



ONEONTA

Chapter Office
124 Human Ecology
436-2135

Chapter President's Notes:

Curse the Darkness, or Light a Candle?

It seems that a new Dark Age has descended upon us.

Dismantling education, health care, and support for the needy seem to be the most important agenda items in political life at a time when business profits and return on investment capital have reached new highs in the country.

The political climate could not be more hostile to the interests of public higher education in the nation and in New York State.

Cuts at the Federal level for student loans and grants will reduce the funding resources of potential SUNY students. Cuts in the levels of Medicare reimbursement are going to have a major impact on SUNY medical centers and require addressing in SUNY's operational budget. In addition, there will be a loss to the State of New York of hundreds of millions of dollars in Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements for New York citizens. These will have to be made up from state revenues. This will mean more budget cuts to the State University.

The multi-year tax cut program passed last year, unless changed, forces dramatic curtailment of state operations and spending for the next three years. This will mean even more budget cuts to the State University.

Albany TV station WRGB reporter Judy Sanders reported Monday night that 10,000 reduction in state employment is being planned by the Pataki administration and she was told by Pataki administration sources that it would be more cruel and difficult than the reductions in 1995.

In July, when I took over as your elected chapter president, I knew the tasks would be challenging. I misjudged -- they are difficult; and things are going to get worse. The orchestrated rejection of civilized institutions such as the public education, health services for citizens (and even labor unions for employees) has not reached its peak crescendo.

Public higher education is on the agenda of selective conservative groups across the nation who seek to dismantle or limit it. CHANGE-NY is one of those nationally linked groups following a program to end the egalitarian character of higher educational opportunities for the financially strapped families of American society. They seek to reduce taxpayer support for education; to end tenure for university faculty members; to reduce research and require greater classroom workloads; and to privatize into profit-making entities as many of the university functions that remain as possible: residence halls, counseling, admissions, security, maintenance, (continued on page 2)

Negotiations Meeting Scheduled For November 30th

The first negotiations sessions with the newly appointed head of Employee Relations and UUP has been scheduled for November 30th and December 1st. Nothing has been done since the initial exchange of demands last spring. The State's insistence on increasing the teaching productivity of all SUNY faculty, reduction of benefits for all employees and no salary increases over a multi-year contract period were rejected by UUP.

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Discretionary Salary Increases Due in December

Salary increases due employees under the now expired UUP contract are to be paid December 13, 1995 for employees on the payroll as of June 30th, 1995.

The pool of money for discretionary salary increases to employee base annual salaries are calculated from a percentage of two payrolls: .7% of the June, 1994 payroll and .3% of the June 1992 payroll. Any current employee is eligible for a discretionary increase if they were incumbents of their positions as of June 30, 1995.

The dollar amount for this year's discretionary salary pool at Oneonta calculates out to be \$167,897.

The chapter officers have acquired the appropriate payroll information to monitor the dollar amounts.

A particular irony in these difficult times; 1992 and 1994 payrolls contain larger numbers of employees than present. This will serve to provide an extra largess that can be spread more widely and richly for the reduced number of staff present in SUNY. Our retired and non-renewed colleagues served to provide a larger payroll base for the calculation. It will not be management's discretion that should be complimented if there is any good feeling resulting from these increases but rather the prior service of many of our former full-time colleagues. It is a small bequest from an earlier generation of employees to the present generation of employees. Think of that the next time you see a retired colleague.

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Mona Hughes appointed Acting Treasurer

Mona Hughes has been appointed Acting Treasurer of the Chapter following the resignation of Todd Jones.

Todd Jones had served as Treasurer for the Chapter for many years and resigned after leaving the (continued on page 2)

Oneonta Chapter Executive Board

Ed Wesnofske, President
Fred Miller, Vice-Pres. for Academics
Will Vitous, Vice-Pres. for Professionals

Paul Jensen, Secretary
Mona Hughes, Treasurer (acting)
Bill Benedict, Delegate & Retired Liaison

Chris Bulson, Delegate
Joe Baldwin, Delegate
Virginia Pence, Part-time Liaison

Chapter President's Notes, cont.

computer services, audio-visual support, printing and internal communications services.

