyst at SUNY Fredonia. She is a UUFaculty Executive Board member and serves on the Black & Latine Faculty/Staff Concerns committee. She served on the 2016-2022 contract Negotiations Team.

Bill Tusang is an associate professor of mathematics at SUNY Cobleskill. He is chapter president and serves on UUP’s Grievance and Technology Campuses committees. He was a 2016-2022 Negotiations Team member.

The information gathered from the regional meet-ings, Town Hall events and chapter visits will help the Team and the Negotiations Committee draft the union’s contract proposals. The Team—made up of one member from each chapter and an additional academic part-timer and professional part-timer—is constitutionally charged with preparing proposals for negotiations and submit-ting the tentative agreement to the membership for ratification.

“This is one of the most demanding and important volunteer positions in our union, and I am grateful to each and every one of them for their willingness to serve,” Kowal said.

UUP’s Negotiations Team brings experienced negotiators and dedicated unionists to the table as the union prepares to hammer out a new contract with the state of New York.

The 12-member team, which includes 7 new members, will fight for the best interests of UUP members and won’t give up until they bring back a fair and equitable contract that members will support.

“This team is going to be exceptional,” said Chief Negotiator Bret Benjamin. “Collectively, the bargaining team reflects the diversity of UUP’s bargaining unit. Individually, team members are smart, dedicated, principled unionists, who have demonstrated track records of UUP activism.”

Members of the Negotiations Team are: Redetha Abrahams-Nichols, Downstate Medical Center Chapter; Jennifer Drake, Cortland Chapter; Mindy Heath, Upstate Medical University Chapter; Shoshana Hershkowitz, Stony Brook Chapter; Jude Jayatilleke, Buffalo State Chapter; Aaron Major, Albany Chapter; Pamela Malone, Empire State College Chapter; Jackie Pittsley, SUNY Cobleskill; and Benita Roth, SUNY Fredonia.

Members overwhelmingly ratified the contract in September 2018, nearly 98 percent of members who voted cast ballots for the contract, which provides a 2 percent raise each year of the pact.

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Scabby’s here to stay

Ong live Scabby The Rat. The giant inflatable rodent, which has loomed over labor protests across the country for nearly three decades, will be part of labor protests for decades to come now that the National Labor Relations Board has dismissed a case to bar unions from displaying the protest icon in certain circumstances.

Under the Trump Administration, NLRB general counsel Peter Robb—who, according to a July 21 Bloomberg Law story (https://bit.ly/2XntTUD), had a personal vendetta against Scabby and what the giant rat represent-ed—wanted to stop unions from using Scabby and similar inflat-ables in protests at businesses that don’t employ the union’s workers. In a 3-1 ruling, the NLRB said the use of Scabby—a fanged rat with red eyes and a scarred belly—was protected under the First Amendment. Courts have long held that the use of inflatable rats by unions at labor protests were constitutional, so long as they aren’t used to block job site entrances and exits.

Scabby takes his name from “scab,” the term labor unions use for strikebreakers. The rubber rodents were first used in 1990 by members of the Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers, who wanted to make an unmistakable statement at their protests. Since then, Scabby and his pals, an inflatable “corporate fat cat”—a large cat in a suit and tie holding a bag of money in one hand and a small laborer in the other—and the “greedy pig,” usually depicted in a vest with money stuffed in his pockets, have been common sights on union picket lines and protests across the U.S. They can be between 6 feet and 25 feet in height. Read the NLRB’s ruling at https://aboutlaw.com/PLrs.

— Mike Lisi

Help rebuild the historic Mullany house

A jeep plowed into the back of the Troy home of 19th century union organizer Kate Mullany last No-vember, causing heavy damage to the National His-toric Site and ruining much of the restoration work that has taken nearly three decades to accom-plish. The three-story red brick row house is being rebuilt—and your donations will help.

Mullany, an Irish laundress, organized and led the 300-mem-ber Collar Laundry Union in 1864. The women fought for better wages and health and safety mea-sures in this extremely dangerous job, which involved the use of boiling water, bleach and sulfuric acid.

The Nov. 11 crash nearly collapsed the second floor. The site is temporarily closed. The restoration was nearly complete before the accident.

