

UUP InSight

Newsletter of the
Stony Brook Chapter of
United University
Professions

September 1996
Issue # 9

FROM THE PRESIDENT A. W. (BILL) GODFREY

Welcome back! It has been a busy summer at UUP. We hope you enjoyed some vacation and that you return well rested.

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Our Fifth Annual Legislative Breakfast will be held on Tuesday, September 17, from 8 - 9:30 a.m. So far, nine legislators have indicated that they will attend and everyone has not been heard from. If you can attend, please call the Union Office at 2-6570.

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Gail Molloy from UUP Central will give a presentation on benefits on Thursday, October 24, at 12:30 p.m. in the Peace Center. We urge all to attend.

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We are also sponsoring financial seminars to be conducted by TIAA-CREF to provide UUP members with information and assistance to secure a comfortable financial future as per the following schedule:

What can you do now to ensure a comfortable retirement lifestyle later? (Designed for UUP members in the 20's - 30's)
Tuesday, September 24
10:30 a.m.- 11:30 a.m., noon - 1:00 p.m.

Are you on the right savings and investment track for a financially comfortable retirement? (Designed for UUP members age 40 to 55)
Thursday, September 26
10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Which TIAA/CREF withdrawal option(s) best fits your financial plan and lifestyle needs during retirement? (Designed for UUP members age 55+)
Tuesday, September 24, 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Thursday, September 26, noon - 1:00 p.m.

All seminars will be held in the Stony Brook Union, Room 226.

UUP members will have the opportunity after the seminars to sign up for a private consultation with a TIAA-CREF representative. Please call the Union Office to let us know you are coming so that we can order refreshments.

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Negotiations on the contract have bogged down on the issue of contracting out. The state has retaliated on the firmness of our opposition to this condition by refusing to contribute to the Benefit Trust Fund. In addition, they have caused us to pay additional for our prescription plan.

The Public Employees Relation Board has ruled that the state has broken the law

and has instructed them to resume contributions the Benefit Trust Fund under the terms of the Triboro Act. The state, however, has appealed the decision and we are still waiting to hear.

The Academic Plan has been issued which has omitted nearly all the objections which the UUP Chapter raised last semester. There are still some issues that require further discussion such as the downsizing of professionals and workload.

The Plan, however, points out the need to promote the university within the community. Since Stony Brook is a relatively new university and SUNY a young system, New Yorkers do not yet think of public higher education in the same terms as residents of California or the Midwest.

For some reason, many New Yorkers, including the SUNY Trustees, are convinced that private higher education is superior to the public sector, probably because it costs more. There are a few "select" schools in New York State, but most of the others do not measure up to the various units of SUNY either in the quality of faculty or the diversity of curriculum.

On Long Island there are about a dozen private colleges. Five of these are called universities and the tuition is two to four times higher than the SUNY units. Most of them advertise furiously and seem to make their enrollment goals each year. The colleges also have substantial admissions budgets to entertain school guidance personnel generously who, as a result, probably feel under obligation to push students in the direction of these private colleges rather than towards Stony Brook.

What no one is willing to discuss is the quality of these colleges which despite the

hype and advertisements, are run more like businesses than real institutions of education.

Consider the following:

-Fewer than ten percent of the students who apply to these colleges are rejected.

-The failure rate of students who attend class is negligible, almost an acknowledgement of a contract that if tuition is paid, the student is entitled to a passing grade.

-The majority of classes is taught by adjuncts -- people who teach one or two courses at one-sixth to one-tenth the rate of full-time faculty, most of whom have neither office hours nor office space.

-The presidents and business officers of five of these institutions are paid at least twice as much as the presidents of the public colleges which should make it clear that these institutions are businesses rather than centers of learning.

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS NEEDED

Linda Plunkett, a long time employee of Stony Brook, and her husband Joe have both recently been diagnosed with inoperable forms of cancer. They are in dire need of financial contributions. If you would like to make a contribution, please send it to:

Plunkett Fund
c/o Vita Rose Lardaro
Long Island Savings Bank
1047 Rte. 25A
Stony Brook, NY 11790