



## Welcome!

This “Forum” intends to be just that, a place where members can learn about their union, and contribute to the larger debate about unions and their role in a working democracy. Join us in these important discussions!

## Table of Contents:

Year In Review	1
Research Support	2
2014-15 State Budget by the Numbers	2
Milestones	3
Student Assembly Resolution on Contingent Labor	3
Family/Worklife Policies	4
The Man Who Would be King	6
UIC Faculty Strike!	7
Unionization at Honest Weight	8
Mental Health in the Workplace	8
Campus Kids	12
Negotiated Salary Increases	13-4

## Year in Review

Bret Benjamin, Chapter President

I know the year is not yet finished. And I know that most professionals and many academics will be on campus throughout the summer. But this is our final newsletter issue of the 2013-14 academic year—the first year in office for nearly all of our chapter officers— so I thought I'd take it as an opportunity to assess and reflect.

I ran for the office of chapter president knowing that a) public higher education faces severe crises; b) recent decades have witnessed an ever shrinking role for employees within the shared governance institutions on campus; c) unionized labor is everywhere on the retreat; and hence, d) the task of re-establishing our chapter as a force on campus capable of shaping the policies and directions of the university (and beyond) would require a long, difficult organizing effort, with plenty of tilting at windmills along the way. Such a project, of course, could never be accomplished in a year. But I modestly assert that we have made steps in the right direction, in large part due to the efforts of my fellow officers, the chapter executive committee members, our department reps, our committee members, and the many members who have shown up to participate in union events and activities. Below is a partial list of our chapter's events, issues, and accomplishments for the year, along with a few less tangible principles and positions that we've tried to advance throughout our work broadly conceived.

Among the workshops, trainings and events that we've sponsored:

- two General Membership meetings
- Campus Equity Week
- Is There a MOOC in Your Future? (Open SUNY/Seamless Transfer)
- legislative outreach training, featuring former Assemblyman Jack McEneny
- On-Call/Recall workshop (professionals)
- edTPA and teacher certification workshop
- Performance Programs and Evaluations workshop (professionals)
- Review, Tenure, Promotion workshop (academics)
- Workplace Civility workshop
- Ergonomics and workplace safety workshop
- Rafia Zakaria on Pakistani women and the war on terror
- Three events with Albany Cuba Solidarity
- Homecoming Tailgate
- EOP Advocacy Day

See: **Year in Review**, page 11

## ■ Editor's Column

### How to Support Research

Paul Stasi, Editor

In the last issue we discussed the University's initiative – under the rubric of “equitable contribution” – to increase faculty research productivity. It was suggested, there (See “Equitable Contribution” and “Academic Affairs” in the March 2014 issue) that rather than pursue a punitive structure, one that would, say, increase teaching loads for faculty deemed unproductive, the administration should, instead, find ways to positively support faculty research. The results of the recent COACHE survey on faculty satisfaction offer a moment to reflect on precisely this issue.

COACHE – which stands for “The Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education” – is a consortium of more than 160 colleges and universities in North America that is based in the Harvard Graduate School of Education. (See <http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=coache&pageid=icb.page385671> for more information on COACHE). With the stated goal of making the academy a more attractive and equitable workplace for faculty, COACHE offers surveys designed to measure faculty job-satisfaction using comparisons with faculty at peer-institutions. The 2011 COACHE survey results for the faculty at the University at Albany found broad satisfaction with departmental leadership and widespread dissatisfaction with senior administrative leadership. In particular, our faculty are more dissatisfied than their colleagues at both the other research centers and our peer-institutions in the areas of senior leadership, research support and family leave policies (for more on the latter see “Faculty Rate UAlbany Low on Family/Worklife Policies” in this issue). We offer here a few thoughts about how to better support faculty research support across campus.

It is worth stating the obvious upfront: the single biggest thing the university can do to support research across campus is to hire more faculty in order to help shoulder the service and teaching responsibilities and, thus, free up more time for faculty research. Faculty currently contribute a remarkably large amount of voluntary labor to the university by serving on departmental, college and university-wide committees. This work is important and is necessary for the proper functioning of the university, yet it is uncompensated and seemingly unrecognized, treated as little more than a footnote in the various mechanisms by which faculty are reviewed, tenured and promoted. Increasing the number of tenure-track faculty will not only improve the working conditions of our instructors, and therefore the quality of instruction on campus, but will lead to an increase in shared governance, allowing faculty a greater stake in the decisions that guide the university's planning.

At the same time there are a number of issues the university can address to help support the research of the faculty who are here:

1) **External Funding.** Obviously enough we are an under-funded state university, and so the administration tries to convince faculty to get money from external agencies to conduct their research. In many disciplines, this is standard procedure. Particularly in the hard sciences, where the costs of research are enormous, faculty spend a significant portion of their time writing and preparing grants. However, many of these faculty have suggested that the pre- and post-grant support at SUNY Albany is lacking, largely due to a failure to adequately staff the offices responsible for such work. Faculty thus find themselves spending more time learning the ins and outs of various arcane university, state and federal policies than on conducting the research for which they've been funded. Investing further in the staff that might

