

# THE BRIDGES

The Newsletter of the Stony Brook Health Sciences Chapter  
of United University Professions

July 2000

## Is trade fair or just free?

Michael Silverberg  
Vice President for Academics

In the last newsletter, I wrote a very brief vignette about my trip to Mexico with the NYS Labor Religion Coalition as part of a delegation to visit some of the communities of workers who produce goods in Mexico for the US market. A fuller description will be published in *The Voice's* September issue. Since I wrote, however, there has been an enormous national debate over a House of Representatives bill to grant China permanent status as a trading partner. The AFL-CIO fought very hard, ultimately unsuccessfully, to defeat this bill. Why did labor fight the passage of free-trade legislation? The proponents of the bill were quick to brand unions as shortsighted trying to protect American jobs in the short term, when in reality, more jobs would be created in the long term by increased trade. Is this a fair accusation?

My experiences in Mexico, visiting workers in the Maquiladora industry, changed my views on free trade and led me to strongly support the AFL-CIO position. The core issue, in my opinion, is whether workers are able to participate in the political process to ensure that they are protected against outright exploitation. In the case of Mexico, we found that they are not despite the apparent good climate for labor there. Mexican labor laws give great protection to workers; the problem is that they are simply ignored or circumvented. The results are good for neither the workers in the developing country nor for their counterparts in the United States.

On our visit to Matamoros, we saw first hand the actual conditions in which workers exist. The textile industry is mostly served by sub-contractors who sew clothes under contract to the big retail brands. One way to avoid having workers attain any seniority is to go out of business and then reopen under a different name — hiring back the same workers in the same factory. By chance we were able to visit a factory that was being occupied by some



**The original bridge to nowhere—over toxic chemicals in Matamoros, Mexico**

of the workers that we had met. The owners of this factory had done a “midnight flit” thus avoiding not only severance pay but a week’s wages too. We saw a large windowless, airless structure where hundreds of sewing machines were arrayed in long lines. There the workers had sewn clothes for Ralph Lauren and JC Penney, getting paid about 37 pesos a day. We calculated that the total labor cost of a garment, typically selling for over \$50, was less than 10¢. The medicine cabinet showed what happened to a worker who complained of pain— perhaps from a repetitive stress injury, which we were told is common. The non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug they were given is not used in the US because it has an unacceptable incidence of side-effects, the worst of which is agranulocytosis, a lethal destruction of the bone-marrow.

cont. on page 4

(Editor's Note: Dawn Hopkins is our NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist for this chapter. If you have a question that you would like answered in a future issue, please submit it any time either to the chapter office or the newsletter editor.)

Dear Dawn:

Due to illness, I have been using my sick leave accruals. What happens if I exhaust my sick accruals but still am unable to return to work?

Marilee

Dear Marilee:

Under the UUP-NYS contract you can apply for Presidential Leave to cover additional sick time. Presidential Leave can be with full salary, partial salary, or unpaid. Also, Presidential Leave is used to cover the time for pregnancy, childbirth, and childcare. The State's policy regarding this particular type of Presidential Leave can be found in the UUP office in the reference compendium. The policy recognizes pregnancy as a period of temporary disability generally commencing four weeks prior to delivery. You may, after your sick leave accruals have been exhausted, use your vacation accruals during this period of medical disability. This policy also specifically addresses the leave issues of childcare (one parent or both), legal adoption, and temporary/probationary employees.

Additionally, application for other academic/professional

leaves consistent with the needs and interests of the University are also made to the President. If you review Articles 23.7(a) and 23.7(b) in the UUP/NYS contract, you will find a more detailed description of this type of leave.

For all of these leaves, you would need to write a letter to your supervisor requesting the leave and identifying its purpose. Include the date you are requesting it to start and when you would return to work. If you are requesting childbearing leave, include a doctor's note stating that you are unable to work from date "A" and will return on date "B." It is important to include a prognosis in all sick leave requests so your department can plan for a specific period of absence. Note that a diagnosis is not required nor should it be requested by your supervisor.

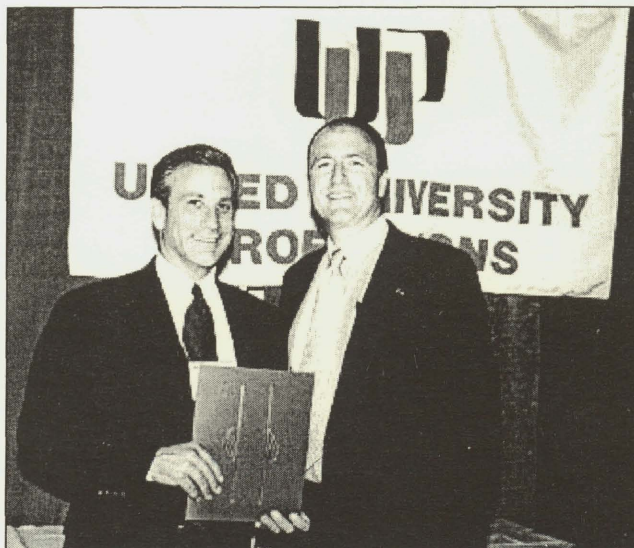
Copy the request to your supervisor to Human Resources. Your supervisor should forward your request along with his/her recommendation to his/her supervisor and Human Resources. Human Resources has the responsibility to forward the information to the President's designee. It is best to request your leave no more than six weeks in advance.

