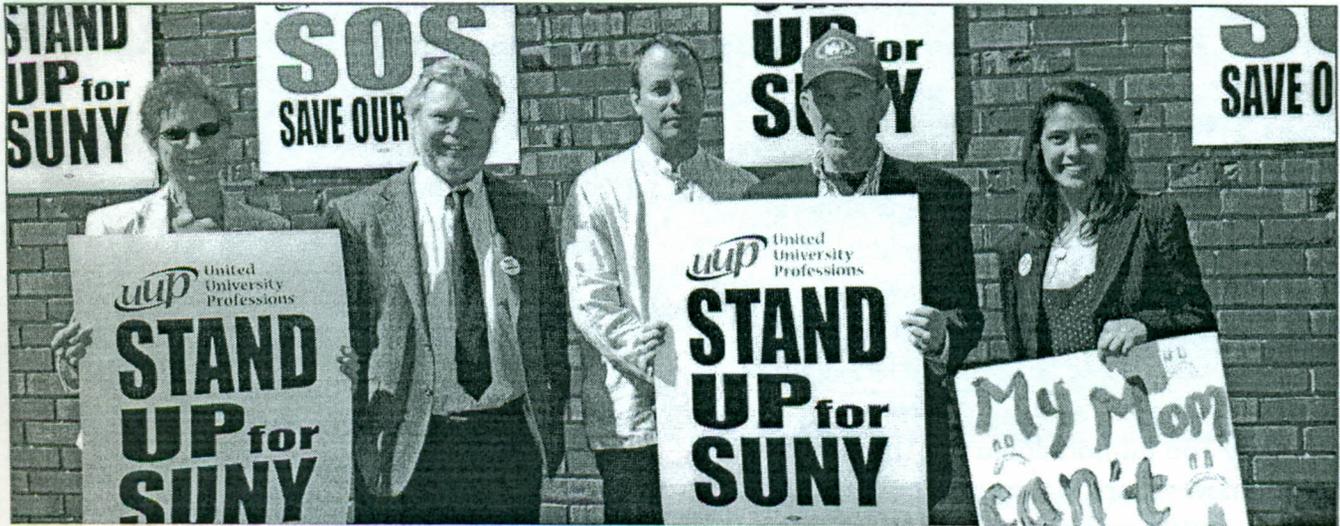


The Bullhorn

The Official Newsletter of the SUNY New Paltz Chapter of the UUP



From left, rally organizers Donna Goodman, Richard Kelder, Ed Felton, Peter Brown and NYPIRG Project Coordinator Ariana Basco stand together on the podium.

Notes from the UUP Chapter President

Richard Kelder

Spring is here and with it comes a sense of hope and renewal. However, I am also reminded of T. S. Eliot's, *The Wasteland*, and the lines "April is the cruelest month, breeding lilacs out of the dead land, mixing memory and desire," and I'm quickly brought back to reality. This April SUNY and UUP members are once again bracing for hard times with deep budget cuts proposed that amount to 158 million dollars. Welcome to hard times. Memories of such times have a way of tempering the desire or wish for better days, better times. Yet we must have faith and persist, and must act to ensure that the future of SUNY remains vital to our students and citizens. Many of us at SUNY have been through hard times before. Some may remember the early 1990s with lag pay, and 0 percent increases for four years. That's right—four bagels in a row and, to add insult to injury, the loss of benefits. Those weren't the good old days. Personally, I had two small children then and times were not easy.

We are often told by pundits and economists that the economy goes through these economic cycles, just hold on and before

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you know it happy days will return again and our IRA and pension accounts will be flush again. This is supposed to be comforting, but this time is different. We are not just randomly tumbling in an average economic cycle here. We are in the worst economic crisis since the Depression and the stakes for recovery are very high. The state of the union in New York State, given a huge budget deficit of 9.3 billion and the severity of the budget cuts proposed by the Governor and legislature, are enough to knock the wind out of any idealist's or utopian's sails. This is the hard cold reality that all New Yorkers will have to live with and survive for the next few years. Recovery will not be easy and SUNY is in the eye of the storm. SUNY has already been cut by 400 million dollars in the past two years and now we are looking at another cut of 158 million. SUNY employees, like all New Yorkers, are feeling anxious, insecure and fearful of losing jobs; the possibility of retrenchment looms in the background. For many, the American dream of home ownership, a secure retirement and pension, and an affordable education for their children, is being put on hold. In addition, students are coming to believe that attaining an education may represent a dream deferred, especially those from lower socio-economic classes whose only option now is to attend a community college, where the transfer rate and the completion of 4 year degree stands at 25%. The doors are closing for too many young people and we cannot let that happen.

