



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

MAY 2008

STATE BUDGET UPDATE

According to UUP statewide President Phil Smith, the recently enacted 2008-09 state budget is disappointing. The spending plan cuts \$38 million in operating funds for SUNY—nearly \$4 million more than the cut originally proposed in the Executive Budget.

In late April, subsequent to the enactment of the budget, the state division of budget (DOB) issued a budget bulletin (see article on page 3) calling for a spending reduction that applies to SUNY revenue funds. This would require University Hospital and the LI State Veterans Home to set aside a portion of their revenues derived from non-general fund accounts (hospital third party payments). While these revenues would be collected, they could not be spent on behalf of those patients who have contributed to them. There are fears that this DOB edict, on top of an already disappointing budget, could severely impact patient safety and access to care.

As this newsletter goes to print, UUP and NYSUT leadership are working to resolve this issue. UUP delegates from across the state will be holding a budget rally at the state Capitol in Albany on Friday May 2. As the situation evolves, UUP members may need to take additional actions. Please visit www.uuphost.org/stonybrookhsc, www.uupinfo.org and www.nysut.org for the latest details and news on this important issue.

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UUP Benefits Trust News

DELTA DENTAL

is the new UUP Dental Care Provider as of April 1, 2008

For more information visit:

www.uupinfo.org or the Delta Dental website: www.wekeepyoumiling.com



Upcoming UUP Events

May 6 & 7

Chapter Meetings with Phil Smith Statewide President

May 12, 13, & 15

UUP Blood Drive

May 28

Hospital Week (Tech Park)

June 4

Hospital Week (Galleria)

June 21

UUP LIRR Trip to NYC

Please call 4-1505 for additional information or to RSVP for these events

President's Message:

In early April, UUPers with 10 years or more of time in the optional retirement plan (TIAA-CREF, Valic, Metropolitan, or ING) saw their three percent contribution reduced to two percent. Next year, those with ten or more years will see their contribution reduced by another one percent and fully eliminated by 2010. The law that led to this pension equity did not come easily. UUP advocated for passage of this legislation for years. The bill had previously passed in both the senate and assembly only to be vetoed by Governor Pataki.

UUP persevered. UUPers across the state, with support from our NYSUT K-12 colleagues, kept pressure on by sending thousands of letters and e-mails to our legislators, Senate Majority Leader Joe Bruno, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver and Governor Spitzer. In August 2007, despite opposition to the bill and pressure to veto it, Governor Spitzer signed the bill into law.

Solidarity and perseverance brought us this victory. Solidarity and perseverance are hallmarks of union work. They also serve us well on the local and national fronts.

On the local front, UUP, PEF and CSEA have started to hold regular labor council meetings. PEF Division leader, Jim Hassett, CSEA President, Carlos Speight, and I will meet to discuss common concerns and issues. While we will face challenges, working together, we will surely see victories.

On the national front, I just returned from the AFT healthcare conference in Washington, DC. While in Washington, along with other healthcare workers from across the country, I advocated for passage of the Medicaid safety net bill. This bill calls for a moratorium until April 2009 on the implementation of new federal regulations that would reduce monies for graduate medical education, services to patients and services to children with special healthcare needs. If Stony Brook were to see a reduction in these important funds, our programs would be negatively impacted and it would interfere significantly with our ability to address our important missions. Congress will be voting on this bill in the next few weeks. The passage of this bill would put a halt to these reductions and allow Congress and the new administration to evaluate the need and consequences of these far reaching changes in the Medicaid program.

Solidarity and perseverance have served us well. We will need to rely on these hallmarks of union work as we face the current budget situation and other future challenges.

In Solidarity,
Kathy Southerton



PHOTO CREDIT: MARYLOU STEWART SBU MEDIA SERVICES

STATE UNIVERSITY SPECIAL REVENUE FUND WITHHOLDINGS

The State Budget consists of several funds. There is a General fund which derives its revenues from State taxpayers such as the personal income tax and the sales tax. A second category is termed State Funds which adds, to the General Fund, revenues from non taxpayer related sources such as State University tuition, dormitory fees and hospital third party payments. The final category is called All Funds which adds Federal government resources to the other two categories.

