The VOICE is the official publication of United University Professions (UUP), bargaining agent for the more than 37,000 academic and professional employees of the State University of New York.

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— Your union supports new taxes to raise money for SUNY. Find out which ones at https://bit.ly/3dJLsjk


— Check out the joint labor-management professional development opportunities at https://uupinfo.org/opps/jlmc.php

LETTERS POLICY

The Voice welcomes timely letters about university and union issues, politics and other events relevant to UUP’s concerns. All letters are subject to editing for length, accuracy and clarity. Please type or email your letters, limit them to 300 words, and include your name and daytime phone number for verification.

Unsigned letters will not be published. Email letters to UUP Director of Media and Publications Mike Lisi at mlisi@uupmail.org or send them to his attention at: The Voice, UUP, P.O. Box 15143, Albany, NY 12212-9954.

Go to www.UUPinfo.org to sign up today.
Welcome to the A.C. world: After Coronavirus.

By that, I do not imply in any way that we are past the crisis. In fact, as I write, we are likely only at the beginning. We all hope that the virus will stop its spread and that we can return to our normal lives as quickly as possible. However, given what we know about its spread and its deadly nature, I fear that for quite some time, our lives will not be the same. And there are those who predict that things will get much worse, upending much of what we know. Time will tell ...

But, as I often do, I find myself looking to history for lessons. As a social scientist, I observe, by nature. In the latter approach, I see how others are dealing with the crisis and learn from their behavior, hoping to be thoughtful, calm and persistent in dealing with the challenges that come my way. Regarding the former, I consider how historical figures have dealt with crises. More importantly, I consider how nations and civilizations have dealt with such crises.

What has astounded me is how narrowly the media and other commentators and experts have viewed our nation’s history. Almost exclusively, they have compared the coronavirus to the great influenza pandemic of 1918. It’s as if the only pandemic in American history was a hundred years ago. The focus globally usually is on the plagues of the medieval times, and perhaps a mention of the Ebola epidemic several years ago.

Lessons from the Past

What is missing in this version of history is the reality that humans have lived in the Western Hemisphere for at least 20,000 years. Most of that history has been lived by what we now know as Native Nations. Their experience is instructive, I believe, for our circumstances.

When the Europeans arrived (usually considered as 1492) the population of what is the present-day U.S. was somewhere between 10 million and 20 million people. That’s a big range, and it reflects uncertainty about how dense the population was. Archeological research and native oral history can only tell us so much.

If we go with 10 million, consider that by 1900, the native population in the U.S. had fallen to under 1 million—that’s at least a 90 percent drop in population. Most of that was due to disease. Endless plagues that swept the continent were brought to these shores by Europeans, devastating the native population, which had no immunity to illnesses as common as measles, influenza and—worst of all—smallpox.

The experience of tribal nations during smallpox epidemics is nightmarish. Recorded history and native oral traditions speak of entire villages—vibrant and self-sufficient—reduced to nothing in a matter of weeks. Survivors were left without homes, family or anything resembling their lives.

And, yet, they survived. Their tribal nations’ ability to overcome such widespread decimation—even as the U.S. government was engineering land theft by violence and by treaty, only to have their culture attacked by the boarding schools and other means—points to a lesson for us now.

They survived. Native populations grew. Native identity and culture—throughout the 20th century—had a rebirth. They overcame the shock and destruction of what they could not comprehend.

In the 21st century, science tells us what we are facing. Research is ongoing and strides are being made. All we are asked to do is to separate ourselves from society to stop the spread of a deadly virus. But it can be stopped—if we make responsible choices and if we support those doing the healing.

On the Front Lines

There have been many times in the 7 years since I’ve become president of UUP that I have felt inadequate in expressing the admiration I have for our members’ work. I have never felt that more keenly than when I consider what our healing professionals at SUNY’s teaching hospitals are doing right now.

The courage, the dedication, the determination, the compassion that our colleagues are summoning to treat the sick—arriving in larger and larger numbers at their facilities—must be recognized and honored. They show us the way. They show us how we can overcome this crisis and be better from having endured it.

They also inspire all of us chosen to lead our union, from department representative to president, to do the necessary work to protect each other’s health, the health of our families and the health of our communities. We also must continue to do the work of protecting our professions and the rights we’ve fought for and won over the decades.

I will not rest until this crisis is over. Everything we can do will be done to defend our health care professionals, as well as our colleagues at our campuses who are continuing to report to work as ordered and may encounter carriers of the virus. We will be persistent, we will be determined, we will be dedicated—just like our colleagues on the front line of the crisis are—to ensure that we are safe, our families are safe, and our communities are healed.

Together, let us reach out to support each other, to sustain each other, and to grow wiser from this crisis—like the Native Nations across the continent who survived and are constant reminders of the resilience of a people committed to each other and to a just cause.

Solidarity Forever, Now More Than Ever!
UP’s reaction to the coronavirus has been swift, proactive and targeted to protecting members on the job, addressing their concerns, and keeping them in the know as information about the virus changes continually, sometimes within hours.

UUP has been in daily discussion with the Governor’s Office of Employee Relations and SUNY to work on solutions to challenges facing members, and come to specific agreements on needed changes related to SUNY’s COVID-19 response—and how that response impacts UUP members.

“The health and safety of our members is paramount during this crisis,” Kowal said. “We will speak out for them, and we will ensure that the rights and protections due them as UUP members will be defended and enforced.”

SUNY was pulled into the coronavirus chaos in early March, with concerns about its health care workers and plans to shutter most classes on campuses and switch to remote learning; the World Health Organization designated the coronavirus as a pandemic March 11.

Meanwhile, doctors, nurses and medical staff at SUNY’s public teaching hospitals are doing all they can to care for a crush of critically ill COVID-19 patients—that threatens to overwhelm SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University and other New York City hospitals—while dealing with a severe shortage of medical face masks, gowns, swabs and other vital personal protective equipment. Researchers are working day and night to find a vaccine for the virus.

Downstate, an emergency pandemic center, was designated March 28 as a hospital that will only deal with COVID-19 cases. The Stony Brook University campus and Syracuse’s Upstate Medical University are being used as drive-thru coronavirus testing sites. On March 23, the governor announced that the Army Corps of Engineers will convert residence halls at Stony Brook and SUNY Old Westbury into temporary hospitals to accommodate an expected overflow of coronavirus patients.

UUP has been very vocal in its push for workers to be provided with proper personal protective equipment (PPE) and that protocols and training are in place to protect staff health and safety. In a March 21 media release, Kowal blamed poor federal leadership for the PPE shortages, and called on the Trump administration to take quick action to get those needed supplies to New York.

“I am so proud of all of our members, especially those at our public teaching hospitals and academic medical centers for their courage and dedication throughout this crisis,” Kowal said. “We all owe our medical professionals our deepest gratitude for putting their lives on the line in the most challenging of circumstances.”

The union also requested that high-risk staff be given assignments that do not involve direct contact with COVID-19 patients or those suspected of having the virus. Scheduling, workload, overtime, compensation, and monitoring conditions at mobile testing sites have been primary items for UUP’s talks with SUNY about conditions at the academic medical centers.

And as the virus takes hold in New York City and other areas, some employees may be deployed to other locations to work with people exposed to coronavirus and to transport specimens for testing.

The hospitals aren’t the only places UUP has been working to secure health and safety protections for members. As The Voice went to press, the union was working with chapter leaders at campuses statewide to protect professionals, including those working in admissions, residence life, student health services, and counseling, said Tom Tucker, UUP’s vice president for professionals.

There is a litany of personal issues impacting workers, such as nonessential employees being designated as essential workers, parking and cancellation of approved leave. As The Voice went to press, UUP was working with GOER’s Work-Life Services staff to use negotiated programs such as the Employee Assistance Program to explore emergency childcare possibilities for members. Many hospital workers and other essential employees at SUNY are facing

UUP proactive in keeping members up to date and informed

Cover Story

COVID-19

BY MICHAEL LISI

s such as SUNY Morrisville and SUNY Cobleskill.

On the Front Lines

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On the Campuses

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new child care needs with the closure of K-12 schools and many day care centers. “We’re hearing from a lot of professionals who are pressed to the max during this crisis,” Tucker said. “We’re doing all we can to make sure their working conditions are safe, and their needs are being addressed.”

Intellectual property protection and information security are a concern for academics; UUP is investigating private vendors and discussing the findings with SUNY. The union has also posted an intellectual property bulletin at https://bit.ly/2UKjOtW with important information on how to protect intellectual property while teaching remotely.

UUP is also seeking timeline changes for employee evaluation processes, and the possibility of tenure and permanent appointment clock extensions for the 2020-21 academic year.

“The research and professional development of many UUP members has been interrupted and they may have difficulty completing work that’s essential for their tenure reviews,” said Jamie Dangler, UUP’s vice president for academics. “Conferences are cancelled, human subjects research can’t take place, and many won’t have access to labs and planned summer field work in the U.S. and abroad. We’re very concerned about the group that would come up for review next academic year.”

**Communication, Teamwork is Key**

To help members reach out, UUP has created a COVID-19 comment and questions portal where they can share problems and concerns. That page—https://uupinfo.org/resources/covid19—also includes a list of important informational links about coronavirus.

Communicating with members during the crisis has been a prime concern for the union. Kowal is tapping weekly video messages to members—posted on the UUP website at uupinfo.org—and the union has launched UUPconnect: Coronavirus, a weekly coronavirus newsletter that contains UUP-specific information regarding the pandemic.

UUP has been in daily contact with chapter presidents and NYSUT labor relations specialists, who have been instrumental in documenting campus-specific situations, which has allowed UUP to push SUNY—at campus and statewide levels—to address them.

Conference calls with officers, chapter presidents and Executive Board members are held weekly—and sometimes more frequently—to address COVID-19 issues.

Workload increases, compensation and worktime needed to transition to remote instruction are some of the concerns of academics and professionals. Adjuncts and information technology professionals have had to work beyond their normal professional obligations during the rapid online transition.

