

Clarion

NEWSPAPER OF THE PROFESSIONAL STAFF CONGRESS / CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK



MAY 2017



CAMPUS GAs get bonuses

Some graduate assistants were denied bonuses, so the GC chapter fought back.

PAGE 4



Ellen Moynihan

ADJUNCT PAY EVERYONE'S ISSUE

PSC Vice President for Part-Time Personnel Susan DiRaimo was one of many CUNY adjuncts from across the city who testified before CUNY's Board of Trustees about the hardships adjunct instructors face with what the union called an unacceptable wage for part-time faculty. The union is demanding

the city and state invest funds that would raise adjunct pay to \$7,000 per course, bringing CUNY adjuncts in line with their peers at other institutions. DiRaimo, like many adjuncts, made it clear that she was not a part-time worker, but a full-time worker with part-time pay. **PAGES 6-7**

TUITION

Cuomo's plan observed

Governor Andrew Cuomo has finalized his college scholarship program, with much fanfare. But critics say it's a deal that leaves many students unserved. **PAGE 3**



MAY DAY

Classroom protest

Highlighting the injustices of the Trump administration, PSC members will use May 1 as a time to engage students in discussions about today's political struggles. **PAGE 4**

TRANSPARENCY

Union audit released

Independent auditors have completed their annual review of the financial statements of the PSC. See the full auditors' report. **PAGES 10-11**

SURVEY

Seeking member input

The PSC is conducting an email survey for its members and the union wants you to participate. It's an easy and quick way to help guide the union. **PAGE 12**



On April 6, PSC members marched in solidarity with LIU faculty who were locked out of their campus at the beginning of this academic year.

PROF TO LIU:

Settle with us now

By DEBORAH MUTNICK

When the Long Island University (LIU) administration locked out faculty on its Brooklyn campus last September in the midst of contract negotiations, the LIU Faculty Federation gained the national spotlight as the poster child for the corporatization of the university. Colleagues across the country watched closely to see what would happen, fearful that the LIU lockout – a precedent-setting labor action in higher education – could pave the way for other university presidents and boards of trustees to do the same.

When the lockout ended, we called it a victory – management was bruised by bad press and faculty emerged as heroes of the growing academic precariat. But even then we knew we'd only won a battle; the war would rage on.

Not surprisingly, morale plummeted as nonbinding mediation failed and bargaining proceeded as a one-way conversation: The union spoke and management took orders from LIU President Kimberly Cline. Her power over negotiations and the rumor that she'd reviewed promotion and tenure files with an attorney were deeply troubling.

FACULTY INTIMIDATION

Already afraid of losing their jobs, faculty understandably felt vulnerable as management sought to intimidate and bully us into submission while keeping up a rhetorical pretense of supporting “academic excellence” and shared governance.

The situation only got worse. In early 2017, the Board of Trustees issued two unilateral mandates – one to close academic programs, despite a review process that is supposedly part of the strategic plan, the other to reduce the core curriculum from over 50 to 30-33 credits. Between LIU's two campuses (Brooklyn and C.W. Post on Long Island), close to 50 programs, mostly in the lib-

eral arts and sciences, have been “stayed,” consolidated or “sunsetting.” Pressed for clarification of the timeline, administrators told us to trust them: “Reason would prevail,” they said. *Really?*

Meanwhile, our extended contract expires May 31. We face the possibility of another lockout. We may have to work without a contract and continue to negotiate. Our experience with bargaining and mediation has been dismal, but it must change. And that is why we rallied April 6: to tell administrators, enough; it is time to bargain in good faith.

UNIVERSITY, INC.

Here is my message to President Cline: I have been outspoken about my opposition to the corporatization of the university and the unjust treatment of campus workers as well as students. Together with many of my colleagues, I have stood up for what I believe to be right, for academic integrity and quality, for student rights, for shared governance, for access to education and for a democratic process in the workplace.

Give the LIU unions fair contracts and we will work to rebuild this cored-out university.

Deborah Mutnick is a professor of English at LIU and a member of the Executive Committee of the LIU Faculty Federation. A version of this article originally appeared on the American Federation of Teachers' website.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR | WRITE TO: CLARION/PSC, 61 BROADWAY, 15TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10006. EMAIL: APAU@PSCMAIL.ORG.

Overlooking long-timers?

● It won't be long until the various chairpersons at CUNY schools begin to schedule for the Fall 2017 semester. As a long-term adjunct, I happen to be the perfect example of what is wrong with the current contract. I've been at Queensborough Community College for the better part of 45 years. I started in 1972.

Under the terms of this agreement, I could easily lose my job, as I have no seniority/retention rights. This while people with far less service than I have now not only have retention rights, but, if classes are eliminated, must be retained while I am forced to leave so that they receive their guaranteed two classes. All of this is due to the fact that the agreement gives adjuncts who have taught two classes for a few consecutive years retention rights over adjuncts (like myself) who have not done so. Years (or decades) of service and total classes taught over the years are ignored.

Bernard A. Bilawsky,
Queensborough Community College

Safety at SPS

● I would like to add to some of the points raised in “Fighting for safe drinking water at SPS,” which appeared in the March 2017 *Clarion*.

In addition to high levels of copper in two of the rooms tested at the School of Professional Studies, detectable levels of lead were also found in one room. Repairs were made to the water system in the building, though we have been unable to obtain details

about when they were done. Following these repairs, the lead level in the affected room was actually higher than the initial test results.

Additionally, water samples taken after flushing in some cases have higher metal levels than before – this is the opposite of what would be expected.

While all metal levels are now below Environmental Protection Agency limits, we know that there is no “safe” level of lead in water. Employees remain concerned about the safety of the water and the effectiveness of repairs that were made.

For these reasons, we are requesting additional water testing. SPS management has not yet agreed to pay for testing.

Susan Fountain, School of Professional Studies

Editor's note: Fountain recently won the American Association of University Professors 2017 Georgina M. Smith Award for her work on this issue.

Credit the committee

Your wonderful coverage of the conference, “Union Hosts Global Voices,” (*Clarion*, April 2017) has one important omission: it was organized by the PSC International Committee. Its members – especially the chair, Professor Manny Ness and Secretary, Tony O'Brien – contributed much time and effort to make it as successful as it was. The International Committee has been actively working on solidar-

ity with academic unions in other countries for the past 16 years and has recently grown in membership.

Renate Bridenthal,
Brooklyn College, retired

Editor's note: We regret not highlighting the role the International Committee played in organizing this important conference.

Israel, a fair state

● The April 2017 *Clarion* published a letter “No to anti-BDS laws” by Sarah Schulman.

On November 29, 1947, the United Nations declared the establishment of two states: one Jewish and one Arab (not Palestinian) effective May 15, 1948. The Arab League ordered the Arabs in Palestine not to declare a state. Instead, Arab countries (Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Iraq and Lebanon) invaded Palestine to push the Jews into the Mediterranean Sea.

Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East.

All residents get the same salaries, fringe benefits and pensions. In Israel there is an Arab on the Supreme Court. The Arab members of the Knesset (Israel's parliament) get the same salary, benefits and diplomatic passports.

Schulman's letter is a complete misrepresentation and far from the truth about farmers, students and artists. Schools are funded equally.

