Maintaining High Energy at Work

What can keep you feeling energetic at work? There’s more to it than avoiding potatoes at lunch or sugary snacks that result in an energy crash. Discover a personal plan for staying perky at work. Take a week to record on a three-by-five card four observations:

1) what time(s) of day you feel most energetic and engaged;
2) what time(s) of day you feel the least energetic and engaged;
3) what you did just prior to these periods; and
4) what behaviors or influences appear to have affected these energy states.

To complete your plan, conduct an online search of “ways to improve energy at work.” You’ll discover everything from munching on pumpkin seeds to going to bed by a certain time. Now, compare all these “energy tools” to see which ones fit best with your rhythm or cycle. Experiment and fine-tune your personal energy plan. Later, consider whether you have experienced an increase in overall job satisfaction as a result. You may be pleasantly surprised.

Source: Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You!  Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program.

Secondhand Stress

According to University of California, Riverside researchers, people get stressed out by someone in their visual field who is angry, anxious, or panicked even if they are separated by a window. This secondhand stress can damage health and productivity in the same ways as the stress you experience. Find ways to tune out the negativity around you. Create a positive mindset, do stress-relieving activities and exercises, and express gratitude and happiness toward yourself and others. The best results come when you find ways to accept adversity and make peace with your environment and within yourself.

“We will open the book. Its pages are blank. We are going to put words on them ourselves. The book is called Opportunity and its first chapter is New Year’s Day.”  ~ Unknown

Happy New Year!
Burnout: People or Workplace?

What do you think of when you hear the word burnout? In actuality, the term which came into being in the 1970s has a history of being difficult to define. This year, the World Health Organization (WHO) included burnout in its International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11). When there was confusion about the definition, WHO clarified that burnout is “an occupational phenomenon, not a medical condition...reasons for which people contact health services but that are not classed as an illness or health conditions.”

When dealing with burnout, the general approach is to focus on employees and what they can do. Individuals are given techniques to use for self-care, e.g., yoga, meditation, learning to say no, setting boundaries, and tapping into one’s resiliency. In her December 11, 2019 article in the Harvard Business Review titled “Burnout is About Your Workplace, Not Your People,” Jennifer Moss proposes a different approach to the condition. This alternative approach is prompted by research conducted by Christina Maslach, social psychologist and professor emerita of psychology at the University of California, Berkley and expert on measuring burnout. Maslach voiced concerns with the WHO’s position on burnout since it focuses only on the individual and not on the workplace environment that can cause an individual to experience the condition. Cited in the article to support Maslach’s worries are results from a Gallup survey of 7,500 full-time employees which found the five top reasons for burnout as follows:

1. Unfair treatment at work
2. Unmanageable workload
3. Lack of role clarity
4. Lack of communication and support from their manager
5. Unreasonable time pressure

If managers and employers address these areas, they can help prevent employees from possibly experiencing a harsh impact on their health and well-being.

If you are in a supervisory, managerial, or leadership role, check out the full article to discover ways to enhance your ability to create the type of work environment that can help employees thrive and avoid burnout. Go to: https://hbr.org/2019/12/burnout-is-about-your-workplace-not-your-people.

Put Feedback to Work. Receiving feedback can feel uncomfortable, but if you adopt the attitude that feedback is useful, you can transform the experience into a wonderful way to boost your productivity and performance. Here’s how:

Listen carefully. Hear what the person offering feedback has to say, without interrupting, defending yourself, or forming a response.

Be receptive and respectful. As you listen to feedback, keep your body relaxed and open. Avoid crossing your legs, making a fist, fidgeting, or crossing your arms over your body. This will help the speaker be more honest, and it will help you absorb what’s said.

Question. Make sure you understand the feedback, and ask for clarification if you don’t.

Assess and follow up. Think over the feedback, and consider how you might use the suggestions you were given to improve your performance.

Source: Personal Best, a registered trademark of Ebix. (January 2020) TP Top Performance.
New Year’s Goals

If you’re like a lot of people, the New Year has you thinking about resolutions. Narrowing down your choices can help you achieve the changes you want.

- Instead of making several ambitious resolutions, choose one area of your life to improve, and set specific goals for it. For example: health, work, family life, social connections, travel, spiritual development, or volunteering.