See: **Research**, page 10

### NY 2014-15 State Budget: By the Numbers

**16%** Corporate taxes as a percentage of total state tax revenue in 1980.

**8%** Corporate taxes as a percentage of total state tax revenue in 2014-15

**\$600** Millions of dollars in business tax credits given out by NY in 2005

**\$1.8** Billions of dollars in business tax credits given out by NY in 2013

**\$1** Current Exemption Threshold for estate taxes, in New York, in millions of dollars

**\$5.25** New Exemption Threshold for estate taxes in New York, in millions of dollars (to be phased in over the next four years)

**\$600** Estimated amount of revenue lost to New York per year as a result of the higher estate tax threshold (in millions of dollars)

**\$1.8** Estimated amount of revenue lost to New York due to the property tax freeze (in billions of dollars)

**\$5** Billions of dollars needed in state foundation aid to public schools had the state honored the 2007 Education Budget and Reform Act

**1950** Last year local education aid, as a share of total school spending, was as low as it will be in 2014-15

**90%** Percentage of New York State school districts that have less classroom operating aid than in 2008

**28%** Nationwide decline in per student spending on higher education since 2008.

**40%** Decline (in real terms) in state aid to SUNY since 2008

**0%** Annual increase in state support to local governments over the next four years (despite an inflation-adjusted 75 percent reduction in such spending since 1980)

## Milestones 04/14/14

### Professional Vice President's Report

Thomas Hoey

Spring semester is winding down and there is still much to be done but first let's review what has been accomplished so far. We have had 2 workshops for professionals – On-call/Recall and Professional Programs and Evaluations – and we have one more in May on Civility in the Workplace. The winter State-Wide UUP DA focused on getting more state aid for SUNY campuses and the Hospitals. UUP was partially successful with that endeavor. UUP had a weekend President/Vice-President and New Leader retreat in Cooperstown where I attended an excellent all-day Taylor Law Seminar that explained the history and current ramifications of this legislation. The biggest and most important event that will have the greatest impact on our union occurred on April 5<sup>th</sup> with the election of NYSUT President Karen Magee and her slate consisting of Andrew Pallotta, Executive Vice President, Catalina Fortino, Vice President, Paul Pecorale, Vice President and Martin Messner, Secretary-Treasurer. Change with NYSUT's style and direction will evolve with these new officers. The ballot for NYSUT elections is a public ballot and you will see that I supported the change in leadership along with our State-wide President Fred Kowal and the other UUP Officers. There is much more to be done and by working together we can make a difference.

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## Student Assembly Passes Resolution on Contingent Labor

Bret Benjamin

On behalf of the Albany Chapter of UUP, I wish to publicly thank and congratulate UAlbany Graduate Student Association (GSA) President Caitlin Janiszewski for her tremendous efforts on the part of contingent faculty at UAlbany and across the SUNY system. Caitlin, along with Jessica Aubin, Jackie Hayes, and the GSA Wages and Benefits Committee, successfully championed a resolution in

support of contingent faculty at the state-wide Student Assembly meeting in early April. A version of this resolution passed the GSA here at Albany last fall, but Caitlin had the perseverance to get the state-wide SA to adopt the resolution as well.

Among other things this resolution called for SUNY to raise the minimum per-course salary for contingent academics to \$5000, recommended that contingents be given appointments that make them eligible for health care, and called on SUNY Chancellor Nancy Zimpher and the Board of Trustees to advocate for resources to support better working conditions for contingents. This provides a framework for meaningful change in the working conditions of contingent faculty, among the most exploited laborers in higher education.

Quite simply, this is a tremendous victory. Passing this resolution signals a conceptual shift; it recognizes students as essential participants in contemporary debates about the future direction of public higher education. The fight for contingent faculty rights is simultaneously the fight for students' rights to the highest quality education. Students, therefore, have always been at the very heart of this campaign, and hence their entry into the debate is of enormous consequence.

Caitlin and the Albany GSA deserve great credit for the comprehensive argument they developed and presented. They successfully made the case that the interests of graduate students, undergraduate students, contingent faculty, tenure-line faculty, and even SUNY as an institution are profoundly interconnected, and that no "constituent group" within this relation can be thought of independently. The impetus for the resolution was never simply about funding graduate students, though that was an important consideration, since graduate students employees make up a considerable portion of contingent faculty and contingency creates financial stress, overwork and longer degree times for grad students. Equally important, however, GSA made the case that the working conditions of contingent faculty are simultaneously the learning conditions of undergraduate students. The SA, which represents a constituency of more than 400,000 students, is dominated by undergraduates, and has historically

been rather conservative on many issues, recognized that the resolution was an effort to improve educational quality across the SUNY system. Further, the GSA resolution makes the explicit claim that labor concerns and educational concerns are inseparably linked. The resolution does not pit employees against students or students against SUNY; rather it states that contingent faculty (many of whom are graduate students) play an essential role in higher educational instruction, and that for SUNY to provide the highest quality education will require a significant improvement in the working conditions of its most exploited employees.

These are the sorts of principled arguments, and the sorts of determined action that will be required in order to bring about meaningful change for contingents. Resolutions, we all know, are a first step, not a final one. But first steps can be among the most important and difficult to take. I commend in the strongest possible terms Caitlin, Jessica, Jackie, and all the other GSA Albany members who worked on this project. The UUP Albany chapter offers its admiration and respect, and is proud to work in solidarity alongside such committed allies.