Yehuda Tamir, College of Staten Island, retired

March for science, and the planet

By CLARION STAFF

PSC members were among the throngs of demonstrators in the streets of Manhattan on April 22 for the March for Science, a demonstration against the Trump administration's proposed cuts to scientific research and its policy of rejecting established science regarding climate change.

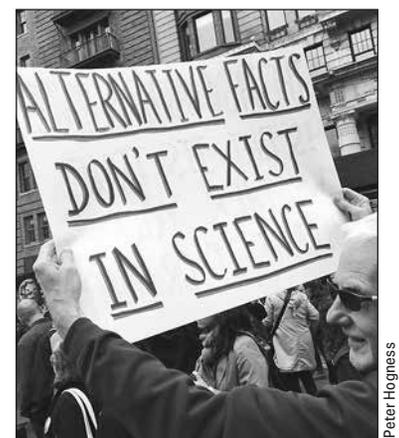
“I've been aware of this climate change situation for quite a while,” said Adam Koranyi, a retired mathematics professor from Lehman College, who marched. “It's just that if you have eyes, and you see the blind man going to fall into a deep ditch,

then you have to try to stop him. That's my attitude.”

He added, “It looks to me that we're running towards a catastrophe, and if you see that, then you have to do something.”

Unionists joined environmental groups and other science advocates to protest the administration's deep cuts to agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Institutes of Health. The administration is widely seen as a friend of the fossil fuel industry.

As this newspaper went to press, union members were also participating in the April 29 People's Climate March in Washington, DC.



Protestors took part in the March for Science.

Peter Hogness

Critics say tuition plan falls short

Many students will not be covered

By ARI PAUL

In January, when Governor Andrew Cuomo unveiled his proposal for a tuition waiver plan for students from low- and moderate-income families for CUNY and SUNY, he did so with Senator Bernie Sanders at his side. The joint appearance with Sanders created the impression that the usually centrist governor had embarked on a new progressive path, adopting the free college idea that Sanders had featured in his 2016 presidential campaign.

Yet, when the governor signed the bill for the plan in April, calling it the “first-in-nation, tuition-free college for the middle class,” he did so next to Sanders’s more centrist competitor and eventual victor in the Democratic primary, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Some observers read this as a tempering of the original plan, or at the very least an indication that the Cuomo tuition plan was less ambitious and progressive than many first thought.

As details of the plan emerge, it looks like the skeptics may be right.

Most prominently, many economic justice activists have pointed out that the tuition plan covers far fewer people than originally anticipated.

OTHER EXPENSES

Tom Hilliard of the Center for an Urban Future wrote in a statement, “The bill has...shortcomings. Its requirement of 15 credit hours per semester, every semester, is unrealistic for many students. It provides no benefits for low-income students whose tuition is paid by TAP and Pell, but who struggle to pay living expenses. There are no companion benefits to improve student completion rates at public colleges where the odds of dropping out are higher than the odds of graduating. But these are omissions that could be fixed in subsequent years.”

CUNY advocates also note that the scholarship won’t cover other basic costs that are burdensome for working-class students, such as the cost of books and living expenses. As *The New York Times* reported, there are other requirements that could prevent many students from taking part in the scholarship program. The paper reported, “To qualify, students must attend school full time and be on track to graduate within two or four years, depending on the degree they are seeking. But low-income students often must interrupt their studies to work. At the state’s community colleges, more than 90 percent of students would not qualify for free tuition based on those requirements. Even at its four-year colleges, 60 percent would be ineligible.”

In fact, *The New York Times* editorial board voiced skepticism about the plan, saying, “This was not the product of extensive hearings or long study; there was no sense that it emerged because public-policy or higher-education experts – never



Hillary Clinton (l) joined Governor Andrew Cuomo at LaGuardia Community College for the bill signing of the governor’s new “free” tuition plan for public universities in the state.

mind students! – had told the governor, let’s examine what is keeping young New Yorkers out of college, and figure out how to get them in and keep them there.”

The *Times* editorial noted that while the proposal in January claimed that nearly a million families could qualify, one estimate put that number closer to 32,000 students.

Kevin Stump, the northeast director of the Young Invincibles, which along with the PSC is a part of the CUNY Rising Alliance, said in an article for the *Gotham Gazette* that the final budget agreement did offer some relief for part-time students: “The budget also established a Part-Time Scholarship (PTS) that is available to community college students based on financial need who take more than six credits but less than 12 credits a semester. Students who qualify may receive an award up to \$1,500 for up to four consecutive semesters only, which would likely leave them without any aid to finish the second half of their degree.”

MIDDLE-CLASS PLAN

Slate’s senior business and economics correspondent, Jordan Weissmann, said the plan “may be more helpful to middle-class than poorer families, who already tend to pay very little in tuition. That’s because it’s a so-called last dollar program – New York will cover the cost of tuition, but only after subtracting the value of other grants and scholarships students receive.”

He continued, “This somewhat undermines one of the big rationales behind making college tuition-free in the first place. A lot of progressives hope that by zeroing out tu-

ition, low-income students would be able to use their other scholarship and grant money to cover living expenses.”

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

Among the issues critics are finding is a feature not included in Cuomo’s original proposal, but rather similar to a competing SUNY/CUNY affordability plan introduced by Assemblyman James Skoufis. While news reports indicated that the change in the final plan came from Senate Republicans, Skoufis is a Democrat.

The governor’s plan requires that a recipient of the tuition waiver live in New York state for up to four years, or else the waiver becomes a student loan. The idea is that the state of New York’s workforce should reap the benefits of the investment in public higher education affordability, and not subsidize brain drain.

This policy might be well intentioned, and certainly statistics show that most CUNY graduates don’t leave the state upon graduation, but the problems with the requirement are many.

Suppose you are from a family earning a total of \$90,000 per year in New York City, and you enroll at City Tech on the scholarship, specializing in computer science. It turns out you’re a whiz, and upon graduation you’re offered extremely exciting positions out of state that come with livable salaries and benefits in parts of the country where buying a home is much easier than in New York City, where housing prices have skyrocketed. Besides, you’re just not getting that many good computer job offers from employers in the state. You don’t

come from a rich family, so you don’t have family money to fall back on.

What are you to do in this case? Take the job that provides you a real professional path and be forced into debt, or do you stay restrained in a smaller job market with higher living costs?

The answer isn’t easy, and this one example shows just how troubling this provision is, since now it makes financial planning and career building that much more difficult if someone at the beginning of college doesn’t know whether they’ll be in debt in a few years or not.

“Forcing college graduates to live and work in New York is wrong. A grant should be a grant, not a loan with an escape clause,” Hilliard said. “The provision is also dangerous. Students may not understand what they are getting into when they accept the money.”

He noted that this requirement could place students in a precarious situation. He said that an out-of-state move could mean that a student would “suddenly face a student loan burden of up to \$27,500.”

The loan-conversion requirement also puts other kinds of financial handcuffs on potential graduates. What if a graduate must move out of state to take care of a sick relative? And such a restraint would cut off the potential of living abroad, such as participating in the Peace Corps or pursuing a Fulbright scholarship, or simply taking jobs teaching or working overseas. All of these things are supposed to be opportunities for Americans to have broad experiences early in life, but they would

be denied to New Yorkers who come from low- or moderate-income households.

PART-TIME STUDENTS?

