



Unifier

UNITED UNIVERSITY PROFESSIONS

◆ FARMINGDALE CHAPTER ◆

FEBRUARY 2021



In this issue

- ◆ Professionals' Corner PAGE 2
- ◆ President's Message PAGE 3
- ◆ Information Centerfold PAGE 4-5
- ◆ Exam Fee Reimbursement Program PAGE 6
- ◆ Retiree News Student Debt Clinic PAGE 7
- ◆ UUP on the Stimulus Bill PAGE 8

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Welcome Back

...to the 2021 Spring Semester, as remotely and as safely as possible. We send special thanks to our UUP, CSEA, and PEF colleagues in the Health and Wellness Center and everyone throughout the campus, including the police, for the extra time, skill, and dedication they have given to make the campus safe.

Remote Assignments: Again, classes and other work duties are mostly remote; testing has been increasingly frequent as dictated by the regional infection rate; masks are available and required; and social distancing is mandated. From the beginning of this pandemic, UUP and SUNY agreed to mandate these successful practices, although not all campuses followed them as well as they might have. But vaccines are still scarce--difficult to locate and not even available yet to most of those under sixty-five, like our students. We hear from government experts that it is only a possibility that traditional in-person classes can safely begin in September.

Office Hours: As you know, adjunct faculty members do not have office hours at Farmingdale. Office hours for full-time staff, of course, exist, if only remotely. These are described on the college website: *Office hours are an important component of the full-time faculty member's professional obligation. Each faculty member must schedule five office hours (250 minutes) on campus each week.*

Testing: Covid-19 testing has become much more frequent for those staff members who are scheduled to come on campus, if only once per week. A problem has developed for members who work on campus in the evening only and are unable to come to campus between nine and three, the hours during which testing is scheduled. We have contacted Management about this and have heard back that Management is trying to come up with a workable solution, a solution, we emphasize, that does *not* create more work for our already overworked health and wellness staff. ◆

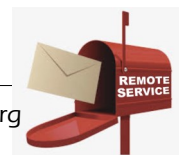
Virtual GENERAL MEMBERSHIP Meeting

Thursday, February 18, 2021 ◆ 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 Espaillet

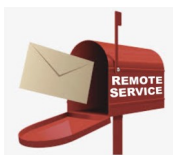
Welcome back everyone. Those of you who have been at FSC for four years or less may only know me as your UUPF VP for Professionals. You may not know that I am a full-time professional staff member in IT. I want to reassure everyone that we are working non-stop to get everything ready for coming back to work on-site. To find out how your own department or division is preparing, please check with your chain of command. We want everyone to have a **safe** and effective return.

Most of our members have been working remotely since before the telecommuting agreement. Some members have experienced a substantial increase in workload by making themselves available for longer than usual periods of time. I recommend that all members avail themselves to UUP workshops and webinars on **Time Management**. You can control – or at least document – the amount of time that you put in. Attend our meetings to learn how.

Remote Duties

Professionals, while we have all had to adapt when working remotely, I want to remind you not to deviate too far from the responsibilities listed in your Performance Program.

(Certainly *no one* should have been asked or required to do so.) If you are concerned about changes to your duties, or any other issues related to remote service, please click the mailbox on our Chapter website to send us a confidential email.



Accrual Rollover

As you know, the limit on vacation accrual has been put in abeyance for 2020. It appears that some members do not know how to go back and check if accruals have been carried over. Here is how you do that:

- ◆ The Time & Attendance portal will deliver you to the current time period [February 2021].

- ◆ Change the period to December 2020 and click *change period*
- ◆ You will see the Record Date change at the top, and the accruals for that date at the bottom. Keep copies for your records.

If your accruals do not reflect the 2020 rollover, please let me know asap. ◆

Employee Time Record for February 2021

Accrual Period
February 2021 ~ Working Change Period

Accrual Balances

Employee Time Record for December 2020

Accrual Period
December 2020 ~ Approved Change Period

Accrual Balances					
Name	Vacation	Sick*	Family Sick Used	Lost Time	Floater
Beginning	45.50	198.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Charged	9.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sub-Total	36.50	197.00	0.00	0	0.00
Earned	1.75	1.75	0.00	0.00	0.00
Adjustments	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Ending	38.25	198.75	0.00	0.00	0.00

* Includes family sick leave balance

President's Message

About Our Raises...