Renovations to the house have cost about $500,000—covered mostly by grants. Much of the renovation work was done by members of the Capital Region Buildings and Construction Trades Council, who donated their time and expertise to the cause. The Mullany House, located on the New York State Women’s Heritage Trail, is owned and operated by the non-profit American Labor Stud-ies Center. The house is a National Historic Landmark. To donate to the restoration effort, make out your tax-deductible check to the Ameri-can Labor Studies Center and mail it to: Slocum and DeAngelus, Accountants, 974 Albany Shaker Road, Latham, NY 12110.

Go to www.katemullanyhs.org to find out more about the Kate Mullany National Historic Site.

LABOR NOTES

UUP supports Fossil Free Future rally in Albany

UUP members joined hundreds of other environmental advocates from around the state on Friday, Aug. 6, in Albany’s West Capitol Park to call for the New York State Teachers Retirement System to divest from fossil fuel stocks.

With UUP as a co-sponsor, the youth-led “Fossil Free Education, Fossil Free Future” rally was organized by New York Youth Climate Leaders, and featured remarks from area legislators and environmental activists.

UUP has publicly called on the TRS to divest of all fossil fuel-related investments.

Though the legislature passed the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act in 2019, any comprehensive environmental action has stalled awaiting the 22-member Climate Action Council’s recommendations. No further ambitious climate bills have been passed since then.

“We cannot allow the legislature to hide behind the CLCPA, claiming that they cannot pass additional climate legislation until the Climate Action Council releases its recommendations,” said UUP President Fred Kowal. “These excuses are merely delay tactics, and they threaten the livelihoods of our generation and future generations. Additionally, with an estimated $4.5 billion invested in the fossil fuel industry, NYSTRS is doing their pensioners and the planet a disservice by continuing to invest in fossil fuels.”

UUP has also made specific calls for the SUNY Retirement System to begin divesting from fossil fuel stocks. Last January, more than 300 delegates to UUP’s 2021 Winter Delegate Assembly passed a resolution demanding that SUNY pressure Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association of America to divest from such stocks. In June, SUNY Chancellor Jim Malatras announced plans for a working group to examine more socially and environmentally responsible investments for SUNY employees.

During the rally, demonstrators concluded the event with a march around the capitol, and others left pro-environmental messages on the sidewalk in colored chalk. “The inaction of the New York State Legislature on climate this session was an absolute disgrace,” said Caitlyn Carpenter, a student at Mamaroneck High School in Westchester County and New York Youth Climate Leaders’ Westchester Regional Field Organizer. “Our state representatives must treat the climate like the crisis it is by passing legislation to move us off of fossil fuels.”

“Seeing the determination of the young advocates gives me hope for the future,” said Jeri O’Bryan-Losee, UUP statewide Vice President for Professionals Carolyn Kube was also present. “These impassioned, well-educated youth are so right. If not now when?” Kube said. “If the leaders of this planet don’t start to make a change from fossil fuel use to clean energy, we will suffer much more financial loss than divesting from these companies in our state pension plans now.”

— Mark Hempstead

UUP members march for the environment

Secretary-Treasurer Jeri O’Bryan-Losee (left) and Vice President for Professionals Carolyn Kube (far right) participated in a youth-led rally on Aug 6 to demand action on climate change.

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Tracking down one cause of a killer

Stony Brook HSC Chapter member Ira Cohen was part of a national team of researchers that identified a compound involved in a dangerous and sometimes deadly form of heart arrhythmia called Torsades de Pointes. Many drugs that are effective against cancer, infections and other diseases may lead to heart arrhythmia as a side effect, so this discovery may lead to a way to prevent this dangerous side effect of several commonly used drugs.

The team’s findings were published in May in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America. Visit https://www.pnas.org/content/118/20/e2024215118 to see the paper. Ira Cohen is a graduate of the SUNY-IBM AI Collaborative Research Alliance for a project titled, “Trustworthy AI from a User Perspective.”

Heart arrhythmias contribute to about 200,000 to 300,000 sudden deaths a year, more than annual deaths from stroke, lung cancer or breast cancer, according to the American Heart Association.

Touch-screen test helps children reach for school

A $385,000 grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation will help a research team led by Buffalo Center Chapter member Claire Cameron develop an updated version of an assessment used to measure skills that small children need for success in school.