The residency requirement of the Cuomo scholarship plan underscores the problem with treating higher education simply as a utilitarian, Fordist, workforce-training program, rather than as a public service for civil society.

“Education is not only about ‘training the workforce,’” LaGuardia Community College PSC Chapter Chair Sigmund Shen told *Clarion* in an email. “If we’re going to say now that the primary goal of college is job training, then we should at least be consistent and demand that students be paid as they would for any other job training. But it would be better to recognize the implicit value of education to democracy, civilization and the planet, regardless of who is currently hiring or for what.”

The loan-conversion plan is only one issue related to the scholarship plan the governor has put forth that critics have cited. As student and faculty advocates have noted, the program will offer the greatest help to full-time students from household incomes between \$80,000 and \$100,000. The program offers nothing for students who go to college part time because they have to work, and the program also cuts out undocumented students.

Even with this scholarship plan signed into law, the PSC, along with the CUNY Rising Alliance, has re-committed to continued lobbying and demanding more affordability for public higher education, which would require full funding from the state. In particular, PSC said it would continue working with Inez Barron, chair of the City Council’s higher education committee, who has formed a task force to reintroduce the possibility of making CUNY free.

NEEDED INVESTMENT

The union has maintained the position that while affordability is a necessary goal for CUNY, affordability is meaningless without the increased investment that would enable both current and future students to take the courses they need.

“Without increased public investment in CUNY, Excelsior cannot achieve its full potential,” PSC President Barbara Bowen said in a statement. “Excelsior requires timely progress to graduation, but the enacted state budget for FY18 failed to provide the resources necessary to enable students to graduate on time. Nearly half of current CUNY undergraduates report not being able to take a course they need for their major. Without adequate state funding, CUNY cannot support the smaller classes, expanded faculty mentorship, improved advisement and increased support services that are proven to improve graduation rates.”

Courtesy of the Governor’s Office

Class struggle: teaching May Day

By CLARION STAFF

This May Day, faculty and staff from universities across the nation will teach about how the policies of the Trump administration affect subject matter in a range of disciplines, from the sciences to social sciences, from criminal justice to public policy. An administration that spreads alternative facts, ignores science around climate change, and uses hateful language to describe women and immigrants poses a threat to academic inquiry and critical thinking, both of which are essential components of a college education.

PSC President Barbara Bowen wrote in a message about May Day that PSC members “have a responsibility to use our power in academically responsible ways to expose untruths and demand that universities be safe and productive.” She invited faculty and staff to participate in the moratorium by integrating examination of Trump policies and their impact into relevant classes and by joining a mass demonstration in support of immigrant and workers’ rights on May 1 in Lower Manhattan’s Foley Square.

“It is clearer every day: Donald Trump’s plans threaten to severely undermine the communities we serve, the democratic values we hold dear and the public good we hold dear,” wrote PSC Secretary Nivedita Majumdar in an email to members. Scores of faculty and staff across CUNY have pledged to include critical reflection on the impact of the Trump presidency in ways that will deepen discussion within their academic subjects.

The PSC is also collecting suggested readings about the Trump administration that can be used to initiate discussions in the classroom. To add your own suggestions to the dropbox, go to tinyurl.com/Trump-syllabus-submit. To view the readings collected so far, go to tinyurl.com/Trump-syllabus-view.

Below, some PSC members share what they plan to discuss in their classes on the week of May Day.

Anne Posten

Adjunct Instructor, English Department
Queens College

Last spring, I developed a syllabus around the theme “literature of immigration.” In the Spring of 2016 it felt very timely; I could hardly have imagined how much more timely it would feel to teach the course a year later.

One of my primary goals was to use the course to think about immigration from a variety of different angles – to form an abstract, philosophical picture of what immigration is and means and how it is written. It seems to me that this is exactly what literature is good for: to allow us to see from different perspectives, and to think critically and abstractly in order to later apply these ideas to the world we live in.

I have used a small excerpt from the beginning of Julia Kristeva’s *Strangers to Ourselves* as a corner-

Bringing the protest to CUNY campuses

stone of the course to think about the trope of the foreigner. Kristeva’s text is a difficult one, but the thesis is clear: foreignness is within us all, and by recognizing it in ourselves we can avoid fearing or hating it in others. Students then apply Kristeva’s ideas to a widely varying selection of prose dealing explicitly or implicitly with the theme of immigration.

This May Day will mark the turning point of my class, and the beginning of the last unit, which I call “Immigration in Crisis: Europe and America Today.” On May 1, I will ask my students to consider what it means to say that we are experiencing a crisis of immigration, and who or what is causing it. Is our country really threatened by immigration the way our president suggests? If it is natural, as Ben Mauk suggests in his piece for *Granta*, “A Land Without Strangers,” to divide ourselves and judge on the basis of differences real or imagined, how can we fight this impulse, recognizing our mutual strangeness and fostering a more just world?

Stuart Chen-Hayes

Associate Professor/Program Coordinator
Counseling, Leadership, Literacy, and Special Education (CLSE) Department
Lehman College

This semester I am teaching two sections of “College Access Counsel-

ing.” From the start of the classes, we have focused on access, affordability and college admissions. We’ve talked about how prepared first-generation poor and working-class immigrant students of color are to navigate the labyrinthine financial aid process and the need for affordable options beyond free tuition, such as covering the cost of food, housing, transportation, childcare, and books – options that are available in many other countries. We will spend our class time the week of May Day discussing the Trump administration’s threats to the Pell Grant program, elimination of protections for student borrowers, the temporary removal of the FAFSA financial aid tax retrieval tool, and Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos’s focus on privatizing K-12 schools and higher education.

Immanuel Ness

Professor, Political Science
Brooklyn College

As Trump seeks to eviscerate public education, in this centenary year of the Russian Revolution, students in my class, “Guns, Money and Politics in the US,” will learn the importance of education in building a new society.

In the week of May Day, I will teach about the work of Nadezhda

Teaching about Trump and his policies.

Krupskaya, an early 20th-century activist and a leader in the movement to widely expand women’s access to education throughout Russia. From 1929 to 1939, she served as the Deputy Minister of Education of the Soviet Union. As a young adult in Imperial Russia, Krupskaya recognized the importance of science and mathematics and also attached great importance to literature, history and the social sciences. Krupskaya devoted her life to educating women workers. Krupskaya provides a sharp contrast to Betsy DeVos, Trump’s secretary of education, who advocates for restricting public access to education through privatization and charter schools. DeVos, a member of a billionaire family, has invested in companies seeking to profit through spending public tax money on private for-profit schools.

Our mostly working-class students will discuss whether our government is committed to providing quality higher education. Students will evaluate whether Krupskaya’s dream of advancing public education and learning for all has become a reality in the 21st century. Students will discuss their own programs for expanding public higher education here at CUNY.

Rachel Cholst

Advisor, CUNY Start
Hostos Community College

I think it’s important that our students realize that Trump’s policies are the manifestation of many hateful ideologies, but he is certainly not the first person to espouse such ideas or even to use the government as a platform to make racism, sexism, homophobia and labor suppression into government policies.

