



The Union News

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The Union News is a publication of the Plattsburgh Chapter of United University Professions. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Plattsburgh Chapter Executive Board or UUP.

Colleagues,

Election season is almost upon us in New York State. To vote in the Presidential Primary you need to be registered by March 25th to vote next month on April 19th.

To check your registration status online see the Voter Registration Search page at <https://voterlookup.elections.state.ny.us/VoterSearch.aspx>

If you discover you are not registered or wish to change parties you can do online at :



Your path to personalized online services

<https://my.dmv.ny.gov/crm/?register=T>

As I write this, UUP is carefully monitoring the passage of the New York state budget. Updates can be found at <http://uupinfo.org/>

I encourage you to study the Governor's proposal to change retirement healthcare premiums that is included in this newsletter. This is "crunch" time for UUP advocacy.

In recent years the budget has been passed in both Houses by April 1st.



[Take action! Support retirees, SUNY and higher education!](#)

Please use this link on uupinfo.org to contact the Hon. Janet Duprey and Sen. Betty Little to protect the future of state retirees and support SUNY and higher education in New York.

Karen Volkman



Announcements

PUUP May Mixer SAVE THE DATE!

Tuesday, May 10, 4:30 – 6:30: Plattsburgh UUP will be hosting a membership mixer at the Plattsburgh Brewing Company (over Comfort Inn).

A \$5 donation to the PUUP Good & Welfare Fund will receive:

- Appetizers (vegetarian and gluten-free choices available)
- Two “wooden nickel” drink tokens for soda, juice, beer or wine (share with a friend or use them both yourself, but PUUP cannot provide more than two drink tokens per adult); kids drink free
- Updates on the latest in the contract negotiations, membership drive and national events affecting the labor movement
- Conversation and camaraderie with your colleagues

We hope to see you and your family there!

Retirement

Recently, there's been some discussion about what UUP has been doing to support retirees, who are facing higher costs for their health insurance in the proposed Executive Budget.

UUP has been doing a lot. Retiree issues are a prominent part of UUP's 2016 Legislative Agenda and are among the important issues members bring up when meeting with lawmakers.

Specifically, the budget proposes:

- Tiering state contributions to retiree health insurance premiums based on years of service for state workers who retire as of Oct. 1, 2016. This would impact employees with less than 30 years of service.

- Capping monthly Medicare Part B reimbursements at \$104.90 for state retirees covered through NYSHIP. As Medicare Part B premiums increase, retirees would pay more.

- To end state reimbursement of increased Medicare Part B costs for higher-income retirees under IRMAA. Higher-income retirees pay escalating rates for Medicare Part B based on retirement income. Currently, retirees earning between \$85,000 and \$107,000 pay \$170.50 per month for Medicare Part B.

- This proposal would end state reimbursement of these higher premiums.

UUP members are speaking out against these initiatives, and are urging legislators to take action to ensure that they do not become part of the state's enacted 2016-17 budget. Members are calling on lawmakers to:

- Support income security for retirees by increasing the maximum earning allowance for public employees from \$30,000 to \$35,000.

- Support a pension credit for all veterans.

- Allow retirees to make automatic, voluntary contributions from their Optional Retirement Program accounts to union political action committees.

UUP leaders are also urging all members to send an e-letter to legislators that details the union's legislative agenda regarding retirees. The letter is on the UUP website; [click here](#) to access the letter.



Announcements

Please Consider Registering a Personal Email Address

My 'plattsburgh.edu' email address was my first, and for many years my only, electronic mail address. In fact I have had this email account so long that the first address was actually hartshwk@splava.cc.plattsburgh.edu. I still have a folder in my account with the first email I ever received, it was from my high school buddy Joe VanAndel on April 18, 1990. I used this address for years in all email communications; personal, academic and professional. Times have changed, however, email is ubiquitous and free email accounts are now easily obtained. There are several good reasons for acquiring a non 'plattsburgh.edu' email address, not the least of which is that using a state email account for personal or non-SUNY professional reasons is a violation of policy. As this is an election year and also a UUP contract year, this policy also prohibits the use of state resources for political or organizational purposes. We must also be aware that the SUNY servers are not private and that communication and information residing on SUNY servers is accessible by the state without permission. Additionally, any information owned by SUNY or the State of New York is FOILable under the Freedom of Information Act.