In the midst of hard times it is easy to acquiesce, despair, entertain distractions or worse, fall into denial. We cannot. Last month UUP and NYPIRG held a rally on campus, and students and faculty spoke about the importance of education and the need to save SUNY. Attendance was fair and it could have been better. Perhaps it is the case that people only take political action when things are really critical, when something impacts them directly. You know what I mean. When my neighbor is out of work it is a recession, when I'm out of work it is a depression. However, things are

really bad for many, and it is time for faculty and staff to speak up and advocate for SUNY and for our students. Sitting on the fence is no longer an option; nor is complacency. It has come down to a line in the sand and a moment for decision. Which side are you on?

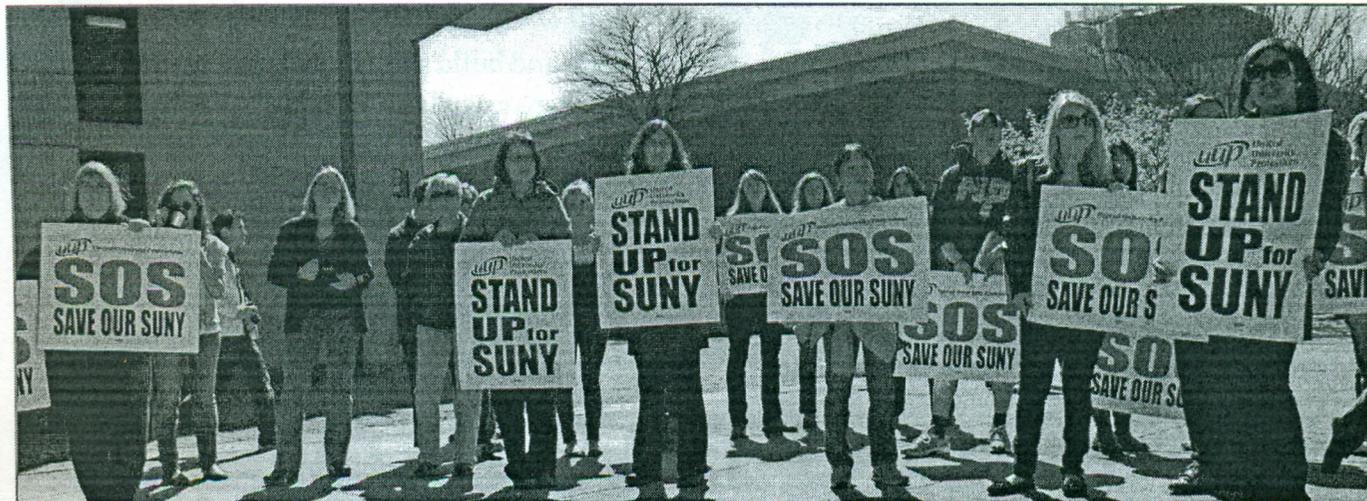
As we all know, UUP employees are in-line for a 4% raise either in July or September. The Governor has said he will not honor the negotiated raises of unions. Soon there will be calls from various quarters that UUP not accept the raise, that in the spirit of common sacrifice and for the good of the state we should comply, knowing full well that we may not have a contract for a few years. Where does UUP stand on this issue? Where do you stand? Which side are you on? Courage and action are needed now so it is important to write and call your legislators, or speak with them directly and state the case that the future of New York lies with a quality public higher education, an educated citizenry and a strong SUNY. Now more than ever we have to come together and do what is right for each other, our children and our state. We have to close ranks and stand firm in our demand that funding for SUNY be restored, and that the future of a higher education, the dream of so many students, not be placed on hold now or in the future.

In union,
Richard Kelder

Self Identity

Glenn McNitt

UUP Statewide Executive Board member



UUPers and students hold signs as they listen to speakers at the March 2010 rally.