Cameron developed the original form of the assessment, known as the Head-Toes-Knees-Shoulders assessment. It’s a five-minute game that helps gauge the ability of children ages four to eight to pay attention, remember rules and control impulses. In the original form of the assessment, children are asked to follow commands such as, “Touch your head.” Cameron has also conducted research that indicates the assessment also measures aptitude for math and literacy skills.

The grant will help the researchers develop updated versions of Head-Toes-Knees-Shoulders that rely on augmented reality and mobile games and which can be used in regular classrooms by teachers. Using the grant, researchers will test two forms of the new version: one which will be an augmented reality game, and the other a tablet-based game that requires children to answer recorded audio prompts by tapping the image of a bear on the screen instead of their own body. The hope is that these updated versions will help teachers determine if young children are ready to progress in school; the original form of the assessment had to be given by a trained researcher.

Helping humans learn to trust artificial intelligence

Ira Cohen and Samantha Legere wanted to donate their time to a community cause, so when the System Administration Chapter members saw that Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany was seeking volunteers to help with a pop-up food pantry in Schenectady, they didn’t hesitate.

They were in.

Dressed in blue jeans, sneakers, bright red UUP t-shirts and black UUP face masks, the women joined nearly 70 other volunteers who walked from table to table to fill boxes of food—everything from frozen pasta and raisins to fresh green bell peppers and bunches of asparagus—in the parking lot of Schenectady’s Crosstown Plaza on a cloudy mid-September morning.

“Food insecurity is a huge problem and this is one way we can help,” said Hoffman.

“I had been looking for a way to give back,” Legere said. “We saw this opportunity and here we are.”

As Hoffman, Legere and the other volunteers packed the food boxes, drivers in a long line of cars that trailed out of the plaza saw this opportunity and here we are.

“I had been looking for a way to give back,” Legere said. “We saw this opportunity and here we are.”

Some 700 boxes of food would be given out that day, which would feed more than 2,000 people, said Sister Betsy Van Deusen, director of community partnerships for Catholic Charities.

“Food is one of the pots that needs to be filled,” said Van Deusen. “Some people may not need the food, but by having it, it will allow them to spend their money on other things, like a mortgage or rent.”

No one is turned away and no qualifications need be met to accept donations through the organization’s “CC Move” food distribution program.

“We don’t know their stories,” she said. “Our job is to give away the food.”

That’s why Hoffman and Legere were there.

“Looking at all the cars here for food, you can see how important this is to do,” Legere said. “This is real.”
A new leadership, new challenges

Two UUP members with long experience in teacher education are newly named as leaders of UUP's statewide Teacher Education Committee, just as the state again confronts the certification test that started the committee's original effort: the edTPA.

Brockport Chapter member Cathy Houston-Wilson is committee chair and New Paltz Chapter member Amanda Merritt is assistant chair. They follow newly retired state-wide Vice President for Academics Jamie Dangler, who had led the committee since its original inception as a statewide UUP task force that formed in response to New York's 2014 mandate of the edTPA for teacher certification.

Both new leaders said that Dangler's expertise—she co-chaired a statewide task force appointed by the New York State Board of Regents in 2016—put UUP into the national spotlight of a debate about the best way to prepare new teachers to enter the classroom. The committee's position always has been, and remains, that experts working in the field should have a strong voice in that debate.

"No one wants a better teacher ed program than the people working in teacher ed," Houston-Wilson said.

**Strong backgrounds; strong advocates**

Houston-Wilson and Merritt are well prepared to meet the challenges of their new positions. Merritt is a UUP member and activist in the New Paltz chapter who serves as the chapter grievance officer. She's been involved in UUP's work for teacher education and the edTPA since the beginning of that effort. At New Paltz, she's assistant to the dean of education and director of the Curriculum Materials Center, a resource center that holds lesson plans, textbooks, and other guides to help teacher candidates prepare for student teaching and field work.

The edTPA—the acronym stands for “Educative Teacher Performance Assessment”—is one of many aspects of public education in New York that has been upended by the coronavirus pandemic. The state suspended the edTPA as a certification requirement in the spring of 2020, and extended that pause through the summer of 2022, because the assessment hinges on teacher candidates submitting videos of their classroom interactions with students—an impossible task to accomplish with so many schools operating either fully or partially through distance learning as the coronavirus continues to disrupt in-person schooling. Teacher candidates during this period can instead take an older test that is mostly multiple-choice, with one essay question.