Members and supporters of these groups are now being appointed to the SUNY Board of Trustees. Their impact can be seen in their recent behavior; a public humiliation of the Chancellor by rejecting his budget request for SUNY because it did not cut enough. More Trustee positions will be filled by Pataki appointments in the coming months and bode even more damaging influences.

These dark forces are already being translated into action at the State University at Oneonta and they are already evident to many on campus. The first round of retrenchment notices have been issued this fall to members of the Education Department and staff in the College Union. These terminations are in addition to wholesale nonrenewals for dozens of term appointees.

In addition, University planners have proposed an initial round of program eliminations at the College. A further mid-year budget cut of 1% for SUNY is likely to occur.

Two choices confront us: 1. Do nothing and hope the nasty political climate turns benign and continue to curse our fate as victims, or, 2. Do something and try to dispel the darkness.

Doing nothing and hoping it goes away is a foolish strategy to say the least.

Doing something to change the bleak environment is the only sensible alternative.

How can you light a candle? Sign up for UUP's VOTE/COPE campaign. By law, union dues and agency fees cannot be used for political activity. They must be collected separately. UUP's legislative and political fights are meagerly funded because we have not made the effort.

We have been asleep politically for a long time expecting other factors to take care of us: positive ideas about education in the public arena; relying on other unionized groups like school teachers doing the political fund raising and education. That era has come to an end.

Sign up for VOTE/COPE. Two dollars a paycheck, \$1.00 a week will add up. Lobbying and supporting candidates friendly to SUNY and the cause of the union is expensive in a statewide organization such as ours. Some individuals contribute \$5.00 per paycheck. Call the office at 2135 to get a payroll deduction authorization form. It is painless sacrifice when done on a biweekly basis. A VOTE/COPE payroll authorization is a **lighted candle** which when united with the contributions of other SUNY employees and members in the broader labor movement will cast off the darkness.

A little contest. The first UUP member who calls the UUP office to correctly identify the two people on the left in the front page photograph of the November UUP VOICE will win a nice canvas tote bag with the UUP logo on it. Chapter officers and Executive Board members are not eligible to win. Decision of the answering machine will be final.

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Chapter Elections to be Held

At the next chapter meeting, an Elections Committee will have to be appointed to conduct elections for a treasurer to serve until June 30, 1997; professional delegates to the Delegate Assembly which meets three times a year; and delegates to affiliated labor bodies. A chapter meeting is tentatively scheduled for December 1st.

Hughes Appointed Acting Treasurer, cont.

State University to pursue career opportunities elsewhere. Diligent and professional to the end of his service, Todd prepared materials for the annual audit by UUP's accounting firm for the period ending August 31, 1995.

Mona Hughes is well known to many for her work in the Instructional Support Center in IRC. She will serve as Acting Treasurer and member of the Chapter Executive Board until an election for a replacement takes place later in the semester.

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Carl Meacham Appointed Chapter Affirmative Action Chair

At its September meeting the Chapter Executive Board approved the appointment of Carl Meacham of the Political Science Department as Chapter Affirmative Action Chair. Carl had served in the position previously.

The Executive Board also approved a motion authorizing \$400.00 appropriation for support of program activities associated with the Affirmative Action function. Carl will have discretionary authority over this budget item.

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New Office Hours Announced

New hours for the staffing of the UUP chapter office in Human Ecology have been announced for the fall semester.

The chapter office is open Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Peg Carney is the office secretary who staffs the office at these times. During weeks with recognized holidays under the Communication Workers of America contract that governs staff working conditions, the office hours are shifted appropriately.

Information on such things as benefits or questions about UUP's contract can be addressed by contacting the office. In addition, an answering machine is available to receive calls and inquiries when officers are not in and the office is not staffed.

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Labor Management Meeting Scheduled for Friday, November 10th

The Chapter's Executive Board will meet with Management on November 10th at 9:30 AM as part of the regular consultations about issues and problems raised by our members.

The agenda items for this meeting are the constitution and operation of the College Review Panel and the College Committee on Professional Evaluation mandated under a Memorandum of Understanding between UUP and the State; the status of proposed program cuts for SUNY Oneonta; the class scheduling proposal of the Provost's office; and workload and planning issues associated with the curtailment of student teaching activities in the Education Department for 1996.

The College Review Panel and the Committee on Professional Evaluation are important review and advisory committees are controversies relating to the status of professional employees.

Reports on these meetings will be forthcoming.