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## Family/Worklife Policies Where do we go from here?

Gail Landsman

UAlbany faculty are less satisfied with personal and family policies than are faculty at five other peer institutions to which they were compared. This is one of the key findings of the COACHE survey of tenured and tenure-track faculty in which UAlbany participated in late 2011 (See also "Research Support" in this issue).

### Response to the COACHE survey

UAlbany's Office of the Provost recently ran a series of "fireside chats" to present the findings of the COACHE survey. (An image of a crackling fire was provided on an iPad). The set of concerns raised by the survey regarding personal and family policies included the following issues: partner hiring program; child care; family/parental leave; flexible workload and modified duties, stop the clock

policies, and whether the institution does what it can for work/life compatibility. Those in the pre-tenured status category at UAlbany rated their satisfaction lower than did those in the tenured ranks. Overall, UAlbany faculty were less satisfied with personal and family issues than faculty at both comparable peer institutions and other SUNY University Centers as well. This last point is notable because UAlbany and the other Centers share the same UUP contract, from which our personal and family leave policies issue. If the four University Centers are working from within the same legal framework, what might account for the lower levels of faculty satisfaction about family policies at UAlbany?

Among the issues raised by UUP members at one of these fireside chats was the lack of consistency in application of family friendly policies, and variable, (sometimes non-existent) knowledge among faculty, deans, and department chairs about available options. It appears that everyone negotiates their own deal; as a consequence, those most vulnerable (including junior faculty) may be less likely than others to be assertive in seeking leaves or modified duties when family responsibilities or health difficulties impede work performance. The ad hoc nature of decisions regarding leave, and the fact that negotiations take place behind closed doors, also lead to resentment and frustration with lack of transparency.

Provost Phillips suggested that in dealing with dissatisfaction with family friendly policies the University's hands are tied by UUP's contract. Albany UUP chapter president Bret Benjamin responded that the contract provides a floor beneath which the university's policies cannot go, but that the campus has considerable flexibility to improve its implementation of family-friendly policies. At the last Labor/Management meeting he again refuted the notion that the union is holding up the process. As Benjamin later explained, UUP has, over many years, consistently advocated for more generous family leave policies. In his words, "It is disingenuous at best to blame the union." Instead he has pledged that in the coming months the chapter will present a range of policy recommendations along with suggestions for

education, training, and communication to improve the quality of family and work-life practices on campus.

#### **Earlier Findings**

The results of the recent COACHE survey regarding personal and family policies are consistent with findings submitted to Provost Phillips in earlier reports by at least two planning groups of “CLUE,” (Career Leadership and University Excellence). According to the Final Report of the CLUE Planning Group on Promotion and Tenure, submitted in 2012, “UAlbany appears to be significantly out of step with our peers with respect to a formal family leave policy, of which we have none.” While acknowledging, “informal policies and practices may exist,” the group found that it is left up to individuals to decide whether they will enforce them. Most of the other institutions the group surveyed have formal policies for both medical and family leave, which *automatically* stop the tenure clock. Chair of the Planning Group on Promotion and Tenure, Mary Gallant, explained that in the course of their work, the group learned that at UAlbany it is possible to stop the tenure clock, but that the extent to which that was known varies, with many faculty members, deans and chairs unaware of the options or the process; this leads to the perception of a lack of fairness.

In a report submitted in December of 2011, the CLUE Planning Group on Quality of Life found that UAlbany was also out of step regarding support for nursing mothers on campus. The right of mothers who wish to express milk at work is protected by an amendment to the New York State Labor Law. The report notes that in light of this law, the lack of appropriate facilities on campus leaves the university vulnerable to legal action. Nor does the university provide much in the way of elder care resources for faculty members and professionals who have responsibilities for the care of aging family members. The reports and recommendations of the CLUE planning groups, can be found on the webpage of the Provost, under Reports:

[http://www.albany.edu/academics/provost\\_reports.shtml](http://www.albany.edu/academics/provost_reports.shtml)

#### **Where do we go from here?**

At Purdue, paid parental leave (at 100% of regular pay) is available to male and female

employees to bond with a newborn or with a newly adopted child. At the University of Virginia, “Backup Care” is available to deal with temporary breakdowns in regular child, adult, and elder care-giving arrangements. At UC Davis, employees are provided private breastfeeding pumping rooms with hospital-grade electric breast pumps at 35 locations on campus. The University of Missouri has a webpage devoted to “family-friendly campus locations,” listing, among other things, lactation stations throughout campus as well as unisex and single-occupancy restrooms. The University of Kansas stops the tenure clock for faculty members who have taken family and medical leave and/or who have become parents through birth, adoption, or foster placement and who choose such an extension. Perhaps most significantly, at most of these peer institutions to which our COACHE data were compared, explicit, clear information on family friendly policies is easily accessible.

At the very least, UAlbany might actively promote the family-friendly policies it has, making information about such policies accessible to employees, deans, and chairs and encouraging their fair and consistent implementation. Nevertheless, progress is being made. During a recent Provost Fellowship, Mary Gallant worked to revise the “Administrative Procedures for the Preparation of Recommendations for Promotions and Continuing Appointment,” and the revision includes procedures for stopping the tenure clock. The revised document is under review by stakeholders now, and should be finalized and widely available on the Provost’s webpage by the fall.