**Working from Home**

One of UUP’s biggest issues was ensuring that as many members as possible would work from home during the crisis. Working together, UUP, GOER and SUNY came to agreement March 16 on a state telecommuting pilot program that allows most SUNY employees to work from remote locations, to stem the spread of the coronavirus.

The state and SUNY have continuously resisted UUP’s efforts to put a telecommuting agreement in place; this is an opportunity to protect members’ health and show that the telecommuting plan can work. The agreement was in place before the governor’s March 20 executive order that shut down all nonessential businesses statewide.

“Until mid-March, many campuses had designated far too many employees as essential and directed them to report for work,” Kowal said. “We’re here to answer their questions and guide them through this very difficult time.”
As many SUNY campuses prepared for spring break, the orderly progression of the semester vaporized with a series of stunning announcements stemming from New York’s response to the growing threat of the coronavirus pandemic.

First, SUNY and CUNY campuses learned that classes would convert to mostly online education for the rest of the semester. UUP announced the cancellation of several member events, and the suspension of campus visits by statewide officers and representatives of the UUP Benefit Trust Fund.

UUP leaders worked with the Governor’s Office of Employee Relations and SUNY for details of how such an unprecedented and unimaginable switch would affect members and work conditions. As The Voice went to press, UUP did not have all the answers, but continued to work with the state to address members’ questions.

And the SUNY teaching hospitals in Brooklyn, Stony Brook and Syracuse prepared for the worst-case scenario of playing a frontline role in the response to a pandemic. That meant planning for a possible influx of very ill patients, while taking emergency steps to prevent the coronavirus from infiltrating their buildings—with the accompanying risk of making sick patients even sicker and incapacitating staff.

**CALM, CoORDinAteD response**

But in the face of conditions that could have produced alarm, UUP members instead responded with calm. At campuses throughout the state, they prepared to make the massive switch to remote instruction with equanimity. Concern for students, patients and the public far outweighed any inconvenience to themselves.

“This is a health care crisis, and teaching hospitals such as Downstate are at the front lines,” said Rowena Blackman-Stroud, president of the Downstate Medical Center Chapter in Brooklyn. “Our members are professionals who are working hard. They care about their patients and their colleagues. They, too, have families. They are putting themselves on the front line of care. We must be mindful of that and provide them with the resources they need to help those who fall ill during this difficult time.”

Kowal applauded how members reacted, and he encouraged members to contact him or other statewide officers with questions and concerns.

“As academics and professionals in such a vast public university system, we try to anticipate the most likely emergencies, and plan the best way to respond to them,” Kowal said. “An outbreak of an entirely new disease, about which there is still very little known, is one of the worst crises we could imagine and, frankly, not the most likely one we could have prepared for. But the response of our members could absolutely be called heroic. Their first concern has been their students and patients, and they have more than risen to this very difficult occasion.”

**ON THE FRONT LINES**

As The Voice went to press, news outlets in New York reported that the state was asking retired doctors and nurses to consider temporary returns to work, as one of several steps to brace for a medical crisis.

SUNY hospitals had already begun preparing for the pandemic well before the governor’s public warning to be ready. At Upstate Medical University’s hospital, for example—where thousands of people work, and hundreds, if not thousands, more enter the complex each day as patients or visitors—hospital administrators have notified faculty and staff of several emergency measures that began March 12, according to Upstate Chapter President Rich Veenstra. Visitation policies have been tightened, visitors who have recently been in any of several countries with severe outbreaks are prohibited from the hospital complex, and the hospital started a community hotline to provide public guidance on whether and where people should seek medical care if they believe they have contracted COVID-19, the illness caused by the coronavirus.

Upstate University Hospital is one of six sites in New York designated as a COVID-19 testing site.

Residence halls at SUNY Old Westbury and Stony Brook University are being retrofitted to serve as temporary hospitals to deal with an expected overflow of COVID-19 patients.

Stony Brook University Hospital is converting two areas for the emergency: one to be used for screening of suspected COVID-19 patients, and one to be used as an isolation unit to treat patients diagnosed with COVID-19, according to Stony Brook HSC Chapter President Carolyn Kube. The hospital has also started screening...
patients who arrive at the hospital’s emergency department in private vehicles; those who require further evaluation are directed to the newly designated screening area in the hospital.

“Mask usage is being tightly controlled and monitored; as of last week, the hospital felt they had enough N95 masks but were trying to get more supplies,” Kube said March 13. At that time, the hospital had no testing kits. But Kube added that, “I do know that the hospital has made every effort to reach out to public officials and the governor to try to expedite getting the tests and needed supplies prior to any exponential increase or spread of the virus.”

Members make it work

At other campuses, faculty are devising next-best strategies for handling classwork that doesn’t always readily convert to an online format.

Roger Masse, a UUP member and assistant professor of wildlife management at Cobleskill, was preparing students for a popular outdoor lab to capture and band birds when he learned that classes needed to be conducted remotely. Even if students opted to return to campus after spring break to help him with the banding, the recommended social-distancing protocols during the pandemic made Masse think twice about having students travel in a campus van.

Instead, Masse will film lab activities in the field and post the videos online.

“It’s not the same as having a student learn the safest way to hold a frightened bird during a field examination, but it’s the best that can be done right now. “I have also told current students that I will try to make opportunities available to them during fall 2020 or spring 2021 to gain some of these hands-on experiences once we are back to normal operating procedures,” Masse said.

Holly McKenna, an adjunct faculty member in the University at Albany journalism program and English department, and a member of her chapter’s Contingent Concerns Committee, said the shift to online education for the remainder of the semester makes her appreciate the fact that she already had her class materials loaded onto Blackboard, a digital course management system.

“As an adjunct, I have had my courses on Blackboard for years to save paper and make it easier for locating course materials and grading,” McKenna said. “The discussion-board feature is a great way to virtually engage students. Now it’s a vital step in keeping our students enrolled in their courses during this uncertain time. Many adjuncts did the same because they juggle different courses at different schools.”

Protect your intellectual property

Follow these basic steps to protect your intellectual property:

1. Make sure all your work—including course syllabi, PowerPoints, exams and other course materials—includes a copyright notice. Though the symbol is optional, it makes sense to include it as a step toward asserting your intellectual property rights. In the United States, the copyright notice generally consists of three elements:
   - The © symbol, or the word ‘Copyright’ or abbreviation ‘Copr.’
   - The year of first publication of the copyrighted work;
   - The name of copyright owner.

2. Tell students that posting your course materials without your permission is a copyright violation.

3. Add the following to course materials: “Reproduction of this material is prohibited without the author’s consent.”

Check out the flier at https://uupinfo.org/resources/
Fund SUNY Now!

Members rally, host events to stress the need for more state funding

BY MICHAEL LISI

ew Paltz Chapter member Anthony Dandridge wore a defiant look as he hoisted a sign over his head that said #FUNDSUNYNOW.

He wasn’t the only one wearing that look. Or hoisting a sign. More than 300 New Paltz UUPers loudly echoed Dandridge’s message to Albany at the chapter’s Feb. 25 “#FundSUNYNow Rally for Justice.” Chapter members took turns holding up a six-foot pair of scissors made of plywood and cardboard as they chanted “Don’t clip our wings!”—a reference to the school’s hawk mascot.

At SUNY Buffalo State, UUP President Fred Kowal led a group of about 150 Buffalo State and University at Buffalo chapter members and students in a chant of “Fund SUNY now!”

“This situation has gone on long enough,” said Kowal. “Our campuses are hurting financially, and yet again, direct state funding to SUNY is flat. Things have to change and now is the time for that to happen.”

MESSAGE DELIVERED

Hundreds of UUP members at SUNY campuses around the state held rallies and handed out flyers, stickers and other information at tabling events, all to send a loud, direct message to Albany that cash-strapped SUNY needs more state funding.

UUP members at Buffalo State, New Paltz and Old Westbury held rallies Feb. 25. The next day, dozens of Plattsburgh Chapter members and supporters rallied outdoors as snowflakes fell. And about 75 higher education advocates—Cortland Chapter members, students, county legislators and Kowal—gathered March 3 in SUNY Cortland’s Corey Union to let Albany know that the time is now for the state to begin investing in SUNY’s future.

Three other chapters—Binghamton, Brockport and Fredonia—held tabling events. Members handed out information about UUP’s legislative agenda, signed students and staff up to vote, and collected “Real Progress for SUNY” postcards filled out by students and colleagues; the cards will be sent to legislators.

On Feb. 28, dozens of Geneseo Chapter members stood together for a photograph tweeted by the chapter.

“Rallies like this are important because they help us educate people about what the TAP Gap is and how detrimental it is to financially struggling campuses like Buffalo State and SUNY Fredonia,” said UUP statewide Secretary/Treasurer Jeri O’Bryan-Losee at the Buffalo State rally. “We’re also able to tell people how much it would help if we could just change the (TAP) funding formula.”

Many SUNY campuses—including Buffalo State, New Paltz, Plattsburgh, the University at Albany and SUNY Fredonia—are desperately trying to close budget shortfalls caused by years of SUNY underfunding. The gaps are also due in part to the widening TAP Gap—the difference between full SUNY tuition and the amount campuses can charge TAP-eligible students—which campuses must cover.

“Faculty, staff and students—from the North Country to Western New York and everywhere in between—have trumpeted an unmistakable message to legislators
and the governor: Fund SUNY now,” Kowal said days after the rallies. “The message has been sent. The question is: How will it be received?”

**LOUD AND PROUD**

Buffalo State Chapter President Fred Floss and Buffalo HSC Chapter President Phil Glick spoke during the boisterous 45-minute rally on the Buffalo State campus, along with Buffalo State United Students Government President Gaelle Jean-Baptiste, and Buffalo Central Labor Council President Denise Abbott.

“We need to make public higher education a priority,” Abbott said. “We need to put public higher education at the top of the budget, not the bottom.”