Dawn

## **Bridges honored at Delegate Assembly**

*Bridges* was selected for two awards in UUP's first chapter newsletter journalism competition to recognize outstanding chapter newsletters. Gina Alaimo's "Shuffle off to Buffalo" from the January issue won Best in Class for the category of Best Feature Story. A feature is a well-written report of an event or person that draws on human interest. Lucille Protosow wrote "On Diversity, Affirmative Action, and Equal Opportunity" in October which won Best in Class for Best Editorial or Column. An editorial presents the organization's official point of view on a subject and is usually a regular part of a publication. A column is a personal take on an important subject, but it is not an expression of official policy.

This competition was judged by three communications professionals: Sara Hubbard, an Albany-area public relations director, and freelance journalists Karen Nelis and Eric Van Dyke, both former writers and editors with NYSUT's *New York Teacher*. They judged our newsletter to be among the best in a very competitive pool of entries. The awards were given at the Spring Delegate Assembly dinner on Friday, May 12<sup>th</sup> in Albany and are on display in the office.



**John Marino accepts award from Frank Maurizio, UUP Director of Communications**

# To UUP members of this chapter,

As you may have heard by now, I have been elected statewide Vice President for Professionals of UUP. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the support you have given me as your chapter president and hope it will continue during my statewide service. I find this new endeavor to be both exciting and sad. I am excited to have the privilege to represent professionals around New York State and it's sad leaving Stony Brook and all my friends here. I do plan to come back often during my two year term.

None of the good things we do as chapter leaders are possible without you, the members. Because of you, Stony Brook HSC is recognized as one of UUP's most active chapters. We have come a long way in the last few years and I am confident, as you should be, that this chapter will continue to prosper. One of my goals as statewide Vice President for Professionals is to help new leaders here and at other chapters around the state move towards increasing member participation within the union. Visiting all the chapters will be very high on my list along with continuing to be accessible by phone.

One of the most important ingredients for a successful union is to find out about your concerns. Many of you know I had an open door policy and truly enjoyed the opportunity to listen to your issues and talk about things going on in the union. But the best part of this was that many of you got involved in your union. You have taken

ownership of your chapter and can help shape its future. I am very proud to have played a role in encouraging some of you to get involved.

Because of our high level of participation the leaders of tomorrow are here today. On Tuesday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, our executive board overwhelmingly appointed Ed Drummond to assume responsibilities as Chapter President and Darcy McGuire to take over the duties of Vice President for Professionals. I know that Ed and Darcy will make an excellent team. I have worked closely with both of them for many years and know they are committed to making membership concerns a priority. Together with Michael Silverberg, Vice President for Academics; Ed Hines, Treasurer; Tina Manning, Secretary; and our many delegates, Stony Brook HSC will continue the tradition of strong member advocacy. It is important for you to support your chapter leaders. I know they will do a great job in listening to your concerns and acting in your best interests. You should also feel free to stop by the UUP office just to see how they are doing. I always appreciated it when you did that for me, it really helps. Remember that we are in this together, the success of the union does not hinge on any one person, it takes all of us.

Thank you for the privilege of serving.

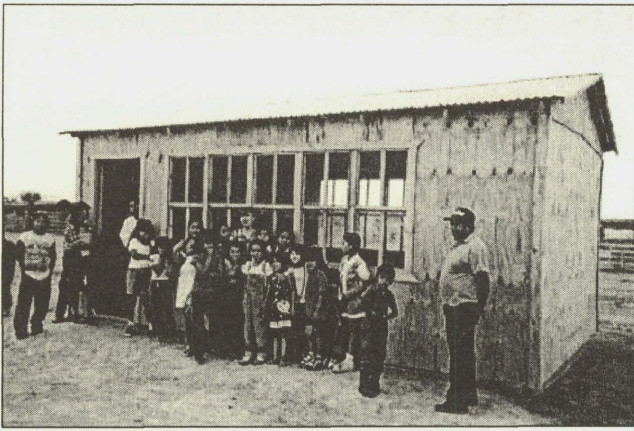
In solidarity,  
John Marino

## Members get more money, benefits

New York State has agreed to use some of its unexpectedly large budget surplus to improve our salaries and benefits. Among the enhancements: bargaining unit members will receive 3.5% annual salary increases in the final two years of the agreement, up from 3%; salary increases will be effective the pay period closest to either July 1 or Sept. 1, instead of Jan. 1 or March 1 of the following year; annual inconvenience pay, for employees regularly scheduled to work at least four hours between 6pm and 6 am, will increase from \$400 to \$500; and the state will increase its contribution to dependent care accounts of employees earning up to \$55,000. Also, the deal includes a number of health insurance enhancements. Go to [www.uupinfo.org](http://www.uupinfo.org) for more detailed information. The Memorandum of Understanding resolves two issues UUP and the state continued to discuss after the contract was ratified last fall: Eligible part-

timers can take advantage of the sick-leave exchange program, effective Jan. 1, 2001, and clinical practice participants hired after July 26, 1976 are now permitted the same 15% tax-deferral of clinical practice income as employees in tiers I and II. Bargaining unit members who participate in either Teachers Retirement System or Employee Retirement System will be included in any legislation that affects employee contributions to these guaranteed retirement plans.