For some time now, I have been urging our members to consider travelling to wherever policy-makers may be to persuade them to support our cause and our efforts on behalf of students, the communities from which they come and the communities where we live. Put briefly, we in SUNY New Paltz and in other campuses have a “noble” mission, as do all teachers, to educate and empower intellectually and ethically those who enter our classrooms. In that respect, we have made our case many times to those who question our motivations and efforts. Public higher education, just like K-12, has been attacked as inferior to private education, as too generous and inclusive for the economical circumstances which we now face, and not modern enough for the new century. We are old fogies, inferior in the first place, and dreamers who refuse to face pragmatic realities. In other places, I have attempted to enlighten those who diminish our efforts, both inside and outside the academy, but let me just say, the critics are wrong.

First, I want to acknowledge the comments of Tom Auxter, President, United Faculty of Florida, for

his insights regarding the role of higher education in his state, and frankly, most states. Many of the comments that follow are guided by his perceptions.

Much of my time and that of many others from the union and from management, has focused on justifying continued support for public universities in every state. The focus has been on money—revenue and tax support—that policy makers of the State ought to provide to the public university, at least in our judgment. Meanwhile, policy makers face declining revenues, requests and demands from numerous groups and interests which also have legitimate needs and concerns, and not enough resources. So why provide resources to higher education with the barrage of requests that come from so many constituencies? UUP has made the following arguments.

What is the quickest way out of this recession for New Yorkers? Clearly, what the State has done in the past would be good, if we could do it again, although that might not be good for the country ultimately. Returning financial institutions in New York to their previous profligate status

would earn enormous tax revenues for the State. When times were booming, 40% of NYS revenues came from taxes on the income of Wall Street Bankers and their friends. As terrible as that practice was, it resulted in enormous tax revenue for NYS. Yet, returning to that situation would be foolhardy. New Yorkers need a more broad based economy than one concentrated on investment banking alone. So what options might we reasonably envision?

Investing in SUNY is investing in a knowledge-based economy. Graduates of SUNY bring to the job marketplace ingenuity, innovation, inventiveness, and insights that will benefit them as individuals and the State as a whole. Rather than offering tax forgiveness for businesses in the hope that businesses will migrate to New York or downsizing public institutions so that they are a lighter burden on the taxpayer, NYS should invest in higher education for New York's youth, supplying an enlightened labor force that can generate opportunities within the State. Educated and enlightened workers will seek an enriched social and cultural environment for themselves and their families. It is not just economic advancement that is a result; it is a community rich in diversity and committed to the public good.

In these tough times, policy makers (and we who influence them) must be cognizant of the fact that supporting higher education is a responsible investment in the work force of New York State. Uneducated workers proliferate the unemployment rolls, challenge the social services functions, and stress the law enforcement practices. Those in higher education are a force for relief as they improve their work skills to empower themselves for new job opportunities as they arrive, and focus their attention on positive rather than negative outlooks for the future.

We know that SUNY graduates stay in New York—80% of graduates stay in the State upon graduation. We also know that graduates benefit

all regions of the State, not just NY City and the urban regions. Throughout NYS, young people (and those who wish to be rejuvenated as adults with a new vision of their lives) want to stay in New York and build a life for themselves and their families here, not elsewhere. SUNY provides such opportunities, as long as it is open to all New Yorkers across the State, affordable to those of limited means, and offers quality education to all. Conversely, colleges with differential tuition, those that offer high quality education to only a few, and those that deny admission to those of limited means do not serve the people of New York. That is the sordid promise of Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act (PHEEIA).

We in New York, and especially those of us who work and are intimate members of SUNY, have a special insight into what SUNY is and can be. It could be hierarchical, a pyramidal replica of corporate America as PHEEIA proposes, or it could be what it was meant to be, a largely egalitarian institution offering feasible opportunities to those throughout the State who seek higher education regardless of their family or financial circumstances. SUNY offers hope and the possibility for a different life than our circumstances might predict, or at least it once did. Rejection of PHEEIA means that SUNY will continue to offer hope—hope for all of us who make up the New York community.

