

Executive Board Meeting – March 14, 2024

Acting President's Report

21st Annual Legislative Forum sponsored by the Catskill Regional Teachers Center - February 8, 2024

I was invited to attend the 21st Annual Legislative Forum on February 8, 2024 as Acting Oneonta UUP Chapter President. The event was hosted by Aaron Sorensen from the Catskill Regional Teachers Center. There were many teachers from the region present and Assembly Members Chris Tague and Joseph Angelino. Other Legislators were available via zoom in particular Assembly Member Brian Miller and Senator Peter Oberacker.

Most of the conversation revolved around Health Care and Retirees. There are bills in the assembly and senate that would reduce or harm the health care benefits of public employees who worked hard for the benefits and retired. There are also bills that prohibit the diminution of health insurance benefits of public employee retirees and their dependents including reducing the employer's contributions for such insurance. There are state agencies, municipalities, school districts, and public authorities and commissions all affected by these bills.

We must remain vigilant and contact our Legislators so our fellow public employees in retirement can rest assured that their benefits remain intact.

Also discussed at length was Tier 6 and how terribly flawed that Tier is for State Employees. We need our legislators to make changes to Tier 6 and have it (as well as Tier 5) mirror Tier 4.

I asked the Legislators if money appropriated to SUNY during the legislative process could be earmarked specifically for distressed SUNY campuses.

I was hoping more Legislators would be in person at this meeting, but in the Zoom state we remain post Covid.

Department Representative Meeting – Membership Development Officers – February 14, 2024

Our Oneonta Chapter Membership Development Officers, Rachel Germain and Matthew Unangst had a successful Department Representative Luncheon on February 14, 2024. One of the items brought to our attention was the lack of Union Bulletin Boards in some areas on campus.

At the recent Labor Management Meeting we started the conversation, noting areas that were lacking these boards and we are hoping to rectify these situations.

If anyone knows of areas with outdated or no bulletin boards – please contact Rachel Germain Rachel.germain@oneonta.edu or Matthew Unangst Matthew.Unangst@oneonta.edu

UUP Advocacy Day – March 4-5 Albany

I attended UUP Advocacy Day March 4-5 in Albany to pursue legislative initiatives for our workplace and communities in Healthcare, Education, Accessibility, Leadership and Sustainability.

This year UUP advocated for \$139 Million to go to the 18 distressed SUNY Campuses to close their budget deficits. These 18 SUNY Campuses include: Albany, Brockport, Buffalo State, Canton, Cobleskill, Cortland, Delhi, ESF, Fredonia, Geneseo, Morrisville, New Paltz, Old Westbury, Oneonta, Oswego,

Plattsburgh, Potsdam and Purchase. UUP asked for an additional \$110 Million across all SUNY Campuses to go towards enhancing academic programs and student services.

Our union strongly opposes the closure of SUNY Downstate. We spoke with legislators to urge them to support of the following bills S.6956 (Myrie) and A.7546 (Cunningham), which provides for a sustainability plan for SUNY Downstate. Downstate needs operating support for the hospital while it undergoes capital improvements and well as additional investments for perinatal care and infant morbidity.

Closing SUNY Downstate would devastate the Brooklyn community and effect mainly patients that are low-income, people of color and immigrants. Please fill out a letter of support and send to your legislators now: [United University Professions - Action Network](#).

UUP asked for restoration of \$175 Million for the three SUNY public teaching hospitals to provide coverage of employee fringe benefits and debt service payments.

\$20 Million to protect and expand the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) as well as \$5 Million to support the Pre-Medical Opportunity Program. Establish the Mental Health Education Opportunity Program (MHEOP).

Our advocacy group led by Jeri O'Bryan-Losee, from Statewide, met with Senators Joseph Griffo (District 53) and Peter Oberacker (District 51). Stephen Hinkle from SUNY Morrisville and Penina Kamina from SUNY Oneonta were part of our group. Our meeting with Senator Griffo was positive on all the asks for SUNY Campuses, except that we perceived lack of support from him on SUNY Downstate. Professor Kamina urged the senator to reconsider his position and advocated passionately on behalf of the SUNY Downstate community. Next up was our meeting with Senator Oberacker, who shed more of a positive outlook for SUNY Downstate. Oberacker is passionate about his support for SUNY Campuses as he represents 5 in his district. At the end of our meeting with Senator Oberacker, conversation shifted into healthcare and he was passionate to provide our District with assessible quality care to keep us all healthy.

New Employee Meet and Greet – Membership Development Officer – March 7, 2024

Our Oneonta Chapter Membership Development Officer, Rachel Germain, had a successful New Employee Meet and Greet on March 7, 2024, in Craven Hall. It was very nice to meet individuals face to face and have conversations outside of workplace activities.

Joint Labor Management Health and Housing Survey

In response to rising concerns about healthcare cost and access, our UUP Oneonta Chapter is continuing its work on a SUNY Oneonta survey on the topic of healthcare and housing access. In a smaller working group consisting of William Simons, Gary Wickham and myself we pulled together a comprehensive Health and Housing Survey which we will present to Management for distribution later this month.

Compensation Committee Report

On February 27th we had a meeting with Mark Ferrara, Chris Sielaff and Shirley Clark representing the union side and for Management it was President Cardelle, Dia Carleton and Julie Piscitello.

We will continue to meet with management this semester to address compensation issues affecting UUP members.

Upcoming Events

- 1) Performance Programs: Professional Development and Advancement – March 21, 2024, Noon-1pm – Morris Hall – Otsego Grille
- 2) Critical Decisions: Retirement & Healthcare Considerations for UUP Members – April 4, 2024, Noon-1pm - Morris Hall – Otsego Grille
- 3) May UUP Picnic – May 11, 2024, 11am – 4pm – College Camp

As Acting President, I will be attending the Delegate Assembly held April 12-13, 2024, in Saratoga Springs, NY at the Saratoga Hilton. I also scheduled an appointment to meet with Senator Peter Oberacker on May 2, 2024, at 9:30pm to discuss support for SUNY Oneonta and Higher Education Initiatives. Anyone interested in joining this meeting please reach to me at clarksa12@gmail.com.

CWA Assistant – Chapter Hours

Our UUP Chapter Assistant, Teresa DeSantis, has indicated that she would like to increase her hours in order to effectively do the work of organizing and meeting our Chapter needs moving forward. This would include updating the database and creating a searchable archive. I would like to make a motion to increase Teresa DeSantis' hours from 17 to 21 hours per week.