Buffalo State is facing a $3.4 million budget shortfall, the exact amount of the campus’ TAP Gap loss in 2018-19. SUNY Plattsburgh and SUNY New Paltz are struggling with budget deficits of $3 million and $2.9 million, respectively; they pay $2.1 million and $2.9 million, respectively, to cover the TAP Gap.

Kowal urged legislators to create new revenue streams for SUNY, such as enacting an enhanced Millionaires’ Tax, a new billionaires’ tax and a pied-a-terre tax. UUP estimates an enhanced Millionaires’ Tax could generate an additional $2 billion in new state revenue. A pied-a-terre tax—which would tax luxury residential properties not used by their owners as primary residences—would bring in an extra $560 million in new state funding.

**‘DON’T CLIP OUR WINGS!’**

New Paltz Chapter members braved chilly weather Feb. 25, holding their rally in a campus plaza that serves as a pedestrian crossroads and central gathering spot.

“We’ve got a big message for the (governor) and our state legislators, and that message is, ‘Don’t clip our wings!’” Chapter President Beth E. Wilson told the crowd, as she urged them to call their legislators to demand fair funding for SUNY. “We’re sending the message by

see [Fund SUNY Now!](#), page 10
gathering here today, and we’re going to continue sending it by ringing the phones off the hook.”

Dandridge, a new UUP member and a faculty member in the black studies department, said the state’s disinvestment in SUNY is an ongoing problem that unions can address, and are doing so.

“I do value unions,” said Dandridge, “The underfunding impacts minorities disproportionately, both students and faculty. If it impacts one part of our community, it impacts us all.”

UUP Vice President for Professionals Tom Tucker called on lawmakers to revise state tax laws, so that New York’s ultra-rich residents would pay a greater share of taxes.

“It’s time we asked them to pick up their fair share,” Tucker said.

**Fighting for Fairness**

At a late morning rally at SUNY Old Westbury Feb. 25, more than 30 Old Westbury and Farmingdale chapter members held handwritten signs that said “Billionaires pay your taxes!” and “Fund SUNY.”

Talking through a megaphone, Old Westbury Chapter President Martha Livingston urged members to tell their elected state representatives to push for fair funding for SUNY.

UUP Membership Development Officer Tom Hoey also took part in the rally.

**Rally in the snow**

Nearly three dozen SUNY Plattsburgh students, UUPers and CSEA members chanted “Save SUNY Now!” amid the snowflakes that drifted down on Amitie Plaza, the site of a Feb. 26 rally hosted by the Plattsburgh Chapter to urge the state to properly fund the University.

Speakers included O’Bryan-Losee; UUP Plattsburgh Chapter President Kim Hartshorn; chapter members Wendy Gordon, Gary Kroll and Richard Aberle; local CSEA President Ethel Facteau; and sophomore Mac-Olivier Lalanne.

The message was clear: If SUNY is to continue as a top-notch public university system, it needs to be properly funded. And the best way to do that is to close the tax loopholes and ask the millionaires to pay more.

**FUND SUNY Now!**

Kowal led the crowd in a chant of “Fund SUNY now!” that echoed through the Function Room in SUNY Cortland’s Corey Union March 3. He told advocates that the only way to get more state funding for SUNY is to tell their elected officials to make it a priority.

He also pushed for millionaires and billionaires in New York to pay their fair share through an enhanced Millionaires’ Tax, new taxes on billionaires and ultra-millionaires, and a pied-a-terre tax.

“Right now, we could fill Yankee Stadium with the millionaires and billionaires who have homes in New York, and it’s time that they paid their fair share,” said O’Bryan-Losee, drawing cheers from the crowd. “The state has to pony up, and we have to demand it,” Hartshorn said to more cheers.

Longtime member Jim Lindgren carried a sign that read “Underfunding SUNY Undermines NY,” a slogan first used in the 1990s. He touted rallies as a way to remind the Legislature and the governor of the importance of SUNY.

“The squeaky wheel gets the oil and we need to squeak more—for the students and a quality education,” Lindgren said. “The funding (just) isn’t there.”

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— Karen L. Mattison and Darryl McGrath contributed to this report
Members continue push for more University funding

BY DARRYL McGRATH

UP’s effort to see New York state close the TAP Gap for SUNY campuses and to gain new revenue streams for public higher education gained momentum in late February and early March, with a series of productive meetings with lawmakers during two advocacy days.

UUP statewide officers and chapter leaders joined their K-16 colleagues in Albany March 3 for NYSUT’s Committee of 100 meetings with lawmakers, and then gathered on the Capitol’s Million Dollar Staircase for a rally to demand full funding for New York’s public schools, colleges and universities.

There, UUP Vice President for Professionals Tom Tucker led a roof-raising chant of “Fund SUNY Now!” as several hundred unionists, lawmakers and public education advocates—who filled the surrounding staircase and landing—joined in.

Several lawmakers said that narrowing, if not entirely closing, the TAP Gap is a priority in the Senate and the Assembly. The TAP Gap is the difference between the cost of tuition and the maximum state tuition assistance grant. Campuses are expected to make up the difference out of their own operating budgets. UUP seeks $75 million to close the TAP Gap.

EOP/EOC TOUTED

The March 3 advocacy event came on the heels of the annual Higher Education Action Day, Feb. 27, that featured some 500 SUNY and CUNY students sharing their personal stories of beating the odds to attend college.

The state’s two top legislative leaders, Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, as well as the leaders of the two legislative higher education committees, Sen. Toby Ann Stavisky and Assembly-member Deborah Glick, were among more than a dozen legislators and advocates—including UUP President Fred Kowal—to address the students.

Each speaker pledged support for a better budget, in what everyone realizes will be an especially tough year. New York faced a $6 billion shortfall before the coronavirus hit; the economic fallout of the pandemic may add an additional shortfall at $9 billion to $15 billion.

Read more about this year’s Higher Ed Action Day at https://bit.ly/3aPnbpx

COVID-19 ...

continued from page 5

d work on campus,” said Kowal. “We even had some deans tell academics who were moving into remote teaching that they had to conduct remote classes from their offices or classrooms.”

“This was the right thing to do at this time of crisis,” he continued. “We will do all we can to keep as many of our members as we can out of harm’s way.”

HEALTH, WELL-BEING A PRIORITY

UUP was determined to ensure that members would not incur costs for COVID-19 testing and basic care under the New York State Health Insurance Program. That occurred in March, when the state announced that the Empire Plan and all HMOs for state employees will waive employee cost-sharing (such as copayments) for a variety of COVID-19-related medical charges, including in-network visits to doctors’ offices, urgent care or emergency rooms.

UUP is working with Delta Dental and Virtudent to provide virtual dental care in emergency situations. Workers can go to info.virtudent.com/teledentistry to learn more and to schedule a virtual consultation.

Also, Empire Plan enrollees can get an emergency prescription refill for a 30-day supply for three prescriptions of retail medica-
tions and one prescription of specialty medications during a 90-day period. The Empire Plan Nurseline, at 1-877-769-7447, Option #5, is a resource for members looking for coronavirus information. Beaconlens.com offers advice and tips on managing stress and anxiety due to the coronavirus.

And there’s a free telemedicine benefit being offered to enrollees of the Empire Plan, NYSHIP and the Excelsior Plan, through LiveHealth Online. Go to www.empireblue.com/nys for a link to LiveHealth Online and a coupon code for a free video visit with a board-certified doctor or licensed therapist on your smartphone, tablet or personal computer.

Throughout the crisis, Kowal said UUP’s focus will be centered squarely on members, who continue to make SUNY work during a deadly pandemic, the likes of which the world hasn’t seen in more than a century.

“We will continue to do all we can to protect our members in our hospitals and on our campuses, who need to focus on the job at hand,” Kowal said. “No problem is too small, and while we may not get back to you immediately, we will get back to you.”

UUP developed a COVID-19 Resources webpage to help members with questions and concerns. Check it out at https://uupinfo.org/resources/covid19
At last: compensation for salary compression

BY MICHAEL LISI

It wasn’t long after UUP members’ overwhelming approval of a new five-year contract with the state in 2018 that union leaders began the arduous task of meeting with the state to determine how to distribute newly negotiated funds to remedy salary compression issues among SUNY employees.

Salary compression occurs when the salaries of more experienced employees have not increased sufficiently, relative to the salaries of similar colleagues hired later. That can be very frustrating for veteran faculty or long-time professional employees who, after years of service, are being paid a little more than, the same, or even less than a recent hire. This can damage morale and motivation and make it more difficult to retain quality academics and professionals.

“Negotiating these dollars in our new contract was groundbreaking in that it is the first time that the state has acknowledged that salary compression is a systemic issue that should be addressed,” said UUP President Fred Kowal. “We all know that the vast majority of the bargaining unit deserves higher pay. “While salary compression remediation does not address everyone’s need for increased pay, it is one very important tool in this fight,” Kowal continued. “This is Round 1 in a multiyear process, and as anticipated, changes are occurring, including modifying and fine-tuning the implementation process, correcting misinformation about the salary compression remediation process, and addressing individual data inaccuracies. We are confident that those problems will be fixed, and our members will receive the funds they deserve.”

SHARING THE WEALTH

Systemwide, campuses saw between 7 percent and 22 percent of members’ salary compression (including inversion) addressed in this first round of remediation. Money to remediate salary compression was distributed for 2019 and will be available in 2020, 2021 and 2022.

On average, salary compression/inversion remediation per campus was around 12 percent. The exact measure of salary compression is a moving target; it changes constantly based on several criteria, including relative years of service and changes in market rates.

“This first round of remediation begins to chip away at salary compression (including inversion) in SUNY,” said Vice President for Academics Jamie Dangler.

Payments went out to members in December 2019, January and February; they were retroactive to July 1, 2019, for employees with a calendar-year or college-year obligation; Aug. 22, 2019, for academics with a pay-basis code of 21 paychecks; or Sept. 1, 2019, for academics who work on an academic-year basis.

More than $11.6 million was earmarked to address compression during the first payment round; that amount increased to $12.4 million when some campuses added discretionary salary increase (DSI) dollars to reduce compression.