**TO BE A MEMBER OF UUP YOU MUST SUBMIT A SIGNED MEMBERSHIP CARD. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR MEMBERSHIP STATUS, PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE AT 444-1505.**



**The Rainbow Project School—this was built because of NYSUT and UUP contributions**

The health and safety issues in other factories are even worse; particularly in a pair of factories making leather covered steering wheels. We spent an evening listening to workers telling us about how they work all day long with solvents and glues without proper ventilation (needless to say the material hazard data sheets are in English if they are available at all). Many of these workers have had children with birth defects such as hydrocephaly and even anencephaly. These particular factories used to belong to a Canadian company which had similar facilities in Canada; eventually the workers in Mexico discovered that the unionized workers in Canada were able to accomplish the same production in a safe environment. When the pressure became too great, the Canadian company sold the factories to a Florida-based company, Breed Technologies. The unsafe conditions still remain.

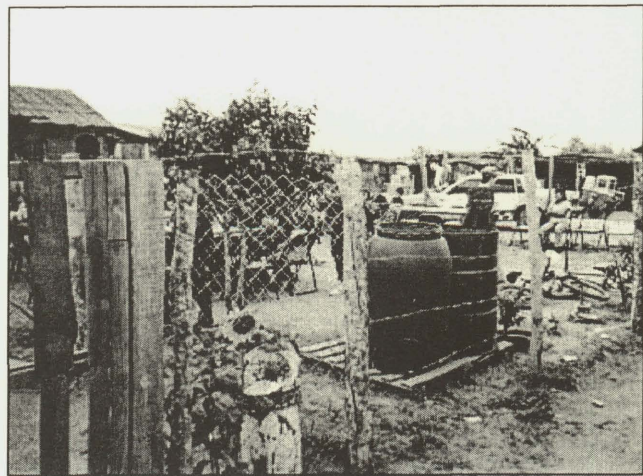
It is fair to ask whether, as dreadful as the current conditions are, they actually represent an improvement in workers' lives. The answer we were given is an emphatic NO! For one thing, the average wage of a Maquiladora worker has declined since NAFTA went into effect. Secondly, the predicted expansion of the Mexican export industry throughout the country did not happen. Today, all the Maquiladora production is still clustered along the US border in tax-exempt enclaves. Workers displaced from agriculture due to changes demanded

This spring I went on vacation to southeastern Arizona. On a trip to the Mexican border at Douglas, we were caught in a huge traffic delay because of extensive road work going on. The road is being fixed to provide for the convoys of trucks coming in from Agua Prieta just across the border. Even in this sleepy little corner of Arizona, the Maquiladora industry is evident.

under NAFTA are forced to live in semi-legal "colonias" around the border towns where the local municipalities cannot afford to provide basic services.

One should also ask how the implementation of free trade has helped American workers. The answer again is - not at all. The Mexican workers are living at such a bare subsistence level, that they cannot afford to buy goods produced here. Instead, American employers can and do threaten to move production to Mexico if they do not get concessions from their American workers. So, the notion that increased trade benefits workers on both sides of the border is largely untrue. A whole other story lies in the wholesale evasion of environmental laws so that toxic chemicals are being discharged directly into the Gulf of Mexico for Texans and other US residents to enjoy.

Finally, there is the moral dimension. It is simply wrong to bask in a high material standard of living that is obtained by keeping others in abject poverty. In China, reports from the factories suggest that many workers are virtually enslaved. UUP members were wonderfully generous in donating supplies that we took to the colonias — basics like shampoo and soap, crayons, pencils and paper for the school children, and a few little luxuries like lipsticks and skin creams. This is not a long term solution though. That must come by an implementation of free trade that is based on fair employment standards. That is why we need to work towards standards of disclosure by companies about exactly where and in which factories their goods are made, coupled with inspections by independent organizations. Most companies are very loath to do that and no wonder — the comparison of their profits and their executive salaries with the conditions endured by their workers might sicken even the most acquisitive consumer.



**A typical family water supply in the colonias**

## **Kathleen Southerton receives Nurse of Excellence Award 2000**

All registered professional nurses employed in Nassau-Suffolk Counties at any not-for-profit hospital were eligible to be nominated for the Nassau Suffolk Hospital Council, Inc. Nurse of Excellence Award. Outstanding contributions to the nursing profession and to the field of health care had to be demonstrated. The Peer Review Committee honored University Hospital nurse Kathleen Southerton, RNC, Ph.D. with the award on May 17<sup>th</sup> at the Woodbury Country Club.

Kathy said at the ceremony, "It is an honor to receive this award and it is a privilege to be here today to share in this celebration with my distinguished nursing colleagues from throughout Nassau and Suffolk Counties. Whenever I am asked what I do for a living, I'm always proud to say I am a nurse. Nursing is a wonderful profession, it gives its practitioners many opportunities to positively affect the lives of others. We do great work. We make a difference. I am very pleased to receive this award for my work. Awards such as this are icing on an otherwise wonderful cake."