As you may know, our Discretionary Salary Increases and Salary Compression Raises at most SUNY campuses are scheduled to appear in our February 17, 2021, paychecks, or at a few campuses, on March 17, 2021. That's a start. But not everyone receives these raises.

What about our annual, negotiated 2% raises? First, you should know that UUP has filed a class action grievance over the absent raises, and it's proceeding at a reasonable pace.

But we all know that the New York State budget and SUNY's budget is in critical condition. This is even though SUNY is receiving \$340 million from the CARES Act and \$260 million from the December Covid-19 relief legislation. Farmingdale's share from the CARES Act was \$6.1 million to students and \$6.1 million to the college.

According to UUP, the December federal funding to Farmingdale is \$12,645,901. That share is pretty good. After the four university centers, only Buffalo State got more, and we are tied with Brockport and Oswego for

the next largest share of \$12 million+.

Campuses must identify the specific allocation of these funds. The money may be used for such things as continuing Covid-related expenses and maintaining staff. Farmingdale management has emphasized that maintaining staff is a priority. We assume this includes the entire staff, including our CSEA brothers and sisters, many of whom are essential workers required to be on campus throughout this terrible pandemic.

This current funding sounds somewhat encouraging, but it's not nearly enough. Also, we do not know if all the funding has been received. Governor Cuomo says right now, we are headed for a 5% cut in state support to SUNY. This threatens jobs, let alone raises.

That's why President Biden's relief bill, containing \$1.9 trillion in aid, is currently before Congress. It is vital. We need it. It could bring \$200 million to SUNY with perhaps \$10 million to our local campus alone.

Which brings us back to our raises. Without the relief bill, the



governor predicts no raises until at least spring 2023.

This is where we all must do something. SUNY, New York State, every state, needs support from the federal government, especially now as jobs continue to disappear and businesses, state and local government, and families are starving for funding.

UUP President Fred Kowal has sent a link to a letter for everyone to sign to support this bill. And everyone means not only you, but your entire family, friends, neighbors, everyone. Quantity matters.

Please go to this link and sign this letter! Send it to others!

This is how we all can make this bill pass — and how we can (more selfishly?) receive our raises.

<https://actionnetwork.org/letters/pass-president-bidens-covid-19-stimulus-bill/>

In Solidarity
Vicki Janik

Pre-Retirement Workshop

**7-8 pm Part 1: Tuesday, February 23rd
& Part 2: Thursday, February 25th**

These workshops are open to all UUP Members who want to learn about the benefits that our union has negotiated over the years.

Register at: <https://forms.gle/bWgbuvUzyWbCqDXE9>

Hear Ye, Hear Ye, Remain Informed

Excerpts from prior UUP & Affiliate Messages

Online Vaccination Tracker is Live

New York has launched a vaccination website that tracks the number of New Yorkers who have received COVID vaccines, how many vaccines the state has received, and other metrics in the state's vaccine distribution efforts.

The COVID-19 Vaccine Tracker Dashboard provides a daily breakdown of first and second vaccination doses administered statewide and regionally. It also lists the number of vaccines the state has received weekly since Dec. 14.

On Jan. 21, the site reported that 84 percent of vaccine doses sent to the state have been administered. New York has received 1,053,650 first doses of the vaccine and has given 907,870 first-dose shots to New Yorkers. The state has received 136,500 second-dose vaccines; 92,904 have been administered.

Regionally, **Long Island has administered 90 percent of the vaccine doses received**, the highest percentage in the state. The Mohawk Valley has the state's lowest vaccine distribution rate, at 74 percent.

Click [HERE](#) to access the vaccine tracker dashboard.

Telecommuting

UUP's telecommuting agreement with SUNY has been

extended through April 2, 2021. UUP first negotiated the telecommuting agreement last spring, following the shutdown of SUNY campuses and the abrupt conversion to distance learning.

"We will continue to advocate for its liberal interpretation so as to protect the health and safety of our campus communities during this most dangerous period of the COVID pandemic."

IDAP Awards Update

We will soon learn more about the deadlines and other information concerning Individual Development Awards (IDAP). These are UUP awards, financial compensation for your professional development activities that take place between July 1, 2020, and June 30, 2021. Both full-time and part-time staff are eligible to apply.

We are waiting for Management to name their three members to the evaluation committee. We will soon publish deadlines. Remember that we have more funding this year than perhaps any year in the past.

For now, please remember to save all your receipts!

eLearning with Empire KnowledgeBank

EKB eLearning offers thousands of courses and videos to help employees develop current skills and learn new skills for professional development and advancement.

