

# THE VOICE



Summer 2022

## The perilous fight

*The future of racism and reproductive rights in America*

**Off and running:**  
*Negotiations underway*



# uup

## THE VOICE

Summer 2022

The Voice is a 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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## IN THIS ISSUE



### Labor on the march

*Union actions in D.C. and Chicago*

14

### Cover story

*UUP takes action on reproductive rights, racism*

6

### ALSO INSIDE

To the Point..... 3

A UUP eye on Uvalde ..... 4

**Outrage:** UUP reacts to the overturning of Roe v. Wade ..... 6

**Past imperfect:** UUP focuses on racial inequalities ..... 10

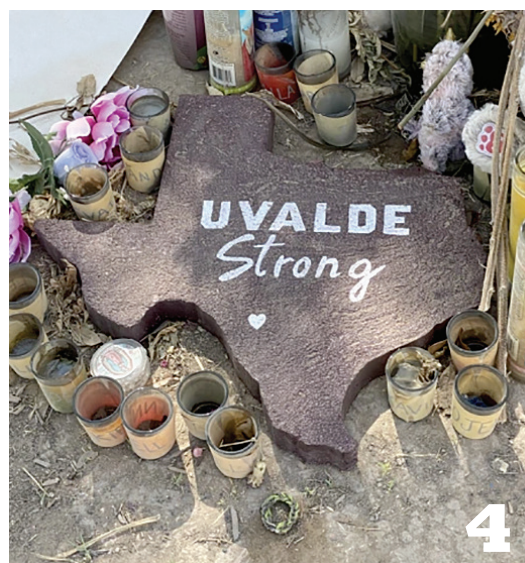
Labor Notes..... 14

**UUPprogress:** A guide to union-supported legislation ..... 22

Members Spotlight ..... 26

Organizing..... 27

Member Benefits..... 28



4

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# AMERICA, FLAWS AND ALL

I ndependence Day just felt different to me this year. I certainly didn't feel like celebrating. Living in a nation that is so divided, with so many challenges that seem beyond the reach of political leaders and Americans across the country, I found it difficult to celebrate our nation's 246th birthday.

America seems like a nation that has lost its way; its institutions seem incapable of protecting or unifying us. I've dedicated nearly 40 years of my life to education, and I'm not sure how those of us who teach will be heard by the young, who face a nation so fractured and scarred.

But I know our nation's history, and I know that we have faced incredible challenges before this. I also know the history of African Americans and Native Americans and the challenges they have faced—often manifested in horrible violence—before surmounting those challenges.

Hope is possible. Indeed, it's necessary.

But it's not easy to be hopeful right now. Where do we find hope? I've asked myself this as each week—sometimes each day—brings us mass shootings and devastated communities changed forever by this senseless, incessant violence.

We've seen evidence emerge that the former president was actively planning a coup to overthrow our democracy. And we have a radicalized Supreme Court issuing decisions that do not reflect the traditions of the court, but do echo the extreme views of a minority.

There are far too many voices amplified by the ignorant, who thrive on division and fear. These voices claim that our history is perfect, or close to it, and that to speak otherwise is destructive or unpatriotic.

Nothing could be further from the truth, and in fact, I find hope in the imperfect nature of our nation.

Many nations have come and gone throughout history. Whether they were tiny principalities or massive empires, what eventually led to their demise was their inability to deal with a huge challenge—and an unwillingness on the part of leaders to accept that the

challenge necessitated change.

To put it simply, the flaws of a nation doom them—unless people accept those flaws and learn from them.

Nations are human creations and, like us humans, they are flawed. America is flawed, marked by centuries of racism that have led to slavery and genocide.

Ending slavery was an historic, magnificent triumph. But the subsequent establishment of Jim Crow segregation during Reconstruction was a tragic failure.

Accepting and understanding those pivotal stages in American history are central to understanding the struggle to overcome racism. Likewise, the genocide of Native nations did not eliminate Indigenous peoples from the continent. They survived to be members of our rainbow nation because of their own hard work, and the work of some allies.

The worst tragedy would be for deniers to become the dominant voice in the American conversation. That would mean we would never acknowledge our guilt for our crimes. This arrogance would ultimately lead to our decline and our end as a nation.

Ignorance is dangerous. But willful ignorance in pursuit of political gain is destructive. Wisdom demands the truth and the opportunity to learn and move toward a more humane future.

The choice is ours. Hope is not just a feeling. It is a call to labor for the truth, for justice and for a reckoning of the challenges we face. And make no mistake, it will not be easy to deal with those challenges.

The struggle to overcome will require all of us to leave behind the myths and lies, and to grasp the reality of our circumstances. Hope can flourish—but only if we acknowledge our flaws, and thus also acknowledge the chance to grow.

**Frederick E. Kowal**  
President, UUP



## Explaining the unexplainable

*Oswego UUP mass shootings expert saddened, emboldened after Uvalde visit*

**J**aclyn Schildkraut promised herself that she wasn't going to cry as she pulled her car into the parking lot of the Uvalde Family Assistance Center in Uvalde, Texas, with six dozen fresh-baked cookies.

Schildkraut, an Oswego Chapter member and a nationally known expert on mass shootings, was in San Antonio at a school safety conference in late June. She felt compelled to go to Uvalde to "help the helpers" assisting the community cope in the aftermath of the May 24 massacre at Robb Elementary School.

Nineteen children, all between the ages of 9 and 11, and two teachers were gunned down in the massacre, the deadliest mass shooting in Texas' history.

She knew that people in Uvalde were still reeling, suffering in silence now that the excitement was over and the news crews had left town. Schildkraut could relate; she grew up near Parkland, Fla., where 14 students and three teachers were murdered in the 2018 mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School.

So, bringing cookies to the volunteers at the center couldn't hurt.

"In my mind at the time, I was thinking 'I can't cry because I don't have a right to cry,'" Schildkraut said in a recent phone interview. "These are the unsung heroes, and it was so important to me to show my respect and admiration for the people doing this work for the community."

Schildkraut got out of the car and into the 102-degree heat, carrying the giant box of yellow and pink cookies. She felt awkward as she opened the door to the center and walked inside.

"There was a really nice lady there and she had this Texas-sized smile and was so warm and welcoming," Schildkraut said. "She gave me a big hug and thanked me. I held it together for like about four



PHOTOS COURTESY JACLYN SCHILDKRAUT



Makeshift memorials still in place in Uvalde weeks after the massacre at the Robb Elementary School speak to the horror, grief and despair of townspeople in a community devastated by yet another mass shooting.

*Photos by Jaclyn Schildkraut*

seconds and just started crying. I just wanted them to know that they were not alone."

The drive from San Antonio was uneventful; the sound of newer tires rolling over ground-down asphalt provided a somber soundtrack as Uvalde drew closer. The road noise disappeared as she crossed into town, replaced by a disconcerting silence as she drove past makeshift memorials surrounded by flowers, colorful



stuffed animals and candles in tall glass containers.

Signs that read “Pray for Uvalde” and “Uvalde Strong” were everywhere. The words “enough is enough” was painted on the pedal of a child’s bicycle at a memorial in the town square, which she passed before visiting the assistance center.

“There were teddy bears, crosses, flowers, candles, so many different things,” she said. “Multiple sets of crosses and a pair of gigantic angel wings emerging from a heart. A sign said ‘Your wings are ready to fly but our hearts are not ready to let you. And there were butterflies, so many butterflies.’”

“It was also really quiet there,” she added. “There’s a stillness that comes over a place like that. It’s a very different type of silence, a pin-drop kind of silence while the world is figuring out how to move on.”

It was eerily quiet when she got to the elementary school. Bouquets of flowers were piled into mounds on the sidewalk in front of the school. More than a dozen garbage bags, filled with dead flowers, sat at the side of the road. Wreaths of flowers circled white crosses set up near the Robb Elementary School sign. Each cross bore the name of a shooting victim.