**We're very proud of Kathy and the work she has done for University Hospital**



**Kathy and her husband, Tim, a NYSUT member**

In her nineteen years of practice, Kathy has been a staff nurse, a clinician in the NICU, Apnea Program Coordinator, Continuity of Care Coordinator, and presently Clinical Nurse Specialist in the NICU as well as Clinical Assistant Professor in the School of Nursing/Child Health Division. She truly represents the best of nursing and the best of UUP. She is an accomplished, dynamic woman who demonstrates her love of nursing as a professional model of caring to her peers, subordinates, and superiors.

Her most recent accomplishment was in the planning and implementation of the Babies' and Children's Memorial Garden on the grounds of University Hospital. It was created to give families a peaceful place for quiet reflection and as a permanent way to honor and celebrate the lives of their children. Kathy is a Professional Delegate to the Delegate Assembly, Chapter Representative Delegate to NYSUT and AFT, and our new VOTE/COPE Coordinator. Congratulations to Kathy on being recognized for her dedication, dependability, and compassion by her peers.

# To your health: Positive health

Steven Jonas, MD, MPH, MS  
Academic Grievance Chair

At about 9:30 on Saturday morning of the Memorial Day weekend, I was on my way into New York City's Central Park through the entrance at 90th St. and Fifth Ave. for a 90-minute bike workout on Central Park's famous hills. I passed by a well-known "health guru" who holds forth there many Saturday mornings, and has also held forth on the subject on the radio and in books and articles for many years.

Being generally familiar with what he has to say about health, but not having listened to him directly for quite some time, I stopped to listen. What I heard made me think about some of the differences between his health message and mine. Mind you, this personage does provide a lot of useful information and I'm sure that over the years he has helped many people take a good, hard look about what they are doing to promote their own health and what they might do better. But, I was struck by a general tone of haranguing and harassing, of critique and condemnation, of guilt-provocation for those who don't get the message or for those who do get it but don't practice it.

There was a theme that if at any one time you don't do every single thing you could to promote and improve your own health you are somehow deficient; you are somehow a bad person. There was a theme that if in any way you are "unhealthy," however that concept might be defined, you are somehow a bad person. The gentleman's facial expression while he was saying these things— not in so many words, but in the implication of the words he did use— was one that reflected unhappiness, impatience, some contempt for the "less worthy," even some anger. So that was the atmosphere I was experiencing. I was tempted for a moment to ask a question reflecting my differing point of view on any one of these points, but then I decided that that would be both impolite and ineffective. And I then remembered that I would be writing this column two days later, and I would get to say my piece in *Bridges*. So I went out and had, probably coincidentally, my best race-training workout of the season.

I think that health is a positive state of being. I think that becoming more healthy in one way or another and staying healthy as we get older should be fun. It shouldn't be work, except possibly at the beginning of any given personal health-promoting behavior change. Over the long run, if

something that you are doing to promote your own health is work and is not fun (or at least reasonably tolerable), believe me, unless you are a very unusual person, there won't be a long run for that particular behavior. Not doing something that we could do to promote our own health shouldn't make us unhappy. Nor should we feel guilty about that state of affairs. One key to becoming and staying healthy is to recognize that human beings are not perfect nor are we perfectible. One of my maxims of health and wellness is "we can never be perfect; we can always get better." I believe that perfectionism, implied to be a good thing in that Saturday's message, is destructive. Guilt is a lousy motivator, as I have previously said (and will say again, I am sure) in this space. Guilt leads to feelings of frustration and anger and quitting.

We should be engaged in doing one thing or another to improve our health because doing so makes us feel good, not because not doing so makes us feel bad. If you talk to anyone who is a regular exerciser, and ask that person why they do it, chances are probably 99 out of 100 that they will tell you "because it makes me feel good." I've been working out regularly for about 20 years now, and that's surely the reason I do it.

**If you're thinking about health, start with what you are doing right, not what you are doing wrong. And every one of us is doing some things right, or we wouldn't be here.**

But the message of our speaker was that if you don't exercise regularly you are somehow a bad person. What's my message to the person who is not a regular exerciser? Hey, regular exercise can be fun, just as long as you pick a form of it that is or could be fun for you. But perhaps you're not ready. Health, like disease, has a natural history. I didn't start exercising regularly until I was 44 years old. Did that mean that I was a deficient person until I reached that age? Not at all, I was just getting ready. And that was OK. Perhaps you'll never be ready. That state of being is OK too.

There are lots of other things you can do to promote your own health, in the realms of eating, drug-use (including the main killer drugs, nicotine in tobacco and alcohol), safe sex, personal safety at home, in the car, and at the workplace. You are probably doing some of them right now. So, if you're thinking about health, start with what you are doing right, not what you are doing wrong. And every one of us is doing some things right, or we wouldn't be here. It's a nice circle. To be healthy, it helps to be happy about being and becoming so. At the same time, being healthy helps us to become happy. "You gotta" and "if you don't you're somehow bad," have no place in the health equation.

