



Unifier

UNITED UNIVERSITY PROFESSIONS

◆ FARMINGDALE CHAPTER ◆

NOVEMBER 2025



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FIX TIER SIX

By John Masserwick



It was a beautiful fall afternoon October 6th for the FIX Tier 6 rally. Hundreds of teachers and administrators were present to hear a variety of legislators and Melinda Person, president of NYSUT, argue for an equity adjustment to the Tier 6 retirement program.

Tier 6 was put into place in 2012, increasing the amount enrollees must contribute into the system, extending the retirement age and reducing the pension amount retirees will receive, as compared to Tier 4.

Any changes to the current system must be approved by the NYS legislature and the governor.

A recent victory was the mandatory 10-year vesting was reduced to 5 years and the Final Average Salary was lowered from 5 years to 3 years, translating to a bigger pension check every month for life. ◆

UUPF Office

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GENERAL MEMBERSHIP Meeting

Thursday, November 20, 2025 ◆ Gleeson 104 ◆ 11:00 am

Unsure of your active membership? Enroll today:
<https://uupunion.org/myuup/Membership/>

Send us your questions or concerns. Click the mailbox at <https://uupfarm.org/>



Professionals' Corner Updates and Tidbits

By Solomon Ayo

Delegate Assembly:

The UUP Fall 2025 Delegate Assembly was held from October 23-25, 2025 in Albany, New York. Congratulations to Carlos Javita (Electrical Engineering Tech) and Dr. Jack Simonson (Physics) for their inaugural DA representation of all members at Farmingdale. They did a great job! Other chapter delegates in attendance included Yolanda Drakkir, Sandra Hustedt, Darleyne Mayers, and yours truly.

Delegates are your colleagues, elected by the members at large every two years. They serve on the chapter's Executive Board and are a part of the governing body of UUP at the statewide level. Delegates connect with members at the chapter and present questions and concerns to both the local chapters and the statewide leadership. The Delegate Assembly comprises over 300 members elected from all 29 SUNY campuses. Delegates serve on statewide committees and can be elected to serve on the Statewide Executive Board. All delegates have voting privileges and they set the priorities of the union. On the back of this newsletter you will find the list of UUPF's chapter-elected delegates. Please review this list and become familiar with the variety of roles. For further information regarding the Delegate Assembly and the role of delegates, please read

UUP's [Delegate Roles and Responsibilities](#).

Negotiations:

One issue that the Negotiations Team has heard loud and clear is regarding the persistent rise in the cost of living in Long Island and all areas downstate. Please be advised that the Team continues to accept suggestions and inquiries from all members. You may submit your concerns to the Negotiation Team via the UUPF website by clicking [HERE](#).

Discretionary Salary Increases:

The 2022-2026 contract negotiated by UUP concludes next year, but there is one more opportunity for a salary increase remaining this year – a Discretionary Salary Increase (DSI). It is important to remember that it is subject to management's discretion. There is no guarantee of receiving DSI, as it was not negotiated by your union. SUNY could have incorporated these increases into the contract as part of a guaranteed negotiated increase, but it chose the option to distribute them at only management's discretion.

UUP does not negotiate discretionary salary increases, because the union believes that such funds should be distributed among all our hardworking members in other ways. For



many years, it has been UUP's position that the discretionary award is divisive. However, SUNY has continued to exercise its discretion. Members who have experienced increases in their duties and responsibilities are encouraged to document them, and to advocate for themselves at this time of year. This includes particularly activities additional to those outlined in your Performance Program. Keep in mind, there is one more Discretionary Salary Increase next year, to be distributed December 2026.

The official procedures for requesting a pay raise are through a Promotion or Salary Increase application. They are available on the [UUPF website](#) and the Human Resources website. Should you have any inquiries, please contact me at the UUPF office in Ward Hall: uup@uupfarm.org or 934-420-4UUP. ♦

President's Message

What NYS Can Do Without Congress or the Supreme Court

There is A LOT that the State could have and should have been doing all along to prevent so much of damage caused by decisions made at the federal level. But here is one that we should begin immediately.

