United University Professions • SUNY Plattsburgh
http//faculty.plattsburgh.edu/uup

The Union News

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Message from the President

Another academic year is coming to an end. Surprisingly, we don't have a new contract yet, but there's a silver lining to that. No contract means no increase in health benefit costs. Why is that, you may wonder? The 1982 Triborough Amendment to the Taylor Law. It prohibits the state from altering any provision of an expired labor agreement until a new agreement is reached.

You may be hearing more about Triborough over the next year. Now that the Governor has successfully cut future pension benefits with Tier VI, he may try to repeal Triborough as another way to limit the power of organized labor in New York. This will also win him conservative support for his future political plans.

So why should we care? The 1967 Taylor Law ensured uninterrupted public services by prohibiting public unions from striking — the weapon of last resort for organized labor. The Triborough Amendment balanced the loss of the right to strike with the assurance that public employees could not be harmed by loss of benefits while negotiating a new contract. Without Triborough, the State of New York could have cut our health benefits last July with the intent to force UUP to accept a bad contract quickly — with Triborough, we have security to continue to bargain for the best contract we can get. Some of you may remember when a former governor stopped paying in to our dental and vision benefits — UUP sued and won, based on Triborough.

What must we do? We must be vigilant and active. Triborough protects all public employees, including those working for cities and counties. Our local government leaders, mayors and county legislators, may be the voices speaking out against it — just as they spoke out in support of Tier VI. We must remember the motto of the Industrial Workers of the World — *an injury to one is an injury to all*. A repeal of Triborough would injure all public workers, including us.

So the academic year is ending, but we must keep our attention focused on our common interest — the future of public higher education and our role as public employees in that future. Keep vigilant and help UUP help you!

David Curry, *President*

Chapter Executive Board

Bethanne's Bulletin

by Bethanne DelGaudio
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The Professional Concern's Committee has one last meeting this Spring: Tuesday, May 1st, 9-10 AM, ACC meeting room # 8. I will bring some munchies. I am so pleased at the excellent turn out at these meetings. I always look forward to hearing your thoughts and concerns.

Soon you will receive an invitation to our 2nd Annual Professionals Retreat at the Valcour Conference Center on Wednesday, June 20th from 8:30 AM to 2 PM. Place a *SAVE THE DATE* in your work calendar right now. Once again, we'll be catering in a wonderful BBQ in hopes of a beautiful sunny day on gorgeous Lake Champlain. State-wide V.P Philippe Abraham will be speaking about the *"Invisible Workforce: Managements Struggle to Recognize the Role of Professionals on Today's Campuses"* and our own George Still from E.H.H.S. will be sharing his research from his dissertation regarding the "*Social Construction of Unions Relative to Gender and Equity Issues."* We've also invited our colleagues from Potsdam and Canton to join us.

If you have not already done so it would be a good idea to check out www.uupinfo.org and click on the Professionals link. Here you will find excellent info on performance programs, how to request a promotion and/or pay increase, professional evaluation cycles, etc. One way to become *Visible* is to know and understand your UUP contract, come to UUP monthly Professional Issues meetings, go to our UUP General Membership meetings, attend support rallies when asked, sit on campus-wide committees, and understand and vote wisely on our next UUP contract.

Calendar of Upcoming Meetings

April 20-21	***Delegates Assembly***—Desmond Hotel in Albany.
April 24	***Small Executive Board Meeting***—noon-1 PM; ACC, Mtg. Rm. 5.
May 1	***UUP Professional's Meeting*** 9-10 AM; ACC, Mtg. Rm. 8
June 20	***UUP Professional's Retreat*** 8:30 AM-2 PM, Valcour Conference Center; Lunch provided.

Part-Time Concerns

by Kay Branagan
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The Union has been working with the Administration in order to clarify the college policy on Adjunct Teaching Load Limits.