Self identity offers the promise that we are capable of fabricating our own vision of who we are. We can make the university the public good it was intended to be when it was first envisioned if we so choose. We must remember that we are the fiduciaries of a trust given to this staff, faculty and generation of New Yorkers. It is our responsibility to protect SUNY as a system that offers access, affordability, and high quality services to all New Yorkers, now and in the future. That's an identity that I am proud with which to be associated. ▲

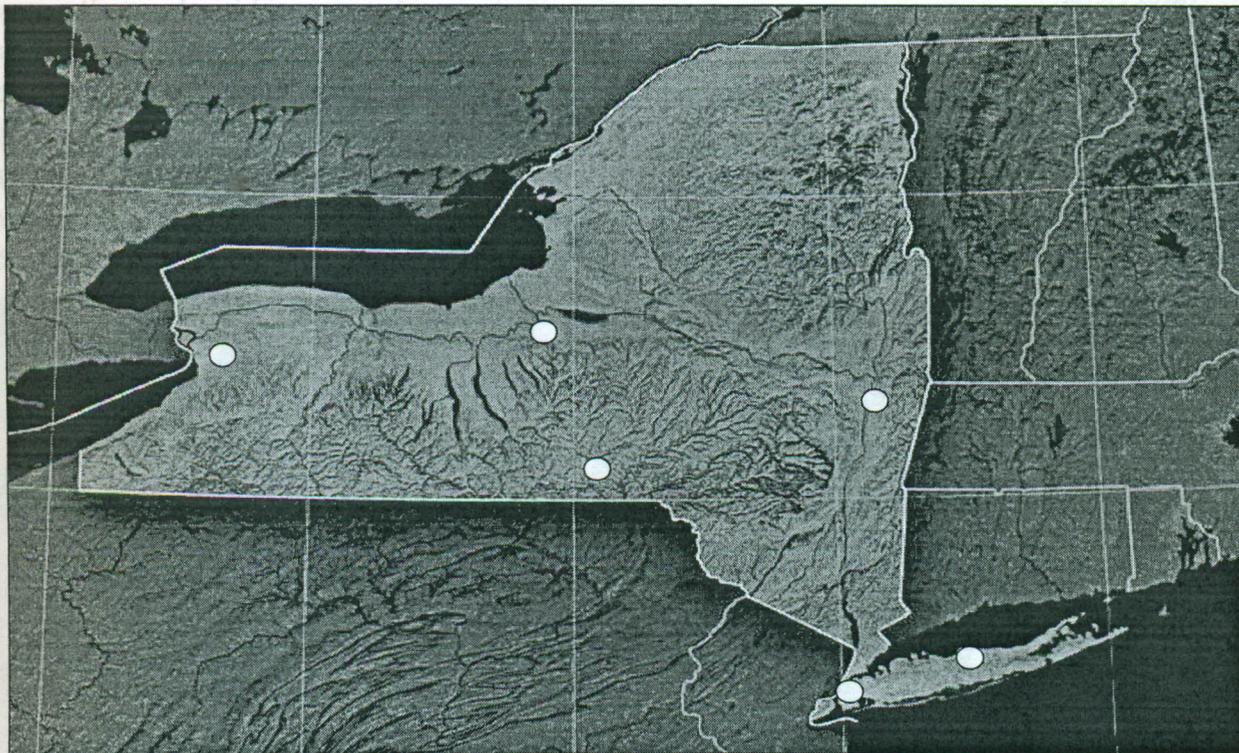
UUP

New Paltz
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Bullhorn Extra

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Where's New Paltz on SUNY's PHEEIA Map?



The map above is the centerpiece of a SUNY brochure promoting the Public Higher Education Empowerment Act (PHEEIA). The brochure focuses on the university centers at Albany, Binghamton, Buffalo, and Stony Brook as well as Upstate Medical Center in Syracuse and Downstate Medical Center in Brooklyn.

You can see the full brochure at http://www.buffalo.edu/ubbelievers/files/Advocacy_Summary.pdf

How will PHEEIA affect New Paltz and the rest of the SUNY campuses not shown on the map?

Go to www.uupinfo.org for more information and to take action.

Unions and the Environment

Brian K. Obach

Labor unions have played an important role in the history of environmental protection in the United States. Prior to the rise of the contemporary environmental movement in the 1960s, the labor movement served as one of the most significant social forces advocating for resource conservation and environmental health. Unions were early advocates for clean water and air, wilderness protection, national parks and sustainable forestry. They lent crucial support to environmental organizations at the start of the modern environmental movement and they fought for such landmark pieces of legislation as the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts.