States create corporations. For over 200 years corporations have gotten all of their powers from the states in which they register. Corporations have the right to sue, be sued, own property, work across state lines, sign contracts, raise capital, own

other firms, sell products, higher employees, access courts, open bank accounts, etc. The Supreme Court has said that states have absolute authority to define and redefine corporations and set those powers.

About 100 years ago, when states started competing for corporate registrations they decided to give corporations the power to do anything permitted under the law. Fifteen years ago, in the Citizens United decision, the Supreme Court said essential-

ly that since corporations can do anything that is legal, and contributing to elections is legal, then corporations contributing to elections is also legal. Ever since then, corporations and billionaires have poured unlimited cash into our elections, drowning out the voices of American citizens, fueling corruption, and undermining democracy. But the states can stop this by restricting



corporate powers and privileges.

In Montana the Transparent Election Initiative proposed a constitutional amendment to state law preventing corporations, nonprofits, and other incorporated entities from making campaign contributions. This initiative failed on a technicality. The Attorney General deemed it legally insufficient because it addressed too many areas of the constitution. But nothing stops New York State citizens from uniting and proposing a similar, simpler measure here.

In the meantime, consider exercising your own constitutional rights and privileges. Although as NYS/UUP employees we cannot strike, it doesn't mean that we can't support those who can, or participate in other national movements. We are all stronger together!

In Solidarity
Yolanda Drakkir

THEPEOPLESSICKDAY.COM

MASS BLACKOUT
REFUSE TO BE SILENCED

NOVEMBER 25TH-DECEMBER 2ND

Time for the Biggest Economic & Labor Blackout in US History!

NO WORK
NO SCHOOL
NO PURCHASES
NO STREAMING
NO FEEDING THE SYSTEM

ORGANIZE. RESIST. STRIKE.

Oh SNAP! Who Knew...

By Vicki Janik

Farmingdale has many offices that help, and one of the most essential is inside the Library. It's the **Food Pantry**.

In Room 114, off to the left when you go into the Library in Greenley Hall, you can find free groceries. It's open Tuesday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Another spot with free groceries in on the Sharing Shelf in the Physical Plant, where a physical plant staff member kindly brings groceries from the Library Food Pantry for their staff.

The groceries are available to students and staff who are in need, no questions asked. We hope that such availability for anyone will continue. The food is donated by Island Harvest. There are canned and boxed groceries, along with various fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, and eggs.

Amanda Cataldo, Assistant Director for Strategic Initiatives, who is now in charge of the Food Pantry, says that there are about 95 visits to the Food Pantry each

week, sometimes over 112, and over the past two weeks there has been an increase.

Of course, we are grateful for this. But there is a downside, a question, really, concerning staff: In affluent, blue state New York, why do employees, *who are often full-time* and working at state-supported Farmingdale State College, need federally-funded free food?

We would be blind if we failed to acknowledge that of our over 1440 employees, almost a third are earning \$4,500 per course for a maximum of three courses per semester.

Worse, however, is the reality that **some full-time employees of the College have an annual FULL-TIME income of \$34,312**. That's for eight hours of work per day for the entire year. Yes, there's a pension plan and health benefits, but those benefits do not pay for rent, an automobile, insurance, utilities, emergencies, and yes, food.

FYI: As you may know, the

federally funded SNAP [Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program] offers subsidies to lower income families. Here's the gross monthly income limits for these subsidies by household size:

1 person: \$1,696
2 people: \$2,292
3 people: \$2,888
4 people: \$3,483

A household with an elderly or disabled person can receive somewhat more.

Since some of Farmingdale's **full-time staff members earn \$2,859.33 per month** (about \$.66 more than minimum wage on Long Island), a family of three can supplement their SNAP benefits with groceries from the Food Pantry. Every little bit helps.