About a dozen people were there when Schildkraut arrived, talking quietly as they tried to process the enormity of what they saw. An older woman, who turned out to be a retired Robb Elementary teacher, stood next to her, tears rolling down her cheeks.

“She said she had to come back (to the school) for the kids because that’s where she felt she needed to be,” Schildkraut said.

In that moment, Schildkraut said she gave up being brave, and the tears came. They stood together

for a few minutes, arm-in-arm, tears streaming as they grieved the senseless loss of young lives to yet another mass shooting.

As she walked to her car, she noticed that all the windows in the back of the school were boarded up. She didn’t know why, but it weighed heavily on her. Were the windows blown out by bullets in the shooting? Did frantic parents break them as they tried to save their children?

One thing was certain: Little, hopeful faces with bright futures would never look out those windows again.



**“ We should all be able to agree that this is a problem long overdue for solving. We should all want to prevent lives being lost every day from firearm violence. ”**

— Jaclyn Schildkraut

“I cried all the way back to San Antonio, and when I got to the hotel, I passed out in my room,” she said.

Schildkraut wrote about her Uvalde trip in a June 21 essay on her website ([www.jaclynschildkraut.com/prayersforuvalde/](http://www.jaclynschildkraut.com/prayersforuvalde/)). At the end of the essay, she included a simple, straightforward plea: Stop the violence.

“We should all be able to agree that this is a problem long overdue for solving. We should all agree that people should be able to send their kids to school and not worry if they aren’t coming home—or worse, have them not come home. We should all want to prevent lives being lost every day from firearm violence.”

## STAYCONNECTED!

To receive the union’s weekly UUPConnect newsletter in your in box, email UUP Media & Publications Director Mike Lisi at [mlisi@uupmail.org](mailto:mlisi@uupmail.org).

If your chapter has a news item or an event, email it to us so it can be shared statewide.

Questions and concerns about the newsletter can be directed to Mike Lisi or to [UUPconnect@uupmail.org](mailto:UUPconnect@uupmail.org).



**KEEPING YOU CONNECTED.**  
[www.uupinfo.org](http://www.uupinfo.org)



### UUP student debt clinic set for July 21

UUP regularly offers virtual student debt clinics to help members navigate the federal public service forgiveness program and learn more about income-driven repayment plans.

Statewide Secretary-Treasurer Jeri O'Bryan-Losee moderates the clinics.

The next session is scheduled from 5 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, July 21.

Click [HERE](#) to register.



### Benefits webinars slated for July 20

A pair of “UUP Benefits 101” webinars will be held Tuesday, July 20.

The webinars start at noon and 6 p.m.

Chapter of Month: June 2023 Chapter of the Month







**ROUGH  
ROAD  
AHEAD**



# Outrage:

## Supreme Court revokes abortion rights

**For UUP,  
*Roe v. Wade*  
reversal upends  
safety, equality  
and workplace  
dignity**

**By Darryl McGrath**

**T**he June 24 decision by a conservative majority of the Supreme Court of the United States to overturn the constitutional right to an abortion compelled UUP to respond immediately and forcefully. And the work to deal with the fallout will not stop there.

“UUP will always take action to stand up for abortion and reproductive rights for its members,” UUP President Fred Kowal said. “Abortion is an entirely personal choice. But we also adamantly support the right of all people to be able to make that choice, and to have access to a safe, legal abortion, without having to travel hundreds of miles to exercise that option.

“UUP will work to elect pro-choice candidates, and we will push them to codify abortion rights in federal and state laws,” Kowal added, in a statement released the same





day that the court announced its ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. That decision overturned the nearly 50-year precedent established in the 1973 case of *Roe v. Wade* that abortion is a constitutional right.

Alissa Karl, UUP's statewide vice president for academics, joined in Kowal's outrage in the UUP statement.

"The court has cast women and all childbearing people as fundamentally unequal. Furthermore, the decision highlights the inequality of childbear-

**“WHETHER TO HAVE CHILDREN, AND HOW MANY CHILDREN TO HAVE, IS TIED UP WITH COMPENSATION, HEALTH AND CHILDCARE ACCESS, GENDER PAY INEQUITY AND MANY OTHER MATTERS THAT ARE INTEGRAL TO THE CONDITIONS WE FACE AS WORKERS.”**

— ALISSA KARL, UUP VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMICS

ing people in terms of the labor they perform,” Karl said. “Whether to have children, and how many children to have, is tied up with compensation, health and childcare access, gender pay inequity and many other matters that are integral to the conditions we face as workers.”

Kowal and Karl speak in great detail about UUP's plan to continue to support abortion rights in an late July episode of UUP's podcast,

“The Voice.” The episode also includes interviews with Sen. Cordell Cleare and Assembly member Jessica Gonzalez-Rojas. You can listen to the podcast at <https://bit.ly/3TglLeP>.

### State, federal government acting

New York and the federal government have taken the following actions to protect access to abortion services:

New York has started to codify abortion rights in its constitution. State lawmakers on July 1 passed a broad amendment that would also make it legal to access and use contraceptives. Amendments to the state constitution require passage by two separately elected Legislatures and then must be approved by voters in a referendum. So, voters won't see a referendum until 2024 at the earliest.

Several new state laws cover a range of issues related to access to abortion. One protects abortion providers from arrest, extradition and legal proceedings in other states by forbidding New York state and local courts and law enforcement agencies from cooperating in most scenarios. Another will allow people to sue for unlawful interference with their right to reproductive health care when other people or entities bring civil or criminal charges against them for seeking, accessing or providing abortions. And a third will prevent insurers from taking action against New





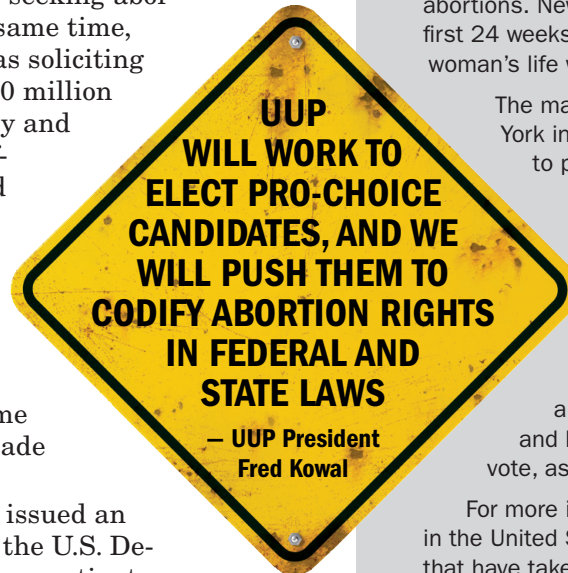


York health care providers who perform reproductive services that are illegal elsewhere.

In May, Gov. Kathy Hochul directed the Department of Health to create a \$25 million support fund for abortion providers to expand capacity and ensure access for patients seeking abortion care in New York. At the same time, the state announced that it was soliciting proposals for grants from a \$10 million fund to help improve the safety and security of health care sites offering reproductive health and abortion services.

The New York state health commissioner will also study the unmet health needs of pregnant people and the impact of unlicensed centers that offer some pregnancy services and persuade people against abortion.

In July, President Joe Biden issued an executive order that instructs the U.S. Department of Justice to make sure patients can travel out of state for abortion care. The order also addresses the elevated risks for patients, abortion services health care staff and clinics, which includes efforts to protect mobile clinics that have been deployed to state borders to offer care for out-of-state patients.



## New York long a haven for reproductive rights



New York is one of a handful of states where abortion was legal before the landmark 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision by the U.S. Supreme Court permitted abortion throughout the country.

New York legalized abortion in 1970, making it the only state east of the Mississippi where a legal abortion could be obtained, and the law permitted people to come to New York from other states for abortions. New York's law permitted abortions in the first 24 weeks of pregnancy, and at any time if the woman's life was at risk.