While not specific to the UAlbany campus, UUP has prepared the updated Family Leave/Work-Life Services Guide, a very useful flier summarizing the family friendly provisions in the new contract. This can be accessed at: <http://uupinfo.org/reports/reportpdf/FLWLSguide102113med.pdf>. The Albany chapter will shortly be distributing a survey prepared by the Women’s Concerns Committee, seeking your input on issues related to gender equity as well as to family/worklife policies affecting all faculty and professionals. As always, if you have suggestions, questions, or comments regarding these issues,



please feel free to contact any your chapter officers directly.

Many thanks to Mary Gallant and Bret Benjamin for providing information used in this article.

## The Man Who Would be King

Marty Manjak

It is generally acknowledged that Governor Andrew Cuomo aspires to a role in national politics. His is the name most often mentioned as a potential rival to Democratic frontrunner, Hillary Clinton. So it's worth examining Cuomo's Albany record to see what we might expect from a Cuomo in Washington.

A pattern has emerged in the governor's first term. He will support socially progressive legislation as long as it does not entail a commitment of public funds. His administration has consistently worked to withdraw or reduce funding for public services. At the same time, he's willing to present himself as a champion of taxpayer interests, portraying public employees as the primary threat to taxpayers' pocketbooks, a threat that he bravely holds at bay.

The tax cap was presented in exactly this fashion, as a shield against insatiable school districts. However, the results of that cap have severely degraded the educational opportunities for thousands of NY students. Particularly hard hit are those districts with the highest needs. 90% of school districts statewide now have less classroom operating aid than in 2008.<sup>1</sup> And yet teachers and administrators who advocate for their students and families are characterized by Cuomo as nothing more than special interests.

Thus, Cuomo curries favor with hard pressed taxpayers while diminishing the political power of public education advocates such as NYSUT, reducing their absolute numbers as district after district, year after year, lays off instructional staff. He seems to have forgotten, though, that those same taxpayers own homes, work in, and send their children to schools in these underfunded districts.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.nydailynews.com/opinion/cuomo-turns-back-city-kids-article-1.1713409>

While Cuomo derides those who actually have the public interest at heart, he, himself, is hard at work collecting campaign donations from some very special interests, indeed. To date, he has collected over \$33 million for his gubernatorial election campaign. Small wonder that campaign finance reform died a sudden death in this year's budget negotiations.

In the months leading up to the sham Nov. 2013 casino referendum, Cuomo received \$361,500 from the gaming industry. This was a particularly egregious conflict of interest, evidenced both by the biased ballot language of the referendum, and the 11<sup>th</sup> hour withdrawal of legislation that would have prohibited donations to state elected officials from the gambling lobby.

More recently, Cuomo has made news as an advocate for charter schools. Perhaps the nearly \$1 million he has received in donations from the charter school industry has something to do with his zeal in promoting private entities who subsist on public money. Success Academy alone, the charter operator run by Eva Moskowitz, has donated \$375,367 to Cuomo's re-election campaign — including \$90,000 since Bill de Blasio, Moskowitz's nemesis, was elected New York's mayor.<sup>2</sup> (One wonders what taxpayer's reactions would be to the news that their money was being used by a private beneficiary to lobby a governor who appears eager to dismantle their children's school district, and turn it into a for-profit enterprise.)

Cuomo's modus operandi consists of accepting large sums of money from special interests, promoting those special interests to the detriment of most New Yorkers (gambling, tax breaks for the wealthy, favoring charter schools at the expense of 97% of students who attend public schools), and posing as a champion of the very people he is in the process of demolishing by trumpeting his anti-tax, anti-public employee policies.

It's a curious vision for both New York State and the nation: a country filled with casinos operated by wealthy, international gambling syndicates, staffed by non-union employees who graduated from for-profit elementary schools and colleges to pursue

<sup>2</sup> <http://nypost.com/2014/01/27/charter-school-board-members-donating-to-cuomos-re-election/>

careers as croupiers and waitresses. I hope New York State wakes up before it comes true.

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## UIC Faculty Strike!

Paul Stasi

On February 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, the University of Illinois-Chicago Faculty Union (UICUF), representing 1,100 tenured and nontenured faculty, staged a two day walkout to protest the Illinois Board of Trustees' handling of contract negotiations. Having won certification two years ago, UICUF had engaged in more than 60 bargaining sessions without any movement towards an agreement. And by the time you are reading this article, they will likely have walked out again, as the union voted to strike on April 23<sup>rd</sup> until their demands are met.

Representing one of the most high profile higher education strikes in recent history, the walkout is both a depressing sign of the anti-union sentiment that rules university administrations and a heartening sign of the courage and determination of faculty unions in the face of administrative intransigence. The issues are those that plague faculty nation-wide, including stagnant wages for tenure and tenure-track faculty, appalling, poverty-level wages for non-tenure track faculty and the erosion of shared governance resulting from both the adjunctification of academic labor and the concomitant increase in administrative jobs across campuses.

