



Unifier

UNITED UNIVERSITY PROFESSIONS



FARMINGDALE CHAPTER



OCTOBER 2020



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Source: UUP Connect

UUP has created its UUP Vote 2020 webpage to help get out the vote in New York and in swing states, and to rally support for Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden and Democrat candidates running for state and federal offices.

The page includes important voting information and a link to UUP's Election 2020 social media toolkit, which has graphics and sample posts you can share on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and other social media platforms.

There are also links to participate in get-out-the-vote efforts in New York and battleground states like Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Florida. UUP has partnered with AFT to host "UUP Swing State Solidarity Phone Calls" starting Saturday, Oct. 10th. Volunteers will make calls every Saturday, Wednesday and Thursday in the weeks leading up to the Nov. 3rd election.

The UUP 2020 Elections site includes links to key resources, including Biden/Harris talking points, NYSUT's 2020 Voting Guide and UUP's 2020 voting primer.

There are also links for volunteers to write postcards by hand to promote Democratic candidates and mail them to voters.

With the election less than 30 days away, now is the time to do your part to get out the vote. ◆

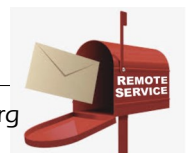
Virtual GENERAL MEMBERSHIP Meeting

Thursday, October 22, 2020 ◆ 11:00 am

Unsure of your active membership? Enroll today:

<https://uuphost.org/myuup/Membership/RegForm.php>

Send us your questions or concerns. Click the mailbox at www.uupfarm.org



Professionals' Corner

By Harry Gabriel Espallat

During this unprecedented time of civil unrest, global resurgence of Covid-19, the inability of the senate and congress to agree on a second stimulus plan, and the economic difficulties projected to take place next year, we need to prepare for possible furloughs, non-renewals and in a worst case scenario retrenchments. We are aware that Dr. Nader (FSC President) is working hard at preventing the loss of jobs on campus, but the dire expectations of a downturn in the economy combined with an increase in Covid-19 infections could easily hamper such efforts.

The loss of health insurance surfaced as the main concern among our members. When you receive a termination notice from SUNY, please contact your campus Health Benefits Administrator to verify the date your healthcare coverage will end and to obtain information on your healthcare options as loss of coverage is considered a qualifying event for enrollment in other options. Some of the options that you can choose from to maintain health benefits are COBRA and Marketplace Coverage.

COBRA

When health coverage provided by your employer (SUNY) ends, you may opt to continue your existing coverage under COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act). COBRA states that if you lose your job

for any reason other than "gross misconduct," you have the right to continue in your employer's NYSHIP group plan for up to 18 months.

Marketplace Coverage

The marketplace is an online tool to assist individuals in shopping for health insurance coverage. The marketplace in New York is called the New York State of Health. Due to the loss of income you can apply for Medicaid (the essential plan), or subsidized qualified healthcare plans, or child health plus.

This coverage is only offered up to the age of 65. Then you must apply for Medicare.

The marketplace plans primarily cover only medical and prescription drugs. All marketplace plans cover 10 essential benefits. There are no exclusions for pre-existing conditions.

COVID Testing

Another topic of concern during our meeting is the continued on-campus testing. Some SUNY campuses failed to establish early Covid-19 testing requirements which led to outbreaks in campuses across the state forcing them to shut down for 2 weeks or the rest of the semester. At Farmingdale, we have not had any outbreaks thanks to the measures in place. We encourage everyone working at the campus to get tested as often as possible, although



random testing rules are in the works.

Telecommuting

The telecommuting agreement was extended to the end of the year. The agreement allows for flexibility but not without its challenges. Members are using the phrase "living at work" because of unset boundaries. Some members reported attending meetings scheduled outside of their professional responsibilities core hours; others reported working until late at night, while others feel obligated to answer emails on the weekends.

The telecommuting agreement is a tool that if used unrestrained can lead to workload creep. Contact your local chapter if you experience such trends.

Vote by November 3rd!!!

Voting is a civic responsibility and your venue to making a difference. ♦

President's Message

The most important message this month is...