The National Education Association's yearly report on faculty salaries was published in March. Among the SUNY comprehensives, the average salary for lecturers at Plattsburgh ranks in the mid-range at $49,500.00. Earlier reports on adjunct salaries, which remain depressingly low, and on a professional level, extremely inadequate, also placed Plattsburgh in the mid-range for SUNY comprehensives.

The Public Service Loan Forgiveness was passed as part of the College Cost Reduction and Access Act of 2007. For part-time and adjunct faculty, some of whom actually work more than full-time and some of whom work at more than one institution, documentation has been difficult. The U.S. Department of Education is attempting to clarify how to document eligibility for these folks. If you think you might qualify go to www.studentaid.ed.gov/publicservice .

UUP Takes Second in the Literacy Challenge

SUNY Plattsburgh's UUP Team placed 2nd in the 20th Annual Literacy Challenge at the Champlain Centre Mall. Below is our winning team (*from left to right*): **Elin O'Hara**, **Tim Hartnett**, **Gary Kroll**, and **Tracie Guzzio**. Yea, team!

Negotiations Update: April 17th

The UUP Negotiations Team spent April 12 and 13 in intensive discussions with state negotiators. On April 12, UUP received the state's response to the comprehensive counterproposal it presented March 22.

Over the course of the two-day negotiations session, mutual understandings were reached on many non-monetary items on the table. As the proposal/counterproposal process continues, UUP will continue to press for a fair and equitable compensation package. An acceptable agreement has not been reached on major monetary items.

The next negotiations sessions are schedule for May 3 and May 4. Over the next two weeks, UUP and state negotiators will work on details and potential contract language to clarify items on which mutual understandings have been reached. All contract items will be finalized in the context of an overall agreement.

Why Civility Matters

by Sara Hacala

Reprinted from the March 2012 AARP Bulletin.

For more information, visit www.savingcivility.com.

"Whatever happened to civility?" is an oft-heard lament, particularly among those of us over 50 who recognize civility's increasing absence in a world changing at warp speed. Technology has forever altered the style, speed, and reach of our decidedly less personal communication. Escalating vulgarity, lax standards, sensational media, and polarized politics reign. Society today is far different than it was when we were young.

While rudeness is pervasive and rising (one recent report concluded that bad behavior may be the "new normal"), the societal and financial costs of incivility are astronomical–impacting our homes and relationships, schools, economy, health care, and government.

Civility is more than polite courtesies. Derived from the Old French and Latin term for "good citizen," civility enables us to live respectfully in communities; it is the glue that binds our society. It can be the difference between life and death –as, for example, when health care professionals bully subordinates, cover mistakes, and create mistrust. It is an essential component of our human sustainability, enabling us not only to survive but thrive.

Reversing the current course of incivility is a challenge for our times. Until a rudeness vaccine is developed, we must dig into our civility tool kit. There are compelling reasons why we should. A life is not defined by a single act, and few of us will ever achieve national acclaim or perform deeds that change the course of history. However, there is a "greatness" in treating others with respect, compassion, kindness, and generosity. With this, we can make a difference in the lives of many.

Here are five tools:

1. Regardless of your age, make a habit of practicing kindness, generosity, and gratitude. Substantial research shows that people who regularly engage in those acts live longer, healthier, and happier lives. It's never too late to start.
2. Nurture your social relationships, which, scientists say, have the capacity to generate our greatest happiness. Enrich your connections by balancing Internet contact with phone calls and face-to-face visits, which are more personal forms of communication.
3. Establish meaningful dialogue with medical providers, asserting your right to respectful and compassionate treatment. As a patient, you have the opportunity to evaluate hospital care; hospitals with extensive negative evaluations can lose Medicare subsidies.
4. Seize "teachable moments" with your children and grandchildren if you love them but not their behavior. Child development experts say we're no longer teaching our kids manners–or respect and empathy for others. By contrast, a major study reported that social skills are a more accurate predictor of future success than test scores. So step up your game with your children and grandchildren. Enlighten your progeny about the importance of developing interpersonal skills and relationships by engaging them in conversations without small screens and buttons. That may be your enduring legacy.
5. Promote decency and decorum among elected officials. Hold them accountable for behavior during campaigns and, more importantly, once they're in office. Urge civil discourse and bipartisanship to avoid gridlock. You and your country's livelihood are at stake.