Full-time students are in class from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., and during our lunch break on May Day, we’ll post a timeline around the room highlighting the events they’ve read about in Michelle Alexander’s *The New Jim Crow* and Juan González’s *Harvest of Empire*, and also include important moments they’ve learned about in labor history, LGBT rights history, indigenous rights history, and women’s rights history. Each of these historical movements will be color coded. The timeline will circle around the room – with the first date next to the last date – to demonstrate that history is not progressive and that some of the events of Trump’s first 100 days might circle back to the past. We will then discuss any patterns students noticed in the long history for the struggle for equality and what each of us can do to interrupt harmful patterns and repeat the successes of past activism. If students desire, they can use art supplies to respond to the question that will conclude our discussion: What kind of future do we want to build?

GAs win bonuses, after denial

By SHOMIAL AHMAD

You fight back, you win.

After pressure from the PSC and the union’s Graduate Center chapter, graduate assistants (GAs) who were denied a \$750 signing bonus because they were on approved leave will be able to collect the bonus upon return to CUNY employment.

“It didn’t happen automatically,” Anh Tran, a Graduate Center chapter activist, told *Clarion*. “It happened because people from our core group of activists made it a priority.”

Graduate assistants who were either on approved leave during the Spring 2016 or Fall 2016 semesters did not receive signing bonuses: \$750 for most Graduate Assistants and \$500 for Graduate Assistants D. But now those GAs, as long as they return to work no later than February 1, 2018, will receive the ratification bonus.

CHAPTER ORGANIZING

Chapter activists said that they’ve seen some direct benefits from the organizing they’ve been doing in recent years. As a representative of graduate assistants, the Graduate Center chapter was practically non-existent several years ago. There are around 150

A union victory on pay



Marc Kagan (l) and Anh Tran (r) are active in increasing union involvement within their chapter at the Graduate Center.

full-time faculty with central line appointments at the Graduate Center, but there are about 1,500 doctoral students employed as graduate assistants, usually working at one or more college campuses. To better represent themselves, graduate assistants have spent the past two

years organizing, with the result that chapter membership numbers have grown and an increased number of delegates will be elected to represent the increased number of members.

Chapter activists also engaged PSC leaders during and after con-

tract negotiations to ensure that graduate student stipends would not decrease once graduate assistant salaries increased. PSC president Barbara Bowen joined Graduate Center Chapter Chair Luke Elliott-Negri at a meeting with the Graduate Center administration last fall to demand that a previous practice not be followed: decreasing stipends once wages were increased so that the graduate employee’s total economic package remained unchanged. The result, on average, is a \$1,000 increase per year for current graduate assistants from the contract.

ENGAGING MEMBERSHIP

Tran said that the chapter continues to engage members. She stepped up her commitment to the union during the strike authorization campaign last year, and she sees more people getting involved.

“Some people get activated because they get inspired by a campaign. Others get activated because of a direct benefit,” said Tran, who studies political science. “This is an opening for GAs to see this as a fighting union.”

The chapter in recent years has made “quantum leaps” in organization, according to Marc Kagan, who got involved with the union in 2015, during his first year at the Graduate Center. The chapter’s increased presence has helped in winning benefits specific to graduate workers. Kagan,

Continued on page 8

Steps made, but budget still lags

By ARI PAUL

For public higher education advocates, the reaction to this year's state budget agreement is lukewarm.

On the one hand, Governor Andrew Cuomo did not attempt to push through any drastic spending cut to CUNY of the variety that led to massive union-led civil disobedience and other protests in 2016, and that jeopardized the outcome of contract talks between the union and CUNY. On the other hand, the PSC, along with other CUNY advocates such as CUNY's University Student Senate (USS) and NYPIRG ran a weeks-long lobbying and media campaign demanding full funding for CUNY to make up for years of austerity funding from the state. The final spending package this year fell regrettably short.

UPHILL BATTLE

The PSC knew from the outset that the fight for a just budget was going to be an uphill battle: with federal cuts to the state expected next year, the governor and legislators crafted a lean budget on the expectation that cuts would be necessary a year from now. Through lobbying visits, TV and radio ads, phone calls to lawmakers and rallies throughout the city, USS, PSC and their allies clearly stated that the historic state underfunding of CUNY is unacceptable, and that a bigger state investment is needed, not just for affordability but also

No harsh cuts, but no full funding either



Ahead of the budget deadline, scores of CUNY students and their PSC allies marched across the Brooklyn Bridge demanding that the state adequately fund public higher education.

to meet student needs. The union and student groups argued that, in addition to freezing tuition, a state budget should fund more full-time teaching lines and a significant pay increase for adjunct instructors.

"State funding for CUNY senior colleges remains essentially flat in the enacted budget," PSC President Barbara

Union and students fight for full funding.

Bowen said in a statement. "The vast majority of new funds for CUNY will come from annual tuition increases paid by the students who do not qualify for the terms of the Excelsior Scholarship. (See p. 3) The tuition hikes approved for the next four years come only with a

promise not to cut state funding; there is no commitment to cover rising operating costs."

She continued, "We thank CUNY's champions in Albany and are grateful for the inclusion of funds for past collective bargaining increases for which a commitment was made last year. And we acknowledge the legislature for fully funding CUNY's opportunity programs and the Accelerated Study in Associ-

ate Programs (ASAP) initiative, while also improving the state's per-student investment in community colleges. But state funding per student at CUNY still lags behind pre-recession levels, when adjusted for inflation. In a year in which the governor rightly emphasized the importance of public higher education, it doesn't make sense to deny CUNY the funding it needs to ensure student success."

SOME VICTORIES

PSC First Vice President Mike Fabricant noted in a dispatch to members, "Our struggle in Albany to produce increased investment in CUNY was an uphill battle from the beginning. In the last two months you rallied to help the PSC make its best case for a significant increase in state investment. Your phone calls and email messages were heard and commented on by many legislators. You did an extraordinary job in fighting for the budget CUNY needs and deserves. Your work did result in some victories."

The union sees the organizing effort conducted by faculty, staff and students as laying critical groundwork for future budget battles and contract campaigns, making the case that workforce issues and the delivery of affordable education to students are inherently linked.

The final state budget – a result of prolonged negotiations between the governor, the Democratic-controlled State Assembly and the Republican-controlled State Senate – did contain some other general victories. For example, the final budget extends the millionaires' tax for two years, which PSC along with other unions and economic justice groups had argued is vital to maintaining much-needed revenue for the state. The budget also included a five-year extension of the 421a tax break intended to promote more affordable housing in the New York City. And the budget makes big headway on the humanitarian front: more 16- and 17-year-olds will be moved out of adult courts and jails.

MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

CUNY management was more upbeat about the outcome for the university. CUNY Board of Trustees Chairman William Thompson and Chancellor James Milliken said in a joint statement, "The budget also provides substantial support for CUNY's facilities and provides much needed operational funding. And, in another significant boost to our students, the state will be providing innovative support for online textbooks that will greatly reduce the cost for thousands of CUNY students. We are grateful for Governor Cuomo's leadership in expanding access to affordable, quality college education for so many New Yorkers, helping ensure that we have the educated and skilled workforce that is necessary to grow the economy for a better New York for all."

New leadership at state parent union

By SHOMIAL AHMAD

Andrew Pallotta, a longtime union leader and a former Bronx elementary school teacher, has been elected the new president of New York State Union of Teachers (NYSUT), the statewide affiliate of the Professional Staff Congress. Outgoing NYSUT President Karen Magee announced earlier this spring that she would not be serving a second term. Magee, NYSUT's first woman president, will be heading a multi-union state and national effort that will focus on women's issues in the workplace. Pallotta, who is a Kingsborough Community College and Brooklyn College graduate, will serve for a three-year term.