Whether just for public relations or other reasons, the Administration will require the University, and other agencies similarly situated, to set aside a portion of the revenues derived from non-General Fund accounts in the State Fund category. The University will be required to collect those revenues, but more than \$110 million of those collections will not be allowed to be spent on behalf of those who have contributed. In effect, the Administration is impounding, whether lawfully or not, funds over which it has no reasonable right to control.

This withholding does not help balance the State Budget. It has no effect on State taxes nor will it save taxpayers even one penny. It was not reflected in the appropriations contained in the Budget nor the legislation accompanying those appropriations. Because of the manner in which its fund structure is articulated, the State University will bear close to 50 percent of the total impact of this tactic – if implemented.

What does all of this mean to the University and, more importantly, to its constituencies who have had no warning that their contributions will be withheld?

It means that a portion of the tuition collected from students and their families will not be available to support their education (\$34.4 million withheld). The result, when added to the impact of a \$38 million State funding cutback in the enacted Budget, means that courses will be cancelled, class sizes will once again be increased and the overall quality of the University's academic programming will certainly be diminished.

It means that a portion of the dormitory fees paid by students will be held back and not permitted to be expended on dormitory maintenance, security and student safety (\$9.7 million).

It means that funds received by the hospitals from patients and third party insurance payments will be locked up (\$43.0 million) – and the hospitals will be unable to use these revenues for the care of those who paid for health care. Coupled with the continued absence of State funding for mandatory costs, the quality and content of patient health care will surely suffer.

It means that almost \$17 million in revenues from food services, bookstores and other user-based sources will be unavailable to maintain current operations.

Even the Long Island Veterans Home will be required to hold back on over \$1.2 million.

The irony is that the year began with the promise of enhanced State support in line with the recommendations of the Commission on Higher Education, but could end with one of the most disastrous fiscal impacts in University history.

The key question for all of us to ask is why do this? There is no logical purpose. There is no apparent benefit to the State. There is no positive result for State taxpayers. There is, however, a very clear impact – on students and their families and on the citizens of this State who rely on the University for quality health care and services.

UUPER'S TAKE ACTION NOW!

The UUP website www.uupinfo.org now has a link to NYSUT so you can take action and fax a prepared letter to the governor to urge him to stop the proposed budget plan for SUNY. There is a letter that can be sent by other NY residents as well. Spread the word and have as many people as possible send a message to the Governor. This plan will be harmful to all of New York.

This summary provided by Phil Smith, UUP Statewide President

PART TIME CONCERNS

Four years ago UUP declared 2004 "The year of the Part Timer". As a result UUP statewide focused its attention and resources on learning about the uniqueness, problems and overall concerns of part time employees throughout the SUNY system. Out of this effort came a constitutional amendment to create the position of part time concerns representative (an elected officer position) at each chapter as well as the creation of the Statewide Part time Concerns committee.

The position of part time concerns representative is valuable to the chapters in that a single person is dedicated to the needs and concerns of part time employees. This individual also sits on the statewide committee where they can gain valuable training and information to help out our chapter part time employees. These representatives on the statewide committee advocated for a change in the 2003 - 2007 collective bargaining agreement. This change added contract language that allows for labor/management meetings that focus solely on the concerns of part time employees. In this past round of negotiations a presentation to the state was made that focused solely on the uniqueness that part time employees bring to the university, stressing the importance of their contributions to the overall excellence of the University.

Stony Brook HSC Chapter now has an active part-time concerns committee chaired by Carolyn Kube. In the past year, this committee has begun to branch out, add members, and become more vocal. There is plenty of work that needs to be done on behalf of the part-time employees here at Stony Brook/HSC.

The part time employees at Stony Brook/HSC are a

multitalented population working in diverse situations; they provide another set of helping hands in the workplace. Part time employees work just when and where they are needed the most. Filling important gaps in the schedule, this helps in making a flexible work schedule for all in a given department. Our chapter part-timers are a diverse group with a wide range of degrees and varying amounts of experience and expertise. They are important contributors to patient care and the functioning of their individual departments and the institution as a whole.

To get a glimpse into the world of a part-timer one must grasp the complexity of the "unique" setting they experience. Imagine working with someone who is not part of the work day 100% of the time yet working 100% of the time for a part of the day or week. This arrangement can be difficult at times, but the Ying/Yang of working synergistically with full time employees can be wonderful, and ultimately creates a pleasant and functional workplace.