***VOTE!!!
and GET OTHERS TO VOTE!!***

Your health, your wealth, and your safety depend on this election. Even if you have only a parochial view of issues that fails to extend beyond Farmingdale, you need to vote.

As we've said so many times in the past, New York State has a huge deficit of over \$14.5 billion as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. We can be grateful that New York's response to the virus has been one of the most successful so far, but it has forced New York into far too many short term loans.

We need the Heroes' legislation and a national effort to beat the pandemic. We must expand healthcare to everyone, respect diversity, protect the environment, stimulate our economy, maintain international alliances, strengthen labor, believe in immigration, support veterans, avoid the double federal taxation of state and local taxes, and on and on. But no one should need to hear these obvious statements. We know this already. Now we must act...

We need everyone to VOTE!!!

COVID-19 Update

We've been doing a good job with our responses to Covid-19 here at Farmingdale, which, as a college campus, we know is a potential hotspot. Surely you've heard of problems at other SUNYs—now Cortland and Oneonta are only offering remote classes. Others may move in that direction; as of October 12, Binghamton had 159 cases. You can go to www.suny.edu/COVID

-19 Tracker to keep up on all sixty-four SUNY campuses.

So far, we have not needed to rearrange either our Fall 2020 or Spring 2021 schedule, as other campuses have. You can check the status of SUNY campuses at www.suny.edu/civid-19 tracker.

We are grateful to many folks here at Farmingdale for keeping us as safe as possible. Our members, like Kevin Murphy and his staff in the Health and Wellness Center and Jeff Carter, Environmental and Safety Officer; our CSEA sisters and brothers who have maintained safety on campus; our Campus Police, whose helpful presence on campus is always necessary; and the College Administration must be commended for working together with care and good sense.

At the state level, we recognize our UUP President, Fred Kowal, who has been in continuous communication with the new Chancellor, Jim Malatras. Since last June, Kowal has urged mandatory testing, and more recently Malatras agreed to this and a number of safety measures. Without such measures, SUNY's goals cannot be met.

On October 1, the statewide Telecommuting Agreement was extended to January 1, 2021. This means that students and staff can continue to work remotely, the safest plan for everyone.

Locally, we've also had our Farmingdale College testing plan, with UUP's participation, approved by SUNY. This means pool testing for the approximately 3,500 students who come on campus each week and approximately 350 bargaining unit members, along with some CSEA staff members and



Campus Police.

The testing plan requires mandatory, twice weekly on-campus pool testing for 5% of randomly selected students and 5% of randomly selected staff. It should be noted that a saliva pool test, by NYS mandate, comprises twelve individual samples, and if there is a positive result in a pool, no one needs to be retested since individual samples remain available from the original samples. If positive test results should rise in number, then more than 5% of the on campus population will be tested.

We appreciate the work of Kevin Murphy and his staff in the Health and Wellness Center in developing this plan. We have, however, one caveat: we urge Management to increase staffing in the Health and Wellness Center so that a larger percentage of individuals are tested biweekly.

We will continue to present updates as necessary. For now, to repeat, we're doing a good job.

*In Solidarity
Vicki Janik*



Cheers! To Your Next

By Vicki Janik

Since 1991, whenever United University Professions needed to negotiate a new statewide contract — that's on six separate occasions — UUP has called on Mike Smiles. Mike, a full professor in Farmingdale's Biological Sciences Department, has served six times as either the Assistant Chief Negotiator or the Chief Negotiator for UUP in negotiating the *Agreement* with the Governor's Office of Employee Relations (GOER). That's more often than any other UUP member, ever, at any campus.

And now Mike Smiles has retired. For all of us in the bargaining unit this is very big news. Why? Because probably no one on our campus has had a greater influence on our jobs here at Farmingdale than Mike.

Mike is a Long Islander. He grew up in Baldwin, graduated from Adelphi with a degree in biology, and after getting his master's degree at Oregon State in oceanography, came back to Long Island and got his first job—teaching biology at Farmingdale. That was in 1970 and the pay for teaching 18 credits was \$9,500. To make a little more money, Mike taught extra classes in the Evening College.