- Set specific goals. A big, vague resolution, such as better health or traveling more, is hard to visualize, plan, and reach. Instead, specify your goals: Visit a foreign country before the end of the year or exercise four days a week.

- Chart your progress. Don’t put your goals away in a drawer and dust them off next December. Tell your friends and family about them. Plan milestones throughout the year, and reward yourself when you reach them.

- Think long term. You can concentrate on your larger end result, even when you have setbacks.

Digital Fasting—A Great Thing to Start in 2020!

A digital fast or digital detox is unplugging from all screens and connected devices for a defined amount of time, anywhere from a few hours to several days. A digital fast can happen once, weekly or monthly. People may choose a digital fast for several reasons:

- To connect with family and friends more deeply
- To work creatively with fewer distractions
- To take a break from work during a vacation or day off
- To cut back on connected activities such as gaming, using social media, or texting

Research has shown that a digital fast may provide some benefits. In one experiment where people were taken to the Moroccan desert for a digital-free retreat, neuroscientists found people slept better, had more engaging and prolonged conversations, and made more positive changes and commitments when they were unplugged from their devices.

If you find yourself often staring down at a smartphone, tablet, or other device, consider setting it aside for awhile. Set a time limit, power off, and discover where the world takes you without digital distractions.

Source for Articles: Personal Best, a registered trademark of Ebix. (December 2019) TP Top Performance.

Some productivity experts recommend managing your energy rather than your time. Time is a finite resource, but where and how you spend your energy are under your control. Ways to maximize your energy to become a top performer: Reduce your screen time, exercise regularly, make sleep a priority, get rid of distractions and energy drains, and tackle important tasks during peak energy times.

Source: Personal Best, a registered trademark of Ebix. (December 2019) TP Top Performance.
Alarming Statistics: Teens, Drugs, and Alcohol

We all know that drugs and alcohol can harm the brain, but they are especially concerning since the brain is still developing well into the mid-20s. Using drugs at an early age can alter the basal ganglia, an area of the brain that’s important for motivation and pleasure.

Protect your teens:
STAY vigilant about your teen’s activities.
KNOW who your teen’s friends are.
LOCK up alcohol and prescriptions.
COMMUNICATE with your teen.

Stay knowledgeable about drug and alcohol facts, statistics, and trends:

- In 2017, 1 in 25 teens reported misusing a prescription pain reliever.
- On average, alcohol is involved in the deaths of 4,358 people younger than age 21 every year.
- Approximately 443,000 children ages 12 to 17 in 2017 had Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD), a medical condition that doctors diagnose when someone’s drinking causes them distress or harm. The younger the user of alcohol is, the more likely they will develop AUD.
- Fentanyl is 50 to 100 times more powerful than morphine. Only a tiny amount can cause an overdose. Some drug dealers mix fentanyl with other drugs because it’s a cheap additive, which can lead to an unintentional overdose.
- There were 177 kinds of synthetic cannabinoids (K-2, Spice, fake weed) reported in 2014. A cannabinoid can look like marijuana, but it contains different, potentially toxic, chemicals that have been sprayed onto plant-like material.
- High doses of MDMA (Molly, Ecstasy) can affect the body’s ability to regulate temperature, which can result in heart, liver or kidney failure.

Source: Personal Best, a registered trademark of Ebix. (January 2020) TS Top Safety

To learn more, go to teens.drugabuse.gov.

Overcoming Money Fears

Worrying about money is common, but if you feel overwhelmed, tackling this fear is a priority. Most money fears—financing a child’s college education, retirement, paying taxes, late bills—lack a commitment to a definite plan, budget, and host of tools, advice, and interventions that can turn your life around. This plan should energize you, cause a renewed sense of control, and give you the ability to track progress toward your goals. Feeling empowered by these proactive steps is what returns the peace of mind you’ve been missing, and it also gives you a better night’s sleep. The path begins with a first step. A good online resource for money management and budgeting information is the Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Rochester. Click here to access its resource pages.