Empire KnowledgeBank, a UUP-negotiated benefit, also offers courses to help members deal with stress, change, and staying balanced in an ever-changing world.

UUP-represented employees can access thousands of eLearning courses, eBooks and short course videos for opportunities to enhance their professional and career development, for certification preparation and continuing education.

Click [HERE](#) to apply.

Discretionary Salary Increases & Compression Distribution

2020 DSI and salary compression pools are expected in March. UUP will provide members with updated information as soon as possible.

Regardless of the date of payment, both salary compression adjustments and DSI will be retroactive to July or September depending on a member's obligation. But the money—added to base salaries—is coming.

Continued on page 5...

Hear Ye, Hear Ye, Remain Informed

...continued from page 4

Excerpts from prior UUP & Affiliate Messages

End of Travel Assistance Program

UNUM (UUP's life Insurance carrier) has reported that the New York State Department of Financial Services (DFS) Life Bureau is requiring that Unum remove all Value Added Services its Life products. Therefore, UUP will no longer be able to offer the Worldwide Travel Assistance program to our represented employees **beginning January 1, 2021**.

Should you have any questions or would like any additional information, please feel free to contact the UUP Benefit Trust Fund at 800-887-3863.

UUP Webpage for SUNY Vaccine Updates



UUP has created a webpage with the latest updates about which SUNY employees are eligible to get a COVID-19 vaccination under the state's Phase 1B vaccination plan. The page also provides information and links about who is eligible for a vaccination and how to sign up for one.

Click [HERE](#) to view the webpage.

Kowal made the most of his brief time, injecting a sense of urgency into his plea for lawmakers to act.

"At best, the state budget for SUNY will be flat," Kowal said. "Cutting SUNY is short-sighted and ill-advised. You don't cut your way out of an economic depression; you take bold steps."

New Employee Orientations

UUP is sponsoring New Employee Orientation programs **every Wednesday at noon**. Called "NEOs at Noon," these webinars offer opportunities to learn about the benefits that your union has negotiated for you with the state, and the best way to maximize them.

It's also a great way to meet colleagues and members of your campus UUP chapter in a welcoming setting, with a presentation designed to answer your questions.

Go [HERE](#) to select a date and register for the webinars.

Important Links

UUP Website:
<https://uupinfo.org/>

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

UUP Orientation Webinar
UUP Statewide New Employee Orientation Webinar (google.com)

Benefits Trust Fund
<http://uupinfo.org/benefits/pdf/benefits.pdf>

UUPF Chapter Elections

Please be aware of the upcoming local UUPF elections. Your nomination forms are to be received by mail in the UUP Central Office by February 18th. We hope many of you have nominated yourselves. We have seven officer positions and 18 delegate positions — one for every 75 members, plus seven officer positions. Our chapter is one of the largest — definitely one of the best.

Prevent SUNY Cuts

Lawmakers have the power to prevent a \$46 million cut to SUNY and protect possibly hundreds of jobs, if they stand united to pass laws that would bring new revenue to the state by fairly taxing New York's richest residents.

UUP President Fred Kowal made his support for new revenue streams the highlight of his three-minute statement to lawmakers on the Senate Finance and Assembly Ways and Means committees, Feb. 4, in an annual ritual of testimony during the budget season that has an added urgency this year because of revenue losses from the coronavirus pandemic.



NYS/UUP Joint Labor-Management Committees

***New* EXAM FEE REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM**

CERTIFICATION LICENSURE EXAM FEE REIMBURSEMENT

The CLEFR Program assists employees with the cost of attaining initial certifications, licenses or designations which are related to their profession or necessary for promotional opportunities and career mobility within the State University of New York (SUNY). Examination fees to renew certifications, licenses, or designations previously obtained by an employee are **not** reimbursable. Maximum reimbursement is \$1,000 for the period January 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021.

For NYS/UUP CLEFR Program guidelines and application, please go to:
goer.ny.gov/nysuupclefr.

PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT



For additional information contact:

NYS/UUP JLMC
2 Empire State Plaza, 8th Floor
Albany, NY 12223

Email: nysuupclefr@goer.ny.gov
Phone: 518.486.4666
Fax: 518.486.9220

Pre- & Retiree News

By Daniel Scott Marrone

The pace of people retiring in the U.S. has accelerated due to demographics and, no doubt, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. UUP has reported that the number of active retiree members has swelled to well over 6,000 individuals. The first step in "retiring" is "planning for retirement." You should carefully plan all aspects of your life in retirement. A first step in this process is to contact Mr. Walter Apple. Walter is an expert on this topic and is the designated person to contact concerning SUNY retirement whether you are an academic or a professional member of UUP. Contact Walter Apple at: 800-342-4206 ext.-638

wapple@uupbenefit.org

From UUP Website:

UUP members who have five years of continuous UUP membership immediately prior to retirement, or who have continuous membership for the length of their employment prior to retirement if less than five years, may apply for Retired Membership. As a Retired Member of UUP you are eligible to receive the following benefits:

- ◆ \$1,000 of UUP Life Insurance coverage
- ◆ Value Advantage discount vision program
- ◆ Opportunity to purchase UUP's



voluntary dental and vision plans

- ◆ Opportunity to purchase the MetLife Legal Services Plan
- ◆ Opportunity to participate in and/or purchase NYSUT, AFT and NEA discounted programs and services
- ◆ Discounted products and services from: Apple, AT&T, BJ's Wholesale Club, Brooklyn Nets, Enterprise Rent-a-Car, Goodyear, Liberty Mutual, and Fuel Buyers Group. ◆

Virtual Student Debt Clinic

Over 12 million people in the United States are struggling to make their monthly student loan payments, and millions more see economic and personal opportunities pass as they prioritize paying down their debt. Does this sound like you or someone you know?

Many of these people may qualify for free federal programs that can help reduce their monthly payments and eventually lead to student loan forgiveness, but these lifeline programs are significantly under-enrolled. In an effort to help our members get access to these programs, United University Professions and the American Federation of Teachers are proud to host a Student Debt Clinic which will provide information on how to enroll in Income-Driven Repayment plans and

Public Service Loan Forgiveness.

We will be offering a virtual Student Debt Clinic on Wednesday, February 17, 2021 from 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM via webinar.

To attend a Student Debt Clinic, you must pre-register here: <http://go.aft.org/StudentDebtClinicRSVP>. From the "student debt clinic" drop down menu, please select the UUP clinic that you are interested in attending – they are labeled "UUP [Virtual Student Debt Clinic] [date] [time]." In the affiliate field, type in the full name of our local (United University Professions), and it will autofill after a few keystrokes.

Registration is first come, first serve, and we must cap attendance for a single clinic at 50 participants in order to ensure

that we are able to provide maximum assistance to attendees. Registration will close 48 hours prior to the virtual clinic. Webinar login information will be provided prior to the clinic to all who register. [If you can't make one of these clinics, don't worry – we're planning on offering them every payday. If you want to help host a clinic at your worksite, please let us know!]

Managing your student loan debt is the first step in taking on the inequities which plague our system of higher education, and we look forward to seeing you at the Student Debt Clinic and working together to find a collective solution to the problems of student debt and college affordability!

Register now!



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Women's Rights & Concerns

Dolores Ciaccio



Dear colleagues:

We are at a pivotal moment in history for our country, our state, our union and our institutions. We have two critical needs: funding from the federal government and the approval of new revenue raisers at the state level.

All of us must continue the hard work of advocacy and we must show our commitment to the cause, push our elected officials, and make our voices heard. We are undertaking multiple actions in the coming weeks to reach our congressional delegation and our legislators in Albany. We need you to participate. It is through a collective effort that we are most effective.

You can help right now by sending an e-letter to Majority Leader Schumer, Sen. Gillibrand and your congressional representatives, urging them to pass President Biden's stimulus plan—a proposal that should deliver \$15 billion to New York, \$45 billion to higher education across the U.S. and necessary funding for our health care system. The timing is crucial and we must be heard!

Please share this message with colleagues and friends to magnify the effect that UUP can have. We strongly encourage you to make phone calls, use social media, and use the toolkit we will distribute. We will recognize the hard work and dedication of the chapter with the most total contacts made by Feb. 15. We hope this will encourage a wide level of membership actions on this important initiative.

Your union is providing every avenue for you to be involved, share your voice, and be part of our movement. There will be further information on the work we are doing at the state level that we will ask you to join. I hope you will work with us. Together we can do this—and we must do it, as our future is in our hands!

*In solidarity,
UUP President Fred Kowal*

CHAPTER MEMBERS on STATEWIDE COMMITTEES

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Affirmative Action

Grievance

Amit Bandyopadhyay

Contingent Employment

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Contingent Employment

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Technology Issues

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Affirmative Action *

Deborah-Ann R. Nilsen

Membership

Louis Scala

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