Mike taught biology at the college for 50 years, serving as chair for several years. He always enjoyed his students, especially when he could take them on field trips, a relatively rare event today.

But Mike says that 80% of his best memories outside of class are about his union activities. And these have been awesome. Mike Smiles served seven terms on the UUP Statewide Executive Board, and six on the statewide UUP Negotiations Committee.

If we have a contract that gives us always increasing compensation, health benefits for both full *and part-time members*, family leave, salary minima for part-timers, and so many other protections won from an always parsimonious New York State, then we must be grateful to Mike.

Remember, adjuncts — thank UUP if you have excellent health insurance — a benefit few part-time workers have anywhere on Long Island, in New York State, or anywhere.

Mike has spent over thirty years driving to Albany for meetings and to nearly all SUNY campuses, meeting with members across the state in order to learn of their professional needs and negotiating with the State to meet those needs.

Jamie Dangler, the current UUP Vice President for Academics, writes:

I learned so much from him about UUP's history of fighting to protect members. Mike taught me a lot about building on previous gains to expand protections and benefits. Mike is the embodiment of what it means for unionists to work together, unselfishly and without personal agenda, to do the best we can for all of our members. He spoke many times of the lifelong friendships he's



made working with fellow union members. Mike's courage, dedication, great sense of humor, and commitment to his colleagues have inspired me and so many others.

Keep in mind that the union work that Mike has done pays nothing to him--no money, no benefits. And it certainly doesn't kick-start any bright-eyed ambitious person's climb up the golden steps of the academy's gilded hierarchy. No. I think Mike did all this work simply because everyone else needed him to do it.

And we cannot forget that Mike served here at Farmingdale as the chapter president for two series of terms--seven years after following



Chapter, Mike Smiles



Bob Reganse and later for another six years.

I remember his leading UUPF in the so-called Reinvestment in 1993-1994. This state-approved negotiation resulted in *local* academic salary increases of between \$6,600 and \$9,000 and the twelve-credit, three-day, 250-minute office hour academic workload.

[Important note: This pay increase also extended to professionals, and it was Barbara Maertz who argued successfully for their pay increase.]

Remember that Jamie Dangler mentioned Mike's "great sense of humor"? One year he had UUPF play our own version of *Survivor*. We placed all Farmingdale managers "on the island" and each month UUPers voted to kick one or more of them off the island. Everyone voted and each month *The Unifier* printed the names of the managers who had been voted out. We picked off deans, the president, vice presidents, anybody else listed in the MC category. The survivor won a free pair of tickets to the annual UUPF dinner dance held in Knapp Hall. [Btw, the winner of the free tickets was Rich Hume, now a p/t UUPer, and his wife Janet.]. I'm sure no MCs had egos fragile enough to feel unloved or disrespected. At least they all kept smiling and talking with us whenever we stopped by to chat.

There's other events... One year long ago Mike led a motorcade down Route 110 to the airport, protesting the State's refusal to

negotiate a contract. He says on the morning of the event when he saw a line of members' cars as far as the eye could see, ready to proceed, he knew he could count on UUPF members (as they could count on him). They, like he, understood that a Union voice must be a Unified voice. *The members themselves had to speak--and drive and honk together. And they did.*

So here's Mike's formula for success: work with *everyone* to protect and advance the lives and careers of members. Do this with courage and grace, wisdom and wit. We know that Mike did this for all of us, and, I am sure, he will continue his successes wherever he goes. Now we need to keep this up—respect one another, enjoy one another, and always hang together. But Michael, we can't forget.



From UUP President Fred Kowal:

Mike is a treasured friend. I can't say enough about how much I have treasured his wisdom, his practical approach to union work, and his great sense of humor. We often joked that we were both actually frozen at 12 years old, given how much we love to joke and tease each other. That has always been a major reason why I've treasured his wisdom: No matter what the crisis

or what we were dealing with, he would bring us back to the next simple step we needed to take. He also is so great at reminding me of who I am; if he thinks I'm starting to take myself too seriously, he would smile and say something like, "C'mon, Fred, we both know you're full of shit." And I would say the same to him when I felt it was necessary!