The majority of abortions performed in New York in the first two years of the new law were to people from other states.

The bill that legalized abortion in New York passed the Assembly only because a Democratic Assemblymember, George Michaels of Auburn, reversed his original opposing vote and voted instead to support it. His district had a large number of Roman Catholic voters, and he lost his seat after he changed his vote, as he expected.

For more information in general about abortion in the United States, including the rapid changes that have taken place in states since *Roe v. Wade* was overturned, visit the website for the Guttmacher Institute ([www.guttmacher.org](http://www.guttmacher.org)), a research and public policy organization that favors access to information on reproductive rights and safe, legal access to reproductive healthcare.



**(Reproductive) Freedom is Never Free.** Activists and supporters of women's reproductive rights have been demonstrating for decades to support those rights. What happens in a post-*Roe v. Wade* landscape?







# A flawed past {but a hopeful future}

**UUP's quest  
to address  
racial inequality  
in the U.S.  
spans many  
efforts**

**By Darryl McGrath**

**O**ne of a union's most challenging tasks is to identify past wrongs—and then figure out how to make sure they never happen again.

Unions do this on behalf of their members, when an injustice speaks to the need for better terms and conditions in the workplace.

Unions also do this when they take a stance on a courageous action that calls for a response—such as UUP's support of Amazon workers who are trying to organize.

And unions do this when they address long-term societal problems, an effort that is a hallmark of the modern labor movement. That's why UUP speaks out about racial inequity: because it affects members, campuses, students, patients and communities. There is no fast solution, but as UUP President Fred Kowal has said, "This is part of who we are, and what we do."



**S**pring and summer have seen horrific gun massacres around the country. A teenager is charged in the killing of 10 Black people at a Buffalo grocery store May 14; he has also been charged with domestic terrorism, which means he is accused of killing based on his victims' race.

It would be easy to slip into despair right now, as Kowal noted in his column in this issue of "The Voice." (See Page 3.)

"America seems like a nation that has lost its way; its institutions seem incapable of protecting or unifying us," Kowal writes. "Hope is possible. Indeed, it's necessary. But it's not easy to be hopeful right now.

UUP quickly responded to the massacre.

"As educators and healers, we are called upon to sustain life and to support the growth of every individual in our society," Kowal said in press state-

**“America seems like a nation that has lost its way; its institutions seem incapable of protecting or unifying us. Hope is possible. Indeed, it's necessary.”**

— UUP President Fred Kowal

ment released May 16, which also called for a ban on assault weapons. "Actions like those of this past Saturday are a direct assault on that work, as well as an assault on the values of equality and justice that we hold dear." (Read the full statement at <https://bit.ly/3ShtBUW>.)

### **A response to hatred**

In June, UUP produced an episode of its podcast, "The Voice," in response to the Buffalo shooting, in which a UUP member and two activists spoke about a city that has developed sharp racial divides.

Hosted by Kowal, the podcast features UUP member Henry-Louis Taylor Jr., founding director of the Center for Urban Studies at the University at Buffalo and a professor of urban and regional planning at the UB School of Architecture and Planning; Janique Curry, vice president of the Buffalo chapter of the National Action Network; and the Rev. James Giles, co-founder of Back to Basics Ministries in Buffalo

and leader of the Buffalo Peacemakers. You can listen to the podcast at <https://bit.ly/3TgILeP>.

Racism in Buffalo takes many forms, some of them subtle, Taylor said. It's not always as obvious as "redlining," in which banks denied people of color mortgages in neighborhoods that were tacitly viewed as "white-only" areas.

City leaders continue to invest in what Taylor called "symbolic projects," while not fixing inadequate city services, unsafe sidewalks and pollution.

"Most of the work that's done in the Black community is done by white people," Taylor noted. He thinks more dollars should be invested in pipeline programs that prepare residents of color for careers that would create a more diverse workforce.

### **Many topics; a long-range plan**

UUP has been speaking out on other lapses in our nation that have targeted communities of color.

Actions by UUP this year, including forums and testimony by members, have unfolded on several topics, including: maternal-infant mortality, which affects Black and Brown women and their babies at far higher rates than white women and their babies; the coronavirus pandemic, which has disproportionately killed Black, Brown and Native people in

the United States; environmental injustice, in which low-income communities of color have endured high rates pollution, because of toxic waste sites or the proximity of industrial complexes that would never be tolerated in white communities.

In the fall, UUP is planning to hold a national mental health forum in Buffalo, dealing with the impacts of direct and vicarious racism on Black people in America.

Watch for future actions by UUP, which has committed to a continued stance against inequity.

Kowal pledged that continued effort in his statement after the Buffalo massacre: "As we have throughout our nearly 50-year history, we will bear witness and stand with the victims of injustice and against the violence that is racism."



**Check UUP's website at [uupinfo.org](https://uupinfo.org) for updates about the roundtable discussion.**



# New UUP podcast speaks to issues, labor history

**W**ords can be a powerful tool for change, and spoken words—offered with passion but also with balance and wisdom—can be especially effective at a time when social divisions and bitter political discourse so dominate the national landscape.

That thinking led to UUP's decision to create its podcast, called "The Voice."

"The Voice" debuted May 25, with UUP President Fred Kowal as the program's host.

The twice-monthly podcast, named for UUP's longtime membership magazine, features interviews with state politicians and union leaders. It also takes on social justice topics such as the climate crisis, racial injustice, student debt, health care and voting rights.

"We are very excited to bring "The Voice" podcast to our members and anyone else with an interest in social justice and in ways we can all help create positive change," Kowal said. "UUP has wanted to do a podcast for several years, but the pandemic sidelined our plans. We couldn't be happier to finally make this initiative a reality."

The producer of "The Voice" is Mike Lisi, UUP's director of media and publications. He also wrote and recorded the theme song for "The Voice."

The podcast's latest episode focuses on the environment and UUP initiatives that would place SUNY at the forefront of the state's transition to a green economy. The podcast also includes discussion of the new federal Inflation Reduction Act and its impact on climate change.

The first episode, "A conversation with retired UUP President Nuala Drescher," featured Kowal and Drescher talking about her time as the union's first and only woman president. In mid-June, UUP released an episode about the May 14 mass shooting in Buffalo, a city and region where UUP represents thousands of members.

"The Voice" will feature interviews with newsmakers across New York state about many of the most crucial challenges facing New York and the nation.

You'll hear discussion on labor issues and social justice topics, including the climate crisis and the

environment, racial injustice, health care, student debt and voting rights.

Topics so far have included UUP history, an interview with AFT President Randi Weingarten, the Buffalo shooting massacre and the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*.



Current UUP President (and podcast host) Fred Kowal talks with former UUP president Nuala Drescher for the first episode of "The Voice."

The logo for "The Voice" podcast. It features a stylized microphone icon inside a circle, followed by the words "THE VOICE" in a bold, sans-serif font. "THE" is in blue and "VOICE" is in black.



## How to hear "The Voice"

UUP's "The Voice" podcast is available on Apple Podcasts and iTunes, Spotify, Google Podcasts, and several other podcast directory sites, including iHeart Radio, Amazon Music and Stitcher.

You can subscribe to "The Voice" podcast on these sites and more by typing United University Professions into the search bar of your podcast app.

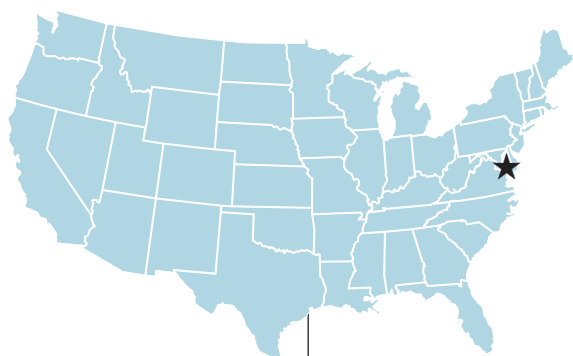
Go to <https://thevoiceuup.buzzsprout.com/> to go directly to the podcast on Buzzsprout.com, UUP's podcast hosting platform.



