
BRIDGES

*The Newsletter of
the Stony Brook
HSC Chapter of
United University
Professions
March 1998*

Message from the president

The first six months of my term in office have now gone by and I have some things to look back upon. In that time, I have had the opportunity to meet with many members of our chapter who have expressed a desire to get more involved, but don't know how to get started. Here are a few suggestions for becoming a more active member. First, make sure that you are already a member by signing a membership card if you have not already done this. The next thing you can do is vote in chapter elections, on our contract, and in all local, state and federal elections. It is your vote which gives you a voice. Another thing you can do is share information with your co-workers. The more information we all have, the stronger the union grows. Next, you can join VOTE/COPE, the political action fund of the New York State United Teachers. VOTE/COPE is your special interest group, with almost 400,000 members of NYSUT, these votes can change the outcome of many elections. These four ideas can get anyone started in union activity. They are all things we can and should do. They will promote a healthy organization which will help you enjoy a happy, productive career.

If you desire a higher level of activity here a few more suggestions. Become a department representative. We need to get information to every member and the department rep system is one of the best ways to do it. Committee work may be something else you would like to do. There are chapter committees and joint labor-management committees. Committee work can be both educational and rewarding. Maybe you would like to run for elected office. You can run for Delegate, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice-President for Academics, Vice-President for Professionals or President. Remember, this is your union, the

person who best understands your professional needs is you. Let your voice be heard. GET IN THE GAME!

John J. Marino

DID YOU KNOW?

To be a member of UUP you must submit a signed membership card. If your dues are coded with 215 on your pay stub you are not a member. The member code is 222. If you have any questions about your membership status, please call the office at 444-1505.

If you have ever wondered about the inner workings of your union, what goes on at a Delegate Assembly or simply interested in getting your feet wet, have we got a deal for you. A list will be started in the union office for those interested in attending the next Delegate Assembly. Anyone on this list will be considered for attending as an observer with transportation, room and board provided by the chapter. This will involve attending the meeting in exotic Albany on Friday, May 8th and Saturday, May 9th.

Highlights of Changes for Professionals in Our New Contract

Article 23: Leaves

Vacation Accruals. "Section 23.2(d) Maximum Accumulation. On January 1 of each calendar year, an employee's accrued vacation leave credits shall not exceed 40 days. An employee's total vacation leave credits may not exceed 40 days during the calendar year but the employee must use the amount over 40 days or forfeit it on the last day of the calendar year."

Holiday Leave. "Section 23.5c. Holiday Leave. An employee who is eligible to observe holidays who is required to work on a holiday shall be granted a compensatory day off. An employee who is eligible to observe Thanksgiving or Christmas, and who is required to work on such holiday, shall be granted one and one-half compensatory days off."

Holiday Leave. "Section 23.5d. Compensatory days off shall be scheduled at times mutually convenient to the employee and the University, and used within one year of accrual or forfeited."

UUP's on the march for VOTE/COPE recruits

Our chapter VOTE/COPE coordinator is nurse practitioner Doris Weisman. Please contact either Doris or the chapter office for more information on the importance of donating to this cause. Payroll deduction makes giving simple and automatic.

Hundreds of other United University Professions members are reinvesting a portion of their hard-fought contract raises into VOTE/COPE to help the union prepare for the next round of contract talks.

"Every member was sent a letter after the contract ratification," said Eileen Landy, the new statewide VOTE/COPE coordinator for UUP. "The response has been wonderful. We're seeing increases from virtually every campus."

The letter, written by UUP President William Scheuerman, said the protracted contract negotiations - and the ultimate settlement - highlight the importance of VOTE/COPE.

"Negotiations is a political process," Scheuerman's letter said. "We were able to negotiate a decent contract thanks to the clout that translates through contributions to VOTE/COPE. A healthy VOTE/COPE fund will strengthen our hand at the bargaining table." He also attached a VOTE/COPE payroll deduction pledge card.

VOTE/COPE is New York State United Teachers' political action fund, supported by voluntary member donations. Funds are used to sponsor ad campaigns, make bi-partisan contributions, and support events such as UUP's annual legislative reception.

In 1997, UUPers donated nearly \$80,000, more than triple the amount donated in 1994.

Eileen Landy, who took over UUP's VOTE/COPE campaign in September, said she expects the recent influx of new donations to help UUP raise a minimum of \$100,000 by April 1. Landy is chapter president at SUNY Old Westbury.