THOSE WHO QUALIFIED

Not all employees automatically qualified for salary compression adjustments. “There is a misunderstanding that everyone would receive salary compression dollars, but that was never anticipated,” Dangler said. “Salary compression, by definition, is a relative, not absolute, measurement. It addresses salaries compressed relative to other salaries.”

Salary compression in higher education is a problem nationwide. A 2018 study by the American Association of University Professors found that at 99 colleges and universities, the difference in salaries for associate and assistant professors was less than $10,600. At 22 schools, associate professors were paid less, on average, than assistant professors, a clear indicator of salary compression.

CREATING A PLAN

A committee with representatives from UUP, the state and SUNY developed the methodology and guidelines for campuses to analyze salaries and distribute the pools of money — 0.5 percent of total basic annual salaries at each campus — to begin to remediate salary compression. The committee reviewed the methodology used by salary compression experts to identify the employee data necessary for salary analyses specific to SUNY. The particular contexts of SUNY’s different campus types and employee situations needed to be addressed.

That data included basic annual salaries, state budget titles, campus titles for professionals, years of service, professional functional area or academic discipline, and market salary benchmarks. Details about different types of academic and professional obligations and appointments were also considered. Campuses used the information to run regression analysis — a statistical technique that measures an employee’s base salary and factors that impact it — to identify which members’ salaries were compressed, and by how much.

“The methodology was developed over several months with the goal of not just addressing salary compression, but of addressing salary compression with a process as objective, consistent, and fair as possible,” Dangler said.

Several data sources were used statewide for market benchmarking. Most notably, campuses purchased market salary data from the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources. Primary sources included CUPA 2019 annual report data for faculty and professionals in higher education.
Fadi Bou-Abdallah, a chemistry professor at SUNY Potsdam, recently received a $387,030 three-year grant from the National Science Foundation that could go a long way toward understanding iron-related diseases such as Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s.

The funding follows a National Institutes of Health grant for $414,047, which Bou-Abdallah received last September, for a total of more than $800,000 dedicated to his iron research. The grants will help prepare SUNY Potsdam chemistry students for future STEM careers in academia or industry. Undergraduates will be involved in performing all of the experiments proposed in the grant and will present their findings at regional and national conferences.

Bou-Abdallah earned his master’s degree in chemistry from Lebanese University, his pre-doctoral degree from Ecole Normale Superieure de Cachan in Paris, France, and his Ph.D. in biophysical chemistry from the University of Paris.

He has been a SUNY Potsdam faculty member since 2007.

Mary Bush, an associate professor of restorative dentistry at the University at Buffalo’s School of Dental Medicine, recently published her first crime novel, which showcases her personal experiences in forensic dentistry, bite mark analysis, and victim identification.

A Simple Lie (Bloodhound Books, November 2019) takes place in Buffalo, and follows a former dentist who becomes embroiled in a serial killer case. It is the first in a three-book deal with Bloodhound Books, based in the United Kingdom.

According to her online biography, Bush has testified in real-life murder trials as an expert witness, focusing on the admissibility of bite mark evidence in the U.S. court system. She has published numerous academic articles and has authored chapters in forensic nonfiction books. As an invited speaker, her talks center on forensic evidence and the cases in which she’s been involved.

A Simple Lie is available in paperback on Amazon and Barnes & Noble, and as an e-book on Kindle.

A book of nonfiction essays by Michael (M.I.) Devine, an associate professor of English at SUNY Plattsburgh, was recently awarded The Ohio State University Gournay Prize for 2019.

Warhol’s Mother’s Pantry: Repetition, Redemption and the Mom in Pop will be published this fall as part of The Ohio State University’s 21st Century Essays series, which helps to promote some of the most daring, ingenious and artistic new nonfiction.

A 2016 National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow and a finalist for the Zuckerman Prize in American Studies by the McNeil Center at the University of Pennsylvania, Devine was awarded a Dickson History of Art Fellowship at UCLA, where he earned his Ph.D. in English literature. He is co-founder of Famous Letter Writer, an arts collective exploring connectivity through music, poetics and live performance.

He earned his master’s degree from Villanova University and his Ph.D. at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Who Gets What

Campuses had to distribute the salary compression money according to results of the required salary analysis.

There were a few campus-specific decisions they could make. Campuses could remediate some departments/functional areas more rapidly, but no department or functional area could be excluded from remediation. They could set a dollar threshold of identified compression below which employees would not be remediated. For example, members at SUNY Buffalo State and Oswego identified as having compression below $1,000 were not remediated. SUNY Albany set a threshold of $2,500 (the maximum allowed) and did not remediate identified compression below that amount. Setting thresholds, which varied across campuses, resulted in directing compression money to those with higher amounts of compression.

Campuses were also able to exclude visiting academics with less than four years of service, some types of part-time employees with less than two years of service, and full-time employees in their final year of service due to nonrenewal or resignation.

Campus administrations had to report their decisions on these few discretionary aspects of the compression distribution. Campus reports also reveal the total amount of compression money distributed and the percentage of total identified compression that was addressed in this first round.

Addressing Issues

With the first round of payments distributed, UUP has created an intake form for members to provide information and raise concerns they may have about the process. UUP is responding to questions submitted.

The union will use the information collected to inform the next round of discussions with the state for possible refinement and adjustments for the 2020 salary compression analysis.

“This is an enormous undertaking for UUP and SUNY,” Dangler said. “Salary compression has grown over decades. There isn’t enough in the contract-mandated pots of money to address all the compression that exists. But this is a very important start.”
Thomas Germano
Farmingdale Chapter

Thomas Germano’s paintings take you into wild and beautiful worlds filled with urban industrial scenes, moody skies, color-drenched European villages, and key moments in the American labor movement.


Germano is a UUP member and delegate, who serves as his chapter secretary and membership coordinator. He grew up in a union household, and his father—a letter carrier, shop steward and, later, executive vice president in his Postal Workers local—participated in the strike depicted in Germano’s famous painting. The unprecedented wildcat strike shut down the country’s mail system for eight days, but the postal workers won guaranteed collective bargaining.

The American Postal Workers Union bought the original of “The Great Postal Strike: 1970” for its Washington, D.C., headquarters. Five thousand lithographic reproductions were printed as posters, and those hang in Postal Worker union offices and post offices all over the country. Of his work on membership activities, Germano said, “It’s not a one-person job—it’s everyone, really.”

Your father was a leader in the 1970 postal strike. What are your memories of growing up in a union household?

The labor movement was something I was introduced to early in life. My father and grandfather were unionists. My father was a shop steward at Branch 36 of the Post Office, and that covered Manhattan and the Bronx. It’s something I’ve always been exposed to. I think I certainly know the benefits of being in the union versus not being in the union. It’s something I can bring to the table from my own background.

The National Postal Museum in Washington, D.C., refused to accept as a gift one of the lithograph poster reproductions of your strike painting; apparently, the subject was too political?

The strike painting has a political subject. But there are 5,000 of them hanging around the country. That’s a thrill.

You’re a graduate of Cornell and Yale universities, but you also hold an associate degree from Nassau Community College. What made you build your career at SUNY Farmingdale?

Farmingdale was close to where I wanted to teach. Farmingdale is a state school, and as I started off at a state school, I felt an affinity with the students. While I’m not a first-generation college graduate, I graduated from college just a few years after my parents completed their own higher education. My mother earned her master’s degree and my father earned a Ph.D. So, I can relate to the students at Farmingdale, most of whom are first generation.

— DARRYL McGrath
With pilot programs for SUNY’s new online initiative well underway, UUP members are making good use of an opportunity to share information and air their concerns. UUP will, in turn, use the information in discussions with the state.

“Our objective is to accurately represent concerns about the impacts of online education on terms and conditions of employment, including workload, compensation, intellectual property protection, the need for resources and support systems, and the involvement of private companies,” UUP President Fred Kowal wrote to members as he introduced the link to a portal on the UUP website where they can submit comments, questions and concerns.

UUP plans to discuss online education with University administrators and the Governor’s Office of Employee Relations. The 2016-2022 contract between the union and the New York state laid the groundwork for those discussions with an appendix to the agreement that specifically cited online education as a topic for discussions after the contract went into effect.

**MEMBER COMMENTS MATTER**

UUP convened a state-level Online Education Advisory Committee last fall to compile information and develop recommendations for discussions with the state. Facilitated by UUP Vice President for Academics Jamie Dangler, it consists of one academic and one professional member from each UUP chapter. In addition, nearly 200 members from campuses around the state have submitted comments so far.

“This is exactly the kind of information that we need to inform our discussions with SUNY and the state,” Dangler said. “Input from our members helps us understand their direct experiences at work, and we encourage members to continue to use the comment portal. The issues being raised in comments so far give us a detailed picture of what it’s like to be an academic or a professional involved in online education at a SUNY state-operated campus.”

Issues raised so far through the comment portal include lack of resources on campuses, concerns about workload increases, a feeling of pressure to teach online, increasing standardization of course content, the need for training and course development time for academics, and staffing needs for professionals working in student services and information technology.

Dangler emphasized that the union is not looking to portray SUNY Online as either negative or positive in general. All member comments are taken seriously. As Dangler noted, some members fully support SUNY Online, while others have concerns about its fast implementation, its focus on revenue generation, and potential academic quality issues. Many comments reflect only technical concerns about implementation of SUNY Online.

Members can still weigh in via the web portal at https://bit.ly/3aOfvnC

**AN EXPANDING ONLINE PRESENCE**

SUNY has run an aggressive advertising campaign for the program on television and social media, even as other universities display the long reach of their online programs. Arizona State University, for example, has been advertising its online program on radio stations in the Capital Region—from the distance of nearly 2,500 miles.

Online education appears to be here to stay for the foreseeable future in higher education. Online learning has greatly expanded in both for-profit higher education and nonprofit public and private higher education since the 2003-2004 academic year. The National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education has been tracking the growth of online education at any level for undergraduate students, including those earning their entire degree online, since at least that year.