"I believe in being relevant, resilient and, above all, relentless," Pallotta, who was most recently the union's executive vice president, said in a speech to delegates at the union's annual representative assembly (RA) in New York City. "We will never quit fighting for those we serve, or for each other."

TOUGH ROAD AHEAD

With more than 600,000 union members, NYSUT is a powerful force in state politics. Union members have successfully beaten back

vouchers, fought against the state's overreliance on standardized tests and successfully elected members to public office and to the Board of Regents. Pallotta told the education news site Chalkbeat that he expects a warmer relationship with Governor Andrew Cuomo, saying the rhetoric of Cuomo's education reform agenda

has been "toned down." In his speech to union delegates, Pallotta recognized the tough road ahead, and said that member involvement is more important than ever in light of legal and political threats to public-sector unions and Education Secretary Betsy DeVos's agenda of promoting school choice and privatization of public schools.

In addition to the elections, the representative assembly is where convention delegates set NYSUT policy for the year ahead. The PSC sent more than two dozen delegates to the NYSUT RA, and they introduced several resolutions, including "ending the rank exploitation" of contingent faculty, support for members' demands to designate schools and colleges as sanctuary institutions, opposing attempts to deny public funding based on constitutionally protected speech, eliminating the cap on Social Security wages, lobbying for federal legislation



Delegates to NYSUT's annual representative assembly elected Andrew Pallotta as NYSUT president.

for paid family leave and seeking legislation so that Medicare can negotiate drug prices. All the resolutions were approved by RA delegates and become NYSUT policy. To read the complete resolutions, go to psc-cuny.org/resolutions-2017.

NEW CAMPAIGN

The NYSUT RA also overwhelmingly approved a special order of business calling for a grassroots campaign to increase union membership in case of a possible Supreme Court decision that would invalidate the collection of fair share fees by

public sector unions. PSC President Barbara Bowen, who introduced the resolution at the RA, talked about the current conservative majority on the Supreme Court with the recent confirmation of Neil Gorsuch.

"His presence on the Supreme Court will lead to a ruling designed to attack public-sector unions, especially teacher unions," Bowen told the assembly, as reported on NYSUT's website. She talked about how losing the ability to collect fair share fees will affect public-sector unions. "If you have enough free riders, pretty soon you have nothing left to ride."

Serving alongside Pallotta for the next three years are Jolene Di-Brango, executive vice president and a sixth grade teacher in the Pittsford District in upstate New York; J. Philippe Abraham, first vice president and past director of career services at SUNY Albany; Paul Pecorale, second vice president and a Long Island teacher, and Martin Messner, secretary-treasurer and a teacher from Schoharie in upstate New York. RA delegates also elected members to NYSUT's board of directors, and PSC President Barbara Bowen was reelected to the board, as were Iris DeLutro, Michael Fabricant and Steve London.

By CLARION STAFF

Adjuncts to CUNY board

We deserve fair pay

The thousands of adjunct instructors throughout CUNY are an important part of students' lives and often have the same academic training as their full-time colleagues. Yet they are paid substantially less.

At a CUNY Board of Trustees hearing at Queens Borough Hall on April 20, dozens of adjunct instructors testified about their experiences, with a unified demand: raise adjunct pay to \$7,000 per course, per semester, bringing pay closer in line with adjuncts at other peer institutions.

They spoke of the sacrifices they make to give high-quality instruction to their students, often highlighting the unseen and uncompensated work they do with students outside the classroom. And the thrust of this demand was a pedagogical one: as long as adjuncts are paid rock-bottom wages, the quality of students' education will suffer.

PSC members argued that many adjuncts are not part-time instructors, but rather full-time instructors compensated at a part-time wage while carrying the burden of teaching the majority of courses at CUNY.

"It is unconscionable to balance CUNY's budget on the backs of adjuncts," PSC President Barbara Bowen told *Clarion*. "The Board of Trustees must make significantly increased adjunct pay a priority. The university must step up."



Stacey Engels consistently receives excellent evaluations from her students and colleagues, yet she finds it hard to make a sustainable living on an adjunct's salary.

STUDENTS NEED US

Raising CUNY adjunct pay to \$7,000 per course will improve CUNY's impact nationally and internationally. As a computer science adjunct lecturer, I want to be able to focus solely on my students and their work, but as a result of low wages, teaching can never be my top priority.

To properly train my students, I need time to adapt my lectures and exams to their specific needs. These exams require a lot of time to grade properly and are much more

useful to the students (compared to multiple choice questionnaires for example).

Increased pay will also allow me to hold longer one-on-one office hours, making sure no student feels abandoned. Increased pay means I can spend more time doing research, staying on the cutting edge of my academic field, thus helping my students acquire the skills most in demand by potential employers. The current state of pay for CUNY adjunct lecturers does not allow us

to dedicate ourselves to CUNY and its students.

**Felix Grezes,
Hunter College**

WE DESERVE RESPECT

I have taught one class at Queens College since 1983. That was the year a film I wrote, *Vigilante*, was released. Since then, I have become successful enough that I was named a lifetime member of the Writers Guild of America East and was

elected to its council for a two-year term in 2012. I have worked with film producers who have either produced, starred in or directed my work and that list includes Francis Ford Coppola, Ed Harris, Walter Matthau, Carol Burnett, Jason Alexander, Agnieszka Holland and George Clooney to name a few.

NOT APPRECIATED

I have written scripts for Paramount, Universal, ABC, CBS, Disney and yet what gives me the most satisfaction is helping students who come to Queens College from all over the world to learn how to write movies. And I'm treated like a seasonal worker by the Board of Trustees at CUNY. I am hired semester by semester and my pay, though I've been teaching nearly nonstop since 1983, is abysmal.

I do not believe I'm appreciated by this educational system. However, I haven't complained because, as I stated, I love teaching at Queens. Yet now is the time to give me equal pay for all I have contributed to Queens College and pay all those others who work as hard as me to educate the young minds who come to our classrooms hopeful that what they learn will give them the opportunity to change their lives. I'm only asking for the respect, I and others like me, deserve.

**Richard Vetere,
Queens College**

SAME WORK FOR LESS PAY

Adjuncts should receive the same pay as full-time staff. We do the same work and, in many cases, do the work more effectively. We often teach sections with more students than our full-time counterparts. As a teacher, professional developer with the UFT Teacher Center and a Literacy Coach for over 36 years with the Department of Education, I believe that I am infinitely more qualified to teach education methodology courses than those who have never taught in the system.

I have often found myself called a "practitioner" in a derogatory manner by certain full-time staff and there is an assumption that I am not knowledgeable in theory and only in practice, an assumption that is false. I have consistently kept up with best practices and current research and am fully capable of engaging in academic research and writing.

I am proud to be considered an effective practitioner. It was my choice to devote my career to working with students both at the middle and high school levels, as well as at the college level. I think I speak for many adjuncts when I say that we always

put our students first, not research. Our students are our clients and they deserve our full attention.