This year it is time to focus on educating our working community to the contributions, and concerns of the part time employees here at Stony Brook Hospital and Medical Center. We can all work together to have our best year both personally and professionally. If you work part-time and are interested in being part of the chapter part time concerns committee please contact Carolyn Kube by calling the UUP office at 4-1505.

This article was contributed by Lori Tischler, RN, who is employed part time in the Healthcare Teleservices Department and is on the Part Time Concerns Committee.

UUP TUITION WAIVER PROGRAM

Deadlines for the UUP Tuition Waiver Program are rapidly approaching.

The timelines for application submissions are listed below:

Summer 2008 session I deadline: May 30

Summer 2008 session II deadline: July 11

Fall 2008 Semester deadline: August 29, 2008

For more information or to obtain an application, please contact the UUP office at 4-1505

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Now that the 2007-2011 collective bargaining agreement between UUP and the State of New York (also known as the UUP contract) has been ratified, have you taken some time to look it over? If not, it may be worth your while to take a look at it.

“Knowledge is power” has become the slogan of our chapter. Empower yourself. Get familiar with your contract. It’s your responsibility to ensure that your negotiated rights and privileges are protected and enforced. Some of us take things for granted and assume that the terms of the contract are being upheld. If we’re not familiar with the contract details, can we really be sure that the processes outlined within our contract are being properly followed and enforced? Unless we take the time to understand our collective bargaining agreement, as well as federal and state labor laws in general, preventable violations and injustices are inevitable.

Can you confidently answer the following questions:

Do you understand how the Taylor Law (Public Employees’ Fair Employment Act) impacts you?

Do you know what “FLSA” means and whether your job is covered by FLSA or is exempt?

Are you eligible for overtime? You may have heard that you have to accumulate 240 hours before getting paid for overtime so you avoid

working any overtime and if you must work extra hours now and then, you don’t bother to record the extra hours worked on your time sheet. *Are you making a big mistake?*

Do you know when you are entitled to earn comp time and when you can use it?

Do you know who is eligible for on-call and recall pay? Do you know where this is documented?

Do you know what is meant by the term “conditions of work”?

Do you know that by moving into some job titles, you may forfeit or become ineligible for permanent appointment? Do you know where this is documented?

Do you know how many holidays you earn a year or how your vacation and sick time are accrued? Do you know how many sick day accruals may be used for absences from work necessitated by the illness or death of an immediate family member?

If you’re unable to answer some or all these questions confidently, and are interested in learning the answers to these or other questions, review your contract and look for upcoming KNOW YOUR RIGHTS articles in future issues of *Bridges*.

This article was contributed by Carol Gizzi, Vice President and Grievance Chair for Professionals.

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT AWARDS (IDA) PROGRAM

Applications for NYS/UUP **Individual Development Awards (IDA) Program** to support activities dated between July 2, 2007 and July 1, 2008 will soon be available. These funds are available pursuant to Article 42 of the 2007-2011 collective bargaining agreement between New York State and UUP. This program is intended to assist eligible employees to develop their full professional potential and to prepare for advancement. Funding may be provided to enhance teaching, research capabilities, professional knowledge and skills. Please call the UUP office for additional information or refer to the website at www.nysuup.lmc.state.ny.us

ENRICH YOUR LIFE SHARE IT WITH OTHERS: Giving Life Sharing & Caring



Albert S. Hunte, Father of UUP Member Tina Manning.

Stony Brook/HSC UUP Member Tina Manning's memory of a blood donor goes back to fond memories of her dad, Mr. Albert S. Hunte, who was a police officer in New York City. Mr. Hunte donated blood on a regular basis. Tina always knew when her father donated blood because he

would arrive home with a special band-aid and a proud smile for having helped save a life. Tina decided at a young age she too would become a blood donor – to carry on her family tradition. Ms. Manning explained her dad started donating blood because he was a personal witness as a police officer to crimes, accidents and trauma suffered by people who often required blood transfusions upon arrival to the hospital. Tina, proud to walk in her father's footsteps, donates blood for patients in need as well as in honor of her dad's life.