## UUP members join nationwide call for change at Poor People's Campaign rally in Washington, D.C.

**M**ore than a half-century ago, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. organized the Poor People's Campaign, a multiracial initiative that demanded economic justice, human rights and other basic gains for Americans living in poverty.

On June 18, thousands of activists and protesters picked up King's unfinished work, delivering a spirited, defiant message for positive change at the Poor People's and Low-Wage Workers' Assembly and Moral March on Washington and to the Polls.



### What is the Poor People's Campaign?

The Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival seeks to continue the unfinished work of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., by calling out the issues of oppression, including racism, poverty and environmental injustice.

More than a dozen United University Professions members spent hours driving or traveling in buses to the Washington, D.C., rally, including UUP President Fred Kowal, statewide Membership Development Officer Tom Hoey, statewide Executive Board member Darleyne Mayers and Upstate Medical University Chapter President Rich Veenstra.

"It's really important to be here," said Kowal. "This is a gathering of groups from all over the country committed to social justice. And part of that struggle is workers' rights and affordable, accessible health care, education for everyone, things we fight for every day.

"I see this event as an answer to January 6th," Kowal continued. "January 6th was about fear, it was about racism, it was about anger, it was about people wanting to grab power, against democracy and what the people wanted. Here, you're seeing diversity. It doesn't matter who you are, you are welcome here. It's a gathering of love and compassion and a commitment to justice. Where else would UUP and unions be?"

Protesters waved bright yellow flags with slogans like "A New Unsettling Force" and "Forward Together, Not One Step Back," and hoisted signs with the words "Everybody Got a Right to Live" and "If It Looks and Smells Like Jim Crow, It's Jim Crow."

"It's gotta come from the bottom up," said Veenstra. "We've got to get more funding for more affordable housing, also support for food, all the basic necessities."

At the rally, led by the Rev. William Barber, co-chair of the Poor People's Campaign, speakers urged the crowd to register to vote in the midterm election later this year. Representatives from each state also spoke, sharing their stories during the nearly four-hour event, addressing health care, gun violence, housing and other issues that disproportionately affect low-income Americans.



Watch a video  
made by UUP of  
the rally at  
<https://bit.ly/3JagqRH>



Read Rev.  
William Barber's  
full speech at  
<https://bit.ly/3PwWOci>





# LABOR NOTES



UUP has been a strong supporter of The Poor People's Campaign, which seeks to address the causes of economic injustice, including racial and wage inequality and the suppression of voting rights. Here, members, including UUP President Fred Kowal, first photo, left, listen to speeches at the D.C. rally. (Photos by Mike Lisi.)

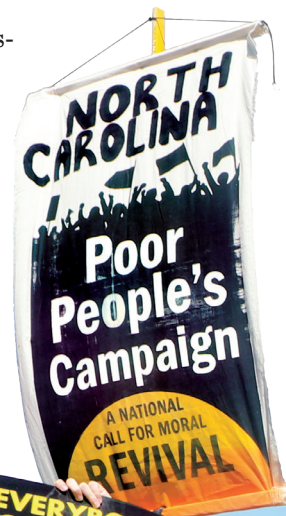
The Poor People's Campaign also demanded what advocates refer to as a "Third Reconstruction," following the First Reconstruction after the Civil War and the Second Reconstruction of the civil rights movement.

The Third Reconstruction would deal simultaneously with systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, health care and religious nationalism that blames the poor instead of the systems that cause poverty.

"Today we are determined to bend the moral arc right here in America," Barber said, his words amplified by a huge sound system over

a large stage with the Capitol, in the distance, as a backdrop. "We are resolved not to stop until we no longer have breath to breathe or strength to give.

"We are not here to beg, but to demand what is fully ours and is every human being's right," he continued. "We've come to put a face and a voice on these numbers of poverty, to show that they are real people and real lives. They are us and we are them, and we cannot be silent anymore."





## A rising tide of worker power

*Chicago's Labor Notes conference celebrates unions' diversity and history*

**T**his is the labor movement in the United States today: Two young men who believe they can help form the first-ever union of food-app delivery workers, seizing their moment to attain a common dream of fair pay and equitable treatment.

This is also the labor movement in the United States today: Gay union members proclaiming their pride with rainbow-themed T-shirts alongside Teamsters, carpenters, railroad employees and steelworkers.

UUP members stood proudly in this vast array of unionists at the 2022 Labor Notes conference in Chicago, June 17-19. The gathering was a striking display of union strength and diversity, 4,000 attendees strong and featuring some of the brightest lights of the labor movement.

Labor Notes, a labor-reporting news outlet and publishing company—it calls itself “The Global Local”—hosted hundreds of unions at the convention and more than a few groups of workers that are organizing with the intention of forming a union.

UUP stood out in this diverse gathering with a delegation of more than a dozen members eager to talk about gains that UUP made decades ago and which other higher education unions are struggling to just now embrace.

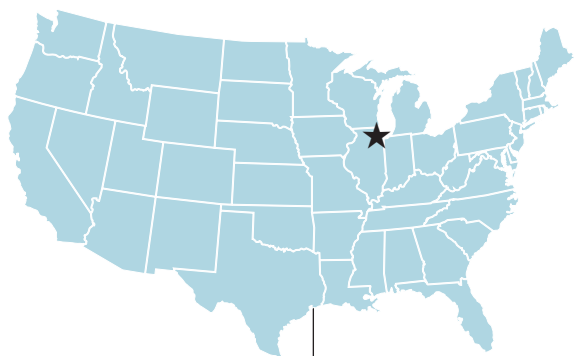
### UUP a standout

Several in the UUP delegation proudly noted that UUP appears to be one of the very few higher education unions that has a “wall-to-wall” bargaining unit. That means that UUP represents not just full-time faculty, but academic and professional contingents, and professionals in a wide range of jobs throughout SUNY, including health care, internet technology, residential life and building services.

“I think that’s something we have to offer higher education labor, to present the full perspective of higher education labor, and we’ve been doing this for 50 years,” said UUP Vice President for Academics Alissa Karl.

UUP Vice President for Professionals Carolyn Kube and Secretary-Treasurer Jeri O’Byrne-Losee joined Karl in leading the UUP delegation.

Kube, a health care professional who led the Stony Brook HSC Chapter for years before becoming a statewide officer, said she was particularly struck by the ongoing struggles of farmworkers at a workshop on health and safety. It drove home the point of how much UUP has done to address health and safety concerns, during the pandemic and in its contract, and it also struck her as astonishing that workers in



Labor Notes is a national labor news organization, publisher and organizing project founded in 1979. Labor Notes also serves to bring union members together through conferences and workshops that promote strategies for organizing and forming alliances. Read more at <https://labornotes.org/about>



# LABOR NOTES



the United States are living under conditions reminiscent of the days of enslavement and indentured servitude.

"The entire room was filled with migrant workers," Kube said of the health and safety workshop. "Many of them are not organized in farmworker unions, but they're organizing. They're winning safety measures for their people in the fields. Some of them don't have running water or heat, and they're living under

deplorable conditions."

O'Bryan-Losee said she appreciated that the UUP members "were very intent about showing what we were doing" as a union.

## A special year for organizing

Labor Notes held virtual events through the first two years of the coronavirus pandemic, and it returned to an in-person conference that coincided with some of the most noteworthy successful organizing efforts in decades, including at Starbucks, Amazon and Google. More than 300 workshops covered a range of topics, including organizing, negotiating or making unions and workplaces more inclusive.

The plenary session offered a lineup of Labor's rock stars, including Michelle Eisen of Starbucks Workers United; Chris Smalls, president of the Amazon Labor Union; Stacy Davis Gates, president elect of the Chicago Teachers Union; and Sean O'Brien, president of the Teamsters.

