BY BRETT BENJAMIN
UPP PRESIDENT

Graduate education is often a long and difficult process. At some point along that path, many of you will become eligible to join United University Professions (UUP). When you do, we will be here to support you. UUP is the union that represents academic faculty and professional staff at all state-operated SUNY campuses. Our membership includes many Graduate Students!

- If you teach even one course as an adjunct instructor (where you are paid on a per-course basis) YOU BECOME PART OF THE UUP BARGAINING UNIT. Many students who begin programs as teaching assistants are later hired as Lecturers, as are many who do not start on assistantships.
- Additionally, if you are hired into a professional staff position at the University you become part of the UUP Bargaining Unit.

In other words, you may currently be UUP-eligible, or may become UUP-eligible later in your graduate student career. Check your paystub: if it says UUP Fee Payer, you are eligible to join but are not a member. We urge any eligible employees to sign a membership card (available at http://www.albany.edu/uup/pdfs/memapp.pdf).

Why Should Graduate Students Become Members?

- UUP Tuition Adjustment Program provides a tuition waiver for one course per semester on a “space available” basis. Many graduate students, late in their careers, are taking only one course for exam, thesis, or dissertation hours. UUP will pay your tuition.
- Those academic employees who are teaching two courses automatically become eligible for health benefits through the UUP contract (whether they sign as members or not).
- UUP offers Vision, Dental, and Life insurance for members.
- UUP offers Individual Development Awards to members to fund conference and research travel.

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- All contingent faculty within the UUP bargaining unit will benefit from the contractually bargained raises, and a pool of discretionary salary money that is designated for contingent faculty.
- UUP offers a host of member services from rental car rates, to phone plans, and legal services.
- The Albany has an active, engaged Chapter right now.

We have a Contingent Concerns Committee that will be advocating on behalf of contingent faculty and employees. We are eager for your feedback and participation.
- We are collaborating with the Graduate Student Employees Union and other campus unions to fight for a better campus work environment, and indeed to fight for a progressive vision of higher education. Graduate students have an essential role to play in such conversations.

We urge you to join, and we welcome your questions or comments. Contact us at the following:

UUP Office: 442-4951, uupalb@albany.edu
President: Bret Benjamin, bret.benjamin@gmail.com

Cultural Connections Club: “Spreading Culture and Fun Won’t Stop This Summer!”

BY AMI JORDAN, (edited by/in collaboration with: ISSS)

Cultural Connections is a new undergraduate cultural club at the University at Albany that welcomes GRADUATE STUDENTS.

Their motto: Cultural Connections is home where those of all different backgrounds come together in harmony. Whether you are a domestic or an international student; if you have a passion for gaining knowledge about different cultures, experiencing other traditions, or making new friends from other countries, please join us! Cultural connections - where the world becomes smaller and the friendships become bigger!

During the spring semester they have successfully planned and hosted multiple cultural events, such as their very first general interest meeting and intriguing workshops on Mongolia, Egypt, and Singapore. They have also teamed up with other UAlbany groups, such as Sigma Beta Rho, to co-host a workshop on WORLD hand gestures. For their end of the semester party on May 2 they teamed up with the Muslim Student Association to host a potluck picnic with free food and cultural games at Washington Park.

This group has had a very busy and exciting semester trying to make sure people like YOU not only have fun but learn more about the diverse cultures in America and around the world!

However, the fun will not stop in May! Cultural Connections will also host a summer event, which they are in the process of planning. If you are interested in joining this AWESOME group or are interested in helping them either plan the summer event or other cultural events coming fall, contact Culturalconnections@albany.edu or add them on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/UAlbanyC

Working with Your Subject Librarian

By Chris Poehlmann and Deborah LaFond

A subject librarian is a specialist librarian who supports research and teaching needs in particular disciplines. They are responsible for managing the University Libraries collections and providing advanced reference assistance in their assigned subject.

Subject librarians carefully build and maintain a library collection to meet the evolving curriculum and research profile of each academic department.

Subject Librarians also foster communication and collaboration between the University Libraries and the University at Albany faculty and students.

Subject librarians serve as liaisons for academic departments partnering to
SUMMER ADVICE FROM CAREER SERVICES

JOSEPH AINI, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Many graduate students come to our office with concerns about their career direction and questions about career options available in their respective academic programs. With the spring semester beginning to wind down, Career Services offers a couple ideas to help you develop your career direction and clarify your options.

I. Develop your networking contacts.

One of the most important activities graduate students can do is to begin making a professional network of contacts that include department professors, fellow graduate students enrolled in the same program and alumni who graduated with the same degree. Many students are not aware that the online resource LinkedIn makes the networking process very easy. Graduate students can also access the UAlbany Career Advisory Network (UCAN) to connect with alumni who want to give back by providing career mentoring and advice. Another idea is to identify and join a professional organization related to your career interests. Many students are simply not aware that joining a professional organization is an excellent option not only to network with professionals but also to have access to possible internship opportunities. Many professional organizations also have very reasonable student membership rates, which is an extra incentive to become involved in such organizations.