Over the next several months we need "UUP members to become donors whenever it is convenient for them" said Jennifer L. Peace, of the Stony Brook University Hospital Blood Bank and UUP member. "Donation appointments will be scheduled to ensure a constant supply for our hospital. There are so many children and adult patients at our hospital that could use this precious gift." Ms. Peace

explained that when you give blood or platelets, your donation remains at the hospital and will be given to a patient in need, or you can give blood as a direct donation for a particular patient. Please contact Ms. Peace of Stony Brook Blood Bank at 444-7586 or email at jlpeace@notes.cc.sunysb.edu. When calling for an appointment please mention that you are a UUP member.

As you may be aware, we are no longer benefiting from the European blood supply. Long Island and the New York metropolitan area are experiencing severe shortages of blood and platelets. It is now more urgent than ever that we depend on our family, friends and members of the community to fill the void. As an independent collection facility, when you donate at the Blood Bank your donation goes directly to a child or adult patient in need.

Blood donation is a generous and lifesaving gift. There is a constant need for blood/platelet donations and supplies are less than adequate nationally, especially during the summer months. During these periods, our hospital receives increased trauma and other urgent care patients who require blood and/or platelets. If all blood donors gave at least twice per year, it would greatly strengthen the nations' blood supply. Less than five percent of people in the US who are able to donate actually do donate.

Article contributed by Tina Manning, UUP Stony Brook/HSC Chapter Secretary.



UUP BLOOD DRIVE

May 12, 13 & 15

SBUH Blood Bank

Donors and volunteers needed
Call the UUP office: 444-1505

We Need You!

The Stony Brook University Medical Center's Blood Bank, was established in 1980. The Blood Bank is an independent collection facility serving the needs of patients at Stony Brook University Medical Center. Suffolk County hospitals, including Stony Brook University Hospital use tens of thousand of units of blood each year. Every three seconds someone needs blood. Each year between 4,000 and 5,000 patients receive transfusions at Stony Brook University Medical Center.

Each day, patients across the country receive approximately 32,000 units of this vital resource. This year alone, as many as four million patients will require blood transfusions, as accident victims, people undergoing surgery and patients receiving treatment for leukemia, cancer and other diseases, all utilize blood and platelets.

Your donation is needed! You can help by calling the Blood Bank to make arrangements to donate. Donors must be in good health, between the ages of 17 to 75 years, and weigh at least 110 pounds. You must allow one hour for blood donations and up to two hours for platelet donations.

There are different types of blood donations that can be made. Donors can make a general donation of blood and/or platelets in support of our patients at the hospital. In addition to general donations there is a no obligation Directed Blood Donations program available for family and friends to provide blood/platelets for their loved ones. The Blood Bank also accepts Autologous Blood Donations. An autologous transfusion is a procedure that allows a patient to be transfused with his/her own blood.

Blood Type Facts: Do you know your blood type?

In an emergency, anyone can receive red blood cells from type O individuals, and type AB individuals can receive red blood cells of any ABO type. This is why people with type O blood are known as "universal donors" and those with type AB blood are known as "universal recipients".

All blood types are always needed – especially Rh factor negative

The approximate distribution of blood types in the US population is as follows:

| | | | |
|----------------|-----|----------------|----|
| O RH positive | 38% | O RH negative | 7% |
| A RH positive | 34% | A RH negative | 6% |
| B RH positive | 9% | B RH negative | 2% |
| AB RH positive | 3% | AB RH negative | 1% |

The Blood Bank is Located on Level 5 of the hospital and is open six days a week as follows:

Monday through Friday 7:45 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Saturday: 8:45 a.m.– 4 p.m.

For more information call the Blood Bank: 631-444-2634

UUP Stony Brook HSC Chapter Contacts

The opinions expressed in Bridges 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, for consideration, articles submitted by members of the Stony Brook community. Persons who have material they wish to contribute should email their submissions to Stonybrookhsc@uupmail.org for consideration. Submissions are subject to the approval of the newsletter editor and the chapter president. They may be edited for brevity and/or clarity.

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|----------|
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For the latest information be sure to check the UUP/HSC website: www.uuphost.org/stonybrookhsc
Include this as a bookmark on your web browser.



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