UUP members have supported the organizing efforts and successful union votes of Starbucks stores in New York, and UUP has also supported Amazon workers in New York as they seek to organize.

An even larger UUP delegation attended the AFT convention in Boston July 14-17, which took place as this issue of "The Voice" went to print. Look for coverage of AFT in the next issue of "The Echo."



**Top:** Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders lauded the successful organizing efforts of unions during the coronavirus pandemic.

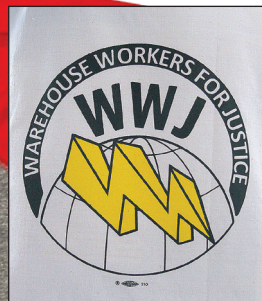
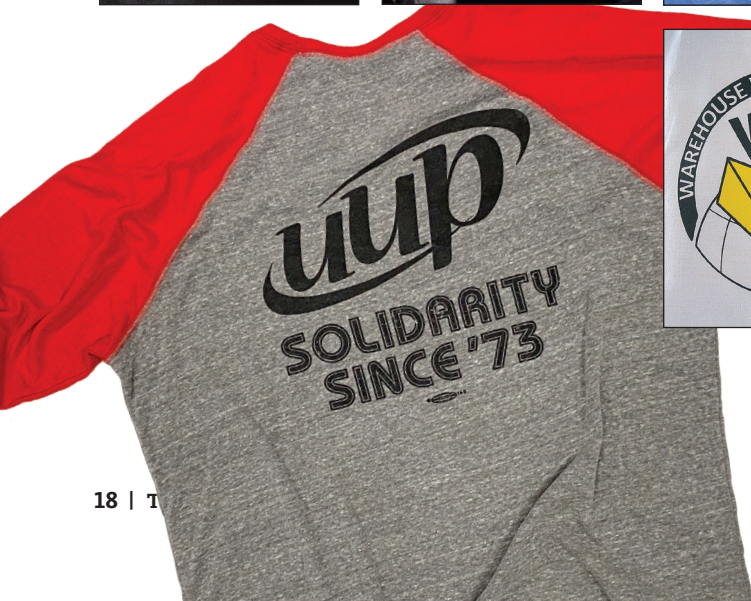
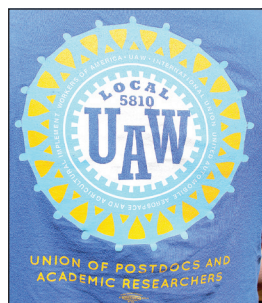
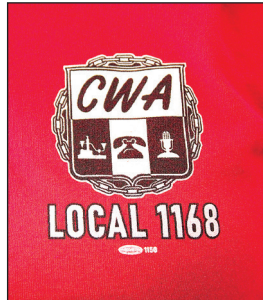
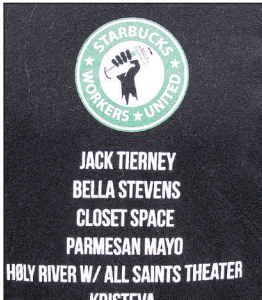
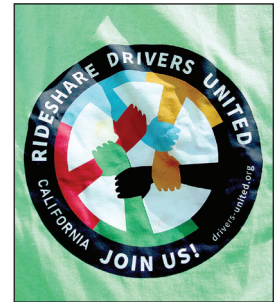
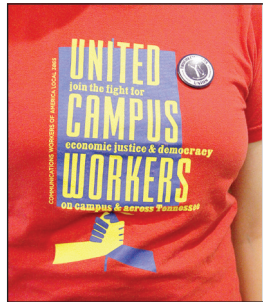
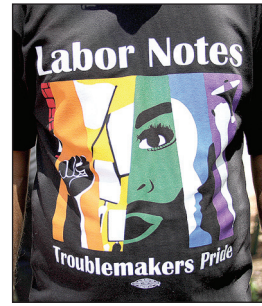
**Above:** UUP members show union pride at Labor Notes. Back row, L to R: Toby Cronk, Buffalo HSC; Laura Fair-Schulz, Potsdam; Lisa Marie Anselmi, Buffalo State; Sidney Contreras, Optometry. Front row, L to R: Jeri O'Bryan-Losee, statewide Secretary-Treasurer; Carolyn Kube, VP/Professionals; Redetha Abrahams-Nichols, Downstate. (Photos by Darryl McGrath.)



# LABOR NOTES

## T'd off! Union T-shirts, logos and slogans make a point at Labor Notes

Thousands of the attendees at the Labor Notes conference—including those in the UUP delegation—sporting T-shirts and logos on accessories such as tote bags that proclaimed their pride and place in the labor movement. T-shirts supported new unions at Amazon and Starbucks, as well as new organizing efforts, including the Deliverista food-app delivery workers in New York City.



» UUP attendees sported this custom-designed shirt commemorating both the union's founding year and the date of *Roe v. Wade*.

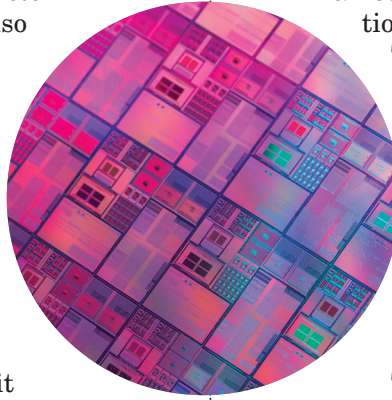


## Chip bill bodes well for SUNY, jobs

President Joe Biden has signed a bipartisan bill advanced by Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, which would support U.S. semiconductor manufacture and research and could also mean jobs for upstate New York and research funding for SUNY campuses.

The bill, informally known as the Chips and Science Act, includes more than \$52 billion for U.S. computer chip production, as well as billions in tax credits to encourage investment in chip manufacturing. It also provides tens of billions of dollars to fund scientific research and development.

Several SUNY campuses could benefit if this bill becomes law, including the University at Albany, Binghamton University and the University at Buffalo. Although the bill is still a long way from sending research dollars to campuses, UUP members will almost certainly be working on projects connected to this bill if it becomes law, as expected. Many SUNY faculty members hold research grants in innovative high-tech fields.



Schumer, a good friend to SUNY and to UUP, has advocated for the Albany Nanotech Complex to be named as the hub for the country's first National Semiconductor Technology Center. That center would be funded by his legislation.

The greater Binghamton area is a growing hub for battery manufacturing and Schumer has said that top research universities in that area, including Binghamton University, would be able to enhance their efforts through more federal research dollars and funding for workforce training initiatives.

The University at Buffalo is one of the research universities that Schumer has cited as a strong candidate to compete for manufacturing training and National Science Foundation funds linked to his bill.



Read more about the legislation at Schumer's senate site: <https://www.bit.ly/3Bm2SR7>  
or this Washington Post story: <https://wapo.st/3BivZ7X>.

## A bug and a feature for UUP

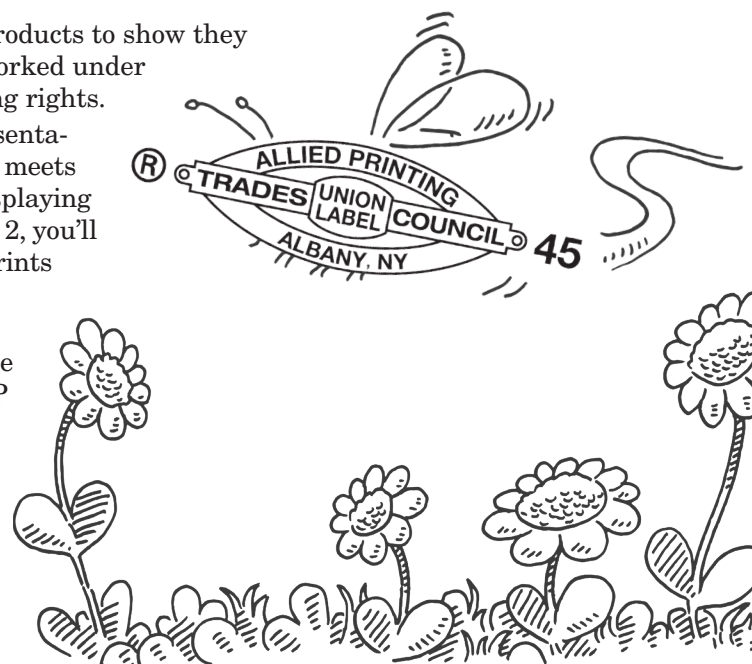
United University Professions has caught the bug. Or more precisely, secured its own union label.