The Illinois Board of Trustees' austerity measures come at a time of budget surpluses for the University, which not only refuses to offer the faculty a multi-year contract – despite signing literally dozens of multi-year contracts with vendors such as ESPN Radio and Greenhouse Marketing and Media – but argues that they already pay “market rate” for lecturers. In addition they are trying to include a “Scott Walker” style proposal that proposes a monthly membership check for union members. A helpful summary of these issues can be found on the Union's website:

<http://uicunitedfaculty.org/2014/04/debunking-myths/>

On the issue of shared governance, perhaps the most eloquent statement comes from a recent Jacobin article on the strike by UIC English Professors Lennard Davis and Walter Benn Michaels. Beginning from the fact that UIC tends to serve working class students – 2/3 of their incoming classes come from households making less than \$60,000/year – Davis and Michaels reject the University's desire to recruit so-called “better” students, arguing instead that their job is to do “a better job of educating the students we have.” And their focus on retention rates, in particular those between the first and second year where many students drop out of college, leads, directly, to the issue of non-tenure track labor, for the majority of UICs first year instructors are adjuncts. “What exactly does it mean,” Davis and Michaels conclude, “to insist on the importance of the first year experience and then pay the people most responsible for that experience a wage that virtually requires them to work a second job? What does it mean to claim you want to reward the best and the hardest working when you not only won't promote them, but you won't even provide a position they could in theory be promoted to?”<sup>1</sup> Student success, Davis and Michaels insist, is tied to the fair compensation of the University's adjuncts, who can not be expected to volunteer their labor to help govern a university that refuses to pay them a living wage. Tenure and tenure-track faculty, then, must recognize that their own interests – in their students, in their jobs and in the institutions in which they serve – are the same as the adjuncts who teach introductory classes. And they must also recognize that they are the ones best positioned to advocate for those interests.

Needless to say, these issues are directly relevant to our own campus, where the standard adjunct wage is \$2,800/course, meaning an instructor would have to teach 5 classes/semester to reach UICs \$30,000 standard salary. Let's wish our brothers and sisters in UICUF well and hope that by the time you are reading this, the Illinois State Board of Trustees has agreed to work with the

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.jacobinmag.com/2014/02/faculty-on-strike/>

faculty union for the benefits of Illinois' students and citizens.

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## A Union Struggle at the Honest Weight Food Co-Op

Larry Wittner, Chair, Solidarity Committee

Albany's Honest Weight Food Co-operative—which last year moved to new and larger quarters at 100 Watervliet Avenue and since then has experienced a very substantial boom in its business—is now the site of a vigorous union organizing drive, as well as strong opposition to that drive by the Co-op's management.

Starting in February, an organizing committee of Co-op workers began circulating cards among the 143 paid employees calling for management's recognition of the United Food & Commercial Workers as their collective bargaining agent. A substantial number of Co-op workers have signed these union recognition cards.

In the first week of March, however, the Co-op's management (the "Leadership Team") struck back by sending two anti-union emails to these paid employees, declaring that "an outside 'representative' is not needed here at our Co-operative." Although one of the two messages said that management would "respect your right under the law to join or not to join a labor union," it went on to attack union representation across the board. It declared that workers already received excellent benefits "without having to engage an external third party" and that "if the co-op becomes unionized . . . you will have forfeited the opportunity to represent yourself, and you will be bound by whatever terms have been negotiated." It also warned about "what it will cost you in dues to have a union" and claimed that "your decision to sign or not to sign a card may be your last opportunity to express your choice."

There has been a sharp reaction to these intimidating messages, drafted with the help of an expensive law firm. Perhaps because management had not consulted Co-op members—who ostensibly run and operate the Co-op—before taking its anti-union action, a membership meeting

was called for March 27. About a hundred members turned out, and virtually all of the dozens of speakers condemned management for intervening in the union representation campaign or, more generally, for having abandoned cooperative principles for corporate priorities. In addition, the Albany County Central Federation of Labor (AFL-CIO) has pledged its support for the union representation campaign and, in response to a decision by the Albany UUP executive committee, UUP President Bret Benjamin has sent a letter protesting the Co-op management's attack upon unions to that management and to the Co-op's board of directors.

The union issue might soon be decided: the card-signing campaign is moving forward and a new Co-op board of directors, hopefully sensitized to worker, member, and community concerns, will be elected in late April. In the meantime, supporters of union representation are urged to speak with the Co-op's paid staff (distinguishable from volunteer workers by their name tags) and tell them of the benefits of going union.

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## Mental Health in the Workplace

Carol Jewell

Members are often confused about what constitutes a disability, under the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and related New York State laws, particularly when it comes to psychiatric disorders. "Psychiatric" can be a stigmatized word, and many members may be wary of admitting that they have mental health issues for fear of being judged, discriminated against, or worse. Mental health disorders are a completely legitimate disability (provided, of course, that certain criteria are met). Mood disorders, which include depression and bipolar illness, affect the US population in significant numbers. For example, in 2005, it was reported that "approximately 20.9 million American adults, or about 9.5 percent of the U.S. population age 18 and older in a given year, have a mood disorder" (U.S. Census Bureau



Population Estimates by Demographic Characteristics. Table 2: Annual Estimates of the Population by Selected Age Groups and Sex for the United States: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2004 (NC-EST2004-02) Source: Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau Release Date: June 9, 2005. <http://www.census.gov/popest/national/asrh/> and Kessler RC, Chiu WT, Demler O, Walters EE. Prevalence, severity, and comorbidity of twelve-month DSM-IV disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication (NCS-R). *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 2005 Jun; 62(6):617-27.).