# Sweeney addresses working class issues

**Jeanne Galbraith**  
**Delegate for Academics**

For his first visit to a SUNY campus, John Sweeney, President of the AFL-CIO, chose Stony Brook. Sweeney spoke on April 25th about "Working Class and Politics in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" as part of the Provost's Lecture Series. His invitation to campus was instigated by the Group for the Study of Working Class Life that was organized on campus by UUP member Michael Zweig. In introductory remarks, Dr. Zweig said that "class is a relationship" that's very complicated and we need to bring class back into our consciousness to see how it works in the U.S. economy in connection with race and gender.

Sweeney's theme was transition for the working class. He began by noting that the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Fire, in which 146 workers were burned or crushed to death, occurred in a period of transition in technology from manual to industrial, and a transition in the economy from local to national. Sweeney then drew a parallel with a Singapore toy factory fire in 1993, in which 188 workers died and 469 more were seriously injured, as occurring in the current period of transition from a national to a global economy, and from an industrial to an information economy.

Sweeney pointed out that the concentration of wealth has grown to the point where 49 corporations each have more wealth than many countries do, and the widest gap between wages and wealth of all industrialized countries is in the United States. Today's workers are "trapped in new kinds of virtual sweatshops" with substandard wages, no health care, and are denied the right to organize unions. Sweeney caught the attention of the academics in the audience by using the example that international law protects intellectual property, the product of workers, but not the health and safety of workers themselves. Thus, we have international copyrights but not international workers' rights.

Since becoming President of the AFL-CIO in October of 1995, Sweeney has increased union organizing efforts. Over the past four years, 2,000 student workers have become involved in organizing campaigns, including Stony Brook graduate Linda Ferman who was introduced by Sweeney at the beginning of his speech.

According to Sweeney, there are six values essential to the success of a global middle class. One is a decent job with good benefits. Another is that every child should get an education sufficient to work in today's digital economy. Every family should have "high quality affordable health care." Each individual should be able to rise as high as one's talents allow. Every worker should be able to count on years of secure retirement when the job is done. And, lastly, every worker should have the best tool available to attain these values, the right to join a union.

Sweeney answered about a dozen questions from audience members after concluding his prepared remarks. In responding to a question about support for political parties, Sweeney said the AFL-CIO works to elect "people who support the working class agenda" by becoming educated about office seekers and holding candidates accountable for their actions. When asked about the health care field by chapter member Lucy Protosow, Sweeney responded that no field is changing faster for workers. The AFL-CIO is seeking reasonable salaries and staffing ratios for frontline workers and working to organize coalitions of healthcare workers. The Patients' Bill of Rights is a major piece of legislation that the AFL-CIO supports.

Chapter Vice-President Michael Silverberg asked whether the actions in Seattle presaged a better working relationship with environmental groups. Sweeney responded yes, that it was evident in a number of areas across the country. He said the union needed to concentrate on issues where the two groups were in agreement. The union needed to be mindful of the effect on jobs while establishing a dialogue with environmental organizations.

Asked whether there had been full recovery from the air traffic controllers' strike, Sweeney responded that the PATCO strike was a national disgrace, a "horrible experience" from which the union learned. Sweeney also said we "need true meaningful campaign reform" to keep the working class from being invisible in election campaigns. Workers can out-vote and out-mobilize corporations if they educate themselves and their fellow union members about the issues.

## **The creative corner**

Mysterious Yen

Sometimes...

An unidentified yearning embraces me  
An inaudible whispering felt  
Pulling me blindly  
To an invisible magnet  
On some distant pole

A gnawing, nagging pull  
Full of insistence  
Demanding my full attention  
Drawing me into its presence  
Calling me to be someplace,  
Wanting me to do something

A longing that tugs at my sleeve  
with a gentle restless melancholy  
Igniting my spirit  
with an urgent zeal  
Propelling me to seek out  
the root of the perplexity

**Barbara Hunter Kelly**  
**Long Island State Veterans Home**

# Why give to VOTE/COPE?



**Kathleen Southerton**  
**VOTE/COPE Coordinator**

A common question heard during the time that UUP does a VOTE/COPE drive is, "Why should I give to VOTE/COPE?" You give because VOTE/COPE is your nonpartisan political voice on issues that are important to your job, our teaching hospital, and SUNY. It's no secret that political action is more expensive than ever and that costs keep climbing. If we want the voices of UUP members to continue to be heard, we need to help VOTE/COPE grow.

VOTE/COPE has been very successful in the past, positive proof is that our current contract was settled early. More recently, because of UUP's political strength and the relationship that UUP has been able to develop with politicians, it was possible to enrich provisions of that contract. You will see these enhancements begin this summer.

While we have had past successes, our work is never done. The \$116 million deficit at the SUNY teaching hospitals, created by an unsound budgetary policy, remains unresolved. UUP wants the legislature and the governor to enact a comprehensive plan to resolve the state-imposed deficit. We want a plan that protects the hospital's public mission and the interests of our hardworking members who perform important

**The opponents of our goals are well organized and well funded.**

responsibilities.

UUP is also lobbying legislators to enact a law to protect health care professionals by regulating the use of sharps (hypodermic needles) in the work place. VOTE/COPE funds are attempting to influence legislators to enact whistle blower protections to protect health care workers from retaliation from their employers when speaking out against hazardous workplace practices.