Given our sheer numbers as older people, we can have an impact on transformation. At the very least, we can set an example. It may take a generation to create a positive cultural shift, but we have to start somewhere. These are the seeds we can all plant. One at a time.

Stress Test

Do you have job stress? Answer these questions and find out.

1. Demand

I have to work very hard.
____ Yes ____ No
I am asked to do too much work.
____ Yes ____ No
I do not have enough time to get my work done.
____ Yes ____ No

2. Control

I have to do a lot of repetitive tasks.
____ Yes ____ No
My job allows me to be creative.
____ Yes ____ No
My job allows me to learn new things.
____ Yes ____ No
I have a lot of say about what happens at work.
____ Yes ____ No
I have a lot of freedom to decide how I do my work.
____ Yes ____ No

3. Support

I work with people who are helpful to me.
____ Yes ____ No
I work with people who take a personal interest in me.
____ Yes ____ No
My supervisor is helpful to me.
____ Yes ____ No
My supervisor cares about my welfare.
____ Yes ____ No

Scoring: Calculate a separate score for each part (Demand, Control, Support). Give yourself 1 point for every YES answer and write either Low, Moderate or High for each below.

My job demands are __________.
(0 – 1 is Low; 2 – 3 is High)
My control at work is __________.
(0 – 2 is Low, 3 – 5 is High)
My support at work is __________.
(0 – 1 is Low, 2 is Moderate, 3 – 4 is High)

Does your test score show high demand/low control/low social support? If so, beware. Research shows that stress, or even illness, can be the result when high demands are accompanied by low control (or not having a say in what you do) and low social support at work. *(Adapted from Stress at Work: A Training Workbook for Working People by the Institute of Labor and the Community, based on a questionnaire by Dr. Robert Karasek.)*

Gas Saving Ideas: Fact vs. Fiction

Excerpted from http://www.theeap.com/main/content/July%202011%20EAP%20Newsletter%20-%20Gas%20Savings.pdf

In spite of gas prices likely to decrease as Labor Day approaches, motorists continue to make significant adjustments in their driving styles in order to reduce the impact on their wallets. While many of these changes may sound good in theory some are actually counter-productive: Here are a few counter-productive ones cited by **Investopedia.com**:

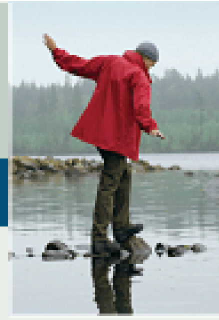
- Airflow gadgets
- Fuel additives
- Higher octane fuel
- Over inflated tires.
- Roll down windows rather than use air
- conditioning

So what small changes can make a real difference?

- *Lowering highway speed from 75 to 55 MPH:* Consumer Reports found that this boosts gas mileage by 33% even in large SUVs.
- *Eliminate trunk junk.* By removing 100 lbs. you will increase gas mileage by 2% thereby saving about 8 cents per gallon.
- *Use cruise control:* According to Edmunds.com, even on lower speed suburban roads, the steadier accelerator adjustments provide a "surprisingly effective way to save gas."
- *Use your GPS:* These don't just keep you from getting lost – they also show you the most efficient route to your destination.
- *Buddy up with* ***GasBuddy.com****:* Your EAP Information Resources site provides a direct link under Tools for Tough Times. Scroll down to Gas & Driving to discover the cheapest gas along your route as well as a wealth of valuable coupons, free Apps for iPhones, Android and Windows and even an interesting and lively blog site.