UUP a leader in edTPA reform

Dangler аппарат a statewide and even national reputation as an expert on challenges presented by the edTPA, which, opponents said, had serious design flaws from the time that teacher education programs began using it in New York in 2014. The committee devoted much of its time to changing how the edTPA was weighted in the overall certification process. Dangler forged a strong relationship with several key members of the New York State Board of Regents, some of whom eventually became advocates for changing the edTPA.

"I’m not sure people will realize the edTPA was a burden," she said.

GPA cutoff still a concern

Another area for the Teacher Education Committee to watch: legislative efforts to overturn a state law that requires a minimum 3.0 grade point average for applicants to graduate-level teacher education programs. In New York, UUP members in teacher education programs have said for years that the law can block an otherwise gifted teacher from attaining the degree that is required to remain in the profession.

"If no one wants to be a teacher or the edTPA was a burden," she said.

Houston-Wilson joined the SUNY New Paltz School of Education in 1993 as assistant to the dean. She’s worked with student teacher and fieldwork placement programs and manages the school’s Curriculum Materials Center. She’s a writer and editor for materials about the School of Education, and coordinates with community colleges to help their students transfer to the New Paltz School of Education. She’s a member of the statewide Teacher Education Committee and Women’s Rights and Concerns Committee, and serves as her chapter’s grievance officer.
TEACHERS
Continued from page 24
standards in an era of fast-track teacher certification through other, less stringent pathways endorsed by the state.
At one point, New York permitted charter schools to develop their own certification policies without any requirement that the teachers they approved meet the state certification standards. The same standards that graduates of four-year public and private teacher education programs had to meet. A state court eventually threw that double standard following a lawsuit by NYSUT.

Changing the demographics
The grants that the SUNY teacher education programs just received reflect an awareness of the past fraught decade, as well as the realization that public perceptions of teachers have improved during the pandemic, given the number of parents and children at home for virtual learning while juggling their own jobs. All the grant proposals focus on attracting new teachers to the profession, most of whom include outreach to underrepresented demographics—with a goal of demonstrating that economic hardship or limited opportunities need not be obstacles to a degree—and some also focus on encouraging teaching as a profession. They note that “teaching is a noble profession, and they’ll shine.”

“We just felt there was much work to do to recruit teachers of color, teachers who are bilingual.”

For example, just south of Buffalo, has a large population of Arabic-speaking residents. She gets weekly calls from districts asking if she can refer any certified special education teachers to them. Given the need, Doody said, the grant will help get the word out that “teaching is a noble profession, and they’ll shine.”

“We’re excited,” Doody said. “We feel it’s really important to expand our recruitment efforts. Our new program is that ‘teaching is a noble profession, and they’ll shine.’”

NEW LEADERSHIP
Continued from page 25
The need is real, she said. The city of Lackawanna, once admitted, all students must meet the same performance standards and evaluations by faculty and supervising teachers in the field. It’s not easy to become a teacher in New York, which has some of the strictest certification standards in the country. The grants also help for graduate students who just barely missed the 3.0 GPA requirement.

Said Houston-Wilson, “I just think, give them the opportunity, and they’ll shine.”

ACH YEAR, UUP AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS to several outstanding undergraduates at SUNY and SUNY four-year colleges and universities who demonstrate a strong commitment to the labor movement. They are typically young adults who believe in shining a light on injustice, in reaching out to the overlooked members of society and in making a difference in the world. And they are outstanding examples of why UUP members are drawn to the mission of a great public university.

The UUP College Scholarship Fund Undergraduate Scholarship is a one-time scholarship of $3,000 for undergraduate students who have a cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.75. UUP created this award in 1987 to honor its members’ commitments to academic excellence, the life of the mind and the promotion of social justice.

The scholarships especially honor the legacy of three late UUP members who exemplified the ideals of the labor movement and social justice or who worked tirelessly to sustain the scholarship fund. They are:

Eugene Link, a SUNY Plattsburgh history professor emeritus remembered for a pioneering approach to his discipline, in which he initiated courses on African American history, women’s history and the history of the labor movement years before many campuses offered these topics.