There are many who are not part of health care or higher education who have strong opinions about what should happen to SUNY and the teaching hospitals. The opponents of our goals are well organized and well funded. We cannot afford the luxury of sitting passively on the political sidelines as observers, waiting and watching for

whatever outcome happens to be decided by others.

VOTE/COPE funds UUP volunteers to speak with legislators so that our positions on these key issues are heard. We need to speak out and make sure that those of us closest to these important workplace and health care issues have a say in what is done at the institutions where we work. Why should you give to VOTE/COPE? Because VOTE/COPE is your special interest. Stop by the UUP office on Level 5 to contribute to VOTE/COPE or to increase your current contribution.

## **Delegates elect officers at Spring Delegate Assembly**

The Spring Delegate Assembly in Albany was once again well attended by Stony Brook HSC delegates. Our first order of business was to act upon a policy change presented at the Winter DA regarding changing the status of statewide Vice Presidents from part-time to full-time activity. Due to membership increases that we have all enjoyed along with an increase in union activism, the vote passed to change their status from part-time to full-time officers. This change will enable the two officers more time to mobilize members against the economic and political crises facing the state university.

The first vote that was presented to the delegates was for Vice President for Academics. Candidates were Phil Smith of Syracuse HSC and E. Wayne Ross of Binghamton, with Phil Smith being elected. The second vote was for Vice President for Professionals. This election was originally between our very own John Marino and Eric Russell of Brooklyn HSC. Mr. Russell withdrew prior to the vote, so John Marino ran unop-

posed. These two new officers start their terms on June 1st, and we wish them both luck.

During this DA, delegates also voted in several new members of the statewide Executive Board. This governing body is able to vote on such things as policy changes for UUP. Ed Quinn, Vice President for Professionals from west campus, was elected to the board. Several committees also met to conduct business during the DA. Among them were Affirmative Action, Finance, HSC Concerns, Women's Rights and Concerns Committees, to name just a few. Work continued late into Friday night and then began again early Saturday morning. Delegates adopted the 2000-2001 fiscal year budget before adjourning in the early afternoon and then starting the long ride back to Long Island.

**Darcy McGuire**  
**Vice President for Professionals**



# Technology impact discussed at Higher Ed Conference

Darcy McGuire  
Vice President for Professionals

During the weekend of April 14-16<sup>th</sup>, Tina Manning and I had the privilege of attending a Higher Education Conference sponsored by the American Federation of Teachers entitled, "Educational Quality and the Union: Special Focus on Technology" in Washington, D.C. The conference's primary focus was on education and advancing technology. A great deal of time was spent discussing "E-Learning" or "Distance Learning", the use of the Internet to provide courses for credit on the web. There are unique concerns and potential problems associated with this service which impact both students and faculty. Concerns from faculty representing several colleges and universities throughout the United States were discussed and shared so that all attending the conference could learn from

their colleagues' experiences.

One of the most interesting workshops was given by Thomas Kriger, Associate Director of Research/Legislation for UUP. He spent a lot of time discussing how to keep such a large membership informed and up to date on the latest and greatest achievements of our UUP leadership. He faces challenges every day in trying to provide this service. Issues of security with E-mail and the limitations we face in using state owned computers for union E-mail was reviewed.

Overall, the conference was very informative and I enjoyed it very much. Most importantly, it gave me a new appreciation and awareness of the issues that are faced by my colleagues that are academic members of UUP.

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## Physicians, the union, and AAUP

Michael Silverberg  
Vice President for Academics

I suspect that most of the time most physicians think that they do not really fit into a union, and may even resent that as a New York State employee they are forced to belong to one. Yet, at a conference in the city this spring, during a session on the unionization of physicians, a speaker from the American Medical Association described the cautious steps that organization is taking towards adopting the concept of collective bargaining.

The AMA's change of heart regarding collective bargaining is mostly in response to the lack of bargaining power an individual practitioner has in relation to an HMO or managed care company. However, the power of the new market approach to medicine to drive down reimbursements is being felt just as strongly in academic medical centers. Almost all AMC's are putting great pressure on their faculty to generate more clinical income at the expense of teaching and research and sometimes, even good medicine. At several institutions, powerful attacks on faculty tenure in medical schools has been one response to the general fiscal crisis. Overall, the general shape of the American academic medical center that was ushered in by the Flexner Report in 1910, is in danger of metamorphosing into something quite different and quite inferior. The great period of progress in understanding and treatment of disease is potentially at risk if that happens.

It would appear that now, more than ever, the clinical faculty at SUNY medical centers should be interested in exploring how their membership in a union may help to buffer some of

ie forces that seem to be changing academic medicine for the worse. It may be hard to believe but during negotiations, UUP has always tried to shield the physician's practice income from the state's sticky fingers and maintain the integrity of the practice plan as the physician's own. Away from the table, UUP has tended to leave the faculty to organize their own affairs; but it is well to remember that the practice plan exists as a result of negotiations between the faculty's representatives and the State of New York.