I also have always treasured his interest in my sons. We would trade stories about what his son and my sons were doing in their lives. So often, these conversations would display his immense pride in his son and an honest respect for what my guys were doing. And then, there were sports. The conversations we've had, no matter how serious, would inevitably drift to baseball, more often than not.

Finally, he is the best kind of union activist and leader because I have always known that he will stay strong with the union regardless of what we might do on a specific issue. I can always count on him to tell me when he thinks I'm wrong. I also know that even if he feels that way, he will support what we are doing. In the last round of negotiations, he was willing to take on any role on the team. He was also crucial in helping our negotiations team move seamlessly when Philippe Abraham was elected to a NYSUT officer position.

A true union soldier. Leader. Educator. Friend. One of the finest people I've ever known...

Thanks for giving me the chance to give you a little bit about how much Mike means to me and to UUP.

Take care,

Fred

Happy 50th Birthday LIEOC

By Michael Oil

UUPF joins the rest of the college in wishing the Long Island Educational Opportunity Center (LIEOC) a very happy fiftieth birthday. A descendant

of the Urban Centers established by New York State in the wake of the Civil Rights movement, the LIEOC offers Long Island's economically disadvantaged a

range of academic preparation and occupational training courses. Its graduates work as Microsoft Office Specialists, nursing assistants and web designers, while others go on to matriculate at local institutions of higher-ed, including FSC. The LIEOC's English as a Second Language program is among the largest of its kind on Long Island, serving area residents that hail from Latin American, Caribbean, South Asian, and Eastern European countries. UUPF celebrates the diversity of the LIEOC student body, and we embrace it for the example it sets for the college as a whole.

The diversity and multiculturalism of the LIEOC faculty and staff also serve as a model for FSC, and they similarly deserve recognition. Yet their contribution to the college doesn't end there, for it would certainly be a less friendly place to work were it not for the improvements to working conditions LIEOC employees have initiated over the years. Indeed, it's worth recalling that, among these, it was folks from the LIEOC who once upon a time mobilized opposition to a management plan to charge employees for parking; that it was EOCers who spearheaded the founding of UUPF committees to advocate specifically for

Academic Freedom

By Anjana Mebane-Cruz

This is the first in what we hope will be a series of short articles to inform or remind members of some of their benefits, rights, protections. We hope that you'll find them informative and useful.

This first was inspired by recent conversations about a series of controversial reassignment/replacement of faculty members at some (non-SUNY) colleges around the country. In one case, the instructor appears to have been teaching historically accurate, contextualized facts that included terms that are now archaic and might be offensive to members of the student body or others, while in another, although teaching about an historic period, the instructor used a term that has always been offensive to people of African ancestry and was not directly tied to the text. While both are issues subsumed under the heading of academic freedom, in fact, only the first example-contextualized and relevant to the lesson-would be entitled to the benefit of coverage.

Title I. Academic Freedom § 1. Academic Freedom. It is the policy of the University to

maintain and encourage full freedom, within the law, of inquiry, teaching and research. In the exercise of this freedom faculty members may, without limitation, discuss their own subject in the classroom; they may not, however, claim as their right the privilege of discussing in their classroom controversial matter which has no relation to their subject. The principle of academic freedom shall be accompanied by a corresponding principle of responsibility. In their role as citizens, employees have the same freedoms as other citizens. However, in their extramural utterances employees have an obligation to indicate that they are not institutional spokespersons.

To learn more, please follow this link: SUNY Policies of the Board of Trustees link - <https://system.suny.edu/media/suny/content-assets/documents/boardoftrustees/SUNY-BOT-Policies-Jan2019.pdf>

It is reassuring to know that because of our great union, we teach at a university where academic freedoms are valued and protected. ♦

UUP Achievement on SUNY Testing Gets National Attention

Source: Rachel Silberstein, San Francisco Chronicle

Officials at the State University of New York have come to an agreement with United University Professions (UUP) on COVID-19 testing of all union-represented faculty and staff who are required to report to campus.

