

UUP Binghamton Executive Board / General Meeting

Wednesday, November 8, 2023

President's Report – Brendan McGovern

Contractual Raises

The negotiated raises and all back pay should be in your November 22 paycheck.

Delegate Assembly

The Fall 2023 UUP Delegate Assembly doubled as a policy-making assembly and a joyous commemoration of UUP's 1973 founding. The celebration also marked recent back-to-back victories for UUP: One of the best budgets for SUNY in more than a decade—thanks in large part to UUP's advocacy—and one of the strongest contracts ever, which members resoundingly ratified in August.

And a call to action as UUP emphasized our goal to stop planned program cuts at SUNY Potsdam and prevent the administrative fiasco at Potsdam from replicating throughout the SUNY system.

Delegates approved a constitutional amendment that will guarantee one place each for academic and professional contingents on the statewide Executive Board.

Also passed: resolutions supporting the newly organized Starbucks Workers United and calling for solidarity with UUP's colleagues at West Virginia University, where programs have been significantly cut; and a resolution supporting legislation in favor of reducing the U.S. Defense budget without compromising the pay or benefits of active service members.

The longest debate came over a resolution authorizing UUP to contribute \$6,000 to two reproductive rights organizations. Delegates voted to refer the proposed expenditure to a subcommittee of the statewide Executive Board for review. And a shoutout to Claire Kovacs for fighting now at 3 consecutive Delegate Assembly's for reproductive rights.

Our chapter submitted a resolution in memory of our fallen comrade Benita Roth and that resolution was approved by the statewide Executive Board. The resolution included a commitment by UUP to contribute to a scholarship on this campus in Benita's name supporting students whose educational trajectory and research reflects outstanding work in gender justice and social justice at Binghamton University.

Campus Labor Council

The Campus Labor Council met with Senator Lea Webb on October 27, 2023 to discuss organized labor on campus, shared issues, and how we can best support each other.

The Campus Labor Council is an umbrella organization that includes UUP, GSEU and CSEA, the three largest bargaining units at Binghamton University. The Campus Labor Council is made

up of different unions with the mission of fostering a strong community that will fight for bettering the lives of all campus workers and their families. Alone we are strong... together we are stronger.

Binghamton Supports SUNY Potsdam

Following our discussion with Senator Webb, she joined with UUP, GSEU and CSEA on the University Union steps in support of our union brothers and sisters at SUNY Potsdam.

Our union colleagues at Potsdam are facing a disturbing and challenging new situation created by decisions made by SUNY's Board of Trustees. On Sept. 19, SUNY Potsdam President Suzanne Smith announced a drastic financial restructuring plan that includes the deactivation of 14 degree programs and closing as many as four buildings to reduce a projected \$9 million deficit.

Many faculty and staff will lose their jobs if these programs are cut. And we are closely watching what is happening at the 18 other financially distressed UUP represented SUNY campuses. Indications have been that Fredonia and Downstate Hospital are next. Our statewide leadership recently traveled in force to Fredonia to put SUNY on notice that UUP will vigorously oppose any attempts to cancel programs or close institutions. Potsdam and other institutions have successfully tapped into their alumni organizations for solidarity. In addition, our statewide UUP President Fred Kowal has been in regular talks with SUNY Chancellor King and shared with us at a Chapter Presidents meeting this morning that Chancellor King has seen that our resistance to the Potsdam cuts are organized and working. Fred also shared that in response to our organized reaction to the Potsdam and other possible cuts the Governor has indicated to him that she will allocate increased funds to Downstate and the financially distressed campuses in this years budget. We will see how this plays out but it is a good sign in a year where NY is expected to have budget issues and money will be tight. We have also been in talks with our legislators and many of them are frankly pissed off because their intent in allocating our UUP ask of an additional \$163 million in operating funds this year was to make financially right the 19 financially distressed campuses.

Adjunct NEO

Our contingent employees are the most vulnerable element of our union. Adjuncts are often hired at the last minute with little job security. Unlike tenure track faculty, there is currently no university sponsored dedicated New Employee Orientation for adjuncts where we as UUP have a chance to share with adjuncts the rights and benefits that they do have, and while we have much more to do, the gains for adjuncts included in the new contract that in addition to higher wages, also include paths to more stability and a lowering of the bar to become benefits eligible. Recently, Courtney, Don and myself addressed this issue and organized a series of Adjunct New Employee Orientations. We faced obstacles particularly in identifying and getting a consolidated list of adjuncts. And when we finally did get this list it was scrubbed of any contact information and we were told that the University could not share that information with us. The good news here is that We raised this issue with management and now have a confirmation that information about an adjunct new employee orientation that UUP will organize will go out with offer letters

that adjuncts receive for next year's courses. This is a big step forward in our support for adjuncts.

Issues with SL Levels

We are seeing an increasing number of cases where jobs are posted with a lower SL level than the statewide classification of the SL levels warrants.

Recently we worked with some members of the sciences to help them get reclassified from a misclassified lower SL level into the appropriate SL level for their duties and responsibilities. Following this, a recent job post in the sciences for a similar position was classified even one SL level lower than the original misclassified positions. Sometimes it feels like we are playing Wack A Mole dealing with these misclassifications. Chris, our Labor Relations Specialist, and our officers are working on this with management.

UUP Binghamton Chapter to Hold Special Election

UUP Binghamton Chapter is holding a special election to fill our vacant Vice President for Academics position. We are using this special election as an opportunity to also fill our five vacant academic delegate positions.

All Binghamton Chapter academics on payroll on November 06, 2023 will soon receive a letter via the USPS seeking nominations for the following positions:

Vice President for Academics and Delegate (You can nominate up to 1)

Academic Delegate (You can nominate up to 5)

Nominations will close on December 11, 2023 and the election will be held soon after academics return from winter break.

Membership Development Drive

Next week, from Tuesday Nov. 14th through Thursday, Nov. 16th, UUP's professional organizing team will be on campus for a membership drive. You are invited to join the effort!

Our organizing staff will provide lists and materials, and we will join them to talk to non-members, ask them to join UUP, and invite them to the University-Wide Benefits Fair. Never done non-member outreach? That's fine! You will be paired with a professional organizer who can show you the ropes.

Organizers will be going out to meet non-members from 10 AM to 4 PM on Tuesday (11/14) and Wednesday (11/15), and from 10 AM to 2 PM on Thursday (11/16). If you want to participate, please respond to me bmcgovernuup@gmail.com and UUP organizer Jordan Helin (jhelin@uupmail.org) and let us know when you're available that day. Even if it's just for an hour, that's great!

Union Wins

From writers' rooms to car factories, workers are pressing companies for higher pay and better quality of life. Many are willing to walk off the job to get there, and some are winning.

The six-week rolling strike by members of the United Auto Workers union has ended. It's clear that the U.A.W. has achieved a historic victory for its members. Capitalizing on the industry's high profits, a tight labor market, and support from President Biden, the union forced the Big Three automakers to make big concessions not just on wage rates but in other areas, too.

Toyota gave 9% raises right after the UAW reached their agreement. Now Tesla is giving a 4% raise + bonuses to all 11k workers at its Berlin Gigafactory because workers were trying to unionize. Union wins ripple across industry. That's why we always stand in solidarity.

On that note

MSHR's Lecture Series

UUP has Joined with Masters of Human Rights Lecture Series as a cosponsor for a discussion with labor activists Jaz Brisack (Workers United Starbucks campaign) and Scott Houldieson (UAW Local 551, UAWD Steering Committee). This event is on Thursday, November 9 @ 6:30 in UDC 120.

To speak about this here is **René Rojas** Assistant Professor Department of Human Development