Work-Life Services

for NYS Employees



EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) helps employees and their families address work, family, and personal issues so they can live healthier, happier, and more productive lives. Specially trained EAP Coordinators, located in agencies and facilities statewide, provide employees with an individual assessment and customized referrals to local resources for additional help. EAP services are free and confidential.

WHAT CAN EAP HELP WITH?

- Family and relationship problems
- Stress, physical, and emotional concerns
- Alcohol and other drug problems
- Health insurance questions
- Identifying local resources for child care, elder care, legal, and financial services
- Wellness programs

For practical help from people you trust, please contact your EAP Coordinator.

www.worklife.ny.gov/eap • 800-822-0244 (available 24/7)
nyseap@eap.ny.gov

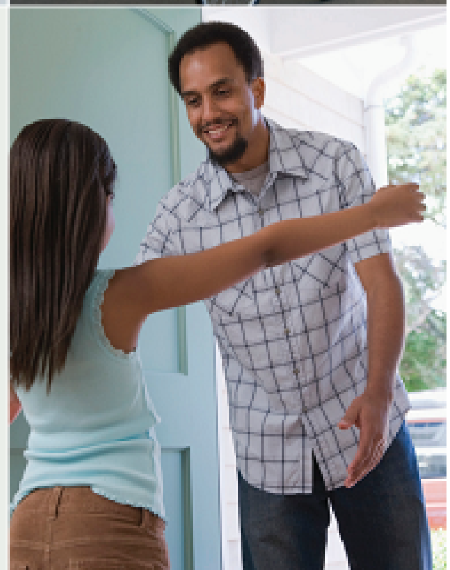
NYS-BALANCE

To make your life less complicated, you and your family have access to support through NYS-Balance. When you call the toll-free number, you will be assisted by a qualified consultant who will respond to your request thoroughly and promptly. When you log on to the NYS-Balance website, you'll find an abundance of useful resources, articles, links, and interactive tools.

NYS-BALANCE HIGHLIGHTS

- Resource and referral for issues related to work, family, daily life, finances, health, and well-being
- Prompt response to your request
- Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Always confidential
- No cost to you or your family
- Contact a consultant, describe the services you need, and get a detailed list of referrals that have current openings/availability

www.nysbalance.ny.gov • Username: nys • Password: balance
866-320-4760 • TTY/TDD: 866-228-2809



www.worklife.ny.gov

ANDREW M. CUOMO, Governor,
State of New York

GARY JOHNSON, Director,
Governor's Office of Employee Relations

Funding is provided by the negotiated agreements between the State and CSEA, PEF, UUP, DC-37, GSEU, Council 82, and NYSCOPBA, and by the Governor's Office of Employee Relations for employees designated M/C.

Work-Life Services

(CONTINUED ON REVERSE)

Balancing work, home, and life

PRE-RETIREMENT PLANNING

Pre-retirement planning information is available to Executive Branch employees both online and at seminars. Online, employees can access a printable version of the comprehensive Self-Help Guide to Pre-Retirement Planning, a checklist, monthly tips, a resource list, helpful links, and videos. DIRECTIONS seminars provide information on planning and the benefits available to state retirees.

WHAT TOPICS ARE COVERED?

- Planning for retirement
- NYS pension
- Health insurance coverage
- Social Security
- NYS Deferred Compensation Plan
- Medicare

DIRECTIONS seminars are held around the state for employees who are within five years of retiring. For more information on seminar schedules, please contact your human resources office.

www.worklife.ny.gov/preretirement
worklife@goer.ny.gov

FLEX SPENDING ACCOUNT

The Flex Spending Account (FSA) offers two benefits that allow employees to pay for expenses with pre-tax dollars:

- **Dependent Care Advantage Account** (DCAAccount) for child, elder, or disabled dependent care expenses necessary to enable you to work
- **Health Care Spending Account** (HCSAccount) for eligible health care expenses not reimbursed by health insurance or other benefit plans

WHY ENROLL?