Source: Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program.
2020 EAP Wellness Calendars

It’s the last call for the 2020 wellness calendars. The supply is dwindling, so be sure to request one after you read this article! The EAP wellness calendar offers an array of tips for your health and well-being that will help you throughout the new year and beyond. **To request a copy be sent to you via campus mail**, call the EAP Office at 518-442-5483 or click on the “Special Promotions” icon on the EAP website’s home page. One calendar available per employee while the supply lasts.

“And suddenly you just know...It’s time to start something new and trust the magic of beginnings.” ~ Meister Eckhart

Four Ways to Beat the Post-Holiday Letdown

The parties are over, and the last of the tasty leftovers have vacated the refrigerator. What is there to look forward to? You’ve got the post-holiday blues. Cure them with these strategies:

**Practice gratitude.** Every day, write down one positive aspect of your life you can be thankful for. It could be something as simple as “There was fresh, hot coffee in the pot today when I arrived at work” or something bigger such as “I did a great job finishing that project today” or “I am proud of my family.” Remembering what goes right each day can help you find things to celebrate long after the holidays have ended.

**Do something nice for yourself.** Treat yourself to a hot breakfast. Take a nap. Take a walk, soak in a warm bath, start that new book you’ve been wanting to read, or sit down to sip your coffee in the coffee shop instead of running out the door with it. Find little indulgences you enjoy, and make time to do them.

**Do something nice for someone else.** Compliment a coworker on a job well done. Hold the door for someone who has his or her hands full. Bake brownies and take them to the nurses’ desk at the nearest hospital or to a fire station. You can feel more upbeat when you help spread joy.

**Get moving.** Counteract holiday overindulgence in food and drink that could be adding to that heavy, sluggish feeling. Take a brisk walk, climb the stairs, schedule a racquetball game, go dancing, or hit the gym a few times per week. Getting energized with exercise will help you shake off the blues.

Source: Personal Best, a registered trademark of Ebix. (January 2019) SW Shiftworker
Use EAP for Acute Stress

EAP Coordinators do more than help employees solve problems. They also possess good listening and empathy skills and provide emotional support that offer relief from the anguish an employee may be feeling caused by a life crisis, difficult time, or even grim personal circumstances. Don’t dismiss asking UAlbany EAP Coordinator Brenda Seckerson for help, even if you believe that “EAP can do nothing to help me in this situation.” Don’t live in fear, lose sleep, become physically ill, or experience a constant sense of foreboding doom by “going it alone.” Instead, partner with the EAP for support that can help you through a difficult period.

The mission of UAlbany EAP is to provide services to support a healthy, productive workforce. Available to all employees is the voluntary, confidential Information, Assessment, and Referral Service provided by UAlbany EAP Coordinator, Brenda Seckerson. Take advantage of this confidential assistance available to you as an employee benefit.

Think of stress as a form of off-key music. You can adjust the volume or turn it off.

To schedule an appointment for a confidential Information, Assessment & Referral session, contact:

Brenda Seckerson, EAP Coordinator
518-442-5483
bseckerson@albany.edu
EAP Website: http://www.albany.edu/eap

Employee Assistance Program-sponsored events and services are open to UAlbany and Research Foundation faculty, staff, family members, UAS employees, GSEU members and retirees.

Early intervention is the key!
Contact EAP.
Quitline Resources for Vaping and E-Cigarettes

In response to the unsettling news we are hearing about vaping and e-cigarettes lately, Nysmokefree.com includes expanded resources particularly geared toward teens and young adults and their parents. If you are concerned at all with your vaping device or products or just want more information, contact vaping.inquiries@health.ny.gov. For coaching and help with nicotine addiction, call the New York State Smokers’ Quitline at 1-866-NY-Quits (1-866-697-8487) or request a call by filling out the online form.

Helping to Prevent Suicide

Experts in suicide prevention will tell you that “a suicidal person doesn’t ‘want’ to commit suicide—they just want the pain to stop.” It has also been observed that when a suicidal person makes a decision to act, their perception of pain may disappear. They become calm. Their decision provides relief because the suicidal person has found “a solution” to their problem. Family and friends can fulfill a powerful intervention role if they witness this change of mood or frame of mind. They should inquire about self-harm if this change happens alongside severe personal problems, victimization, or serious illness. If asked, most people considering suicide will not hide it from you—they’ll talk about it. And that’s exactly what you want. For guidance, turn to the UAlbany EAP, or in an emergency, call 911 or 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

Source: Frontline—Employee Wellness, Productivity & You! Frontline newsletter is courtesy of the New York State Employee Assistance Program.