That's the tiny logo—commonly called a “bug”—used on products to show they were made in a union shop, and that those who created it worked under safe, legal conditions with fair working wages and bargaining rights.

Shops must apply to get their own union label, and a representative makes an on-site inspection of the workplace to assure it meets that union's standards. Only then can that business begin displaying the label on its wares. (If you look at the bottom right of Page 2, you'll note the bug for Benchmark Printing, the union shop that prints “The Voice.”) UUP's will appear on all items printed in-house.

UUP was granted its label by the Allied Printing Trades Council of the Communication Workers of America. For those with better eyesight, it reveals the geographic area (for UUP that's Albany, N.Y.) and a designated shop number (45).

The bug's origins date back to 1869, when the Carpenters' Eight-Hour League in San Francisco began using a stamp to signify the product was made by employees working an eight-hour, as opposed to the normal ten-hour, shift. By 1909, the American Federation of Labor had initiated a separate department to manage the labels, an office still in robust operation today. (See [unionlabel.org](http://unionlabel.org).)





## Off and running: Negotiations underway

**U**UP's negotiations for a new contract with the state have started, following exchanges of conceptual proposals between UUP and the state in May and June.

For members who have never been part of UUP during a contract negotiation, the first question usually is, "What happens to the terms and conditions of my employment, given that the previous contract is now expired?" (The previous contract expired July 1.)

The answer is: Don't worry. Most of the terms of the previous contract continue until a new contract is ratified.

In a recent message to members, UUP's chief negotiator, Bret Benjamin, wrote that members will have no problem staying updated on progress.

"The State's proposals have been posted in full to our Members' Only Negotiations webpage, along with a new Negotiations Bulletin that provides an overview of the State's initial demands," Benjamin explained. "Additionally, you'll find posted on the same page a video presentation about UUP's conceptual proposals from one of our June town hall meetings. There is also a video from our panel about chapter-level organizing gains for contingent faculty."

UUP President Fred Kowal sees this as an exciting time, as UUP undertakes the task which is at the heart of any union: securing the best terms and conditions of employment possible.

Said Kowal, "We are committed to the university we serve, but also to our members and to working productively and effectively to get a deal that will benefit our members, our institutions, our students, the patients we serve and this entire state."



### HOW TO KEEP UP ON CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

As contract negotiations progress, additional information regarding that progress will also be posted on the Members Only Negotiations webpage. If you'd like to become a member, it's easy to do. Visit [www.uupinfo.org/join](http://www.uupinfo.org/join) to sign up now.

To access the Members Only site, go to the UUP website at [UUPinfo.org](http://UUPinfo.org), and click on "Members Only" in the drop-down menu. To log in, members will need their UUP membership ID number, which can be found in the lower left-hand corner of their UUP membership card.

Members will also need their UUP chapter code, which is listed on pay statements and in electronic payroll records as either their "department code," "campus code," or "agency code."

## Fredonia chapter president recognized for tech service

Chris Taverna, president of the UUP Fredonia Chapter, has been recognized by the SUNY Educational Technology Officers Association for his outstanding contributions to the mission and the vision of the association.

The association presented the award during the SUNY Technology Conference, June 21-23.

Taverna is a Fredonia graduate who earned his bachelor's degree in mathematics. He has worked at Fredonia for more than 20 years, and in that time, he's been part of several departments with Information Technology Services and the Professional Development Center.

He is a training specialist in the Accessibility and Collaborative Technology department of ITS, where—in addition to providing various IT

trainings to the faculty and staff of Fredonia—he administers the campus implementations of several programs and applications, including Confluence, Digital Measures and Zoom.

Taverna is also a board director of the Chautauqua Leadership Network, which works to identify and nurture regional leaders, and is the advisory council chair for the Chi Pi Chapter of Alpha Phi Omega, a national service fraternity for college students. He serves on the Fredonia University Senate and chairs the Senate's Faculty and Professional Affairs Committee.

The SUNY Educational Technology Officers Association is an alliance of instructional technology personnel at SUNY. The association provides a forum for its members to share common concerns.





Did you know that all UUP members qualify for

# PUBLIC SERVICE LOAN FORGIVENESS?



UUP MEMBERS  
HAVE ALREADY  
HAD CLOSE TO  
**\$2 MILLION**  
IN FORGIVENESS!

## Virtual student debt clinics held every payday.

Presented by your Statewide Secretary-Treasurer Jeri O'Bryan-Losee, [jobryan@uupinfo.org](mailto:jobryan@uupinfo.org)

Open to all UUP members, these 1.5-hour workshops talk you through the Income-Driven Repayment Plans AND Public Service Loan Forgiveness:

**LEARN ABOUT THE NEW DOE PSLF WAIVER!**

### UPCOMING SEMINARS:

Sept. 28, 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. • Oct. 12, 5 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Oct. 26, 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. • Nov. 9, 5 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

• Nov. 23, 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.



Register through the UUP Events Calendar  
[UUPINFO.ORG/CALENDAR/](http://UUPINFO.ORG/CALENDAR/)

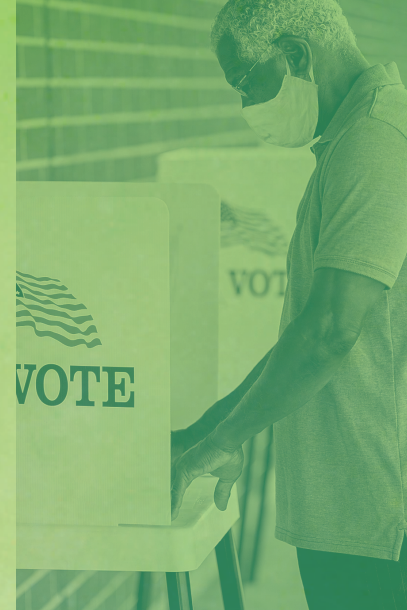




# Capitol progress

**UUP backs bills on environment,  
student loan forgiveness**





## ***A guide to UUP's legislative agenda, and status report of UUP-supported bills***

**T**he post-budget advocacy effort is always important for UUP, and no less this year, when progress in environmental and student-loan forgiveness followed the best SUNY budget in at least a decade.

The legislative session ended in early June, but UUP's advocacy continues, UUP President Fred Kowal told members in a written message as he announced a major legislative win: the Legislature's passage of a measure on public-service loan forgiveness strongly backed by UUP. The bill will now go to Gov. Kathy Hochul for signature.

### **Full-time employment status**

Kowal credited UUP's advocacy for the passage of companion bills S8389C and A9523B, which will amend state labor law to give full-time employment status to public employees who work at least 30 hours a week, so that they can qualify for the federal Public Service Loan Forgiveness program.

"This legislation will be an incredible benefit for our contingent and adjunct members," Kowal wrote in his message to members.

The law would also apply a 3.35x multiplier to contingent faculty's in-class hours so that they can meet the 30-hour full-time definition. It's long been known that contingent faculty work far more than the hours they teach in a

classroom or lab, and that their non-class time includes meeting with students, preparing their syllabi and other course materials, grading and, for many, holding weekly office hours.

The law would also ensure that agencies and employers can transmit the requisite loan forgiveness paperwork on behalf of workers to the federal government, which will help more New Yorkers get their loans forgiven faster.