So, it is advisable that all members should, if they have not already done so, obtain a non-plattsburgh.edu email address. If a member requires any assistance regarding a UUP issue our Labor Relations Specialist will insist that all email communications be conducted through a non-plattsburgh.edu address. New addresses can easily be created through the same Gmail portal the campus is presently using. The chapter is attempting to create a non-plattsburgh.edu database so please register your non-plattsburgh.edu address with us by sending me an email at w.kim.hartshorn@gmail.com from your new address.

You should also register your new email with UUP central by going to the UUPinfo.org homepage and filling out the 'STAY INFORMED' box on the right hand side of the page.

And now a word from your chapter MDO (Membership Development Officer)

Michelle Toth, Feinberg Library 306A, x5225

UUP is ramping up efforts to get everyone who is covered by the bargaining unit signed up as full members. With our current contract ending this summer, now is the time to be sure you are a member so you can vote on the new contract when we have one.

Currently our part-time employees make up 71% of our fee payers. We will be reaching out to all of you to make sure you are aware of the many benefits and services that UUP offers you including: professional development funding, life insurance, and pre-tax savings programs.

Even if you already have another job with a different bargaining unit or you have benefits through a family member you can still join UUP!

Q. How can you tell if you are a member or not?

A. Check your pay stub. If you see "Fee Payer" on your pay stub in the "After Tax Deductions" section you are not a full member. If you see "UUP Member" on your pay stub in the "After Tax Deductions" section you are a full member.

Note: it can take a while for UUP and NY State to update their records once you send in a membership card.

You can now submit your membership form info online at: <https://uuphost.org/myuup/Membership/ReqForm.php>



The Value of NYSUT Membership

You may not be aware that your NYSUT membership allows you to enjoy the benefits of the more than 40 programs & services endorsed by NYSUT Member Benefits, including a variety of quality, competitive insurance plans.

Member Benefits strives to provide the highest-quality programs for NYSUT members and closely scrutinizes all proposals from reputable vendors before any endorsements are given.

While we work continuously to maintain quality benefit programs at competitive prices, you are encouraged to shop and compare before making any purchasing decisions.

MetLife Auto & Home®



Call MetLife Auto & Home to learn about the special savings and discounts you may be eligible for.

1-866-NYSUT-22

If you are looking for potential savings on your auto or homeowners insurance, consider enrolling in the NYSUT Member Benefits Trust-endorsed MetLife Auto & Home Insurance Program.

This program offers special group rates on personal property and liability coverage not available to individual MetLife policyholders. NYSUT members can choose from a variety of coverages that include auto, homeowners, boat, renter's, and much more.

Policyholders can earn extra discounts for good driving, multiple policies and anti-theft devices. MetLife Auto & Home recently raised the multi-policy discount on its homeowners insurance with auto from 7% to 15%. The multi-policy/multi-product discount on auto insurance with home remains at 8%.

Visit the NYSUT Member Benefits website at memberbenefits.nysut.org or call **800-626-8101** for specific details about this program or other Member Benefits-endorsed programs & services.

MetLife Auto & Home is a NYSUT Member Benefits Trust (Member Benefits)-endorsed program. Member Benefits has an endorsement arrangement of 5.5% of total premiums for this program. All such payments to Member Benefits are used solely to defray the costs of administering its various programs and, where appropriate, to enhance them. Member Benefits acts as your advocate; please contact Member Benefits at 800-626-8101 if you experience a problem with any endorsed program.

Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.



For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.

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