A new development that I should like the clinical faculty to be especially aware of is UUP's new association with American Association of University Professors since this comes at a time when AAUP has come to show special interest in what goes on at medical schools. Indeed, the house journal of the AAUP, *Academe*, devoted a whole issue (Nov-Dec. 1999) to "Medical Education and the Health Care Crisis." Look at AAUP's web site at [www.AAUP.org](http://www.AAUP.org); you can find this issue of *Academe* and get a sense of AAUP's approach to the pressures on medical schools. The terms of the agreement between UUP and AAUP include the purchase of 1,000 memberships in AAUP for UUP members. In addition to elected chapter officers and delegates, the Stony Brook HSC chapter has an extra 46 memberships available. I should be very happy to talk to anyone who is interested in taking one of these memberships in AAUP; this is a good opportunity to help keep the major organization that speaks for American university faculty focused on the problems we face.

# Our voices heard at NYSUT RA

**Jeanne Galbraith**  
Delegate for Academics

This chapter was well represented at the NYSUT RA by Edward Alleyne, Jeanne Galbraith, John Marino, Michael Silverberg, and Kathleen Southerton. Primary focus of the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Representative Assembly of the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) was on improving working conditions of teachers at all levels but also on improving the public's perception of them. At the New York City convention held in April, NYSUT President Tom Hobart called for locals to form coalitions with political allies and work to elect friends of public education this November as the best means to improve funding and conditions in SUNY and CUNY as well as elementary and secondary schools.

Tom Hobart was re-elected President of NYSUT for another two-year term in the election of officers and members of the Board of Directors. With the exception of retiring Treasurer Fred Nauman, who was replaced by Ivan Tiger, the other NYSUT officers were also re-elected. Statewide UUP President Bill Scheurman, Treasurer Rowena Blackman-Stroud, and Thomas Matthews (Vice President for Professionals at the time) were re-elected to their board seats. UUP Executive Board member Patricia Bentley from Plattsburgh was elected for a first term on the NYSUT Board of Directors.

Clearly, the highlight of this year's NYSUT Representative Assembly was the appearance of Hillary Clinton on the convention's opening night. Mrs. Clinton's appearance was preceded by a videotape of Rudolph Giuliani's January state-of-the-city scathing criticism of public education and teachers. The 1,966 delegates and other members of the audience roundly booed Giuliani for his comments and for not even sending a representative to welcome the convention to the city. Despite one's politics, the opportunity to hear a First Lady of the United States speak in person is a rare event. Mrs. Clinton gave a strong, articulate statement in support of schools, relaying anecdotes from her visits to schools across the state. After her speech,

Mrs. Clinton spoke with everyone who wished to shake hands, talk to her, or have their picture taken with her, spending close to an hour with the crowd. Even a small town western NY Republican was heard to say he would now have to give Hillary serious consideration as a Senate candidate after hearing her speak.

Numerous other political speakers at the convention included New York Senator Charles Schumer, State Comptroller Carl McCall, Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, and Attorney General Robert Spitzer. Chancellor Carl Hayden of the Board of Regents, Chancellor Harold Levy of the NYC Board of Education, and NY Commissioner of Education Richard Mills also addressed the delegates.

Two amendments to the NYSUT constitution were approved by the delegates. One increased the size of NYSUT's Executive Committee from 10 to 15 members to provide representation from more constituents. The second amendment provides a means for small unions to send delegates to the convention by permitting them to form councils to elect a representative from the group.

Over 100 resolutions were handled by the delegates. While the majority of resolutions dealt with legislative and political action or pension and retirement issues, also included were educational and organizational issues. UUP's resolution that NYSUT work with legislative leaders and the governor to resolve the \$116 million deficit at the SUNY teaching hospitals was adopted with minor amendments. UUP's resolution "that NYSUT work with state legislators to secure adequate funding for additional full-time academic and professional lines at SUNY" was merged with a similar resolution submitted jointly by the Faculty Association of Suffolk Community College and the United College Employees of the Fashion Institute of Technology before being adopted. Another resolution specific to higher education encourages NYSUT to help locals develop contract language that enables faculty members to retain rights to their course materials and especially to alert locals to the importance of intellectual property rights in distance learning courses.

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## Spring Delegate Assembly Actions

Adopted a resolution approving the procedure for allocating additional membership in the UUP Chapter of the American Association of University Professors

Adopted a resolution calling for the monitoring of Affirmative Action hiring, searches, and waivers

Adopted a resolution calling for SUNY to terminate connections with sweatshops

Adopted a resolution adopting the Work and Family Bill of Rights

Adopted a resolution calling for urging chapters to form Joint Labor/Management Subcommittees on Technology

# Interview with John Marino

Shortly after John was elected as statewide Vice President for Professionals, we sat down and discussed his plans for the chapter and for his future.

Could you briefly describe the process by which statewide officers are elected?

Chapters elect delegates to represent them at the three Delegate Assemblies held each year. At the Winter DA, delegates are nominated to run for statewide office. Currently there are two caucuses, these nominate delegates to run for statewide office. However, anyone can run as an independent candidate. I am a member of the United Caucus and share the views and beliefs of that caucus. The Spring DA, usually held in May, is when elections take place with delegates casting votes for statewide officers.