In the fall of 2017, according to the center, 6.6 million students in the United States—or 34 percent of all students enrolled in degree-granting postsecondary colleges and universities, including two-year schools granting an associate degree—had taken at least one online course. In the 2003-2004 academic year, 15.6 percent of all students had taken at least one online course.

An examination of online enrollment data that was published in late 2019 by the digital news site Inside Higher Education indicated that the growth of online education appeared to be slightly slowing. However, the article also noted that in an era when many colleges are struggling to meet their on-campus enrollment targets, “online education remains the main driver of growth in postsecondary enrollments.”
UUPers have role in renaming New Paltz buildings

BY DARRYL MCGRATH

What does the name of a building have to do with union values? A great deal, as it turns out, if the building’s name evokes a painful history that goes against all that unions stand for: social justice, equality and civil liberties.

In that spirit, communities around the country in the last few years have been examining their collective conscience as they probe the symbolism behind monuments to historic figures, or the history of the person or family for whom a building is named.

And so it was at SUNY New Paltz, where a complex of buildings and several other features on the campus were renamed just before the start of the academic year because they honored historic figures in the town who also had connections to the slave trade.

The renaming still resonates on the campus, for the learning opportunities afforded to faculty, staff and students alike.

Two UUP members—academics Melissa Yang Rock and Jessica Pabon—played key roles in the decision-making process that led to the new names. Both served on the SUNY New Paltz Diversity & Inclusion Council that was one of several bodies on campus to recommend the change. The UUP New Paltz Chapter also approved a resolution that endorsed the recommendation for the new names and cited the work of the Diversity & Inclusion Council in that resolution.

Five buildings, a quad and two parking lots received new names that reflect local geographic features, all of which draw on Anglicized spellings of words that originated in American Indian languages: Minnewaska, Ashokan, Awosting, Mohonk and Shawangunk. A dining hall was renamed Peregrine Dining Hall, in honor of the Peregrine Falcon, which has ancient nesting sites in the region.

Both UUP members who served on the Diversity & Inclusion Council said they found the effort fascinating, complex and, at times, difficult. Not everyone in the community supported the change, leading to questions of how best to balance conflicting interests.

“In a lot of ways, to me it felt as though a great deal of effort was made to not trigger white fragility at the expense of our campus community of color,” Pabon said. She also said that she “learned that change comes from the ground up, but by the time it gets to the top of the power hierarchy within an institution, it often looks very different from the original impetus.”

Yang Rock used the renaming effort as the theme of a video project that she collaborated on with interns in her digital arts, sciences and humanities lab. The video can be viewed at https://vimeo.com/318696237 and runs slightly more than seven minutes. It is titled, “Renaming the Hasbrouck Complex Buildings: Diversity & Inclusion on the SUNY New Paltz Campus.”

“As a woman of color—bi-racial, Chinese/Caucasian—and a geographer, I viewed this issue academically through the lens of place-making ... how monuments, names and the reading of the landscape conveys messages of who belongs and who does not belong in a particular space/place,” Yang Rock explained. “I conceived of the video project with this lens in mind—to try to ask those questions and amplify the answers put forth in the video.”

The renaming effort gained national attention, at a time when many other communities and campuses around the country grappled with similar issues. And if the New Paltz effort did not always feel seamless from within, it certainly struck a chord with SUNY Chancellor Kristina Johnson.

She cited SUNY New Paltz in her State of the University System address in January for following the university’s values of respect and inclusivity.

Said Johnson, “In a system designed to fully represent all New Yorkers, there is no room for bigotry of any kind. Everyone needs to feel respected and protected on our campuses.”

AFT’s American Educator spring issue available online

The Spring 2020 issue of American Educator explores how schools and communities can bridge the gap for English language learners and students whose formal education has been interrupted.

With nearly 1 in 4 students in the United States speaking a language other than English at home, teachers’ role in helping all students thrive, no matter their background, is more vital than ever.

Also in this issue: the effectiveness of interleaving in math, education myths debunked, and the role of classroom teachers in the community schools movement.

Check out the latest issue at https://www.aft.org/ae/spring2020
**Snapshots from the Chapters**

**Buffalo State Chapter**
Buffalo State Chapter members, including Jude Jayatileke, below, gather for a breakfast meeting in February. Among the topics discussed were the tenure process and UUP’s advocacy efforts.

**Fredonia Chapter**
Fredonia Chapter President Chris Taverna, right, welcomes his union colleagues to a “Hot Topics: Did You Know” workshop in February.

**Stony Brook Chapter**
Stony Brook Chapter President Ed Quinn, standing, leads the chapter executive board discussion on ongoing labor-management talks, workplace concerns, and member organizing activities.

**WNY Chapters**
Members from Empire State College and the three Buffalo chapters in Western NY support one of their own—UUPer and Assemblymember Monica Wallace—at a recent labor breakfast.
Delegates to the next Delegate Assembly will elect a statewide president, secretary/treasurer, membership development officer, and eight Executive Board members. All elections are for three-year terms.

In late March, the UUP Executive Board voted to postpone the 2020 Spring DA. As The Voice went to press, union leaders were still discussing that issue.

If the membership ratio of academics to professionals remains the same as the present ratio, of the 11 people to be elected, six must be academics and five must be professionals. If the ratio changes, elections will be adjusted accordingly.

In accordance with DA policy, candidates running for statewide elective positions may have statements printed in The Voice, which is distributed to all bargaining unit members.

Statements longer than 500 words are set in smaller type to give all candidates equal space. The statements are printed as received, with minor editing for consistency of style.

The following pages contain the statements and photographs of those union candidates who chose to submit them. Statements submitted by the March 13 deadline are also on the UUP website at https://uupinfo.org/elections/

Frederick E. Kowal
Cobleskill

I am asking for your support for my candidacy for President of United University Professions. I am committed to engage and encourage active participation across our diverse membership and to continue our work of strengthening UUP during these most difficult times in our history. We have come far over the past several years, and thanks to the work of countless volunteer activists, we have built a strong foundation for continued growth in membership activism and political power that are crucial for our union’s future. Working with you over the last seven years in this role has only solidified my pride in being part of this dynamic union.

We can be justifiably proud of how well our union has weathered the Janus decision in 2018. Our membership has remained with us and has, in fact, grown since that misguided ruling by the Supreme Court. More importantly, we’ve developed a growing army of activists committed to our union’s work. There were record numbers of new delegates at the 2019 Fall Delegate Assembly and many have taken on important roles at chapter and statewide levels. Building an effective membership department to support the work of the chapters has borne valuable fruit for our long-term success. But work remains, and that is why I am eager to continue working with members to find their voice, their vision and their role in their union. There are many ways we can do this, from opening meetings and workgroups to every member regardless of prior participation to providing webinar orientations that allow for questions and concerns to be discussed and encouraging, and assisting chapters to develop member organizing systems that allow for direct member contact and connection. We have become stronger and we can be stronger.

We can also be proud of our contract, negotiated and ratified in 2018. That contract attracted the highest vote total of any in our history, and the highest percent of yes votes as well. The contract contained historic firsts: 1) adjunct per-course minimum salaries; 2) a $50 million fund to address the long-standing problem of salary compression; 3) paid family leave (we were the first public sector union to negotiate that benefit); and 4) the protection of our outstanding health insurance benefits for full-time and part-time members. We must continue building on the success of the richest, longest contract in our history. We must improve dramatically the salaries and job security of adjuncts, increase funding to address compression, fight back against decades of workload creep, and demand respect for our work and dedication—which has for far too long been taken advantage of by SUNY and the state. None of this will be accomplished easily. Each day, we will use our collective voice to advocate, and with a strong set of established gains to build on, we look forward to our next round of negotiations.

Our political power has dramatically increased over the past year. As we have become an independent force, we have become strong advocates at both the federal and state levels to protect and promote our work, our university and our future. With nonstop advocacy year-round, joined to public actions by members across UUP chapters, we are respected by policymakers in Albany like never before. Our success in making our issues known to legislators and having had those issues embraced by both the Speaker and the Majority Leader has given us the potential for real success in the next several years. We do not advocate for money alone, but for a greater vision for SUNY for the future and the everyday results that improve our lives. Through our ground-breaking document, NY25, we have begun conversations with our members, chapter leaders, allies in groups like NY Renews, legislators and SUNY intended to spark continuous discussion and articulation of an evolving vision of what SUNY and our state can be for the future. Our political power can make a difference in that work, but we must do it together.

In closing, I humbly ask for your support. I am eager to take the next steps with you to build a UUP that is the best it has ever been. Through my personal losses of the past year, I have found so much solace in talking and interacting with so many of you. It has inspired me to work harder than ever before with you for that great future for our union. And through that inspiration, I have found the hope that makes me believe that we will achieve that future.

Thank you.
Jeri O’Bryan-Losee
Morrisville

Hello,

I am asking for your vote for UUP statewide Secretary/Treasurer. Serving the past three years in UUP’s first combined position has been challenging and rewarding. From the Janus decision through COVID-19, the demands of this office are ever changing. Balancing emerging issues, financial stability and the day-to-day operations of the union means no two days are alike.

My first priority continues to be enhancing the fiscal strength of UUP. I work with chapter treasurers, the Finance Committee and our auditors to ensure support is available to all who need it and the appropriate financial and legal processes are in place. UUP’s audit ratings continue to be ranked at the highest level possible. I’ve worked closely with UUP state and chapter leaders to ensure budget proposals for the Delegate Assembly reflect the needs of our members.

I upgraded our webinar service to improve statewide committee communication, effectively deliver of NEOs and benefit fairs, train chapter assistants and treasurers, and offer webinars for delegates. To support members as the driving force of our union, I’ve worked to ensure chapter office space and equipment properly upgraded.

Administratively, I’ve worked closely with members and committees to update and create effective policies and practices to educate members about who we are as a union, how to participate in shaping UUP. I also ensure proper internal practices are in place to protect our members from ever-changing external threats.