SUNY last week rolled out a surveillance testing program, which screens the saliva for students across the 64-campus system for the disease, but in most cases, the tests were not extended to university employees.

"Today, we took another big step in protecting the public health and safety of our entire college community at The State University of New York. Thanks to major breakthroughs at SUNY Upstate Medical — and the collaboration with United University Professions (UUP) — we will now regularly test UUP faculty members serving on

campus for the virus," State University of New York Chancellor Jim Malatras said in a statement.

UUP President Frederick Kowal said that all medical testing of staff, whether it is a drug test or diagnostic test, must be approved through the bargaining process.

"This is part and parcel with what we have been arguing for since June that that testing should expand to all of our members on all 64 campuses," Kowal said.

The agreement also includes provisions for the type of testing that will be conducted. The testing program developed at SUNY Upstate Medical Center "pools" together saliva samples from the campus population, which are collected at random, enabling campuses to test a large number of individuals at once.

"This will help us pinpoint



State University of New York Chancellor Jim Malatras announces COVID safety protocols and screening practices now that classes have resumed for the fall 2020 semester at University at Albany on Wednesday, Aug. 26, 2020 in Albany, N.Y. (Photo: Lori Van Buren/Times Union)

and isolate cases on our campuses, avoid outbreaks, and most importantly — keep our dedicated faculty members safe. I look forward to working closely with UUP leadership in the months ahead as we navigate these uncertain times," Malatras said. ♦

... Happy Birthday LIEOC ...

adjunct faculty and retirees (and that these would later serve as prototypes for similar UUP committees statewide); and that it was EOCers who more recently pushed for reforms which led to college-wide policies banning nepotism in hiring and sectarian religious expression at FSC functions and ceremonies.

LIEOC employees' long-standing commitment to union activism in fact demonstrates the way in which BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color)

and workplace concerns intrinsically overlap — an intersectionality underscored repeatedly by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

"As I have said many times, and I believe with all my heart," King wrote in a letter in the early 1960s, "the coalition that can have the greatest impact for the struggle for human dignity here in America is that of [Blacks] and the forces of labor, because their fortunes are so closely intertwined." As one might expect, King's words — his recognition that, given the

effects of systemic racism, the BIPOC community and unions make natural allies — apply with particular force at the college to the LIEOC, which historically has been subjected to some of the worst working conditions and managerial malfeasance on campus.

In short, the contributions of the LIEOC have made the college a better place to work for all of us, and for that UUPF offers its thanks. Again we wish the LIEOC a very happy birthday, and many, many more! ♦



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uup WORKSHOP

Intellectual Property: Your Rights as a SUNY Employee

A Presentation and Discussion for Academics and Professionals Represented by UUP



Thursday, October 29, 2020 at 11:00 AM

UUPF will be hosting a webinar covering the following topics:

- ◆ Intellectual Property
- ◆ Patient Policy
- ◆ Open Access Policies
- ◆ Open Educational Resources
- ◆ Companies Pirating Course Materials

We are pleased to announce that Jamie Dangler, UUP Vice President for Academics and UUPF's NYSUT newly

appointed Labor Relation Specialist, Tammy Mays (welcome aboard Tammy!) will present information about these very important topics and answer any questions you may have.

If you are interested in attending and haven't already responded, please reply to this email - a link to attend the meeting will be sent to you prior to the meeting.

We are looking forward to seeing you at the webinar. ◆

PRE-RETIREMENT Webinar:

Friday, October 23, 2020 at 11:00 AM

Walter Apple, UUP Specialist on Retirement

Learn what to do (and what not to do) and when.

CHAPTER MEMBERS on STATEWIDE COMMITTEES

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Comm of VPs for Academics

The UUPF Newsletter welcomes articles and letters submitted by members of the Farmingdale community. Remember, this is your newsletter, share your thoughts with us, we want to hear from you. Persons who have material they wish to submit should contact Yolanda Segarra at youupf@gmail.com