Since these disorders are a legitimate disability, a member who lives with one (I don't like to use the word "suffers") may be entitled to reasonable accommodations, in order to carry out the responsibilities of their job. Examples may include job sharing, flexible hours, frequent breaks, etc. Because job responsibilities and psychiatric disorders vary from person to person, each member's request for reasonable accommodations is treated on a case by case basis.

If you have any questions about disability issues, you may contact me at [cjewell@albany.edu](mailto:cjewell@albany.edu). I will treat all messages as confidential.

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## Research

from page 2

support faculty grant-writing would likely increase our ability to generate the outside dollars our faculty need and the administration demands.

2) **Indirect Costs Transparency.** As many of you know, part of UUP's legislative agenda concerns our access to information about how the Research Foundation spends its money. This lack of transparency directly affects grant-getting researchers, since the Research Foundation takes a significant percentage of any grants faculty generate. At the same time, the University also takes a percentage of any grants generated. This fact, in and of itself, can be particularly onerous for the small grants Humanities faculties are able to obtain, but is a problem in the sciences as well, particularly since the exact split between the Research Foundation, the faculty researcher and the department or unit in which he or she works is

never entirely clear. Thus the various problems faculty routinely report – including purchasing problems, slow access to funds, and even the mishandling of accounts – mean that departments often have to provide indirect costs up front, sometimes waiting years to be reimbursed. Combine this inefficiency and lack of transparency with reports about the various consulting firms the Chancellor has hired out of Research Foundation funds – see "Chancellor Zimpher's Consultation" in our December 2013 issue – and you can understand why many faculty find themselves concerned about how their money is being spent.

3) **Acknowledgement of grants.** At the same time, since funding at the federal level has become increasingly competitive, many universities give faculty credit – for example, in the form of course release—for receiving high scores on their grant applications. UAlbany does not.

4) **The Humanities.** Quite simply, there are few grants available for those of us who work in the Humanities. And yet Humanists have produced excellent scholarship for centuries with little more than a set of texts, a writing implement and time. In other words, there are few grants available for our work because our work does not always require grants. To judge the Humanities on external funding is to judge them on criteria external to their own disciplinary makeup. However the CAS strategic plan – a form all CAS departments are required to complete – begins, effectively, by asking "how much external funding will you generate." During annual meetings with CAS administration, departments are given binders that contain a spreadsheet listing each individual faculty member by name and the amount of research dollars generated. In my department, English, this typically means a list of faculty, most of whom have zeros next to their names. No doubt the same template is used throughout the entire College, but the obvious message is to hammer home the inadequacy of humanities departments' performance on this disciplinarily irrelevant metric. It does not help when the College tries to prove there are funding opportunities by circulating grant notices under hopelessly general rubrics. I, for instance, received a notice about a funding opportunity for restoring

houses in upstate New York, despite the fact that I research early 20<sup>th</sup> century literature.

5) **Conference support.** Conference travel, for most of us, equals a pay cut. The College offers support for up to \$1,000/year for a faculty member to travel to a conference. In practice, however, faculty typically receive something like half or 2/3 of the amount they apply for. What this means is that the University funds half of one conference a year. If a faculty member wants to participate in more conferences he or she has to pay out of pocket. This might seem petty, but it has enormous consequences for faculty productivity and visibility.

The major conference in my field, like nearly all major conferences, moves from city to city. In the previous four years it has been in Montreal, Vancouver Island, Sussex England and Las Vegas. I should attend this conference every year. But because it would cost me something like \$2,000 out of pocket to attend the conference in England or in Vancouver Island I don't go. By not going, I miss the opportunity to connect with other scholars in my field – scholars who might know my name or face, but might also forget me in the two years since my last appearance. I miss opportunities to contribute to panels, edited collections, special journal issues and to get the valuable feedback on my work that I could then use to increase my publications.

Colleagues at Harvard and Penn and Cornell all, of course, receive funds to attend these conferences and, not surprisingly, they are then able to take advantage of these opportunities to push their careers forward. In other words, the inability to support faculty travel has real consequences for faculty productivity and visibility – precisely those markers of status and prestige that establish a University's quality and the reputations of its scholars.

6) **Time.** Again, the most precious thing for researchers is time. Given time off, we will write books and articles, get grants, and produce new research. There should be an across the board pre-tenure leave that gives untenured faculty members time off to work on their research. Sabbaticals for productive faculty should be treated as automatic, rather than something that requires special dispensation from the administration. Course

release – something for which departments continually have to fight – should be granted for particularly onerous service burdens or for taking on officer positions in departments. Course release or flexible scheduling arrangements for specific research projects would also enable greater productivity. This need not amount to a lack of commitment to teaching; it simply might allow the rhythms of teaching to unfold over longer periods of time. Many of our peer institutions and nearly all of those institutions that out-rank us adopt these policies, for the simple reason that they aid the recruitment and retention of productive faculty which, in turn, aids both the intellectual environment of campus and the prestige of the university itself.

If the University does not wish to fund faculty research at adequate levels, then they should accept reduced productivity. And if they wish to maintain our high research standards, then they should increase the support for faculty research. But you cannot both diminish support and ramp up standards of productivity. For despite its faddishness, the corporate slogan “do more with less,” is, strictly speaking, meaningless.