Obviously, all of this does not even begin to address the needs of part-time staff. It's kind of like New York State should be ashamed of itself. ♦

FSC Facts From Labor-Management

By Vicki Janik

We got some good news in the last Labor Management meeting:

1. Although many members reported being told by managers to only expect qualified rank faculty hires in the future, management stated last week that "there is no such plan". In fact, management hopes to

grow tenure-track options going forward. There are currently a dozen advertised positions for tenure track faculty positions in all Schools.
2. Management confirmed that DSI award recommendations of immediate supervisors will not be reduced as they proceed up the chain of command.

3. The search for an Executive Director for Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer is in progress. This person will be a senior advisor reporting directly to the President and will be responsible for Affirmative Action and Title IX Compliance. ♦

Academic Corner

The Farmingdale Way: How We Handle Discrimination: A Review

By Vicki Janik

Nobody at Farmingdale really noticed back in October 2022. And nobody was specifically informed either. I don't remember UUPF being told anything, so maybe the College Council knew, or the President's Cabinet?

I refer to Farmingdale's *elimination and replacement of New York Policy 6501, Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Compliance Procedure* [October 09, 2018]. It's the procedure for state-operated campuses to respond to one of sixteen categories of discrimination. The Office of General Counsel is responsible for its enforcement. It's unclear when the FSC replacement procedure went into effect since the document says it was "adopted" in January 2021 and "approved" in October 2022.

How and why could such an important 10-page NYS/SUNY policy be eliminated and replaced at Farmingdale – replaced by a local 4-1/2 page document titled "Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Complaint Policy & Procedure? [Granted, the FSC font is painfully smaller.] Heres' how: The NYS Procedure 6501 allows that "All campuses must use this procedure *unless the campus has made an application for an exception.*" Apparently, Farmingdale did.

But any new procedure still must comply with the requirement that the Affirmative Action Officer [AAO] "provide the

complainant with information about "various internal and external mechanisms through which the complaint may be filed."

According to the Farmingdale website, currently our Affirmative Action Officer works within the Office of Human Resources which is within the area supervised by the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer. Look at some of the differences between NYS 6501 and the Farmingdale document.

NYS 6501: in five of its 10 pages, the document describes both an informal and a formal procedure.

Informal: The **Affirmative Officer** attempts to resolve the complaint.

Formal: If the informal process is unsuccessful, a formal written complaint request is sent to the **Affirmative Action Committee Chair**. This begins a Formal Resolution Process by a **Tripartite Committee**.

A Tripartite Committee is selected from a preselected group. [Before 2021, at FSC, this was a randomly selected group of campus personnel.] **One Tripartite member is chosen by the Complainant, one by the Respondent, and the third by these two designees.** The Tripartite Committee reviews all information and interviews pertinent witnesses. Both Complainant and Respondent



may testify and submit written documents.

Findings and Recommendations: The chair of the tripartite panel submits a summary of findings and recommendation(s) to the President based on "a preponderance of evidence."

The President writes a response, based on "a preponderance of evidence" and takes appropriate action including but not limited to termination, demotion, reassignment, suspension, reprimand, training. [The 6501 procedure includes five pages of additional details.]

Farmingdale Policy and Procedure: in one of its 4-1/2 pages, the document describes both an informal and a formal procedure. Informal: An Investigator "may attempt to resolve the underlying issue." If this is not satisfactory, a Formal Resolution is *also* handled by an Investigator. This Investigator shall consider "relevant, laws, policies and procedures, documentation, and information obtained from the complainant, respondents and third-party witnesses." Findings and Recommendations: A written

...continued on page 7

WHAT IS VOTE-COPE?



VOTE-COPE stands for:
Voices of Teachers in Education –
Committee on Public Education

VOTE COPE

 **HIGHER ED**
ACTION FUND PAC 

- » VOTE-COPE is NYSUT's non-partisan fundraising arm that coordinates voluntary contributions of members and supports union-endorsed candidates and campaign committees that are pro-public higher education and pro-labor.
- » 40% of your contributions go directly to UUP's Higher Education Action Fund (HEAF) Political Action Committee (PAC).
- » As the second largest local in NYSUT, UUP has significant influence on the expenditure of the remaining 60% of VOTE-COPE funds.
- » Last year, your colleagues contributed nearly \$8 million.