Yet labor's position in relation to the environment is complex, especially when it comes to those representing workers in extractive industries or the industrial sector. In the past some unions have clashed with environmental advocates over environmental policy that unions feared would

seeking to protect old-growth forests in the Pacific Northwest came into conflict with workers in the timber industry. Coal miners have opposed environmentalists on clean air legislation and efforts to fight global warming out of fear that limits on coal burning will destroy their livelihood. During the Bush Administration the Teamsters union squared off with environmentalists over the issue of oil drilling in the Alaskan National Wildlife Refuge.

Yet union resistance to environmental measures is rare and it is often the product of employer action. Employers who seek to avoid regulation characterize environmental battles as disputes about "jobs versus the environment" and they often attempt to mobilize workers as allies against environmental controls. Yet research shows that environmental measures actually yield net job increases. Environmental regulations typically require more workers to ensure that work is done



Brian Obach addresses the March 2010 Rally.

weaken the economy and threaten jobs. In recent decades a few conflicts have garnered a great deal of media attention creating the impression that "hard hats" and "tree huggers" are always at odds. During the 1990s environmentalists

in an ecologically sound and safe manner. The real dispute does not pit workers against environmentalists, but workers and environmentalists against employers who seek to profit by undermining measures designed to protect both the natural

environment and workers' health and safety. The recent coal mining disaster that killed 29 workers in West Virginia is a case in point. Massey Energy, the firm that owns the Upper Big Branch mine where the tragedy occurred, is notorious for the ecological devastation caused by their mountain top removal mining operations as well as their neglect for worker safety. In recognition of these common interests, labor-environmental relations have always been predominantly positive, and increasingly unions and environmentalists are working together to create jobs while protecting the natural environment.

Unions and environmentalists have found common ground on a number of issues in recent decades. A national Labor-Environmental Network was formed in the 1980s when both unions and environmentalists sought to combat the regulatory roll backs advanced by the Reagan Administration. This cooperation was supplemented by a series of joint efforts to restrict the use of hazardous materials. While labor issues and environmental issues are often segmented off by the legislative and administrative government bodies designed to deal with different policy arenas, workers and environmentalists came to realize that the toxic substances that threatened to contaminate the natural environment are the very same ones that poison the workers who use those materials inside the workplace. Coalitions of unions and anti-toxics organizations successfully promoted stricter regulation on the handling and use of toxic materials during this period.

Free trade agreements provided more fertile ground for labor-environmental cooperation. International treaties, like the North American Free Trade Agreement, provided employers with a means to export jobs to countries where wages and workplace safety standards were low and where environmental regulations were weak, non-existent or poorly enforced. Both unionists and environmental advocates recognized that

allowing private firms to move freely around the world would foster a "race to the bottom" in which governments would be forced to lower standards in an effort to attract investment. The watermark for joint labor environmental action on trade issues was the World Trade Organization protest in Seattle in 1999 during which "Teamsters and turtles" squared off against international trade officials in the haze of tear gas fired by baton wielding riot police. A number of coalition organizations were formed during this period and they laid the groundwork for the cooperation that we see today.

Global Warming and a New Green Economy

Part of what has fostered greater labor-environmental cooperation in recent decades has been changes within the labor movement itself. With the decline in manufacturing employment due to globalization and automation, there are fewer instances in which environmental measures could be construed as job threat. The United States has witnessed a significant shift towards service industry employment. This has severely weakened the labor movement as a whole, since unions always had a stronghold in the manufacturing sector. But unionized service industry workers, like teachers, nurses and janitors, do not face the same questions about alleged "job killing environmental measures". When John Sweeney, the former president of the Service Workers International Union, defeated the old guard union leadership in 1995 to become president of the national AFL-CIO, he welcomed cooperation with environmental advocates.

Yet, the hope for greater labor-environmental cooperation stems not just from the changing face of the labor movement. The economic downturn and the growing threat posed by global warming have fostered a new wave of alliance building between environmentalists and manufacturing workers who hope to rebuild America's manufacturing industries on the basis of sustainable

technologies. Global warming necessitates a transition to a clean energy economy, a shift that will create thousands of new jobs for “green-collar” workers. A number of national unions and environmental organizations have come together to form the “Apollo Alliance”, a coalition calling for massive government investment in environmental technology and improved energy efficiency (www.apolloalliance.org). Members include such disparate groups as the United Auto Workers, the United Mineworkers, the Sierra Club and Greenpeace. Just as President John F. Kennedy declared that, with adequate investment, we could put a man on the moon, Apollo Alliance members believe that we can create a prosperous, just and sustainable economy within a decade if we put forth similar effort.

