
BRIDGES

*The Newsletter of
the Stony Brook
HSC Chapter of
United University
Professions
June 1998*

Federation of Nurses and Healthcare Professionals Conference

On April 16-19, the healthcare division of the American Federation of Teachers held their 20th annual conference. The Federation of Nurses and Healthcare Professionals has been an advocate of organized labor in healthcare since 1978. The conference was opened with a very uplifting speech by Donna Shalala, Secretary of Health and Human Services. Ms. Shalala spoke on the changing role of the healthcare provider in these tumultuous times of HMOs and Medicaid cutbacks. She re-emphasized the Clinton administration's commitment to quality, affordable healthcare for all Americans and to preventing the profit driven HMOs from dictating the direction of healthcare.

Another highlight of the conference was a discussion of the pending merger of American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association. This merger would serve to create the largest single group of organized labor in America. There would be approximately 3,000 members in each congressional district in the country. Having representation of this scope would give the newly formed organization a tremendous amount of political clout and enable reforms to be made through legislation and political activism in both education and healthcare.

A representative of the JCAHO spoke regarding the ability of the organization, which is paid for by the facilities it inspects, to effectively police hospital quality. Representatives from several facilities raised questions about methods which are employed by the Joint Commission when carrying out an on-site survey. Concerns were raised that a hospital or healthcare facility could put on a front for the inspection and be given a passing grade when, in fact, there are glaring deficiencies which are hidden from the inspectors. Also questioned were the commission's policy of not making unannounced interim inspections.

In light of the current inadequacies of the JCAHO's ability to effectively find and solve problems, the FNHP

along with the AFL-CIO has proposed "Whistleblower" legislation which will protect employees who speak out against deficiencies present in a healthcare environment. In addition to the plenary sessions at which these speakers were heard, various workshops were held throughout the conference. Discussion topics included such issues as effective organizing, revitalizing local chapters, stress management, and other topics pertaining to organizing and maintaining an effective union.

Bruce Kube
Delegate for Professionals

DID YOU KNOW?

To be a member of UUP you must submit a signed membership card. If your dues are coded with 215 on your pay stub you are not a member. The member code is 222. If you have any questions about your membership status, please call the office at 444-1505.

UUP dental and vision benefits have changed, effective April 1. Information about the changes have been mailed to all UUP members. Anyone who has not received the new benefits booklet should contact the UUP Benefit Trust Fund at (800) 887-3863. The handbook can also be accessed at the union's web site at www.uupinfo.org.

Professional Evaluation Review Committee

It is mandated by the UUP contract that every professional employee have a performance evaluation and program completed on a yearly basis. Every professional employee should be involved in this evaluation process. The employee should have the option of completing an achievement form detailing their accomplishments for the year. Annually, the supervisor should evaluate the employee based upon their performance program. The evaluation is to be reviewed with the employee with both parties signing and dating the document. In the event the employee does not agree with the evaluation, the document should be signed, dated, and noted signed under duress. The employee also has the right to write a rebuttal to the evaluation.

Should an employee receive an evaluation that is rated unsatisfactory or where the content is deemed unsatisfactory and the rating is circled satisfactory, the employee is entitled to a review by their peers. A written letter requesting a review must be sent to the Chair of the Evaluation Review Committee within ten working days of the receipt of the evaluation. It is not within the committee's purview to address non-renewal of appointments, promotions or discretionary increases. The committee can only address the current evaluation as to whether it is warranted or unwarranted.

The Evaluation Review Committee is a standing committee set up in an addendum to the UUP contract. The committee is comprised of five individuals, three individuals are elected by the union at large and two are appointed by the university president. Committee business is conducted by interviewing the employee, the supervisor, and an undisclosed number of individuals. The individuals are chosen from random discussions with the two parties and are usually people who can give an unbiased opinion or provide information as to how the employee performs their job. No one knows who is chosen to come before the committee and all discussions are held in confidence.

At the end of the committee's findings, a letter is written to the president of the university with copies to the employee, the employee's supervisor, the supervisor's supervisor, and the personnel folder. The letter is detailed with the number of individuals interviewed and a decision is rendered as to whether the evaluation should stand as written or be withdrawn. In addition, the letter details the committee's finding and in some cases recommendations are made to the president. It is the president's discretion as to whether to agree with the committee or make her own recommendation. She will render the final decision on the evaluation in writing to the committee. Should you have questions or concerns about your evaluation please feel free to contact Mary Hoch (4-1252), Ed Drummond (4-2245) or John Marino (4-1505).

Mary Hoch
Chair, Professional Evaluation Review Committee

What is a Delegate Assembly?

Hopefully you already know a delegate to your union. It's someone you may work with every day. Like your department rep, he/she is a good resource person, a source of information. They are involved in the union on a local level and are members of this chapter's executive board. Certainly a delegate acts locally but who runs the union overall? The statewide union, the union of over 22,000 academics and professionals? Is it run by some benevolent dictator? Certainly not! In point of fact, your friendly informative pro-union delegate is your elected representative to a much larger collective governing body, the delegate assembly or DA.