No member dues are used to support candidates, campaign committees, or any political action, making VOTE-COPE contributions even more important.

WHY SHOULD YOU CONTRIBUTE?

- » It helps protect pensions, tenure, contracts, academic freedom, collective bargaining, retiree benefits, and so much more.
- » Your contribution provides UUP members the opportunity to deliver UUP's message to legislators by attending advocacy days, in-district meetings or events, and fundraisers.
- » VOTE-COPE supports candidates who fight to protect public higher education – our students, our patients, our jobs, and our retirement benefits – regardless of party affiliation.
- » It unites us into a single voice to fight back against powerful forces trying to privatize our work and our campus resources.

VOTE-COPE SUCCESSES

VOTE-COPE funds helped us achieve the following victories in the 2025-26 Enacted State Budget:

- » An increase of \$114M in state operating aid. UUP has secured nearly \$400M in increased state operating aid over the last three years.
- » \$450M for a new emergency department at Upstate.

- » \$53M for full-time faculty, totaling \$159M for this initiative over the last three years.
- » Stopped the Downstate closure plan and secured \$1.1B for hospital renovations.
- » \$55.7M for hospital debt service cost relief.
- » Restored proposed cuts to student opportunity programs.

And much more!

CONTRIBUTING IS EASY!

1. **Payroll deduction** – You can fill out an electronic payroll deduction form or print a pledge card from the Political Action page on UUP's website and mail it to the below address.
2. **Cash or check contribution** – Members and retirees can donate at the Political Action table at the Delegate Assembly (DA) or mail to the following address:

UUP VOTE-COPE Voluntary Contribution
United University Professions
P.O. Box 15143, Albany, NY 12212-9954

3. **Expense voucher** – After traveling, you can opt to donate your reimbursement to VOTE-COPE at the bottom of your expense voucher.

QUESTIONS?

Please feel free to reach out to Kelly Keck at kkeck@uupmail.org with any questions regarding VOTE-COPE.

**WE NEED YOUR HELP TO CONTINUE SECURING
INCREASED STATE FUNDING FOR SUNY AND SECURE
AND PROTECT FAVORABLE WORKING CONDITIONS.**

Visit bit.ly/VOTE-COPE
to find out more and
donate to VOTE-COPE



Farmingdale Chapter Awarded For VOTE/COPE Contributions

THANK YOU FSC UUP members for helping our union keep up the fight for fair and equitable treatment of all UUP employees, for safe working conditions, and for compensation that respects the contributions ALL of us make to SUNY and the State of New York.

Every legislative "win" for public higher education in New York is the direct result of your contribution to Vote/Cope. Your delegates — all SUNY employee volunteers — write the letters, make the calls, knock on the doors, shake the hands, give the speeches, relay your messages, do all the work needed to negotiate the benefits, secure the funding,

prevent the cuts, and ensure that SUNY continues to function.

Every gain is one that could not be accomplished without You! ♦



How We Handle Discrimination: A Review...continued from page 5

report that "the Investigator will provide" is completed "describing the relevant evidence and making findings". The President responds similarly as in 6501. [The FSC procedure includes one page of additional details.]

Here's one good thing that the FSC procedure continues from 6501: Retaliation against a person who files a complaint serves as a witness, or assists or participates in any manner in the Procedure is strictly prohibited and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or expulsion.

Some questions arise: Why

did FSC request its own far more abbreviated discrimination procedure? Why did FSC replace an entire group of staff members, who were to make a recommendation to the president, with one single person? Why did New York State/SUNY approve this change? Who actually is Farmingdale's "Investigator"? The Affirmative Action officer in Human Resources? Has the new procedure made for a more just world at Farmingdale? Thanks to the new procedure, are there more discrimination cases successfully "settled," so that they do not have to be taken off campus? Or are there

more? Could the College budget be affected if any such cases were to be won by the complainants?

Discrimination is a reality today, perhaps even a growing reality. In a New York State college, discrimination deserves serious attention, from a serious group of employees-- an Affirmative Action Officer, an Affirmative Action Committee, and, as needed, Tripartite Committees who can advise the President.