Right now, the US is behind other nations at building a clean energy industry. Yet there are indicators that the Obama Administration is willing to support a move in this direction. A united labor-environmental effort will be needed to drive this agenda forward and to hold political leaders accountable. Environmentalists increasingly recognize the positive role that unions can play in helping to advance the environmental cause. Unions can also offer important support for environmental legislation and they can aid pro-environmental office holders in ways that most non-profit environmental organizations cannot. Both sides would be wise to strengthen these ties. It is only through an alliance of unions and environmental advocates that we can hope to amass the political pressure necessary to build a just and sustainable economy. ▲

War and Peace: It's Our Business

Donna Goodman

Every UUP contract with the State of New York sets out the terms and conditions of employment for our members—raises, benefits, leaves, rights and responsibilities, and procedures for addressing wrongs. Most members see negotiating and enforcing the contract as the union's only job and voting on the contract as the members' primary responsibility.

But our jobs exist in a broader political and social context. States throughout America are cutting their budgets sharply, to the tune of \$200 billion this year nationwide. Closer to home, New York State faces a \$9 billion budget deficit for the next fiscal year, and the Governor is considering \$152 million in cuts to SUNY to help make up the shortfall.

Now is a good time for us to consider our union representation as not only protecting our livelihoods but also as a vehicle for us to have a voice in changing the policies—national as well as state—that helped bring us to this crisis.

The recession is certainly part of the problem, but it's not the whole story. Another factor, which doesn't depend on the business cycle, is Washington's astronomical military spending, which increases year after year.

The nation's total defense spending, starting with the huge Pentagon budget and adding veterans' benefits, homeland security, interest on past military debts, nuclear weapons, the cost of America's 16 intelligence agencies, and war-related spending absorbed by other government departments, amounts to \$1.4 trillion a year. That's 48% of the federal funds—that part of the federal budget that comes from our income taxes.

The wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Yemen are costing the U.S. about \$200 billion this year when all costs are counted, and the

same next year—enough, if these costs were eliminated, to wipe out the budget cutbacks in all 50 states.

It is important for us, as educators and unionists, to make the connection between the military budget and cuts to education, the loss of civilian jobs at home, and the decline in our democratic rights.

UUP is doing it. The union is a charter member of U.S. Labor Against the War (USLAW), a national network of unions, labor councils and other labor organizations, that calls for a just foreign policy; an end to U.S. occupation of foreign countries; redirecting U.S. resources from military spending to meeting the needs of workers and their families; supporting the troops and their families by bring the troops home now; protecting worker rights, civil rights, civil liberties and the rights of immigrants; and solidarity with workers and their organizations around the world.

Last December I represented UUP in Chicago as a delegate to USLAW's national assembly, its third since its founding in October 2003. It was billed as an international call to the labor movement to work for world peace with economic and social justice in a time of war and economic crisis.

USLAW's founding addressed the need for workers to debate issues of war and peace as core concerns of the labor movement. It also sought to overcome past support by the labor movement of U.S. military interventions in other countries. USLAW is raising awareness throughout the labor movement that war and peace are our business. Check out their website at uslaboragainstawar.org.

USLAW's current goal is to end the wars and occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is crafting a message that can be taken to the broader labor movement and that moves labor to expand its opposition to the war in Iraq to include opposition to the war in Afghanistan. It is also working to create the political climate that will encourage President

Obama, who was elected with broad labor support, to do what his constituency wants him to do: end the war and occupation of Afghanistan. Finally, the organization has established strong ties with international labor activists from Iraq and other countries, with anti-war veterans groups here in the U.S., and with the broader peace movement.

The key strategies employed by USLAW are education, activism and solidarity:

- educating workers to connect war and peace with traditional labor issues;
- increasing labor's visibility and activism in the peace movement; and
- expanding solidarity with the international trade union movement, using relations with Iraqi unionists as a model.

