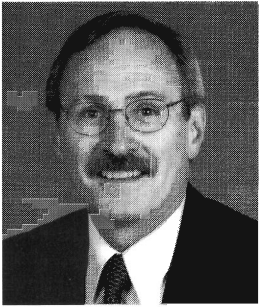


## Time For a Tax Increase!!

Written by John P. Schmidt, President, Stony Brook

Chapter UUP

I'm getting frustrated with the numbers of colleagues who report far too many hours worked and far too many students to effectively teach and support. I'm also getting a little sick and tired of our pot hole ridden, dirty and dangerous roads. Would you be willing to accept a tax increase that would ensure the timely repair of pot holes? Would you be willing to accept a tax increase that would pay to keep our roadsides litter free? Would you be willing to accept a tax increase that would ensure that speed limit violators would be ticketed? Finally, would you be willing to accept a tax increase that would make our colleges and universities accessible to all residents at an affordable price? Any logically thinking person would be willing to pay more.....with the proviso that there be a "payback".



State budgetary structures put higher education at a disadvantage as it competes for state support against other equally important public services. As members of the university community we are in the best position to comment on current work conditions and state unequivocally what "payback" would look like with increased State support for higher education. That has been the operating premise for UUP's legislative/advocacy program for each of the past ten years.

In fall 2003, it is estimated that at least 250,000 prospective students were shut out of higher education due to rising tuition or cutbacks in admissions and course offerings. In addition, many more students are accumulating substantially larger debt as a way to pay for the unpredictable and steep hikes in tuition. In 2003, many states reduced funding for higher education disproportionately to overall state funding cuts. Few would argue that higher education can or should be exempted from reductions required by state financial problems, but disproportionately large cuts in state higher education appropriations were the principal cause of the steep tuition increases and the rolling back of higher education opportunity. The highest priority for state budgets in 2004 should be to protect college access and affordability for students and families. Governors and legislators should deliberately and explicitly seek feasible alternatives to what has become an almost automatic shifting of state revenue shortfalls to students and families (*"Responding to the Crisis in College Opportunity": National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, January 2004*).

Last year, nine of our SUNY campuses received less than 30 percent of their funding from the state. Moreover, SUNY campuses have lost nearly 1,000 full-time academic faculty since 1993-94. Today, we have reached the point where SUNY students pay more for less. Classes are larger, librarians are fewer and lines at the registrar and financial aid offices are longer.

The message is clear but the message cannot simply come from a core of 200 activists. UUP has 28,000 members statewide. It's time for all to deliver the message to their elected representatives.....**We need increased State support for Higher Education!**

Contact information for our elected officials may be found on Stony Brook's Governmental Relations web page or from the UUP Chapter office.

## UUP RATIFIES NEW 4-YEAR CONTRACT

Members of UUP have overwhelmingly (96.6%) approved a new 4-year contract with the state. This was the highest approval rate in UUP history, according to President William E. Scheuerman.

The new agreement runs from July 2, 2003 through July 1, 2007. Its highlights include:

- ★ An \$800 lump-sum payment, prorated for part-timers, upon ratification.
- ★ Across-the-board, on-base salary increases of 2.5%, 2.75% and 3% over the next three years.
- ★ An \$800 on-base salary increase, prorated for part-timers, effective July 1, 2007.
- ★ Annual 1% discretionary increases for eligible full- and part-timers in each of the four years of the agreement.
- ★ A \$500 achievement award increase, effective April 1, 2007, for employees with continuing or permanent appointments and those reappointed to five-year term appointments.
- ★ An \$850 contribution per eligible employee by the end of the contract to the UUP Benefit Trust Fund, which covers dental and vision benefits, life insurance and a tuition scholarship for qualified UUP dependents.

There will be no increases in employees' share of the cost of health insurance premiums, with only small increases in their co-pays.

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### Staying Connected

UUP has been working with Human Resource Services to assure that our retirees remain a part of the university community. The result is *Staying Connected: A Program for Retirees*.

**Go to:**  
[http://naples.cc.sunysb.edu/Admin/HRS.nsf/pages/Training\\_Staying\\_Connected](http://naples.cc.sunysb.edu/Admin/HRS.nsf/pages/Training_Staying_Connected)  
for information on programs, facility access, and issues of concern to retirees.