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## Year in Review

from page 1

In addition to the topics covered in the events above, we have also taken up a range of other issues including:

- contract implementation on campus
- CNSE separation
- gender equity
- StartUp NY
- contingents' equity
- “equitable contribution” and academic workload
- fostering faculty research
- campus accessibility
- health and safety
- parking
- recognition for employees
- family and personal leave

Among our accomplishments are the following. We have:

- expanded substantially the number of active chapter members (approaching 200 members serving on/as executive committee, departmental reps, and chapter committees).
- secured benefits for members during the contract implementation period. For instance, we helped secure flexible leave scheduling for professionals and academics with the Deficit Reduction Program (DRP, or “furlough days”). Likewise we helped contingent faculty assert their rights to take those DRP days during their professional obligation. We successfully argued that a considerable portion of the Discretionary Salary Award (DSA) money be distributed to all members, again with special consideration for contingents.
- helped strengthen the University’s policy on reasonable accommodation for disability.
- produced regular, high-quality newsletters, that have voiced strong positions on issues at UAlbany and beyond.
- updated our chapter website, <http://uupalbany.org> (a project that is ongoing), to make information more accessible to members and improve our lines of communication.
- worked with the University to ensure up-to-date Performance Programs and Evaluations for professionals.
- participated extensively in legislative outreach, advocating for more SUNY funding, better public sector health and educational services, more transparency from the Research Foundation among many other issues.
- developed strong ties with the Graduate Student Employees Union and the Graduate Student Association (GSA)
- worked with the GSA to get a resolution on contingent faculty passed at the state-wide Student Assembly, whose membership tops 400,000 students across New York State.
- strengthened ties with the Albany County Central Federation of Labor as well as other local labor organizations.
- created two surveys on Gender Equity and Contingent Concerns to be circulated soon, with the

intent of developing specific policy initiatives based on member feedback.

- worked individually with members on a range of issues, to insist upon due process, procedural compliance, and employee solidarity.

In all of this work, we have been guided by the following set of core principles and assumptions:

- Education, particularly public education, is a social good worth defending with tenacity, creativity, and vision. We fight to establish a university that is affordable, accessible, and that offers the highest quality education for its undergraduate and graduate students.

- As a corollary, we believe that the public research university must offer a comprehensive array of disciplines and sub-fields, with curriculum shaped both by emerging forms of knowledge and by the centuries-old traditions of intellectual work upon which the modern university has been founded. The corrosive pressure to subjugate intellectual inquiry to market forces and bureaucratic management fundamentally undermines the university.

- UUP members make the university work. We are the teachers, the librarians, the computer technicians, the coaches, the advisors, the researchers, the admissions staff, the accountants, and much more. We are professionals and academics, tenure-line employees and contingents. Our collective labor is indispensable to the university; without us there is no university.

- Furthermore, despite our many differences, we are bound together by our shared structural position as employees of the State of New York working at UAlbany. Individually, collectively, and institutionally we benefit by improving working conditions for all employees.

- We fight so that all members of our bargaining unit can have better working conditions, but we pay special attention to those whose labor is most exploited, those who have historically had the least representation within higher education, and those who are most vulnerable. This is at the heart of unionism.

- We do this because we believe that employees deserve compensation for, and control over, the work they do. Moreover, we understand

that the working conditions of our employees are also the learning and living conditions for the students who attend our university. Taking care of university workers translates directly into a higher quality institution for the students who attend. Further still, we believe that the provision of affordable, accessible, quality public higher education can be broadly transformative, yielding social benefits stretching far beyond the bounds of our immediate university community.

- From such positions, a class analysis of public higher education and the labor movement begins to crystalize. Our chapter will work to develop political strategies that issue from this analysis.
- Our chapter is committed to an organizing model that stresses open communication, broad member participation, and collective action.
- We believe that the people most affected by decisions should be involved in the decision making process. Hence we intend to be proactive in developing proposals and initiatives on campus from the perspective of labor. We will be smart and thorough in this work. We will do our research, gather member feedback, develop arguments, write proposals, and work to develop public support for our initiatives.

I am proud of the work we've done this year and feel that we have made some meaningful gains. We know, however, that much more work will need to be done if our chapter is to assume the role on campus that we ultimately envision. The chapter leadership has broad ambitions, and we plan to redouble our efforts in the coming year. We invite your active participation, and we value all contributions, big and small. E-mail me directly [bret.benjamin@gmail.com](mailto:bret.benjamin@gmail.com) if you would like to become more involved.

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## Campus Kids

Thomas Hoey

One of the little known benefits that employees can enjoy is safe, convenient and affordable daycare right here on the UAlbany Campus and next door on the State Campus. As a parent who has used their Daycare Program and the school age summer program I can attest to the high quality care and the

convenience of having my child nearby as well as the financial tax benefits that come from using a flex spend account and a SEFCU auto pay. Recently, the population of childcare age children has dropped due in large part to the great recession in 2008 – which has led to fears that the daycare programs might close – so it is important to get the word out about this hidden jewel on our campus in order to have it here for decades to come.