Robert Gerlach, a SUNY Oswego associate professor of history and dedicated, longtime member of UUP whose late wife, Katherine, made several generous donations to the scholarship fund in his memory. Gertrude Butera, an associate professor emeritus of business administration at SUNY Alfred whose tireless fundraising helped the scholarship reach a sustainable level, and who was named an honorary trustee of the scholarship fund in 1995.

2021 UUP COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP FUND UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

2021 WILLIAM E. SCHEIFERMAN POST BACCALAUREATE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Laura Seib, a student at the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, is pursuing a master’s of landscape architecture, and holds a 4.0 GPA. She is a project leader for the Syracuse University’s priorities in virtual meetings with members of Congress and congressional staff. She also works with the campus food pantry; the Legal Hand Information Center, which trains non-lawyer volunteers to provide assistance, legal information and information on resources; and the Stony Brook Center for Civic Justice. Prior to the 2020 primary and general election, she registered more than 10,000 Stony Brook students to vote. She participated in a study-abroad trip to Madagascar, which led her to launch a fundraising campaign to support food and education costs for two Malagasy students and their families for two years.

Jessica Selleck, a student at the University at Buffalo, is majoring in environmental design, policy and planning, with minors in economics and political science with a 3.99 GPA. She has served as communications director and vice president of the UB student College Democrats and was a member of the Model United Nations, in which students engage in exercises in diplomacy to try to solve real-world problems. In the fall of 2020, she worked with Michigan United through Vote-Save America’s Adopt a State program, as part of a grassroots organizing effort to advocate for unions, union values and voters’ rights. In her scholarship application, she wrote, “the value of labor unions are the values of America: If you’re willing to work, you deserve dignity and fair treatment.”

Anne Green, a student at Stony Brook University, is majoring in environmental design, policy and planning, with minors in globalization studies and international relations. An honors student with a 3.87 GPA, she works with the Stony Brook Advocacy Corps, which provides special training for students in virtual advocacy so that they can press for Stony Brook’s priorities in virtual meetings with members of Congress and congressional staff. She also works with the campus food pantry; the Legal Hand Information Center, which trains non-lawyer volunteers to provide assistance, legal information and information on resources; and the Stony Brook Center for Civic Justice. Prior to the 2020 primary and general election, she registered more than 10,000 Stony Brook students to vote. She participated in a study-abroad trip to Madagascar, which led her to launch a fundraising campaign to support food and education costs for two Malagasy students and their families for two years.

2021 UUP SCHOLARSHIPS TO SUNY STUDENTS recognize excellence, honor members

UFP scholarships to SUNY students recognize excellence, honor members

Anna Brzycki is a University at Albany honors student with a double major in economics and political science with a 3.99 GPA. She has served as communications director and vice president of the UAlbany College Democrats and was a member of the Model United Nations, in which students engage in exercises in diplomacy to try to solve
MEMBER BENEFITS

Say hello to a fun fall with TicketsatWork

**U**P is proud to offer enhancements to an existing service for active and retired members, with major discounts and fun deals through TicketsatWork.

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Members of TicketsatWork can get instant access to deals. To get started, you need either your work email or a special code assigned for UUP members. You can get that code by calling the UUP Benefit Trust Fund at 1-800-887-3863. Then go to TicketsatWork.com. Click “Become a Member,” and enter the code for UUP or your work email.

You do not need to be a member of TicketsatWork to read about the company and get an overview of the preferred partners that offer special deals, including Walt Disney World, Cirque du Soleil and other well-known names in entertainment and hospitality.

If you need help, call TicketsatWork customer service at 1-800-331-6483, or send an email to customerservice@ticketsatwork.com.

Now through October 15, TicketsatWork is celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month with a special collection of brands, offers and services that support the Latinx American community.

Other discounts can be found for theme parks and attractions, hotels and rental cars, and shopping from home. TicketsatWork constantly adds new products and new offers.

TicketsatWork is just one of the many discounted premium services that UUP offers to members, a list that includes well-known brands such as Verizon, AT&T, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Liberty Mutual and MetLife Legal Plans, to name a few.

Programs offered through UUP’s discounts include products and services, but also cost savings in areas such as home energy, through the NYPIRG (New York Public Interest Research Group) Fuel Buyers Group.

**For a full list of the discounts**, please go to the “Special Offers” link on the “Members Only” page of the UUP website, at UUPinfo.org. You can also call a UUP Benefit Trust Fund Representative at 800-887-3863 if you have any questions.