**Amy Greenberg,
Brooklyn College**

BULK OF THE WORK

I am not part time. I am full time at part-time pay. I teach four courses running from two CUNY campuses. I met an adjunct teaching six courses: two courses at CUNY, two at St. Johns and two at Fordham. I heard about an adjunct teaching nine courses in one semester.

I mentor students, I assist students with applying for intern-



Haley Bueschlen delivered her testimony in verse.

ships, for scholarships. I am on the board of trustees for a scholarship here at CUNY. I advise students about what courses to take and what to major in. I write letters of recommendation. I have to change incomplete grades from the previous semester. This semester I had to advise a student not to commit suicide because his course load was too much. I had to send him to counseling. I had to alert his academic adviser, all without compensation.

CUNY adjuncts struggle to make ends meet.

While CUNY invests in technology and in building new science centers, it has not invested in the adjuncts who teach its courses. At any one time a building that should be 100 percent full with teachers is only 40 to 50 percent full because adjuncts are rushing off to another campus to teach so adjuncts cannot be there for their students.

Adjuncts comprise 60 percent of the teaching staff at CUNY. Adjuncts teach more than 70,000



Welker White works to create the best learning experience for her students, but because of the low adjunct salary, she has had to scale down on writing assignments.

Pay for our work

courses. Every other teacher in a classroom is an adjunct. Adjuncts need pay parity. For the four courses I teach, I get paid for one office hour. I should be paid for four office hours. Each class taught at CUNY needs to have a paid office hour. Adjuncts make as little as \$25,000 a year for teaching a full-time load.

A 2010 Princeton study concluded people are not happier making more than \$75,000 a year. Many people at CUNY make over \$100,000 while adjuncts who teach the bulk of the courses make \$25,000 a year. This is not just. CUNY could find money in its budget to pay adjuncts a fair wage. CUNY runs on adjuncts' low wages.

The Modern Language Association recommended \$7,000 a course.... Adjuncts at CUNY make as low as \$3,000 a course, and \$7,000 a course would give adjuncts a living wage.

Susan DiRaimo,
PSC Vice President for
Part-Time Personnel

THIS IS 'WAGE THEFT'

The ethical issue is clear for those of us who are adjuncts, and that issue is wage theft. Wage theft, as you know, is the illegal practice of not paying workers for all of their work. As adjunct staff members, we work far more hours than we are compensated for, doing activities and tasks such as grading papers and reading student emails.... Every species on the Earth seems to survive and thrive. Adjuncts staffers work hard, and they are getting paid for teaching, but no one wants to feel exploited.

Joyce Timberlake,
Baruch College

A FAMILY TRADITION

I come from a family of teachers. My student evaluations at Hunter last fall ranked me across the board between "excellent" and "outstanding." My Lehman student evaluations were similar. Both semesters, the Lehman College Department of English faculty members who observed my classes ranked my work as excellent. Teaching two classes per semester, I am making a wage that places me close to the poverty line in New York City. Only my freelance work as a grant writer has made it possible for me to survive this year.

Going forward, if I were to try to cover my expenses as a college teacher, I would have to take on many more classes. As it is, I spend many hours a week on lesson preparation and reading student work in addition to the time I spend in the classroom. When I began ask-

ing colleagues how they manage to grade 25 student essays four times a semester, in addition to all their other obligations, I learned they have developed systems that enable them to spend a fraction of the time I have been spending on each essay – literally a quarter to a fifteenth of the time I have dedicated to reviewing, correcting and commenting on student essays.

THE CREATIVE LIFE

I moved to New York City from Montreal over 20 years ago to be a writer. It is always a balancing act to earn enough to sustain a creative life, and in my case, the work I did to support myself came to be extremely important to me. I have worked in public schools and underserved communities because the need is there and I consider it a meaningful way to live a creative life. Yet I have to be able to sustain myself to be able to help anyone else.

Stacey Engels,
Lehman and
Hunter colleges

THE LIVING THEATER

I bring in guest speakers and take my students, often out of class time, to meet industry professionals. In the last eight years I've connected my students with Oscar and Tony winners, major theater and film directors, and some of our country's most lauded playwrights. Of course I don't have to provide my students with these opportunities. But if I don't create the best experience for them that I am capable of, then what is really the point? What I



Marcia Newfield addressed the many difficulties that adjuncts face.

have had to do is make hard choices about how to give my students the best possible learning experience. I'm chagrined to admit that I have, in several of my courses, seriously scaled back the level of writing and research I'm asking my students to do. There is simply no way that I can grade up to 26 papers, prep for class, answer emails and meet students privately and then meet them on the weekend to watch and discuss plays.

Welker White,
Brooklyn College

PROTEST POEM

My testimony is as follows:

Vampires are real.
MFA required.
MFA required.
MFA required.
MFA required.
Posted student loan transaction.
April 11, 2017. Payment. Thank you.
\$396.26.

CUNY adjunct payroll. April 24, 2017. Advice No. 95654888 non-negotiable. Total: \$933.09.

Posted student loan transaction.
March 17, 2017. Payment. Thank you.
\$396.26.

CUNY adjunct payroll. March 24, 2017. Advice No. 95654888 non-negotiable. Total: \$933.09.

Posted student loan transaction.
February 7, 2017. Payment. Thank you.
\$396.26.

CUNY adjunct payroll. February 24, 2017. Advice No. 95654888 non-negotiable. Total: \$933.09.

Posted student loan transaction.
January 26, 2017. Payment. Thank you.
\$396.26.

Payment. Thank you.
Haley Bueschlen,
College of Staten Island

LISTING HARDSHIPS

As one of four grievance counselors at the PSC assigned to address adjunct issues, I am a witness to the difficulties adjuncts experience, difficulties that are avoidable. It's a hardship to have classes canceled at the last minute when you have prepared for the semester, when it cuts you off from the three-year appointment.

Is it really impossible to have smaller classes? The 29-person cap for a writing class, which I experience at Borough of Manhattan Community College, is way too many. It doesn't give enough time to grade papers or meet with students. Five papers of four pages each – 580 pages. Not counting revisions, in-class writing and exams. Our graduation rate would go up if we had more time to guide our students.

Marcia Newfield,
retiree



Joyce Timberlake calls the lack of pay for all the work adjuncts do "wage theft."

Ellen Moynihan

An issue for all of us

By **BARBARA BOWEN**

Adjunct pay is everyone's issue. Clearly the issue is most urgent for those who are living on "full-time adjunct" wages – about \$30,000 a year. We have adjuncts at CUNY on food stamps. But all of us are hurt by a system in which half of the teaching workforce is grossly underpaid.

Think about the economics. I'm leaving aside for a moment the ethical crisis it causes many of us to work for an employer who permits what an adjunct on this page memorably calls "wage theft." I'm going to take it as understood that everyone suffers when there are too few full-time faculty and professional staff to do the work, and that underpaying people is just plain wrong.

But imagine you are an employer like CUNY, which has accepted the idea that there is no alternative to permanent underfunding by the City and State. What incentive would you have to demand that New York City and State pay nationally competitive salaries to full-time faculty when you know that you can hire someone with an advanced academic degree to teach the same course at a fraction of the cost? And why wouldn't you import the cheap-labor adjunct system into other areas of the CUNY?