Legal challenges and Veritas-like messages I’ve received typically question processes. My skills in operationalizing procedures and coordinating project management have been applied to quickly develop clear, consistent post-Janus procedures and improve knowledge and access to UUP.

I oversaw development of the website, making it more accessible and structured to educate those who are less familiar with the union’s work. It created a space to answer the “why” and “how” of UUP and relays UUP’s importance to new employees and members alike. The site will continue to highlight member opportunities for involvement in statewide committees, trainings, affiliate opportunities, conferences and member benefits.

Reaching beyond terms and conditions, the work I am doing with UUP/AFT student debt clinics is impacting the lives of our members. Learning about income-driven repayment plans and the student Loan Forgiveness Program has made a difference to members, their families and their communities. I am working to develop online delivery of clinics to reach those who work in multiple locations or have multiple job and family responsibilities.

The most rewarding and informative parts of my work are discussions, emails and texts from members. Talking to a person who thought they couldn’t use the space-available tuition benefit or the BTF scholarship because they are contingent, discussing UUP with someone considering quitting, listening to someone inquiring about the Legal Defense Fund, or working with retirees to map out their webpages is what the union is all about. I value making personal connections, working with people from different places who need different things, and come together for the greater good.

Thomas C. Hoey
Albany

Dear delegates,

Thank you for allowing me to serve as your Membership Development Officer (MDO) these past four years. Once again I am asking for your support.

Three years ago, when you overwhelmingly elected me as your fifth MDO over a two-year time span, we were facing many obstacles. The largest was the looming Supreme Court decision in Janus v. AFSCME, which threatened the very existence of UUP. Thanks to the terrible decision that followed, we have had to work considerably harder to successfully organize and mobilize. But today we are a much stronger union, with a total membership that grew from 40,514 when I was first elected to 43,594 today. And despite the Janus decision, very few members have opted out. Of course, there is room for improvement, especially with our new hire signups, who represent the future of our union. Also, as I am writing this, our world is facing a very serious health threat, and I want to reassure you that the other officers and I, along with the Executive Board, are currently working on plans to protect you and your employee rights.

Much of what I promised in the last election has been accomplished. This includes record membership numbers, a redesigned membership card, T-shirts designed for women, and much-needed stability in the MDO office. However, there is lots of work that still needs to be done. My No. 1 priority is helping chapters develop and expand their department/building/union representative system. Our statewide Membership Committee is committed to reach this goal, and I have appointed two vice chairs to assist in this effort. We now hold monthly committee webinars to train and discuss what techniques work best in organizing. We will continue to expand UUP’s participation in the NYSUT Membership Organizing Institute. With over 60 UUP graduates becoming chapter activists, it is already a success story. Although no two chapters are alike, working together we can develop programs for chapters to make the union relevant to their unique memberships.

The MDO is a part-time position, allowing only two release days per week. But working and living only 10 minutes from headquarters enables me to donate my free time to working for you. My central location also facilitates same-day chapter visits, reducing UUP MDO travel costs. Furthermore, as the only rank-and-file UUP officer, I have a particularly good understanding of our members’ workplace issues. Finally, as a member of the Albany City Council, I have developed a working relationship with NYS Assembly Higher Education Committee members Patricia Fahy and John McDonald, which is helping UUP advocacy work.

My commitment to our union comes deeply from my heart and soul. I was widowed in 2001, and it was our union leadership that helped me through a difficult time by involving me in union activities. That increased involvement enabled me to rebuild my life and career, starting a new family and passing on our union values to my 12-year-old son, Max. In return, I want to contribute to UUP and to the State University. Indeed, I hope to spend the rest of my life helping others, and ask you to join me.
**ELECTION for Executive Board**

**Bret Benjamin**  
**Albany**

My involvement in the union has been among the most rewarding aspects of my 20-year tenure at SUNY Albany. I began my career interacting mainly with other academics in my home department, English. The union opened for me a broader sphere of social and political engagement. Through UUP I build strong ties with co-workers—academics and professionals, contingent and tenure-line—across my university and across the SUNY system. UUP helped me see my work in relation to the grand but embattled project of public higher education, the radical ideals upon which it is based and the material threats it now faces. Union involvement has helped me understand the relationship between labor organizing in my workplace and the larger Left struggles for a more humane, more equitable, and more just society with which I have always associated myself.

My decision to run for the Executive Board, therefore, is both an acknowledgement of how much my involvement with UUP has meant to me personally, and a conviction that I can contribute to our union and to the broader labor movement.

My sustained record of involvement at both the chapter and statewide levels prepares me for the Exec Board. I was among a group of Albany delegates who re-energized our chapter in the wake of devastating campus cuts and program closures. I have served as chapter president, vice president for academics, and am now the grievance officer. I have chaired and participated in a number of statewide committees. Most notably, I served in key roles on the most recent Negotiations Team, a process that taught me a great deal about the varied nature of our bargaining unit, and about the sorts of benefits and protections that we as a union both have and have not been able to provide our members. This experience has helped clarify for me key points of common interest and potential fissure within our bargaining unit, making me a better organizer.

In concrete terms, I have been a staunch supporter of the struggles waged by contingent faculty, insisting that the casualization of academic labor undermines the academic mission, and at the same time represents a grave labor injustice to the workers whose egregious lack of compensation and protection puts them at perpetual risk. I was among the members of the Negotiations Team tasked with integrating the family leave statute with the particular needs of a university workforce.

I have worked to educate and activate members through chapter-level campaigns aimed at improving work-lives, acting on the principle that unions allow workers to have a say in the decisions that most directly affect them, and about which they have the greatest expertise.

I have worked to craft intelligent, principled solutions, and to advocate aggressively for a better university and a better union.

I pledge to bring these principles and energies to my work on the Exec Board, should I be so fortunate to receive your votes at the DA.

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**Elise Bowe**  
**Upstate Medical**

My name is Elise Bowe, and I am a clinical laboratory technician at Upstate University Hospital. I was raised in a union family with a strong sense of working class values. I am currently a delegate and Membership Committee chairperson at Upstate Medical University Chapter. I am an alumni of University at Buffalo, and my spouse, siblings, mother and grandmother are all graduates of SUNY institutions. The importance of affordable, quality public higher education is not lost on me.

Our Executive Board should better reflect our membership and as an SL1 hospital employee, I will bring the perspective of this currently underrepresented group to the table. As a member of the board, I will advocate for UUP to begin an assessment of staffing ratios in our hospitals. Safe staffing levels save lives, and our members have a right to a work environment without the added stress of frequent short-staffing. We must fight for written contract language that lays strict limits on mandatory overtime for all members.

UUP is at a crossroads where we must decide if we are content to maintain “business as usual” or if we will build strength from our members. We are a diverse union of people with all sorts of knowledge and abilities; our rank-and-file members are the seat of our power, and must be active in all decision making.

I will strive to make all our members seen and heard by the statewide officers and Executive Board. It is time to blaze a new path for our union in these troubling times of anti-union attacks, and I hope you’ll give me the chance to help lead the way.
Rebecca Bryan
Cortland

Hello union activists,

My name is Rebecca Bryan and I am running for re-election as an academic representative to UUP’s statewide Executive Board. I am completing my first term and would be honored to continue representing all of you.

I have been an active union leader my entire professional career in multiple states. Since arriving in New York in 2014, I have been on the Cortland Chapter executive board, served as a delegate, chapter secretary, political action coordinator, and membership development officer. I serve on statewide committees, including the Teacher Education Task Force, the Political Action Committee, the Membership Committee, and an Executive Board liaison to the Women’s Rights and Concerns Committee. I also serve on the Drescher Awards Committee and am co-chair of the Campus Grants Committee for Joint Labor-Management.

Off campus I am a trustee to the Midstate College of Optometry. This position has given me the experience necessary to listen to the needs of my members and make it my duty to ensure that policies and procedures are carried out in a proper manner. I intend to clearly communicate with all constituencies with enthusiasm and express the care and concerns for each of our member’s needs. I am eager to formulate and solidify proper explanations that are in the best interests of all.

I believe we all should have a voice. I also believe that it is important to have a strong and effective voice when it comes to properly communicating matters. If elected, I will plan to effectively settle matters with all parties during times of negotiation. I will work to be the best liaison between UUP and its members and make it my duty to ensure that policies and procedures are carried out in a proper manner. I intend to clearly communicate with all constituencies with enthusiasm and express the care and concerns for each of our member’s needs. I am eager to take full charge in this role.

In closing, I truly believe that the decisions made today will not only affect UUP, but will also impact the future of our children and loved ones. I encourage them to have a voice and speak their truths.

The below quotes inspire and resonate with me personally.

“Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.” — John F. Kennedy

“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.” — Barack Obama

Thanks for your consideration.

— Barack Obama

Central Labor Council (CLC) andamaco-chairofIndivisibleCortlandCounty(ICC).ICCprovidesmonthlyeducationalandcommunityorganizingevents. This month we held a meeting on the state of health equity in New York and Cortland County, with a special focus on women’s and mental health. Next month we will be holding a meeting with Citizens’ Climate Lobby (CCL). CCL is a nonpartisan organization that advocates for climate legislation. The presentation will focus on the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act (HR 763), a bill attractive to both Democrats and Republicans that reduces carbon emissions by 40 percent in 10 years, while driving economic growth and protecting low-income Americans.

I am politically active at the local, state and national level. I am currently petitioning to be a delegate to the Judicial Convention for the 6th Judicial and 125th Assembly District. I recently returned from taking eight Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) majors to Washington, D.C., to advocate for physical education and health in schools. Students were able to meet with NY representatives to ask them to fully fund specific titles in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). It is an invaluable experience to teach students how to advocate for their profession.