# UUP On The March !

Written by *Michael Zweig*

Vice President for Academics, Stony Brook Chapter, UUP

The 500-strong labor contingent at "The World Still Says No to War" march and rally in New York City on March 20, 2004 included about 15 UUPers from Stony Brook.

The picture on the right shows our banner being carried by Judy Wishnia, Joel Rosenthal, and Michael Zweig.

It was a cold and windy day, but the spirit was good, UUP's presence was welcomed by the other labor groups (mainly PSC, with some from CWA, and AFSCME among others), and the march went off well, without incident and without many of the overly restrictive police controls that the NYPD were persuaded to forego through a successful campaign of public and private pressure.

**Onward and upward !**



Photo: Bill Tabb

## From The VP

Written by *Artie Shertzer*

Vice President for Professionals, Stony Brook Chapter, UUP

One day, October 26th, 1999 to be precise, I was minding my own business in the men's room, when I noticed a bright red spot in an otherwise unremarkable visit to the urinal. Figuring that couldn't possibly be from me, I decided to wait to see if it happened on my next trip. Lo and behold, I went, it showed up again, and the rest, as they say, is history.

What I happened on, quite by accident, was that my body was telling me that I had cancer. Bladder cancer. I needn't tell you that I was horrified, scared, I had two children...a house and oh yeah...another 40 or so years that I was expecting to be able to work at Stony Brook. Well, the good news was that the tumor was operable, and I had it removed. I underwent immunotherapy...a treatment discovered in some research lab of some university...(before the budget got so bad and some bean counter decided to cut the research money)...and the best news was that it was a contained tumor...but the really scary news was that the cancer was a particularly aggressive type, and had I not noticed the blood in my urine that day, I probably would not be here writing this article.

So here it is almost 5 years later, and I am still, thankfully, cancer free.

That's why I am writing to you, our membership, to encourage you to do several things. Avoidable death, (from cancer, not plane crashes) is frankly avoidable if and only if you exercise vigilance regarding your body. Mammograms, self-exams and pelvic exams are things particular to women that if done regularly can save your life. Men and women can avoid an "avoidable" death, by taking a more pro-active approach to personal health care by having periodic colonoscopies, avoiding unprotected exposure to the harmful UV rays of the sun...and by having moles, freckles and spots checked by a dermatologist. Otherwise known as a full body check.

Besides the diseases themselves, there are a few things (also avoidable) that can keep you alive and healthy.

- I cannot emphasize to you that the fear of knowing you have some thing, is not as bad as finding out you have something too late.
- The fear of an internal exam, pelvic exam or colonoscopy is not nearly as bad as being told you don't need one anymore.
- Melanomas (skin cancers) are one of the fastest growing causes of death in America today. (They are **NOT** all cute moles or freckles.)
- People often joke about these exams...except when they have waited too long to have one.

The key - is clearly early detection and treatment. Please, put your fears aside and talk to your physician and ask him/her about the risks at your particular age and the suggested examinations that should be performed.

I was fortunate to have had a chance to prevent my death from cancer...please do not let yours pass you by.

UUP provides some of the best medical benefits around, covering most exams and doctor visits. If you have questions, call us and if we don't know the answer, we will find out who does. Our central office in Albany works extremely hard to negotiate for enhanced health care coverage and you should take advantage of that hard work...it could literally save your life.



## The Mexico Experience

**"Despair is the luxury of the rich." – (unknown)**

Experienced and written by *Sarah Battaglia*

Stony Brook Chapter, UUP

In February, UUP invited me to travel with the New York State Labor-Religion Coalition and a group of students and teachers from the upstate area to visit northern Mexico, to observe the effects of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) on the lives of people living on the U.S. border. My seven-day stay would prove to be very educational but also quite emotional.

In Matamoros, Reynosa and Valle Hermosa – all towns with a large number of workers in the maquiladora (factory) industry – we visited with educators, health care personnel, activists, scientists, union organizers, children and the factory workers themselves. We met in workers' homes or designated areas far from the factories, as many feared being seen with us, or heard by their employers.

