



UUP Binghamton Executive Board / General Meeting

Wednesday, March 13, 2024

President's Report – Brendan McGovern

UUP Binghamton Chapter Special Election for Academic VP & Delegates

I am delighted to announce and extend my warmest congratulations to Tejpreet Chadha from Biological Sciences for securing victory in UUP's special election for Vice President for Academics.

Furthermore, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to our newly elected academic delegates: **Rebecca Harrison** from Philosophy, **Peter Knuepfer** from the Department of Earth Sciences, **John Ponstingel** from Geography, and **Michael Kelly** from Judaic Studies. Your willingness to serve as representatives is commendable and I am certain that you will advocate effectively for the interests and concerns of our members.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to all UUP union members who participated in this special election. Your active engagement and participation are fundamental to the democratic process within our union and your voices contribute to shaping our collective future.

Together, let us continue to uphold the values of solidarity, fairness, and unity as we work towards a stronger, more inclusive union that serves the needs of all its members.

UUP Binghamton's Membership Growth and Commitment to Union Participation!

I am very pleased to announce and congratulate our Binghamton Chapter United University Professions (UUP) on increasing our membership from 80% to 82.3% in the last month, without any change in the size of our bargaining unit. This achievement is a testament to our collective commitment to strength and unity within our union.

I want to extend a special acknowledgment to those who have played instrumental roles in this success. **Donald Kunkel, Courtney Ignarri, Alexandra Messersmith-Mars, Troy Norton, Patrick Doyle, Nick Eggleston, and our statewide and organizer friends: Jude Jayatilleke, Jordan Helin, Danielle Judge and Kate Wood**, your dedication and efforts during new employee orientations (NEOs) and this month's membership drive have been invaluable. Your hard work has contributed significantly to our union's growth and vitality.

As we celebrate this achievement it's important to reflect on the challenges facing public sector unions like ours, particularly in light of the Supreme Court's Janus decision. This ruling has had

a negative impact on public sector unions by eliminating fair-share fees for non-members, thereby reducing the financial resources available for collective bargaining and advocacy efforts. Proponents of Janus hoped it would lead to decreased union membership and influence, posing challenges to our ability to effectively represent the interests of all employees.

Despite these challenges, our increased membership demonstrates our resilience and determination to overcome obstacles together. Let us continue to stand united in advocating for fair treatment, better working conditions, and a brighter future for all members.

Congratulations once again on this significant achievement, and a huge thanks to all of you for contributing to our union's growth and success.

Library Concerns

We are addressing some issues with the Libraires. Particularly in regard to member calendars and the Time and Attendance system. We are working on this, and it is ongoing. And here is a reminder:

You should never feel compelled to share any personal medical information with any supervisor. There may be occasions when it is necessary and appropriate to share medical information with Human Resources, but for the most part your medical information is between you and your doctor.

Delta Dental

We continue to hear from members about Delta Dental, and local dentists opting out as in network providers. If you are contacted about this by members ask them to please address all complaints to our statewide UUP Benefits Trust Fund representatives: Director of Member Benefits/Fund Doreen Bango dbango@uupbenefits.org, and Healthcare Specialist/Benefit Fund representative Walter Apple wapple@uupbenefits.org.

Sunshine Fund

Thanks to David Stone for managing this fund. Dave has asked to step down and following how this is managed at other campuses, I will call for volunteers to serve on a committee to manage our Sunshine Fund. They will be charged with creating policies for managing the fund that will then be voted on by our Executive Committee. If you would like to serve on this committee please reach out to me.

Advocacy Day

Shout out to Binghamton Chapter members who traveled to Albany on March 4 – 5 to effect legislative change including Andre Mathis, Troy Norton, Robert Mess and Nikita Robinson. Statewide we had double the number of people we had in the past and fought to save Downstate, fund our 18 distressed campuses, and to fix the retirement Tier 6.

As crises have hit at Downstate, Potsdam and Fredonia we have been able to marshal our strength and focus as never before. UUP is gaining support in the legislature and in the media while Chancellor King has been losing support. If we allow them to take out one of our hospitals in the middle of Brooklyn then no campus is safe.

The Assembly and the Senate have released their one house bills and they are favorable to us. With Senator [Zellnor Myrie](#)'s bill in the senate that would effectively save downstate. The Assembly's 1 house bill also supports keeping downstate open.

In terms of the non-hospital campuses. We asked for \$138 million in additional operating funds, the Senate has given us \$100 million and the Assembly has given us \$186 million. This is not a final budget so now is when our advocating is most needed. We have unprecedented access to the governor's staff and are using that influence to achieve our goals. We also have access to Senators and Assemblymembers across the state including locally Senator Lea Webb and Assemblymember Donna Lupardo here in Binghamton. Last year we benefitted from a drawn-out budget process, but this year *Speaker* Carl Heastie wants to wrap up the budget on time and so does the governor.

Statewide we are keeping pressure on governor regarding downstate. TV Ads are running in Brooklyn and Albany, hard-hitting and it's having some effect. The secretary to the governor has shown interest in the wording of our bill.

Here is one of the commercials:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=trzH8yYAjaM>

Send Letter

Kevin Smith, Chapter President from Potsdam shared with me this morning that the SUNY Potsdam administration is in the middle of processing a second round of terminations.

Statewide UUP President Fred Kowal met with ministers from Brooklyn on Advocacy day. All in all our advocacy is working. The governor is beginning to pause as we are making significant strides on this issue.

Keep sending letters. Focus on leaders and local assemblymembers and senators.

<https://actionnetwork.org/groups/uup>