The DA is an excellent example of democracy in action, an example of scholarly intercourse on all topics that pertain to the entire union membership. Something like C-Span (only it isn't as boring!).

On a purely legislative basis, delegates vote. Delegates vote for and elect the statewide leadership; President, Vice-Presidents, Treasurer, Secretary, and statewide executive board. Delegates also vote on matters that help determine the direction that we as union are going. Should we, as affiliate members of AFT, join with NEA? Should we boycott a particular company for it's anti-

union or union busting activities? Delegates vote to make these decisions and more.

Delegates are your representatives to the three DAs per year. This doesn't seem enough when one considers the amount of work a union of 22,000 plus has to do. The meetings of a DA can seem endless, often keeping a delegate's attention until after midnight. Typical meetings or committees are: legislative, professional concerns, HSC concerns, contract watch, finance, women's rights and concerns, elections and credentials, part-time concerns, negotiations, solidarity, chapter development, nursing profession work group, technology, Eugene P. Link scholarship trust fund, future of SUNY, affirmative action, computer technology, benefits, disability rights, legal defense, strategic alliance, retiree, etc.

Get the idea? And you are correct if you think that it cannot all be done at just three meetings a year. Many delegates and other volunteers meet regularly throughout the year to attend statewide committee meetings to set up work for the DA, making the DA more productive, but I digress. The DA is hard work that's hardly ever seen by the general membership. But, the result is a well focused and smoothly running union. Your delegate assembly: democracy in action.

Daniel Fischer
Delegate for Professionals

VOTE/COPE NEEDS YOU!

Higher education is vital to each and every one of us and a valued higher education is found in the SUNY system. Statistics show that without a college degree, one earns about \$20,000 per year. A college education may double this income, and in addition, the educated person provides nourishment to our society as well. "A stronger SUNY is a key to our success" (Carl McCall, New York State Comptroller, 5/98). The way to a stronger SUNY is through legislative action- especially through VOTE/COPE political action funding.

If you believe in the value of education for you, for our state, and for future generations, then walk with us towards the goal of strengthening SUNY through supporting VOTE/COPE. This chapter recently won

a statewide award for increasing the number of VOTE/COPE participants. Let's continue our great record. Please support by joining if you are not a member, or by increasing your deduction if you are a member.

Watch your mailbox for a bagel brunch in July for VOTE/COPE members and other UUPer's who want to join in the effort.

Doris Weisman
VOTE/COPE Coordinator

25 Year Recognition Certificates

UUP is 25 years old this year and UUP/NYSUT 25 Year Recognition Certificates were awarded to chapter leaders at the May 6th chapter meeting. A database of all statewide delegates, statewide executive board members, standing and ad hoc committee members, and the five elected chapter officer positions was established by NYSUT. Anyone whose name appeared more than five years and up through the last eleven years (records prior to that were incomplete) was included. Congratulations to the following chapter leaders for their long years of dedicated service.

Ed Alleyne, Howell Archard, Richard Blakeslee, Ora Bouey, James Connolly, Edward Drummond, Celeste Dye, Daniel Fischer, Jeanne Galbraith, Edward Hines, Aldustus Jordan, Colleen Kenefick, Bernard Lane, Joseph Melendez, Donald Pisani, Lucille Protosow, Judith Schwartz, Michael Silverberg, Mark Swerdloff, and Ann Zuppardo.

Survey for Professionals : Look for It!

Sometime during the first week in June, UUP professional members will receive a survey from the statewide leadership in Albany. This survey will have a cover letter from the VP for Professionals and will cover such topics as evaluations, promotions, and compensatory time. Your input is really needed. Look for the survey, fill it out, and return it.

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 '98	Saturday, July 4 th
Labor Day '98	Monday, September 7 th
Columbus Day '98	Monday, October 12 th
Election Day '98	Tuesday, November 3 rd
Veterans' Day '98	Wednesday, November 11 th
Thanksgiving Day '98	Thursday, November 26 th
Day after Thanksgiving '98	Friday, November 27 th (in lieu of Lincoln's Birthday)
Christmas Day '98	Friday, December 25 th
New Year's Day '99	Friday, January 1 st
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day '99	Monday, January 18 th
Washington's Birthday '99	Floating Holiday
Memorial Day '99	Monday, May 31 st

United University Professions

Stony Brook HSC Chapter

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

OFFICERS

President - John J. Marino 444-1505
 Vice President (Academic) - Michael Silverberg 444-2347
 Vice President (Professional) - Dennis J. Caruana 444-1505
 Secretary - Tina Maria E. Manning 444-3232
 Treasurer - Edward W. Hines 444-1428
 Grievance Chair (Academic) - Steven Jonas 444-2147
 Grievance Chair (Professional) - Leslie Burnett 444-4185
 NYSUT Field Representative - Dawn Hopkins 273-8822
 Newsletter Editor - Colleen Kenefick 444-3995
 Administrative Assistant - Sharon Hines 444-1505

The opinions expressed in the Newsletter are those of the authors, the editors, 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.