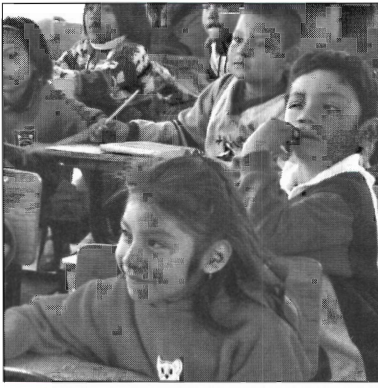
### UUP SUMMER OFFICE HOURS

**7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.**

**Monday thru Thursday  
Closed Friday**

**May 31<sup>st</sup> 2004 - September 3<sup>rd</sup> 2004**

*Other office hours are available by  
appointment if needed, please call 632-6570*



The colonias – or makeshift neighborhoods set up by factory workers – are forced to establish their own “governments” for leadership, since they are not provided the means to live properly by any formal government. People in the colonias elect their own president, vice-president, treasurer and secretary, who hold meetings open to the colonias, always trying to secure benefits for the neighborhood. Some are lucky enough to fight

for and receive electricity or running water, or to have partial funding of these. The colonia homes are made of cardboard, hard plastic, metal sheets and, in rare cases, wood or cinderblock. If a family is fortunate enough to afford the cinderblocks, they are purchased one at a time for 52 cents per block, and built as they can afford it. One home we saw has been under construction for 2 years, made half of cinderblock and half metal sheets. Most colonias do not have any electricity, heat or water. If there is water, it comes from a stand pipe shared by hundreds of people, and is not at all safe for drinking because it is contaminated with the toxins which the factories dump into the canals. Yet there, alongside the poisonous water filled with benzene, calcium sulfate and other chemicals which turn it bright green, live families with many children who play next to this dangerously polluted area and even go into the water to pick up old toys.

Domingo Gonzalez, an environmental health expert and ecologist, told us about the high incidence of birth defects, particularly neural tube defects such as spina bifida, which occur among people at the border because of toxic waste dumping. He said that General Motors has 54 factories in Mexico but they often close a plant and re-open under a different name (one of them being Delphi) in order to escape liability, so that it is a different company that is fighting in court. He told us how U.S. factories did not have to pay taxes when they moved to the border and how these factories are destroying Mexico's environment. He said that though the U.S. invested in factories there, they did not invest in improvements to the infrastructure, particularly the desperately needed waste-water treatment plants. The air is also polluted because the factories burn plastic waste continuously.

I visited the Colonia Derechos Humanos and saw the amazing, inspiring work done at a health clinic there by Sister Maria Teresa and her staff of seven, including Dr. Marcella Sanchez, her nurse assistant Yolanda, and Jackie Gallo, a student intern from New York. Sister Maria helped found the clinic with the Ursuline Sisters in 1999, where they now serve over 10,000 people per year. The clinic staff knock on doors to ask people to attend important health meetings where they receive education about AIDS, STDs, birth control and more. Though clients are asked to pay 25 pesos for a visit, nobody is ever turned away.

The final result of the political, economic and environmental effects of NAFTA are the human effects. Human beings are being violated in a number of ways while our government continues to perpetuate their abuse. NAFTA has failed to protect the rights of workers to fight for their fair share of economic benefits.

*Thank you to UUP for giving me this opportunity!*



Photo: Sara Battaglia

## Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program

*Gail Maloy, Director*

Member Benefits & Services

As you may have heard, there are some changes in the Empire Plan as a result of recent contract negotiations. Effective Jan. 1, 2005, the Empire Plan's drug program will include a formulary (or a third tier of benefits).

### What is a prescription drug formulary?

A formulary (or preferred-drug list) is a list of brand-name medications that have been rigorously reviewed and selected by a committee of practicing doctors and clinical pharmacists for their quality and effectiveness. If all are equal, the cost of the drug is the deciding factor. You can save money by encouraging your doctor to prescribe medications from this preferred list, because the copayment is less for preferred drugs than non-preferred drugs.

### Does that mean I can't get a non-preferred medication?

Not at all. You can get the non-preferred medication, but at a higher copayment.

### If I want to, how do I switch to a preferred drug?

Call or make an appointment with your physician. Show him or her the list of preferred drugs and see if the preferred therapeutically equivalent drug would be right for you.