That is exactly what CUNY has done. The entire CUNY budget is structured on a reliance on underpaid contingent labor. CUNY's adjunct pay is unfair to adjuncts and helps to depress the salaries of full-

timers. I suspect that we all subsidize the university by doing unpaid work, but in the case of adjuncts, the magnitude of the subsidy is absurd. There are now 11,000 teaching adjuncts at CUNY, 1,100 "non-teaching adjuncts" (who typically do work that otherwise might be performed by HEOs) and 600 part-time college laboratory technicians. Contrary to what some of us believe, CUNY is not moving away from using adjunct labor; it is rushing to import the adjunct-labor model wherever it can.

MAINTAINING AUSTERITY

By relying on a huge workforce paid substandard wages, CUNY sends the message to the State and City that an austerity budget is just fine. It communicates to our working-class and poor students that an underpaid workforce is all they deserve. By failing to challenge the fundamental premise that underlies low adjunct wages, the CUNY administration is complicit in economic austerity.

If CUNY management will not challenge adjunct pay, we must. The union has called for an increase in public funding to raise adjunct pay to \$7,000 a course – an amount that would put adjunct pay on a basis of parity with full-time lecturers. The PSC has made major gains for adjuncts in the past because we understood their importance for the whole union. Winning \$7,000 will pit us against the entire system of academic labor under austerity, but it's a battle none of us can afford to lose.

New medical benefit

By SHOMIAL AHMAD

Open enrollment for new participants in NYSUT's Catastrophe Major Medical (CMM) Insurance Trust is now open to non-retiree NYSUT members who live in New York state, and who have the required underlying coverage. During this enrollment period, from May 1 to June 15 of this year, new participants can elect to get catastrophic coverage for themselves and their family members; they will not be disqualified because of preexisting conditions.

"It's a tremendous opportunity if you're eligible, and it may be a one-time opportunity," said Steve London, an executive officer of the PSC-CUNY Welfare Fund. "This is an opportunity that should not be missed."

CATASTROPHE MEDICAL INSURANCE

NYSUT negotiated the supplemental health benefit so members could have coverage in case of a medical emergency. The plan covers eligible expenses after the deductible for the existing health insurance has been met. Examples of eligible expenses include prescription drug co-pays, home health care and durable medical equipment. Annual premiums for the plan depend on the age of the plan's participant and whether it is an individual or family plan. For instance, an individual member under the age of 40 would pay \$83 annually. For a family, including spouse and children, with the main participant in their 50s, the annual premium would be around \$635.

New enrollment to the CMM plan that was previously offered closed in the summer of 2011 because insurance companies withdrew from the CMM market after the passage of the Affordable Care Act. People who remained on that plan, which provides superior benefits, should continue with that plan rather than enroll in the new plan.

For information, contact the CMM Plan's Administrator, Mercer Consumer, at 1-888-386-9788 or visit NYSUT's member benefits page at tinyurl.com/NYSUT-CMM.

Fighting for a fair teaching load

By ARI PAUL

Bronx Community College Associate Professor of History Katherine Culkin was worried about a student who had shown promise at the beginning of a semester but after a few weeks began falling asleep in class regularly. The student later confided in Culkin that she had unexpected health issues that caused her to be constantly exhausted. With Culkin's extra help, the student was able to pass the class and get back on track to graduate.

For Culkin, this is an example of why CUNY instructors need a reduced teaching load. "With a reduced teaching load, I would have a better sense of my students, allowing me to recognize when they might need help even with less overt signs," she said in testimony on April 20 to the CUNY Board of Trustees.

More time with students

This was the latest push by rank-and-file, full-time instructors to urge the city to include a \$35 million increase to CUNY in the upcoming budget to bring the full-time faculty teaching load in line with that of peer institutions, for the purpose of allowing more one-on-one time between teachers and students.

TIME FOR RESEARCH

Beverly Horowitz, an associate professor of occupational therapy at York College, noted that her heavy teaching load has made it so that she has almost no time to work with her students individually or address her out-of-class professional obligations such as doing research or serving on campus committees.

"While I have conducted several research studies since joining the occupational therapy department, [competing for] several projects was made possible due to a reduction in teaching responsibilities as I prepared for tenure," she said. "Now that my teaching responsibilities include 21 contact hours as per contract, [in addition to] writing grant proposals, conducting research, writing articles for publication and writing proposals for submission for academic conference presentations is very challenging, often impossible."

Horowitz said that while the department boasted excellent students and a 100 percent passing rate on the state's licensure exams, CUNY was a unique place that requires student-focused attention from instructors. "We have numbers of nontraditional students who support children and families, students who are caregivers for ill and disabled relatives, many students are the first in their family to attend college, and many have limited supports at home," she said. "Ongoing faculty advisement until graduation and academic support from the full-time faculty is key to the success of our program and is important for the success of all CUNY students."

MORE ATTENTION

The testimonies from PSC members to the board came after dozens of instructors testified in support of the workload reduction to the city council's higher education committee. See the April 2017 issue of *Clarion* for those testimonies.

LaGuardia Community College Lecturer Fern Luskin said, "If I were required to teach only eight courses a year, one of the biggest benefits for my students would be that it would afford me more time to teach them how to organize their thoughts and achieve flow from one paragraph to the next in their writing. A reduction in my course load would also give me more

time to look over their notebooks to make sure they have written down all the important points I presented to them in class. I have found that both these strategies help students write better papers and do better on their exams, but it is very time intensive,

Faculty don't have time for one-on-one engagement.

especially for instructors who have large classes of 35 students." Queens College PSC Chapter Chair David Gerwin spoke about how the current full-time faculty are spread too thin, doing administrative tasks and fulfilling other obligations, robbing them of time that could be spent with students, speaking to the need of a course load reduction and the hiring of more full-time faculty. "We'd be able to get me...back into the schools supervising student teachers. When we have these relationships, powerful collaborations develop."



Ellen Moynihan

Beverly Horowitz spoke about workload and student needs.

GAs win bonuses

Continued from page 4

who now serves as the chapter's grievance counselor and is affiliated with the history department, recalls people coming to him about not receiving the ratification bonus.

"We knew of numerous instances where people had called us up and said, 'I didn't get the ratification bonus. What gives?'" Kagan said. "We investigated," Kagan recalled, and GC Chapter Chair Luke Elliott-Negri contacted the PSC Office. PSC adjunct contract enforcement counselor Stanley Wine filed a non-payment grievance based on lists of GA non-recipients developed by the chapter with PSC Organizer Sam Lewis and then worked directly with university payroll to ensure that GAs – who often work at different campuses every semester – got their bonus.

In addition, the union negotiated an agreement to permit several dozen GAs on approved leaves during Spring and/or Fall 2016 to receive their bonuses when they return to work at CUNY. Elliott-Negri argued that if full-time faculty and staff on approved leaves receive their ratification bonuses when they return to work, so should part-time workers.

MEMBERS' CONCERNS

Subho Chakraborty, a graduate assistant in physics, may benefit from the new side agreement. He went on medical leave in July 2016, and therefore he did not get the bonus. He was in touch with chapter officials about the matter and is pleased with the agreement.

"I got the feeling the union keeps pursuing the matter with a lot of tenacity. They don't take things lightly," Chakraborty said. "They take it seriously – until the end."

New SUNY boss

By CLARION STAFF

Kristina Johnson, a former US Department of Energy undersecretary in the Obama administration, has been appointed the new SUNY chancellor in a unanimous board of trustees vote.