During UUP’s advocacy I also planned a #FundSUNYNow rally at Cortland, partnering with SGA and NYPIRG. You can view the press release and a livestream of the rally at https://cortlandvoice.com/2020/03/05/uup-cortland-members-rally-demand-more-state-aid-for-suny-video-included/

In everything I do, my union values of equality, integrity and justice guide me. These values drive me to protect the rights of workers to unionize for fair and just working conditions, and the fair treatment and compensation of all workers. My values are grounded in compassion with a strong belief in the common good, of which public higher education is. I believe that union organizing is not about signing a card, it is about empowering others and changing peoples’ lives. I am asking for your vote to continue this work and changing the lives of our members and students by serving you on the Executive Board.

Sidney Contreras
Optometry

My name is Sidney Contreras and I would like to take this opportunity to express my desire to become a member of the UUP’s statewide Executive Board.

As a family man, I’m a proud Dad to a 7-year-old daughter. I’m also a proud, long-suffering Knicks fan. I’m enthusiastic for what is to come and am hoping to leave a positive influence for the future of my family and for my daughter.

I currently serve as a delegate at SUNY College of Optometry. This position has given me the experience necessary to listen to the needs of my members and to help them understand what the union can do for them and with them, which I believe is key to being an effective board member.

Through my delegate responsibilities, I have a full comprehension of how important it is for individuals to feel the support of their union and to speak clearly and concisely on their behalf. I would like to be a board member that works side by side with other UUP leaders, keeps the members thoroughly informed, and voices the concerns of the members. My plan is to formulate and solidify proper explanations that are in the best interests of all.

I believe we all should have a voice. I also believe that it is important to have a strong and effective voice when it comes to properly communicating matters. If elected, I will plan to effectively settle matters with all parties during times of negotiation. I will work to be the best liaison between UUP and its members and make it my duty to ensure that policies and procedures are carried out in a
Jennifer Jokinen  
Stony Brook

I have worked in higher education for nearly 20 years. I spent the first half of my career at a private university, where I lost my job due to budget cuts and no job security since there was no union for professionals. At that same institution, I accepted a position working for the all-faculty union, the Hofstra Chapter AAUP. I was quickly promoted to the managing director for the chapter, running the day-to-day operations which included managing a large budget, being the first line of contact for members, and handling grievances with the chapter attorney.

A few of my accomplishments included coordinating a “yes” strike authorization vote when contract negotiations stalled the day before the contract was due to expire. I worked with the accountants to put together a dues increase referendum that members ratified unanimously. I was also successful in having hundreds of organizing conversations over the years with non-member adjuncts which resulted in them joining our union.

I currently work as a graduate program coordinator for the department of microbiology and immunology at SUNY Stony Brook. In 2017, I decided to bring my passion and union experience to my chapter and run for an officer position. I was elected treasurer and am currently serving my second term. I also serve at the statewide level as a member of the Finance Committee and Membership Committee.

During the 2019 election cycle, I co-founded the Coalition for Union Reform and Democracy on my campus. Together, we broke the apathy members were facing after years of budget cuts which correlated with a gradual decline in the activity and strength of our chapter. The organizing efforts of our coalition engaged many new and veteran members via 1-1 conversations, infographics, and digital communications with our member-driven platform. Our team got dozens of new and formerly disengaged members active in our chapter by offering them a seat at the table, centering their voice, and building union power together. I am a founding member of our chapter’s Grievance and Workplace Concerns Committee, which was started to help members with noncontractual workplace issues, as well as contract violations. I am also a member of our chapter Communications Committee.

I believe my experience organizing with all types of faculty members, especially adjuncts, would bring a very valuable perspective to the Executive Board. We need fresh ideas and perspectives to reverse the decades of low membership and participation from rank-and-file contingents, as well as the alarming post-Janus membership rate for full-time academics.

In my years of experience, I have found a transparent union which engages members face-to-face and empowers and encourages their initiative are those which are strongest and capable of strike preparedness and combating attrition. I am committed to effective communication and transparent decision making.

If you agree with these values, I would appreciate your support!

Pamela Malone  
Empire State College

Fellow unionists,

It would be my great honor to continue to serve you on our union’s statewide Executive Board. I hope I will earn your vote through my experience, knowledge and dedication to UUP and our members.

I believe my experience and knowledge are important because our union is complex, and our membership diverse. I have learned about the unique concerns of our members at our medical schools and hospitals, comprehensive and tech campuses, and university centers. We serve in a huge variety of roles for our students and patients—academically, professionally, full and part time. It is in this diversity that we can find our strength as a union—one that fights for our members, our students and our communities. Because we have such a broad reach, we can uniquely support the labor movement and working families everywhere.

I have gained this experience by serving our union in many ways: on the statewide Executive Board, Outreach co-chair, NYSUT board member, and member of the last two Negotiations Teams. I was protesting in front of the Supreme Court the day of the Janus case, and laying strategy for labor’s responses with my fellow board members—an effort that continues to this day. Drawing upon the work of our UUP officers, I presented information about the dangers of a New York State Constitutional Convention to other UUP members, other unions, and community organizations. After receiving guidance on my own student loan debt from our affiliate AFT, I was in the first group of UUP members who volunteered to offer student debt clinics through UUP—something I regularly offer to members at my own chapter and others.

I have been president of the Empire State College Chapter since 2013. Much like our statewide union, UUP members at ESC are distributed across New York, and we have solved many practical and logistical issues. I bring this perspective and possible solutions to my work on the board.

Importantly, I am able to draw upon the knowledge I have gained from my experience to our collective fight. My various roles have prepared me to help identify challenges, collaboratively determine solutions, and join in the work to achieve our success.

We are nothing without our members. My years of UUP service have demonstrated my commitment to our union and our members. As a member of the statewide board, I work very hard to serve all of our members, while drawing on my local experience—and I will continue to do so if you vote for me.

Thank you, and I hope that I have earned your support for our Executive Board.
Ed Quinn  
Stony Brook
I am running for a professional seat on the Executive Board and asking for your vote.

I can bring my years of experience doing union work and fighting for economic and social justice to the table to benefit our members. I have worked on these issues locally, statewide, nationally, and internationally. My experience consists of being involved in public higher education and continue to do so by working with labor activists and community members. By working with local, state, and federal elected officials, we have fought back the privatization efforts. It is also important we keep in mind that while we are fighting to keep our campuses open, we are also fighting for those communities around the campuses.

UUP is a statewide organization when united has the power to influence decisions in New York through its membership. We have members in just about every election district and we must organize and use that influence to benefit public education and our communities.

I will work hard to build our influence that can benefit our members, their families, and their communities.

I ask for you to join me in this struggle to fight for what is fair. Thank you.

Brian Obach  
New Paltz
I am a professor of sociology at SUNY New Paltz and a graduate of the SUNY system. I have been engaged with labor issues my entire adult life. I have marched with miners in Virginia, demonstrated with janitors in Los Angeles, organized graduate assistants in Wisconsin, and mobilized food service workers in New Paltz.

My scholarship also focuses on social movements and labor in particular, with an emphasis on movement strategy and tactics.

I got very involved with the UUP soon after my arrival at New Paltz in 2000. I was elected as a delegate early on and have been active ever since. I served in various roles within UUP, doing political outreach, lobbying, and engaging in solidarity actions, activity that I consider central to effective unionism. Yet, I always felt that we were lacking in grassroots mobilization. In lieu of opportunities at the statewide level to lend my expertise and experience in grassroots mobilization and movement strategy, I directed much of my energy towards other causes, especially the environmental movement. I was involved with a number of successful campaigns at the campus, community, and state levels, from fossil fuel divestment, to reductions in single-use plastics, to the statewide ban on natural gas fracking.

Now, I am inspired by the new life I see emerging in the UUP. After years of defensive action, avoidable budget cuts, and poor contracts that result from a gradually weakening bargaining position, today I see a union ready to go on the offensive. I have helped to organize several actions in my chapter and now I see growing opportunity at the state level. It was at the last DA where I heard President Fred Kowal introduce plans to allow for strike action and the cheers that arose from those assembled. This, I concluded, is a union to which I can make a more significant contribution.

While I view these developments as hopeful, I want to ensure that we maintain that momentum. I believe that I have the expertise and experience necessary to help move our union forward down a path of mobilization, empowerment, and political efficacy. I would welcome the opportunity to serve on the Executive Board to act as a voice for active engaged unionism. I believe that in these dark political times, this is the only way to reverse decades-long disinvestment in SUNY and the deterioration of our political power.

As educators, scholars, and professionals in the largest higher education union in the country, we have the potential to be a powerful voice, not only in New York State, but nationally. I want to see us live up to that potential, and as a board member I can help to make that happen.

If this is the kind of union you want UUP to be, I would welcome your support.
Cindy Riedi
Morrisville

I have seen firsthand the difference that union representation can make in the lives of its members, by making other workers aware that our lives could be better. Growing up, my family struggled to get by on substandard wages, while others around us who were part of a union prospered. As a teenager, I realized that unions were the champion of the working class and fought for families to earn living wages in safe working conditions.

I am an adjunct at SUNY Morrisville, and the elected officer for contingents. I am an advocate for our most vulnerable members and work to empower them. I have been a proud UUP member since 2010, and I attended my first DA as an observer that fall. In the past decade, I have seen our union become more proactive in the fight for SUNY. We have had the best contracts of any of the public sector unions in the state due to the hard work of our members on the Negotiations Committee.

Despite that, I feel that rank-and-file members are not given ample opportunities to utilize our collective voice, eroding our ability to continue to serve our members fully. In the post-Janus landscape of public labor, anti-union forces are painting the picture of unions being of little real value to rank-and-file members while union leaders greedily rake in dues for their own benefit. Potential members and current members are losing sight of the power of a strong collective voice; we are already finding ourselves struggling to maintain, let alone grow, our union.

We experience the day-to-day struggles of our campuses, our hospitals, our colleagues, and our students. We are the ones who must build stronger bonds with students, and community organizations to fight for public higher education. We need to engage all of our members and future members in our fight for what we all know is the finest public higher education system in the country. To become stronger we must become bolder in our vision and our demands, and fully commit to building power. We need to raise our collective voice and present a united front against the forces that strive to tear SUNY apart. This can only be done by centering the voices of contingents such as myself and listening to them. Contingents are over 40 percent of our bargaining unit (and growing). If we continue to leave these folks behind, the vast majority of our non-members, we will lose this fight for the soul of public higher education. We need to follow the lead of other higher education unions and fully commit to engaging these members and nonmembers and fight to improve their working conditions.