The copayment is less if you use the mail order program. For more information on the mail order program also known as the Express Scripts Mail Service, visit the member benefits home page at: [www.uupinfo.org/benefits.html](http://www.uupinfo.org/benefits.html)

If you have additional questions on the prescription program, please call **UUP Member Benefits & Services** at: (800) 887-3863 Express Scripts at: (877) 769-7447

## UUP Spring 2004 Delegate Assembly

*Written by Dawn M. Svoboda*

Co-Editor, Stony Brook INSIGHT Newsletter

The mood was jubilant as Willa Smith put it, and rightly so! UUP had just on May 3rd, Friday morning, ratified a new 4-year contract for the nation's largest higher education union. Nearly 300 academic and professional delegates from across the state attended the two-day event. And yes...delegates and guests alike all had a wonderful time!

There was our benefits exhibition, packed with information with everything from Cigna Dental to long term care from NYSUT.

Highlights from the assembly itself were the statewide elections for office, and the annual Journalism Awards competition!

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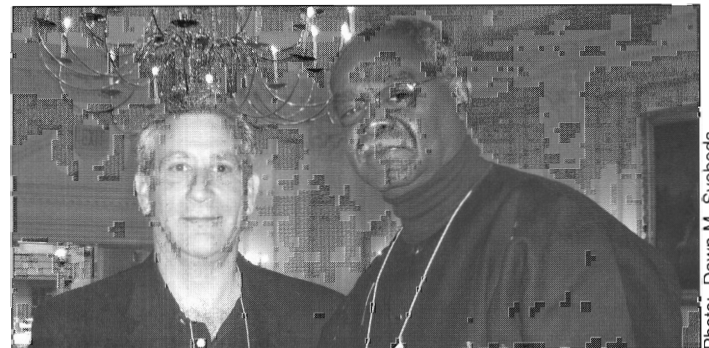


Photo: Dawn M. Svoboda

*"Stony Brook's" own, John Marino was re-elected State-wide VP for Professionals (pictured here with SB HSC/Hospital Chapter president Ed Drummond)*

# Who's Who at UUP

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## The Chapter Office is open Monday through Friday, from 9 am to 3 pm.

The Executive Board meets on Alternate Tuesdays at 12 noon, and members are encouraged to attend. Please contact the Chapter Office for exact dates and times. Insight is published by the Stony Brook Chapter of United University Professions. Items for inclusion should be sent to the UUP Office, 104 Old Chemistry, Zip=3475. The opinions expressed in articles in the newsletter are those of the author or the Stony Brook Chapter of UUP and are not necessarily the opinions of United University Professions.

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Frederick G. Floss, a professor of economics at Buffalo State College, was elected as United University Professions' (UUP) statewide vice president for academics.

Floss will succeed Phillip Smith, who served two terms in the post and as chief negotiator for the union's recently negotiated contract.

Re-elected to statewide offices were Vice President for Professionals John Marino of Stony Brook Health Sciences Center (HSC) and Treasurer Rowena Blackman-Stroud of Brooklyn Health Science Center (HSC). UUP officers serve two-year terms.

Marino, re-elected to a third term, is on leave as associate director of medical radiology at Stony Brook HSC and Blackman-Stroud, re-elected to a sixth term, is on leave as a medical radiographer at Brooklyn HSC.

Six members of UUP's Executive Board were also elected.

## Ask Lisa!

**Question:** *I have been summoned to Jury Duty and was wondering if I have to charge my time to any of my leave accruals?*

**Answer:** Jury Service is addressed in Article 26 of the UUP contract. The contract states, "On proof of necessity of jury service, an employee shall be granted leave with pay without charge to leave credits. Leave with pay for jury service shall mean leave at the rate of pay the employee would have received had the employee not been on such leave."

## GOT SOMETHING YOU'D LIKE TO SAY?



Send us an email for publication in the "Letters to the Editors" column.

We'd love to hear from you!

*(The Editors reserve the right to edit submissions for content.)*

**Editorial Policy:** The opinions expressed in **INSIGHT** are those of the writer and the West Campus Chapter, and do not necessarily reflect the position or policies of United University Professions.

**INSIGHT** encourages letters to the editors about union, campus and university issues, politics and other membership concerns. Letters may be sent by e-mail or campus mail and include the writer's name and daytime phone number. **INSIGHT** reserves the right to edit all letters. **INSIGHT** cannot guarantee that all letters will be published. The final decision is at the discretion of the Editors and/or the Chapter President.

Send letters to: uup@notes/cc.sunysb.edu, or UUP, 104 Old Chemistry, Z-3475



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