### **Envisioning a stronger environmental role for SUNY**

At a May news conference, UUP also announced five environmental bills that would help SUNY become a greener university. The UUP statewide Environmental Issues and Advocacy Committee drafted the bills. Four of the five have at least one sponsor in the Legislature, and one now has a bill number in the Senate. The bills were announced as the legislative session drew to a close, and it was not expected that they would make immediate rapid progress.

Kowal said the fact that they were drafted, announced and now have several lawmakers signed on as prime sponsors is incredibly fast work by the Environmental Issues and Advocacy Committee.

Delegates voted to establish the new statewide committee at the UUP Spring Delegate Assembly April 8-9. It is co-chaired by Susan Fassler of SUNY ESF and Brian Obach of New Paltz.



## UUP-backed bills progress in the NYS Legislature

UUP backed several bills on topics important to higher education and to UUP, including voting rights, student debt and telecommuting. They include the following:

### Passed both houses of the Legislature:

#### **S1046-E/A6678-E:**

##### **The John Lewis Voting Rights Act of New York**

If signed into law, this bill would:

- Require local governments with records of discrimination to prove that proposed voting changes will not harm voters of color before such changes can go into effect
- Provide new legal tools that can be used in court to fight discriminatory voting provisions
- Expand language assistance for voters with limited English proficiency
- Create strong protections against voter intimidation, deception or obstruction
- Instruct state judges to interpret election laws in a pro-voter way whenever possible, so that close questions of legal interpretation are resolved in favor of the rights of qualified voters
- Establish through companion legislation a central hub for election data and demographic information that will empower officials and community members to ensure accessible elections

### Passed both houses of the Legislature:

#### **S8389-C (Same as A9523-B):**

##### **Public Service Loan Forgiveness**

This bill designated full-time employment as 30 hours only for the purpose of qualifying for the federal Public Service Loan Forgiveness program. It credits every hour of teaching time as 3.35 hours, again only for the purpose of qualifying for Public Service Loan Forgiveness. The bill also streamlines employment certification. See UUP President Fred Kowal's comments about the passage of this bill in the accompanying story beginning on previous page.

### Passed both houses of the Legislature:

#### **A5321/S202:**

Would amend New York's lobby laws to exempt people from those laws if their only state employment has been as a SUNY or City University of New York academic faculty member. Under the state lobby laws, people must disclose a business relationship with state lawmakers to guard against conflicts of interest and to ensure transparency. It's not uncommon for SUNY and CUNY faculty members to deal with lawmakers during advocacy events for their universities, but such interactions are often limited to a single event during the year and do not fall under the ongoing lobbying relationship the lobbying laws are intended to govern.

"This is a wonderful example of members taking a proactive approach to a problem that affects us all," Kowal said. "The committee members have a very focused and detailed knowledge of how SUNY can make changes to become more environmentally responsive, and I look forward to seeing members continue to work with lawmakers to raise awareness of these issues."

The bills with sponsors would:

1. Require SUNY to develop a plan, systemwide and for each campus, to have zero waste by 2030, with Sen. Brad Hoylman of Manhattan as the lead sponsor. The bill number is S9040.
2. Help keep surplus SUNY property out of landfills and would instead help find a new home for surplus property, either on a SUNY campus or through a charitable donation, with Assemblymember Patricia Fahy of Albany as the lead sponsor. The bill has been introduced into the Assembly; as "The Voice" went to print, it did not yet have a bill number.
3. Require SUNY to hire a systemwide sustainability director, with Sen. Robert Jackson of Manhattan as the lead sponsor;
4. Establish three areas of sustainability work on SUNY campuses, including waste management; energy management; and education and outreach. Assemblymember Anna Kelles, whose district includes Tompkins County and parts of Cortland County, is the lead sponsor.

A bill that would create a "green revolving fund" to finance sustainability projects on campuses is still under development.



**Watch the UUP member newsletters, Connect and UUPdate, for more information on the bills.**

### Passed only Senate:

**S552-A:** Would allow Tuition Assistance Program funds to be applied to credits earned in a dual- or concurrent-enrollment high school-college program.

**S7383/A8438:** Prevents current employees of the governor or New York City mayor from serving as SUNY or CUNY trustees.

### Passed only Assembly:

**A464/S159:** Under the New York State Teleworking extension act, each state agency would establish a policy and program to allow employees to perform all or a portion of their duties through teleworking to the maximum extent possible, as long as employee performance is not diminished. Each state agency shall appoint a telework coordinator responsible for overseeing the implementation of this program. No agency shall establish a policy for any employee that is subject to a collective bargaining agreement unless that policy is agreed to by both the agency and the employee organization.



## » UUP members speak out on green efforts

**A**s New York prepares to take the critical next step in the state's landmark 2019 environmental law, UUP members have been outspoken in urging the state to enforce the law in the most effective ways possible.

UUP Vice President for Academics Alissa Karl joined other labor representatives June 8 for a press conference in New York City in support of the full implementation of the state's Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act.

"UUP stands with you today to deliver this clear message: New York must lead the way in environmental justice reform, and we will work together to make sure that happens," Karl said. "It will take all of us—environmental advocates, unions, students, community leaders and workers across the state.

"Advocating for climate action is not new to UUP—we have been advocating for a cleaner, more sustain-

able future for our communities for years."

The 2019 Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act sets strict new standards for emissions control, among other major steps to protect New York's environment. The state's Climate Action Council, which was created as part of that law, conducted public hearings through July 1 to gather comments on the specifics of carrying out the mandates set by the law. The Climate Action Council is expected to release a final plan for implementing the law by Jan. 1, 2023.

### **Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act**

UUP member Brian Obach of the New Paltz Chapter was one of hundreds of people who testified at one of those public hearings. Obach and Susan Fassler of the UUP chapter at the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry co-chair UUP's new statewide Environmental Issues and Advocacy Committee.

In his May 7 testimony, Obach said that the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act needs strong funding and strong

enforcement power to be effective.

"I have the challenging role of teaching environmental sociology, which examines societal impacts on natural ecosystems," Obach told Council members. "As much as I love teaching, this is a challenge because the subject matter is so grave and frightening. Young people know the scope of the problems we face, especially SUNY students, many of whom come from working class backgrounds that make them among the most vulnerable to climate impacts and other environmental hazards."

Obach went on to tell Council members that the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act requires the following supports from the state to be effective:

- Adequate funding
- Strong enforcement
- Effective actions. "Things like carbon capture and green hydrogen are diversionary schemes promoted by dying fossil fuel interests grasping for a way to prolong their profits," Obach said.
- A just, equitable application of the law. "Low-income and working-class people already suffer the most, through current environmental policies which concentrate hazards in their communities," Obach testified. "These New Yorkers must be made a priority as we develop a new green economy."



Brian Obach



UUP Vice President for Academics Alissa Karl speaks on June 8 in New York City in support of the state's Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act.



# An insidious epidemic

*Often-invisible occupational diseases kill thousands of New Yorkers a year*

**S**tudents in social studies classes learn about a long-ago time in this country when people's jobs sickened and killed them, and no one did much about it—certainly not employers, and often not the government.

As **Michael Lax** and **Jeanette Zoeckler** will tell you, that situation hasn't improved all that much. Occupational diseases still kill thousands of people a year in this state, and employers and the government still do not respond with a sense of urgency.

These occupational health experts—both members of the Upstate Medical University Chapter, and quietly passionate about their public health specialty—have just published a stunning report about occupational disease and deaths in New York. It is the first such report in 35 years, and it is the product of years of research and data analysis.

"There is a total dearth of information," said Lax, a physician, occupational medicine specialist and medical director of the Occupational Health Clinical Center at Upstate. "There are pretty strong disincentives to recognize occupational disease."