Quit/Craving Kits Available from EAP

If one of your wellness goals in 2020 is to quit smoking or limit the amount of cigarettes or e-cigarettes each day, contact EAP to receive a “Quit/Craving Kit” to support your efforts. NOTE: The kits do not contain nicotine replacement therapies (NRT); however, they do contain other helpful items and information to make those cravings subside.

bseckerson@albany.edu  518.442.5483

As the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) states, “Addiction can happen to anyone, any family, at any time.” The OASAS website has important information regarding prevention as well as how to recognize the signs and symptoms of opioid drug abuse.

To access the OASAS resources, click here.

Call the OASAS helpline at 1-877-8-HOPENY (I-877-846-7369).

Contact Brenda Seckerson UAlbany EAP Coordinator, for a confidential conversation if you have concerns about heroin or prescription drug abuse. Support and help is available!

bseckerson@albany.edu  518-442-5483
WellNYS Everyday 2020 Monthly Challenges

Want a way to help you stay focused on your healthy behaviors during 2020? Participate in the WellNYS Everyday Monthly Challenges sponsored by New York State EAP. This self-paced program completed on an honor system provides you with a different challenge at the beginning of each month. Tracking your progress makes it easier to meet your goals. January’s wellness challenge is to “Choose a wellness accountability partner” and February’s will be to “Get more sleep.” Invite a colleague or family member to join you in the monthly wellness challenge fun!

In addition to the monthly challenges program, WellNYS Everyday also offers a wellness “Daily To-Do” which can be emailed to you. NOTE: You don’t have to participate in the monthly challenges to receive the Daily To-Do email. To learn more and to register to participate, go to: https://wellnys.goer.ny.gov/.

What is your 2020 Wellness Vision?

Have you thought about what the new year and a new decade mean to you in regards to your health and well-being? What do you ENVISION for yourself in 2020?

To gain clarity and sharpness for a 20/20 vision, spend 20 minutes during your lunch break with EAP Coordinator Brenda Seckerson who will guide you through an exercise to help you FOCUS on your wellness intention for the new year.

Create a compelling wellness vision for yourself to identify what goals you want in your life. To prepare for our 2020 Wellness Vision session, think about these two questions:

1. When it comes to wellness, what would you like your life to look like and feel like?
2. What health promoting behaviors do you want to be doing consistently?

Two sessions to choose from:

**Wednesday, January 15**
Noon—12:20 pm
Conference Room 320
University Administration Building (UAB)

**Thursday, January 16**
Noon—12:20 pm
Room 307
Campus Center

To register, go to: [http://www.albany.edu/eap/event_sign-up.htm](http://www.albany.edu/eap/event_sign-up.htm)
For Your Health: Winter Brings the Challenge of Dry Skin

It is amazing how each season can affect our health and well-being. For many, the winter months mean dealing with dry skin (xerosis). Certain diseases can also trigger this condition. Weather, heat, hot baths and showers, harsh soaps and detergents along with skin conditions like eczema or psoriasis can dry skin.

What to do about this? The Mayo Clinic offers some home remedies that might help keep skin healthy. Suggestions include to moisturize (especially immediately after bathing), use warm water and limit bath time, avoid harsh, drying soaps, and use a humidifier just to name a few. For more detailed information, check out the Mayo Clinic’s article titled “Home Remedies: Dealing with the difficulties of dry skin.”

Can You Give Blood?

January is National Blood Donor Month. A drive for blood donation is especially important during the winter, which is a challenging season to collect enough blood to meet patient needs. As we begin a new year, the Red Cross reminds everyone who can to give blood now or whenever they can any time of the year. There are three health benefits of donating. They are:

- Blood tests are free. Your donated blood is tested, and you can request results.
- About 650 calories are burned during blood donation, close to an average spin class.
- A donation helps reduce excess iron buildup in your blood. It also reduces the risk of heart disease or cancer.