Here is an excerpt from their brochure with contact information: “The Campus Children’s Center, Inc. provides a special kind of place at both of its sites: the U-Kids Child Care Center located on campus in Dutch Quad and the Campus Children’s Center located in Building four on the adjacent Harriman State Office Building Campus. These programs offer care for children from birth through pre-k as well as holiday care and a summer camp for school aged children. The early childhood programs offer child care in a developmentally appropriate educational program. The children are provided with a loving environment designed to stimulate the children’s growth and development. Breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack are provided. The Summer Fling Camp program is for school aged children. It has something for everyone with daily field trips, lots of outdoor activities, games, arts and crafts and tons of fun!”

To learn more about the Campus Children’s Center and their programs please visit the web site at [www.cccukids.com](http://www.cccukids.com) or call U-Kids at 442-2660 or CCC at 457-3210. Feel free to contact me [tomtomhoey@gmail.com](mailto:tomtomhoey@gmail.com) if you have further questions.

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**Let us know what you think.  
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## United University Professions

**To:** UUP Leaders  
**From:** Frederick E. Kowal, President  
**Date:** April 17, 2014  
**Re:** Negotiated Salary Increases & Budget Update

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I understand that there are a number of questions about how public higher education fared in the final 2014-15 state budget, and how the budget will impact our negotiated salary increases. I'd like to take this opportunity to answer those questions.

Let me start by putting to rest any rumors you might have heard about our negotiated salary increases. **We will get our raises.** The negotiated salary increases were agreed to by the State of New York and will be paid.

The enacted budget includes a \$7.6 million increase (for personal service costs) to state-operated campuses. How that \$7.6 million will be allocated, how SUNY balances its budget, and how SUNY will fund our raises are all decisions to be made by SUNY Administrators. Regardless of their choices, **we will get our raises.**

Rumors that program cutbacks or funding reallocations are necessary to fund the salary increases are unsubstantiated and unjustified. We will continue working to dispel these rumors, and encourage every one of you to help us by letting our sisters and brothers know the facts about the available funds.

### **Budget Highlights**

The enacted budget included several provisions that are crucial for higher education. UUP fought hard to secure funding in all of the areas below:

#### State-Operated Campuses Funding:

- Provides an increase of \$7.6 million in support to the SUNY state-operated campuses, for a total appropriation of \$715.6 million.

#### SUNY Hospitals:

- Provides \$87.5 million for the SUNY hospitals state subsidy, which represents a \$27.5 million General Fund increase from the 2013-14 appropriation of \$60 million.
- Removes the Restructuring Health Care Delivery Systems Pilot Program proposal. UUP was instrumental in defeating this proposal which, if enacted, would have set the stage for the privatization of SUNY hospitals.

#### Opportunity Programs & Tuition Assistance Programs:

- Increases the Educational Opportunity Program by \$1.3 million, for a total appropriation of \$22.3 million.



- Provides an increase of \$26.3 million to the Tuition Assistance Program, for a total of \$976.7 million. Beginning in 2014-15, the maximum TAP award is increased by \$165, bringing the maximum award to \$5,165 for this program.

Despite these successes, more work needs to be done to pursue our legislative agenda. As part of our efforts, UUP will continue to advocate that SUNY must receive the resources needed to fulfill its ongoing mission.

## **Negotiated Salary Increases**

Here are some key facts regarding the funds available and the impact of the salary increases:

- The cost of the UUP raises for this budget year, according to the New York State Division of Budget, is estimated to be \$42.9 million (including fringe benefits). The SUNY General Income Fund Reimbursable (IFR) account is a self-supporting account that generates its own revenue (from a variety of fees or other income sources) to support its expenditures. This account carries over its year-end cash balance (or surplus) to the next year. At the end of October 2013, there was \$480.4 million in the SUNY General Income Fund Reimbursable (IFR) account. Since April 2010, the SUNY-wide IFR account has never dropped below \$325 million. These funds could certainly be used to pay for our salary increases.
- SUNY is a system. When a campus is short of funds, SUNY has in the past spread the burden throughout the system. SUNY can also tap its reserve funds to help an individual campus in financial difficulty. To jump to the conclusion that the SUNY campuses have to cut programs instead of using SUNY's available reserve funds is little more than SUNY simply trying to short circuit its own commitment to "systemness."
- SUNY is not being forced to cut campus funding because of the salary increases—they are choosing to balance their books with campus cuts. SUNY has many choices for filling any budgetary gaps that they may face, including using some of its reserves and/or delaying the implementation of new initiatives, such as Open SUNY.
- Over the past few years, the state has balanced its books by asking SUNY faculty and professionals to do more, for less pay and with fewer resources. SUNY faculty and professionals have already given back much more than their fair share. We must push back against threatened program cuts for the sake of our students. They are paying MORE for their education and should not be subjected to threats of service and program cuts.

We must push back because SUNY already relies heavily on tuition revenue for operating expenses. This has to change. SUNY faculty, professionals, and students have already paid their fair share for New York State's public higher education system.

UUP will continue to monitor and address any actions taken by the campuses to reduce their budgets as a response to the mutually agreed upon salary increases. Please contact UUP with any details regarding proposed campus budget cuts, so that these issues can be raised at the statewide SUNY labor/management meeting. We will continue to fight the unsubstantiated claims that campus cutbacks are a direct result of UUP raises and we hope that you will continue to help us by using these facts about the available funds.

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