II. Identify and develop your transferable and soft-skills.

Have you ever taken an inventory of your skills? Many graduate students are not aware that most employers are looking for students with excellent “soft-skills” in addition to the more specific “hard-skills” that might relate to a specific task. Soft-skills are the qualities and attitudes that make you an excellent employee like flexibility, adaptability, open-mindedness and patience. Many people, especially college students, have difficulty in identifying and articulating what their unique soft-skills might be and how those skills relate to employer needs. Transferable skills are yet another set of skills that are important for you to identify and articulate to a potential employer. Similar to soft-skills, transferable skills are broad and portable --- meaning that you bring these skills from one job to the next. However, transferable skills are not so much relevant to your unique personal attributes and qualities. Instead, transferable skills are skills that you learned from activities such as part-time jobs, hobbies, or maybe even in the classroom. A transferable skill might be a bilingual ability in Spanish or the ability to manage money accurately or perhaps how to resolve a conflict.

ATTENDING SUMMER SESSIONS?

Stephen Kudzin, Interim Director of the Office of Financial Aid

The UAlbany 2015 Summer Aid Application is now available. If you plan on attending summer session(s) and would like to receive financial aid, the following information will assist you with the process.

- Complete all outstanding important items on MyUAlbany.
- Complete the UAlbany 2015 Summer Aid Application found in the Finances tab of MyUAlbany. The application is available until Sunday, August 9th at midnight.
- Be meeting the Graduate Federal Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), additional details available at http://www.albany.edu/financialaid/requirements.shtml.
- To be eligible for Federal Direct Loans, you must have enrollment of six credits or more in a matriculated program of study and be pursuing coursework applicable to your degree.
- Direct Loan disbursement dates are determined by your enrollment.

Please note, if you receive a Direct Loan for summer, your remaining fall/spring eligibility will be affected. We recommend you consult with a representative in the Student Financial Center regarding Summer Aid questions and necessary planning.
From the NAGPS Northeast Regional Chair, Will Frankenstein

As Northeast Regional Chair for the National Association of Graduate and Professional Students (NAGPS), my two primary responsibilities are recruiting new members and helping organize the annual regional conference. I'm happy to say that this year's Regional Conference, held at the University of Pittsburgh, was successful and enjoyed by all attendees.

We had over 30 graduate student leaders for the conference representing over 38,000 graduate students from across the region. All in all, we had 10 different presentations covering a variety of issues, including:

- Developing a graduate community
- Graduate student service and advocacy
- Trivia nights
- Promoting biking
- Regional student government models
- Funding graduate student organizations
- Graduate student government strategic planning
- Data-driven advocacy

Albany was particularly active, helping moderate three roundtables:

- **Grant Allocation Best Practices**, moderated by Kimberly Berg
- **Hiring Adjunct and Contingent Faculty**, moderated by Caitlin Janiszewski
- **Social Change, Justice, and Graduate Students**, moderated by Hirah Mir and Sam Leitermann, NAGPS Social Justice Concerns Chair (Syracuse)

At the business meeting, we discussed:

- National Conference bid awareness for 2016
- Northeast engagement in NAGPS
- Electing a regional board

For the 2015-16 Regional Board, I'm pleased to announce that many board members chose to continue serving on the board in the same capacity. I'd like to thank 2014-15 Regional Board members, which included Albany students Caitlin Janiszewski as our Employment Concerns Chair and Ryan Gregoire as our Legislative Affairs Chair, for their service, and to specifically welcome new board members:

- **Daniel Gingerich**, PhD candidate in Engineering and Public Policy at Carnegie Mellon, our new Northeast Legislative Affairs Chair
- **Hirah Mir**, PhD candidate in Education Psychology and Methodology at University at Albany, our new Northeast Employment Concerns Chair
- **Rajesh Kumar**, PhD candidate in Electrical and Computer Engineering at Syracuse, our new Northeast International Student Concerns Chair

I hope to meet more of you at this fall’s Leadership Summit at Albany!

Will Frankenstein
Northeast Regional Chair, NAGPS
nerc@nagps.org

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**A MESSAGE FROM NY STATE OF HEALTH**

**After graduation, will you be covered?** With graduation approaching, now is the time to start thinking about your health insurance coverage. As a young adult, you have choices: stay on your parent’s health plan, buy your own plan, or get coverage through a new job.

If you decide to get your own insurance, you’ll find lots of choices at NY State of Health. There are many plans at different coverage levels and all plans cover health services such as yearly check-ups, flu shots, emergency services and prescription drugs. You may be surprised how affordable getting coverage can be. Some plans will cost less than your monthly cell phone bill and for some people, depending on income, coverage will be free.

Even though Open Enrollment for 2015 has ended, you may still be able to enroll in coverage this year if you qualify for free coverage, or if you enroll within 60 days of a Qualifying Life Event. Qualifying Life Events include no longer being eligible to stay on your parent’s health insurance, loss of other health insurance, a permanent move to another part of New York State, getting married or having a child.

To learn more, please visit [http://info.nystateofhealth.ny.gov](http://info.nystateofhealth.ny.gov).
Cultural Connections

If you have a passion for gaining knowledge about different cultures, experiencing other traditions or making new friends from America and other countries, please join us!

Cultural Connections – Where the world becomes smaller and friendships get bigger!

Stay tune for our next events:
- Mongolia Workshop - Perception vs. Reality
  - 4/28/15
- BBQ in 6 mile waterworks Park
  - 5/02/15

Flyers Created by Minh Anh Le
Logo Created by Hyejong Kim

Edited by Cultural Connections
E-board & Graduate Student Advisor

Sponsored by SA & ISS
Spring 2015