What are the duties of the statewide Vice President for Professionals? I am approaching this job as any and all duties as assigned by the President of UUP, Bill Scheuerman, will be my responsibility. However, specifically the Vice President for Professionals duty is to apprise the president of professional issues that face our members around the state.

How difficult a decision was it to run for statewide office? It wasn't a difficult decision at all. I find union activity is one of the most rewarding things I have ever done. Not only can we make an impact on day to day issues that affect us in the work environment, but we can also address social issues that effect every American citizen.

What life experiences have prepared you for statewide union office?

Serving as the chapter president of the Health Sciences Center for the last few years has helped me get a better understanding of the collective bargaining agreement and the issues that face both academics and professionals. The other experiences of serving on the statewide executive board and negotiations team have enhanced and broadened my knowledge on the statewide level.

How did being on the negotiations team prepare you for this new position?

As a member of the negotiations team, I worked closely with colleagues from around the state to bring forward the issues that affect us every day. We needed the input from everyone on the team because it gave a good representation of the union's diversity and the concerns of all our members. Academics, professionals, part-timers, health care workers, two-year colleges and university centers interests were all represented.

What about being a chapter president prepared you for a new

challenge at the statewide level?

As a chapter president, I gained the valuable experience of dealing with management on a daily basis. In representing our members, we felt it was always important to be prepared, reasonable, and fair. This has proven to be a formula for success at Stony Brook and has activated our members and will continue.

How will having a statewide officer from a Health Sciences Center benefit all UUP members?

When I was traveling chapter to chapter as part of the negotiations team, I quickly learned that the problems facing our members today are not unique to any one type of campus. As a statewide officer, the experience I have gained from working at the HSC will benefit not only HSC members, but all members of UUP.

Today with massive budget cuts to the HSC has far reaching and detrimental effects on all SUNY campuses. Working together with my colleagues at the statewide level, we can continue to address the problems that face the three Health Sciences Centers today. Hopefully, working together with the legislature will keep the State University accessible to all who want a college education.

What is the most important thing you've learned by being active in the union?

Working on behalf of the membership with management can make the difference and can benefit all of us.

How can members contact you in Albany?

My plan is to be accessible to all members across the state so anything needed to achieve this will be done. That includes traveling to the campuses to get constant feedback. The phone number of the UUP office is 518-458-7935 or 800-342-4206. My e-mail address is [jmarino@uupmail.org](mailto:jmarino@uupmail.org).

What will you miss most about being at Stony Brook Health Sciences Center?

I will miss the frequent interactions with members of this chapter for the last few years. Whether it was in the cafeteria, walking in from the parking garage, in hospital hallways, chapter meetings, or the UUP office, interacting directly with members gave me the greatest satisfaction and I will always remember that.

Do you have any final words for our chapter members?

I would like to remind everyone that I am serving a two-year term and can be back in two years. If that happens, I will continue to represent Stony Brook HSC members in anyway I am able and will then support the elected officers of the chapter. I won't forget the support that members, officers, and delegates of this chapter have given me over the years. Thank you.

## Employee Holiday Schedule

*Mark the following dates on your calendar. They are the holidays observed by UUP members at the State University of New York at Stony Brook.*

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| Independence Day       | Tuesday, July 4th  |
| Labor Day              | Monday, September 4th                                    |
| Columbus Day           | Monday, October 9th                                      |
| Election Day           | Tuesday, November 7th                                    |
| Veterans Day           | Saturday, November 11th                                  |
| Thanksgiving Day       | Thursday, November 23th                                  |
| Day after Thanksgiving | Friday, November 24th<br>(in lieu of Lincoln's Birthday) |
| Christmas Day          | Monday, December 25th                                    |
| New Year's Day '01     | Monday, January 1st                                      |
| Martin L. King Day     | Monday, January 15th                                     |
| Washington's B'Day     | Monday, February 19th                                    |
| Memorial Day           | Monday, May 28th   |
| Independence Day       | Wednesday, July 4th                                      |
| Labor Day              | Monday, September 3rd                                    |
| Columbus Day           | Monday, October 8  |

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**Office:** HSC Level 5, Room 572, Zip 8553  
**Hours:** Mon. - Thurs., 9:15 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
**Telephone:** 444-1505; FAX 444-7566

### OFFICERS

**President** - Ed Drummond ..... 444-1505  
**Vice President (Academic)** - Michael Silverberg ..... 444-2347  
**Vice President (Professional)** - Darcy McGuire ..... 444-1505  
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**Grievance Chair (Academic)** - Steven Jonas ..... 444-2147  
**Grievance Chair (Professional)** - Ed Drummond.....444-1505  
**NYSUT Field Representative** - Dawn Hopkins ..... 273-8822  
**Newsletter Editor** - Colleen Kenefick ..... 444-3995  
**Administrative Assistant** - Sharon Hines ..... 444-1505

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The opinions expressed in the Newsletter are those of the authors, the editor, or the Stony Brook HSC Chapter of UUP and are not necessarily the opinions of the United University Professions.

The UUP Newsletter welcomes articles and letters submitted by members of the Stony Brook community. Remember, this is *your* newsletter. Share your thoughts with us, we want to hear from you. Persons who have material they wish to submit should contact: Colleen Kenefick at 444-3995 or 444-1505.

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