Learn more at: www.redcrossblood.org

Source: Personal Best, a registered trademark of Ebix. (January 2020) TH Top Health

The Right Time for Coffee?

If you have a morning cup of coffee, research suggests you may get more out of the caffeine boost if you wait. Levels of the hormone cortisol, which makes you feel alert, are at their highest levels around 8:00 am or 9:00 am, so the extra caffeine lift isn’t as effective. Later, between 9:30 am and 11:30 am, cortisol tapers off, so that may be the best time to enjoy your coffee.

Source: Personal Best, a registered trademark of Ebix. (January 2020) TP Performance
Join us for this 4 week class where we will gently breathe and stretch our way to a comfortable body and more relaxed mind. No previous yoga experience needed to gain the benefits of this centuries-old practice. All movements are done seated or standing with the chair for support. Learn techniques that you can use at your desk!

**Instructor:** Judi England, RN, licensed massage therapist, and professionally certified Kripalu yoga instructor. Judi has offered programs in wellness, yoga, and meditation for over 20 years in the Capital Region. Her blog “Holistic Health” has appeared in the Times Union for ten years.

**Class Fee:** $40.00
Check made out to Judi England and due upon registration. Send to EAP Office, MSC Room 200.

**Comments from the past class:**
“I loved it! Judith was wonderful, and I left each class so relaxed.”

“I was glad to be exposed to yoga in this way.”

**To Register Contact:**
Brenda Seckerson, EAP Coordinator
bseckerson@albany.edu

CALL 442-5483 OR REGISTER ONLINE
http://www.albany.edu/eap/event_sign-up.htm

**Class site:** Professional Development Program (PDP)
4 Tower Place, Stuyvesant Plaza

**Mondays**
Noon—1:00 pm
January 13—February 10*

Room 608
4 Tower Place/Stuyvesant Plaza

*No class on January 20
The Health Zone

Monday, January 27
11:30 am–1:30 pm
Room 110A
School of Public Health

Take advantage of these FREE screenings for your health!

*Cholesterol Lipid & Glucose Screening**
*FREE Blood Pressure Checks
*FREE Pulmonary Screenings

Additional Health Information for Your Well-Being

No appointment necessary!

**St. Peter’s Cardiac & Vascular Center screenings provided free of charge.

Start the new year off by knowing your numbers!

EAP-sponsored events and services are open to UAlbany & Research Foundation faculty, staff, family members, UAS employees, retirees and GSEU members.

For information, contact

BRENDA SECKERSON, EAP COORDINATOR
518-442-5483
BSECKERSON@ALBANY.EDU
All About Ancient Grains

When trying to take in a diet high in fiber, consuming whole grains is a great start. Getting those whole grains can come in many forms, not just from brown rice and whole grain breads/cereals. This program will discuss the importance of whole grains, as well as many of the ancient grains and their health benefits. Participants will sample a tasty ancient grains recipe, learn and see what the different grains look like, and obtain recipes to prepare at home using these grains.

Presenter: Patty Wukitsch MS, RD, CDN

Wednesday, February 5
Noon—1:00 pm
Café Conference Room
A Wing Building

To Register Contact:
Brenda Seckerson, EAP Coordinator
bseckerson@albany.edu
CALL 442-5483 OR REGISTER ONLINE

http://www.albany.edu/eap/event_sign-up.htm
The Village Movement in the Capital Region

The “Village Movement” was founded with the idea of “neighbors helping neighbors” with the goal of seniors remaining independent in their homes. Villages are membership-driven, grassroots, nonprofit organizations run by volunteers and/or paid staff that coordinate access to a variety of services including transportation, home repairs, and social events. Learn how and where Villages are being developed right here in the Capital Region!

Presenter: Betsy Mulvey, Project Director, Village Technical Assistance Center (VTAC)

Tuesday, February 11
Noon–1:00 pm
Room 375
Campus Center

To Register Contact:
Brenda Seckerson, EAP Coordinator
bseckerson@albany.edu
CALL 442-5483 OR REGISTER ONLINE

http://www.albany.edu/eap/event_sign-up.htm
EAP Lending Library—Book Highlights

Book summaries compiled by Marina Nana, EAP Work Study Student

As we kick off the new year, we’re highlighting three EAP Lending Library books that focus on personal growth. Whether it’s contemplating your emotional life as you age, finding meaning in the second half of life, or dealing with your emotions and the things that trigger you to act in ways you’d prefer not to, there are books available to sign out from EAP to support your personal development. Here’s to making 2020 an enriching year for Y-O-U!