Discrimination causes great harm. Farmingdale State College must give it at least 10 pages worth of attention. ♦



Did You Know...

By Sandra Hustedt

FARMINGDALE CHAPTER

EXECUTIVE BOARD

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President

Vicki Janik

VP Academics

Solomon Ayo

VP Professionals

RoseAnn Byron

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Debbie Nilsen

Secretary

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Michael Oil

Marian Nelson

Grievance: Academic

Michael Oil

Grievance: Professional

Sandra Hustedt

Health & Safety

Michael Canders

Labor Management

Michael Oil

Library Concerns

Kathryn Machin

Membership

Debbie Nilsen

Newsletter

Yolanda Drakkir

Active Retirees

Daniel Marrone

Webmaster

Sylvia Navarro Nicosia

Dependent Care Advantage Account (DCAA)

As a result of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the State and public employee unions, many employees are eligible for an employer contribution from New York State. To receive this contribution, you need to enroll in a DCAA. If you are eligible, the employer's contribution is automatically deposited into your account. For more information, go to the Human Resources webpage, then Benefits, then Other Links & Information, then [NYS Flexible Spending Account](#).

Leave Donation Program

The Collective Bargaining Agreement provides for a Leave Donation Program to assist employees who, because of long term illness, have exhausted all of their leave benefits and are subject to a loss of income during a continuing absence from work. Voluntary donations may be made from vacation leave only. For more information, see pp. 125-127 of the [Agreement](#) and go to the Human Resources webpage, then Forms & General Information, then Time & Attendance, then Leave Donation Program – [Guidelines](#), [Form](#). ♦

Individual Development Award Program

The application period for the Joint UUP/New York State Individual Development Award Program (IDAP) is open. Applications will be accepted through **May 15, 2026**. Awards will be made for the period between **July 2, 2025 – July 1, 2026**.

As a reminder, the IDAP is intended to assist eligible employees to develop their full professional potential and to prepare for advancement. Funding may be provided to enhance teaching, research capabilities, professional knowledge, and skills. Please consult the [Program Guidelines](#) and Application Instructions when completing your application to ensure that your application meets program requirements.

To be considered for an award, please submit the following via the: [IDAP Application Submission link](#). A fully completed [application form](#) that includes a budget summary (check the college [travel webpage](#); for per diem and mileage rates) and all supporting documents.

- A description of the proposed project or activity including:
 - Type of event, event site, and sponsor.
 - Whether the employee is presenting a paper or formally participating. If presenting a paper, the title of the paper and nature of the presentation must be provided.
 - A letter of acceptance of the paper being presented or other proposal. If acceptance is pending, the Campus Professional Development Committee should be notified of its receipt as soon as possible.
 - How this project or activity will further the employee's professional development or otherwise assist in preparing for advancement.
- An updated, brief curriculum vitae.
- Any relevant documents regarding the activity, and documentation on projected costs.
- For activities that have already taken place, please include copies of receipts and expenses.

Applications missing required documentation will be **rejected**.

For further information, please contact the Joint Labor Management Confidential Staff committee. Email FarmIDAP@farmingdale.edu. Applications will be accepted until **May 15, 2026**. ♦

STATEWIDE UUP COMMITTEES ♦ Contact UUPF if you are interested in joining any of these:

<https://uupinfo.org/committees/>

HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS COMMITTEES:

Disability Rights & Concerns
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Opportunity Programs
Gender and Sexuality Interests
Veterans Affairs
Women's Rights and Concerns

ADVOCACY/LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES:

Academic Medical Programs
Black and Latino Faculty/Staff Legislative
Environmental Advocacy and Issues
Outreach

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEES:

Contingent Employment
Future of Public Higher Education
Membership

Solidarity
Teacher Education
Technology Campuses
Scholarship Development subcommittee
Scholarship Selection subcommittee

PROCESS COMMITTEES:

Compliance/Audit
Constitution and Governance
Finance
Grievance

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 Drakkir at youdupf@gmail.com