Budget talks move to state Capitol

With an anticipated state surplus of almost \$2 billion and a University still reeling from past spending cuts, UUP and its supporters are advocating a commitment to SUNY that goes beyond the proposals of the 1998-99 Executive Budget.

The Executive Budget calls for an increase for SUNY of \$87.4 million - nearly all of which would go to pay for contractual pay raises. While there is \$2 billion for capital projects, as well as a nominal increase for TAP and a new scholarship program for academically talented New York high schoolers, the spending plan does not even cover inflation. As a result, UUP President Bill Scheuerman said, the union must renew its efforts to convince state lawmakers additional moneys are necessary to begin making up for a decade of severe cuts. Volunteer lobbyists from the UUP Legislation Committee, working with NYSUT legislative staff, have already begun making the rounds at the state Capitol.

UUP is also asking legislators to give SUNY a 50th "birthday gift" – a multiyear funding commitment, one of the centerpieces of the union's legislative program this year.

Meanwhile, one lawmaker who doesn't need a lot of convincing that SUNY deserves more state support is Assembly Higher Ed Committee Chair Edward Sullivan (D-New York). Sullivan has released a proposed "Fairness Budget for Higher Education" that calls for, among other things, an additional \$45 million in SUNY operating funds; a \$3 million full-time faculty initiative, reflective of UUP's push for more full-time faculty; a \$16 million technology initiative; and a \$200 cut in tuition at SUNY and CUNY.

"Our state cannot advance economically unless we have higher education facilities that are modern, excellent and open to all who can take advantage of them," Sullivan said in a letter to the governor. "Half-educated citizens are a burden on the rest of us and slow all of us down. Fully educated citizens will help move the economic engine forward and will help keep New York the Empire State in the 21st century."

UUP Sponsored Benefits

- Dental Plan
- Vision Care Plan
- Group Life Insurance
- 403(b) Tax-Deferred Investments with Aetna
- Eugene P. Link Scholarship Program
- Free Tuition on "Space Available" basis
- "Ready or Not" Pre-Retirement program
- Walt Disney Magic Kingdom Club
- Six Flags Funseekers Club

PDQWL: UUP and the state agreed to "fast-track" the first round of awards, which will be for Jan 1, 1997, to Aug. 31, 1998. The deadline for this round is March 16. The second round of awards will be from July 1, 1998, to Aug. 31, 1999. That deadline hasn't been set.

NYSUT Legal Service Plan is Affordable and Accessible

The NYSUT Legal Service Plan is a popular benefit program with UUP bargaining unit members and for good reason. Whether it's related to buying a home, drafting a will or fighting a traffic ticket, NYSUT's plan provides legal assistance for personal legal matters.

Plan features include unlimited toll-free advice, a free simple will or update of an existing simple will, free office consultations, a newsletter and guaranteed maximum fees for a variety of personal legal matters.

The annual enrollment free is \$49.50, or \$45 if paid through payroll or pension deduction. The plan also covers a participant's spouse or domestic partner and unmarried dependent children under the age of 25. Coverage is also provided for dependent parents.

Optional riders for Elder Law services and business protection can be added to the plan's coverage for a modest fee.

For more information, contact NYSUT Member Benefits at (800) 626-8101.

Member Benefit

Show your union card at World Gym, 384 Mark Tree Road, East Setauket, 751-6100, and get a 15 month membership for \$299. (Regular price is \$399 for 12 months)

Employee Holiday Schedule

Mark the following dates on your calendar. They are the holidays observed by UUP members at the State University of New York at Stony Brook:

Memorial Day '98	Monday, May 25 th
Independence Day '98	Monday, July 6 th
Labor Day '98	Monday, September 7 st
Columbus Day '98	Monday, October 12 th
Election Day '98	Tuesday, November 3 th
Veterans' Day '98	Wednesday, November 11 th
Thanksgiving Day '98	Thursday, November 26 th
Day after Thanksgiving '98	Friday, November 27 th (in lieu of Lincoln's Birthday)
Christmas Day '98	Friday, December 25 th
New Year's Day '99	Friday, January 1 st
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day '99	Monday, January 18 th
Washington's Birthday '99	Floating Holiday

United University Professions

Stony Brook HSC Chapter

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The opinions expressed in the Newsletter are those of the authors, the editors, or the Stony Brook HSC Chapter of UUP and are not necessarily the opinions of the United University Professions.

The UUP Newsletter welcomes articles and letters submitted by members of the Stony Brook community. Remember, this is *your* newsletter. Share your thoughts with us, we want to hear from you. Persons who have material they wish to submit should contact: Colleen Kenefick at 444-3095 or 444-1505.