UUP plays a significant role in USLAW. Our union's resolution calling for an end to the war in Afghanistan, passed at our fall 2009 Delegate Assembly, was the basis for USLAW's primary resolution in December: to End U.S. Wars and Occupations In Iraq and Afghanistan and Rebuild America. UUP passed a second anti-war resolution this year at the winter DA, calling on its members to help build the March 20, 2010 peace demonstration in Washington.

Resolutions are an important way to let the labor movement and the public know what we stand for. But passing resolutions commits us to action, and UUP is taking measures to deepen its involvement in anti-war work.

The union, through the statewide Labor and Higher Education Committee, is helping campus chapters to start their own anti-war committees. Each campus will get a "starter kit," consisting of instructions, fact sheets, suggested activities, and a DVD called "Why are we in Afghanistan," to help members establish their committees. (You can preview the DVD at whyareweinafghanistan.org.) The New Paltz chapter is already in the process

of forming a campus anti-war committee. To join, or to find out more, please contact me at goodmand@newpaltz.edu.

Among the activities the union will suggest to its members are: organizing tables for USLAW literature; asking to be invited as a guest speaker at Area Labor Federation and Central Labor Council meetings; getting on the agenda of campus and community meetings with an anti-war union message; and writing for union, campus, and regional media. Our membership in USLAW also gives us an institutional entry point to speak up for peace with our U.S. Congress members.

USLAW and UUP are taking important initiatives in charting an anti-war path for the labor movement. This is a perfect opportunity for UUP members to stand up, speak out, and work for peace. ▲

Donna Goodman is a UUP professional delegate, co-chair of UUP's statewide Women's Rights and Concerns Committee, and a member of the statewide Labor and Higher Education Committee.

SUNY'S MISSION

"The mission of the state university system shall be to provide the people of New York educational services of the highest quality, with the broadest possible access, fully representative of all segments of the population in a complete range of academic, professional and vocational postsecondary programs..."

—State Education Law

WHAT'S IN PHEEIA FOR NEW PALTZ AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE AND TECHNICAL COLLEGES?

Consider the following as you think about this question:

- The New York Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act (PHEEIA) reflects a "flagship" model that runs counter to SUNY's mission. New Paltz and the other comprehensive colleges are marginal to the plan.
- PHEEIA relies on tuition as the main source of revenue growth. How will New Paltz fare over the long run if our tuition levels get closer to the tuition of private institutions, especially given the extensive scholarships privates can offer?
- **Should SUNY be privatized?**
 - PHEEIA will transform the nature of our public university system through the following major changes in the relationship between SUNY and the public:
 - Tuition would be taken "off budget," which will hasten the decline in state support for SUNY institutions.
 - Tuition would no longer be restricted to supporting the academic mission of colleges/universities.
 - State oversight for leasing campus properties and entering into public-private partnerships would be substantially reduced.
 - The State would be freed from funding salary increases and covering fringe benefits.
 - Contracts for service and leases would be removed from State Comptroller or Attorney General oversight, potentially allowing outsourcing and use of non-union labor that is not subject to prevailing wage.
 - Outside agencies could build or lease property for purposes not related to SUNY's academic mission on SUNY land – just to avoid paying property taxes.

SUNY'S PHEEIA "SPIN" – ARE YOU DIZZY YET?

SUNY claims that PHEEIA will generate \$8.5 billion in **non-state funding** for construction over the next 10 years but has not provided requested analysis and documentation to support this assertion. Where will that money come from?

SUNY claims that PHEEIA will produce **non-state revenue** (\$1 billion) to support 10,000 new campus jobs over the next 10 years. The only way this could happen is to double tuition.

PHEEIA has been promoted as a way to expand public-private partnerships that could be lucrative for the university, but many such ventures have cost SUNY substantial money and are a drain on the university's resources.

UUP'S POSITION ON PHEEIA

While UUP supports PHEEIA's proposals for elimination of preapproval of goods and increases in operational efficiencies through changes in procurement policies, it opposes the overarching intent of the legislation, which is to further privatize and divide our state university system.



For further information, Contact Richard Kelder, UUP New Paltz President; Peter D.G. Brown, Vice President for Academics; Linda Smith, Vice President for Professionals; Yvonne Aspengren, Vice President for Part-Timers; Alan Dunefsky, Treasurer; or Colleen Brulee, Secretary. SEND A FAX TO YOUR LEGISLATOR TODAY BY GOING NOW TO

www.uupinfo.org