We’ve all experienced moments when we lose control of a situation and ourselves. In Growing Yourself Back Up, John Lee explains the idea of emotional regression. Lee identifies the circumstances that cause seemingly uncontrollable feelings and shows how they are directly tied to our experience as children. This self-help book will show you how to develop strong emotional boundaries and convey them to others, learn the “detour method” that can reverse regression, and communicate with authority figures who push your buttons. Lee offers hope as well as practical strategies that work for conquering those childlike feelings of powerlessness that are almost rooted in regression.

In Aging as a Spiritual Practice, Zen Buddhist priest and meditation teacher Lewis Richmond helps us understand how transformation can bring new possibilities, fresh beginnings, a wealth of appreciation, and a depth of gratitude that profoundly affects how our lives proceed. Richmond offers an inner road map for aging, acknowledging the fear, anger, and sorrow many people experience when they must confront the indignities of their aging bodies and the unknowns associated with mortality.

In Finding Meaning in the Second Half of Life: How to Finally Really Grow Up, author James Hollis explores the ways we can grow and evolve to fully become ourselves. Offering wisdom to anyone facing a career that no longer seems fulfilling, a long-term relationship that has shifted, or family transitions that raise issues of aging and mortality, this book provides a reassuring message and crucial bridge across this critical passage of adult development.

Visit the Library page on the EAP website for a full list of topics, books, and DVDs/CDs that the EAP Lending Library has available. Contact EAP if you would like to borrow any materials. bseckerson@albany.edu
Heating Help—NYS Heating Assistance Program

The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) is a federally funded program that issues heating benefits to supplement a household’s annual energy cost. **HEAP also offers an emergency benefit for households in a heat or heat-related energy emergency.**

Additionally, HEAP offers a heating equipment repair and/or replacement benefit for homeowners with inoperable heating equipment. HEAP may help you or those you know pay for electricity, propane, natural gas, wood, oil, kerosene, coal, or any other heating fuel. For all of the details about the various programs available and the income guidelines, go to: [http://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/](http://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/)

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Compliments of Personal Best Publications

**MAKE A GREAT PLATE.**
Served warm, this oven-baked dish is perfect for chilly nights.

**Baked Fruit with Cinnamon**

**INGREDIENTS**
- 2 medium apples, unpeeled, cored, cut into 1-inch chunks
- ½ cup pitted frozen cherries
- 1 can (20 oz.) pineapple chunks in juice (reserve juice)
- ½ cup water
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- 1 tbsp butter, broken into pea-sized pieces

**DIRECTIONS**
- Preheat oven to 350°F. **Add** apples, cherries and pineapple to 9” x 9” baking dish.
- In small bowl, combine pineapple juice, water and vanilla. **Pour** over fruit. **Sprinkle** with cinnamon and butter. **Bake** 30 minutes. **Serve** warm.

Makes 6 Servings. Each: 120 calories • 1g protein • 2g total fat • 26g carb • 22g sugar • 3g fiber • 1mg sodium • 1g saturated fat • 1g mono fat • 0g poly fat

IBAW © 2020 EBIX INC.
Save the Date!

Tuesday, February 25
11:30 am—1:30 pm

EAP Meet and Greet and Kindness Project

Mark your calendar for EAP’s February Meet and Greet event. We will continue the tradition of the EAP Committee’s Kindness Project when we collect personal care items for the Purple Pantry and St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry. Community resources will be attending to help you achieve your 2020 wellness vision! Stay tuned for more event details.

EAP is a joint labor/management program and is part of the NYS Employee Assistance Program. 
Contact Info:
10B Airline Drive, Albany, NY 12235 ~ 518.486.9769

Disclaimer: Material presented in this newsletter is intended for educational or informational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice of a qualified health professional.

EAP-sponsored events and services are open to UAlbany & Research Foundation faculty, staff, family members, UAS employees, retirees and GSEU members.