The report estimates that at least 3,000 New Yorkers a year die from occupational diseases. If the definition of occupational disease is expanded—as they believe it should be—to take in new illnesses such as COVID-19, which has disproportionately killed health care staff and low-wage workers, then occupational diseases may kill more than 7,000 New Yorkers a year.

Lax explained that he and Zoeckler, the center's director, pieced data together from a variety of sources. Data recording is hindered by employer exemptions on reporting of hazards, by trade secrets, by chemical

usage small enough to avoid mandated reporting but which still exposes workers, and by an extreme shortage of board-certified occupational health physicians.

"People don't think of work as a place that affects our health," said Zoeckler, who holds a Master of Public Health and a doctorate in social science. "How many people are really going under the radar, never identifying their health problems at work? It's a reflex to not identify work as a possible cause."

Nearly a million workers in the state each year may also be exposed to dangerous chemicals and substances such as lead, silica and asbestos. Unions can help safeguard working conditions, and the report cites the decline of unionization as one of several factors that put workers at increased risk for occupational disease.

Lax and Zoeckler are waiting to see what response the report generates. They know their findings are jarring, but that people who can make a difference sometimes look the other way. They wonder if the pandemic has made any impression as a workplace hazard.

"This report is kind of like ... almost an experiment," Lax said. "Now the question is, 'What's going to be done with it?' How do we engage the people who need to be engaged, and start a conversation?"

With the memory of the earliest COVID-19 deaths still vivid, Zoeckler said that "discouragement comes."

"When you're face to face with people, you can't lose heart and give up," she added. "But around the heart-break is a sense of outrage."



**Scan to read the report or  
visit <https://bit.ly/3lQAQPA>**





## MEMBER ORGANIZING

# Growing a union... one knock at a time

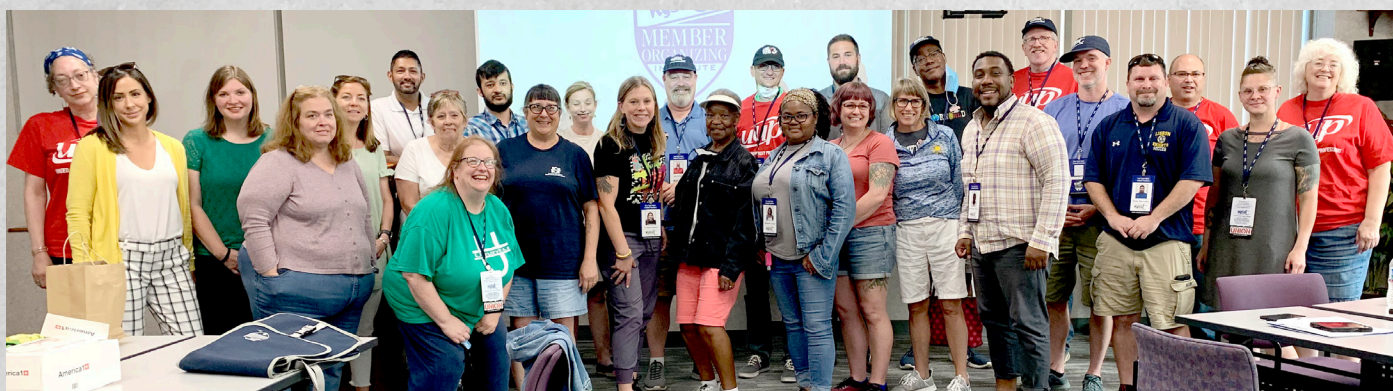
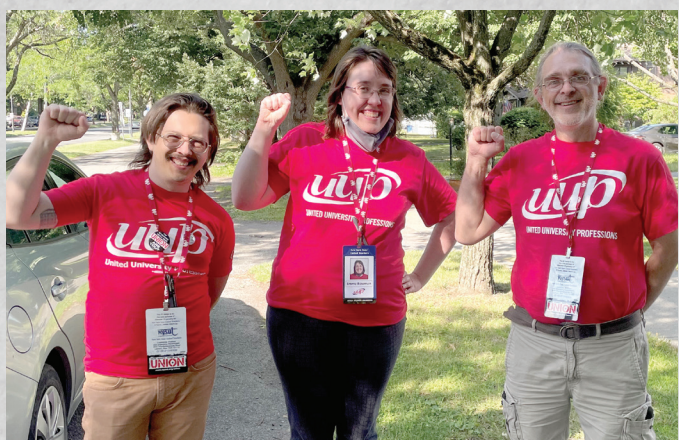
Growing a union is all about talking to people. And knocking on more than a few doors.

Fifteen UUP members from 11 chapters got (or gave) valuable instruction in good ways to do both tasks, as part of the NYSUT Member Organizing Institute in June and July. The annual summer field training program ran in four regional sessions, in Rochester; Nassau, Long Island; Tarrytown, Westchester County; and at the NYSUT offices in Latham.

UUP members Jude Jayatilleke of Buffalo State and Andrew Solar-Greco of Stony Brook were coaches.

Participants learned the art of conducting one-on-one conversations with current or potential members at their homes. Following their training, they are putting their newly honed skills to good use in the field during door-to-door efforts during the summer.

And they got results. As of mid-July, participants had visited 198 homes, held 77 conversations with members or potential members, and signed eight members. They also had spoken with 32 people who did not sign up as members in that initial encounter, but who expressed interest in knowing more and would be likely candidates for a follow-up contact.



UUP members Bradley Taber-Thomas of Geneseo (left) and Jeffrey Hirschfeld of Buffalo State, with a new member during their door-to-door engagement with members.

## NYSUT's Member Organizing Institute

Founded in 2017, NYSUT's Member Organizing Institute has helped train hundreds of UUP members to be effective door-to-door organizers.

Participants in the institute receive training on effective ways to conduct one-on-one conversations before they undertake at least 12 four-hour shifts. They begin that work knowing they are backed by experienced trainers and coaches who can answer questions and provide valuable tips.



Read more about the Member Organizing Institute at <https://www.bit.ly/3yOFbOy>

**Left:** (from left to right) Members David Banks of Albany, Emma Bowman of Empire State College and Kelly Keck of Delhi, share a moment of solidarity during a training session.

**Below:** More than two dozen UUP and NYSUT members from Western New York participated in the MOI training in that region.



## » MEMBER BENEFITS

# *New enhancements to negotiated benefits*

**T**he UUP Benefit Trust Fund Board of Trustees is pleased to announce enhancements to negotiated benefits administered by the UUP Benefit Trust Fund. They include:

### Delta Dental

Effective July 1, 2022, Delta Dental is making two important changes to the Preferred Provider Organization plan.

Basic restorative services will now be paid at 90% of Delta Dental's contracted rate, and implant coverage will now be paid at 60% of Delta Dental's contracted rate.

### Dependent Scholarship Program

The scholarship award has been increased to \$750, effective immediately. The increase applies to applications for the Spring 2022 semester, and will be in effect for applications for future semesters.

The UUP Benefit Trust Fund Scholarship Program is available for eligible undergraduate students who are children of active, UUP-represented SUNY employees.

Scholarships can be used for books, supplies and room and board costs, but not for tuition. A maximum of one scholarship per dependent child will be awarded each semester, even if both parents are UUP-represented employees.

Eligible dependents up to age 26 must be enrolled in a SUNY state-operated campus. Dependent children who turn 26 anytime during the semester in which they are applying are no longer eligible. Each dependent child is eligible for a maximum of eight scholarships. Applica-



tions must be postmarked by 60 days after the end of the semester for which the dependent child is applying.

The scholarship form outlines specific criteria that UUP-represented employees and their dependent children must meet to qualify for the scholarship. There are two different forms based on a member's eligibility for the New York State Health Insurance Program. Non-NYSHIP-eligible employees will need to provide documentation verifying that they are the parent of the student.

For information, or to download application forms, visit <https://uupinfo.org/benefits/btfscholar.php>



**For more information on any negotiated benefits administered by the UUP Benefit Trust Fund, call 800-887-3863.**