Save on federal, state, city, social security, and medicare taxes and keep more hard-earned dollars in your pocket.

HOW CAN I ENROLL?

Eligible NYS employees enroll during the open enrollment period each fall or during the year if they experience a qualifying Change in Status.

www.flexspend.ny.gov • 800-358-7202

NYS-RIDE

NYS-Ride is a pre-tax benefit that allows employees to save money on public transportation expenses used to commute to work.

WHY ENROLL?

Save on federal, state, city, social security, and medicare taxes while helping to sustain the quality of the environment.

HOW CAN I ENROLL?

Enroll anytime if you are an eligible NYS employee receiving biweekly paychecks.

www.nysride.com
866-428-7781 • TTY/TDD: 866-353-8058

WORKSITE CHILD CARE CENTERS

The NYS Worksite Child Care Centers are licensed by the State of New York and many have achieved national accreditation. Each center is a separate not-for-profit organization with a volunteer board of directors that sets policy and oversees program management.

WHAT IS OFFERED?

- Peace of mind that comes from having your child close by
- Hard-to-find infant care, part-time care, toddler, and preschool programs
- Summer day camp programs for school-age children at many centers
- Enrollment priority to children of state employees
- Developmentally appropriate programs
- Assurance your child is in a licensed center
- Opportunity for mothers to return to work and continue nursing
- Opportunities for state employees to serve on a board of directors

A listing of child care centers is available on the website.

www.worklife.ny.gov/childcare
worklife@goer.ny.gov • 518-473-8091

Is Level Term Life Insurance right for you?

With the cost of consumer goods such as gasoline rising at an alarming rate, we're all trying to cut back on expenses any way that we can. Cooking at home instead of eating out? Smart (and healthier)!

Consolidating and paying off debt as quickly as possible? Great decision! "Saving" money by not purchasing life insurance? Not so good. Ask yourself this… would your family be protected if something were to happen to you?

If your answer is "no," you may want to consider purchasing the NYSUT Member Benefits Trust-endorsed Level Term Life Insurance Plan – a new insurance offering available to NYSUT members and their spouses/certified domestic partners.

This plan offers life insurance in force for either a 10-, 15- or 20-year period. Your individual premium is scheduled to remain the same during the term period; you cannot be singled out for a premium increase due to your age or a change in health status; and coverage will not decrease during the term period.

Your rate for Level Term Life is based on your age at the time that you are approved for coverage. Keep in mind that the insurance company reserves the right to change rates for all insureds only once in a 12-month period.

When the term ends, you have a few options. You can renew for another term with proof of insurability, during which your benefits will remain the same. Or, you may renew directly into the Member Benefits Trust-endorsed annual renewable Term Life Insurance Plan with no medical underwriting (depending on age). You can also convert to an individual permanent life policy at a higher cost.

For more information about this new program, please contact Marsh U.S. Consumer, a service of Seabury & Smith, Inc. – the plan administrator – toll-free at 888-386-9788. Feel free to also contact Member Benefits with any questions at 800-626-8101 or visit memberbenefits.nysut.org.

Need help getting your financial house in order?

It's spring time... and spring cleaning time! Take advantage of this opportunity to go through your home and get rid of those items that you no longer need. And, while you're getting your home in order, why not make sure your financial house is in order as well?

Do you have questions about how to properly invest your assets to build a college savings or retirement fund? Maybe you want to purchase or refinance a home, or simply pay off some debt?

These are important questions to ask of a professional you can trust who can put your mind at ease and help you avoid financial mistakes. The NYSUT Member Benefits Corporation-endorsed Financial Counseling Program – provided by Stacey Braun Associates, Inc. – offers unbiased, objective advice customized to specific financial situations such as the ones mentioned above.

For more details, please contact Member Benefits at 800-626-8101 or visit memberbenefits.nysut.org.