We need to have a contingent voice on our Executive Board that can speak for the silent (and often ignored) majority of our academics. If you agree with me, I would appreciate your support!

Andrew Solar-Greco
Stony Brook

Unions and public higher education have been under attack for years. We need to embrace fresh ideas, as the issues we face can only be resolved by member-driven participation. As a three-time SUNY alumni, I feel a calling to defend this institution from decades of cuts and flat funding.

Janus has changed everything. We must supplement our standard advocacy and representation to reverse the attrition that has set in since the Supreme Court eliminated agency fees for all public sector unions. UUP must embrace an organizing union model where we center the voices of our members, and empower them to build power from the bottom-up. Members deserve to be involved every step of the way in not just the implementation of plans, but the development of them. UUP needs to fight side-by-side with—not just for—its members.

I started at Stony Brook HSC in 2015, and worked there for over two years before joining Stony Brook in the computer science department. I have served as chapter membership development officer (MDO) since January 2018. I immediately worked to build a Membership Committee, and we revived our department representative system, which now holds regular meetings and engages members and non-members in face-to-face conversations. I co-founded the Coalition for Union Reform and Democracy, and we built a movement that raised the expectations of our membership. We more than doubled voter turnout in the 2019 chapter elections, compared to 2017, and tripled the amount of elected delegates for our chapter. Since we assumed office, we have worked to build a democratic union committed to building power, aiding members on non-contractual issues, and empowering them to be active. We developed a team who runs our new employee orientation (NEO) where we highlight not just terms, conditions and benefits, but other important values, such as defending SUNY, union democracy, building solidarity on campus, and how new members can get involved. This new approach has led to more than doubling our new-hire join rate.

Last year, I was appointed vice chair of the statewide Membership Committee and I have led the way in developing a deadline-driven and detailed strategic plan. I regularly work with committee members on organizing at their chapters, breaking apathy, and running effective NEOs. I have also worked with other chapter MDOs on how to assemble a Membership Committee and department representative system, build member capacity, and issue-based organizing.

If elected, I want to aid UUP in organizing strategically to ensure our union rebounds from Janus membership losses, builds power for upcoming contract negotiations, and remains strong for years to come. I am committed to effective communication with delegates, union democracy, holding our leaders accountable, and grassroots organizing efforts.

Many UUP leaders are set to retire in coming years, therefore it is instrumental we begin engaging in succession planning and developing the next generation who will lead our union in the future. I hope you entrust me with this opportunity.
Beth E. Wilson
New Paltz

I have served on the statewide Executive Board since 2013, as the chapter president at New Paltz since 2015, and I have been an active member of the Contingent Employment Committee for well over a decade. I was also a member of the Negotiations Team for our current contract, an experience which gave me a close look at the strengths and weaknesses of our union, as we engaged in the critical process of hammering out the agreement that governs our most basic terms and conditions.

I am most proud of the fact that we finally achieved paid family leave, as well as establishing defined salary minima for part-time academics—both of which were things we had been asking for in negotiations for years. Both of these advances came in response to the clearly articulated demands of our members, and it was clear at the table that the state understood that. But there were many other things that didn’t make it into the final agreement, and I believe that we as a union can be much stronger, and bring much more leverage to the table (and beyond!) by committing ourselves fully to organizing more effectively at the chapter level, member-to-member, to build real collective power. Leadership citing statewide membership numbers is not enough—those numbers need to be connected to real people, working in the trenches, and we must embrace that perspective as the generative force in what we demand, and in how our union functions. Statewide leadership must always be accountable to the membership, and the Executive Board is an important place to ensure that.

Janus has changed everything. While we must absolutely do the work to meet with new hires and have them sign membership cards in order to avoid the attrition of our member base, that’s just the first step. We need to build a union that empowers its members as we build a collective voice, from the bottom up, and to do that we need statewide leadership that can think creatively about how we organize, how we communicate with each other, and that can envision new organizational models that will encourage and enable this important work. In order to engage the membership, we need to develop a vision of our union that includes and welcomes their real input, rather than just feeding them information and asking them to show up for legislative lobbying.

Toward that end, we initiated this year’s #FundSUNYnow rallies at New Paltz and networked with other campuses in the system to get this conversation started. Moving beyond just mobilizing, it is imperative that we dedicate ourselves to the work of deep organizing, and we need statewide leadership that can embrace this vision.

Putting my faith in the fundamental power of our members, I hope that this is a road that we can build together, and I would appreciate your support for my re-election to the statewide Executive Board.

Spring DA postponed

One amendment on the agenda for a future DA

In accordance with Article XIII of the UUP Constitution, UUP bargaining unit members are hereby notified that the following proposed constitutional amendment is on the agenda of the next scheduled DA.

The Executive Board recommends a yes vote. Deletions are struck through; insertions are underlined.

Amend Article III. Membership, Section 1. Classes of Membership, Subsection b. Retired Membership

There shall be the following classes of membership in United University Professions:

a. Regular Membership: Regular Membership shall be open to employees in the State University of New York and in such other higher education units in the State of New York as shall be determined by the Delegate Assembly;

i. Contingent membership shall extend from September 1 through August 31. Membership in good standing shall be maintained through payment of dues as defined in Article III, Section 4.b.i.b. and shall be on a continuing basis throughout the membership year.

b. Retired Membership: Retired Membership shall be open to any regular member in good standing who has retired from active service with a minimum of five continuous years of membership in good standing immediately preceding the date of retirement or continuous membership 30 days after the adoption of this amendment by the delegate assembly, whichever is less. If a member has less than five years of continuous bargaining unit employment the member must have continuous membership in good standing for the length of their employment in the bargaining unit or beginning 30 days after the adoption of this amendment, whichever is less.

Retired members may not hold UUP offices or Executive Board positions elected by the Delegate Assembly. If a member retires while holding an office elected by the Delegate Assembly, they may complete their term.
UUP offers pet insurance through Trupanion

Coverage Overview

Budgeting for a pet’s illnesses and injuries can be stressful for anyone. It’s difficult to plan for a pet that’s unlucky or develops a chronic condition, and treatment costs can be unexpected and fluctuate. So Trupanion is there to help you focus on your furry family instead of finances.

WHAT’S COVERED*

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- Herbal therapy
- And so much more

WHAT’S NOT COVERED*

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WHO
14 Years and Under

All dogs and cats from birth to 14 years of age, regardless of breed, can enroll for lifelong coverage.

WHAT 90% Coverage

The only company that covers 90% of all eligible illnesses and injuries and can pay hospitals directly at checkout with no payout limits.

WHEN 5 – 30 Days

Coverage begins after applicable policy waiting periods: 5 days for injuries and 30 days for illnesses.

WHERE US, Canada, Puerto Rico, Australia

Visit any veterinary, emergency care, or specialty hospital in the US, Canada, Puerto Rico, and Australia, including US and Canadian military installations.

ENROLL TODAY

UUP members receive an 11% monthly discount. Please contact UUP Member Services Trust for your promo code: 800.887.3863.

Call 855.235.3134 to enroll (Mon - Fri, 10am - 6pm ET)

Your enrollment will go live on the first of the following month. Premiums can be payroll deducted or directly billed through UUP. Please contact UUP with any billing questions.

¹ Conditions that show signs or symptoms prior to enrollment or during waiting periods.
² This includes vaccinations, flea and tick control, heartworm medications, etc.

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A perfect fit, with the help of UUP’s Benefit Trust Fund

BY DARRYL McGRATH

Walk into most eyeglass stores, and you’ll find hundreds of frame choices for adults. But for kids? You’ll have to look a lot more closely, because chances are the kid choices are so limited, they’re all on a single rotating display stand.

Compounding that lack of choice: It’s even more difficult to find kid-sized glasses for a young eyeglass wearer who is way past the age of cartoon character themes, but not yet quite the right fit for the ’tween-to-teen frames.

And so UUP came to the rescue of 7-year-old Dan Squire, by helping his mother—UUP member Elizabeth Squire of Stony Brook University—get a reimbursement for the out-of-pocket purchase of eyeglass frames from a retailer that had a wide selection.

Squire put the problem to UUP Benefit Trust Fund staff. She believed she could get Dan the right size frames through a different retailer. Would the Fund make an exception in this case, and cover the cost of the out-of-plan purchase?

Once UUP assured Squire that this exception could be made, she took the frames to a nearby eyeglass store so that the lenses could be made to fit.

The result was a new pair of eyeglasses with a fit and a look that Dan liked so much, he gave them a two-thumbs-up review right there in the optometrist’s office.

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— Elizabeth Squire
Stony Brook

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Dan’s mother is equally delighted. “It worked out so well, and we were able to get glasses that were a perfect fit,” she said. Previously, she bought the frames at another retailer out of pocket and did not seek a reimbursement, but this time around, “I thought it was worth it to see if I could get a reimbursement for going to a different provider.”

It’s especially important for children to have properly fitting glasses, she noted, because comfortable glasses are more likely to be worn.

Squire has been a member since 2001. She has used the vision benefit several times, and she appreciates the ability to speak with the knowledgeable UUP Benefit Trust Fund representatives any time she has a question.

Said Squire, “I’m a longtime UUP member, and I am really happy with our chapter here on campus, and the statewide union, as well.”
Dealing with coronavirus
4—As The Voice went to press, the union and SUNY were doing what was necessary to deal with coronavirus, amid constant updates and directives from the governor, the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control.

8 Fund SUNY now!
UUP members, students and other supporters of public higher education rally for more state funding for SUNY.

12 Salary compression payments underway
First round of long-awaited remediation gets to members.

15 Members comment on online ed
Nearly 200 UUP members have submitted comments on SUNY’s new online education initiatives.

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