Johnson, an accomplished engineer and university administrator, comes to SUNY as the United University Professions is in contract talks with the state.

"She seems to have a lot of energy and drive...and that's the kind of leadership we're going to need in times that are financially tough," UUP President Frederick Kowal told the *Albany Times Union*.

Settlement: PERB charges dropped

By ARI PAUL

The PSC has settled an improper practice charge with the state Public Employee Relations Board (PERB) the settlement restates the union's position that new adjunct appointments are grievable under the current contract with CUNY, resulting in charges against the union being withdrawn.

Three adjuncts claimed in PERB charges that the ratification of the contract was invalid and constituted a breach of duty of fair representation on erroneous grounds that the union concealed material terms of the agreement from the membership in regards to the three-year appointments for adjuncts. They

also alleged that the multiyear provisions for adjuncts was not subject to the grievance procedure. Those bringing the charges insisted that the ratification vote be nullified and to have the three-year appointments struck from the collective bargaining agreement.

The union argued that the charges were false. The resulting PERB settlement restated the terms of the contract were open and transparent, and that the grievance process applied to the appointments.

ALL ABOVE BOARD

The union said in a statement, "The PSC provided the entire Mem-

orandum of Agreement (MOA) and its attachments to all PSC members eligible to vote. Every effort was made to inform PSC members of

Adjunct terms 'grievable'

the contents of the MOA and its attachments and to answer any questions that were raised about the proposed agreement. As with other provisions of the contract, provisions of the MOA are subject to the contractual grievance procedure (Article 20) unless they are explicitly excluded. As CUNY management acknowledged, the newly negotiated provision for multiyear adjunct appointments was always subject to the grievance procedure."

Mourning Pearlman, CLT activist

By ARI PAUL

Alan Pearlman, a leader of the union's College Laboratory Technicians (CLTs) chapter who served on the union's executive council for six years, died unexpectedly this spring, leaving behind a legacy of fierce loyalty to the union and his fellow members. He was 67.

Pearlman served in the psychology department at Baruch College, where, as his colleagues recalled, he offered leadership and helped build the PSC chapter.

"Alan began employment at Baruch College in 1972," said his department chair, Jennifer Mangels.

"When a distraught or confused student came to the office trying to figure out how to navigate the CUNY system, he used his years of expertise to help them find their way. 'Another satisfied customer,'

'Solidarity was his mode of being.'

he'd say with a big smile across his face, knowing he'd helped bring a student a little closer to graduation or at least to getting to their class. He also stood up in defense of students, faculty or staff when he saw something that wasn't working and where attention was needed. As department chair, I knew that if he came to me to alert me of a problem, it was something where I should put some thought."

PSC President Barbara Bowen said in a message to members, "He took an expansive view of his job description as chief CLT and served as a trusted adviser to students and members of the Baruch community. Almost single-handedly, Alan sustained the faculty chapter at Baruch in the interim between chapter chairs, and then he helped the current chair, Vince DiGirolamo, to build new leadership. He was a leader and mentor among CLTs, conscious of the needs of the whole union membership."

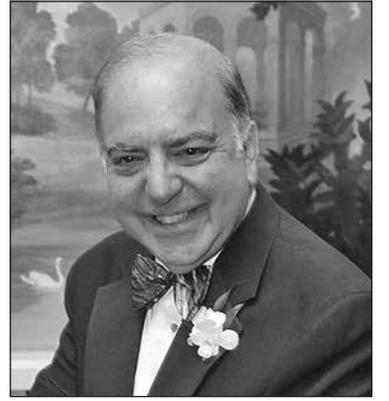
Albert Sherman, PSC chair for CLTs, told *Clarion*, "Alan was a dedicated colleague, not only to the CLT chapter and to the union, but

on a personal level. Alan and I went back a very long time, we were personal friends. He'd give you the shirt off of his back and he would never say the word 'no' to anyone. He had no bad bone in his body."

People can donate to a scholarship in his name by mailing a check to BCF/Alan Pearlman Memorial Fund, Attn: Nicole Souza, 1 Bernard Baruch Way, New York, NY 10010.

DEDICATED TRADE UNIONIST

"Tears come to my eyes hearing about Alan's death," said Baruch retiree Jackie DiSalvo. "I only really met him later in the Delegate Assembly (DA), where he participated so fully. In fact, we only have a Baruch



Union leader Alan Pearlman

chapter again, after a few years in abeyance, due to Alan's determined efforts to revive it. Given his sincerity, warmth and enthusiasm, who could turn him down? He did live to celebrate the fruits of his efforts in the full chapter meetings this year."

DiSalvo added, "Solidarity was his mode of being."

GLOBAL STRUGGLE

Hungary's fight matters to us

By LILLA TÖKE

On March 23, the Hungarian government introduced legislation with the goal of drastically modifying the ways in which foreign universities can operate on Hungarian soil. The law targeted one institution in particular: The Central European University (CEU), a private university that offers masters and doctoral degrees for a highly selective body of graduate students from East-Central Europe, Russia and countries of the ex-USSR, as well as many Western European countries and the US. Founded in 1991 with an endowment by George Soros, the school's mission has been to foster a much-needed civil society and independent intellectual inquiry after the breakdown of the authoritarian, communist regimes in the region. The CEU has produced internationally acclaimed research by its faculty as well as its alumni in sociology, medieval studies, gender studies, economics, environmental studies, political science and many other disciplines.

RUSHED LEGISLATION

Despite the outrage and opposition by academics, public intellectuals and many politicians as well, the law was jammed through the Hungarian parliament by the majority Fidesz party on April 4, and was signed into effect by the president less than a week later. Amongst others, the new regulations require that educational institutions with international accreditations be affiliated with European Union (EU) member countries or else have a special agreement with the Hungarian government or a local university; that such institutions must have an active campus in the country of accreditation; and also that faculty and staff employed by such higher education institutions must be EU citizens.

Critics agree that these requirements target the CEU specifically since the CEU is the only US accredited university in Hungary that has complete financial and institutional independence and, due to the very nature of its purpose (to study the region of Eastern Europe), it does not have a campus in the United States; and finally because a significant number of its faculty are US citizens or

come from outside the EU including its current rector and president, Michael Ignatieff, who is a Canadian citizen.

Seemingly, the situation of the CEU in Hungary has very little in common with our lives here at CUNY. We work for one of the largest public university systems in the United States with the mission to offer equal access and a chance for upward mobility to an extremely diverse, urban student population. The question therefore is logical – while it makes sense to generally support keeping an internationally recognized education and research open, why should we care about the CEU especially? Why should we understand better and follow closely what is happening to this relatively small private graduate institution in a distant country such as Hungary?

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Here is my answer. Understating what is happening in Hungary right now may raise our awareness about just how fragile and contested the notion of "academic freedom" is. Academic freedom and the freedom of thought in Hungary has a relatively short and hard-fought history in the post-Cold War era. Most Hungarian universities are financially dependent on the government and so faculty continuously battle ideological pressure and nepotism. The CEU is unique in the sense that since its establishment it has remained fiscally and politically independent from Hungarian politics. The current government has very low tolerance for such independence.

Academic freedom is a principle that CUNY faculty cherish and take pride in. But, it seems to me, to a degree we also take our right to academic freedom for granted. However, academic freedom remains contentious and without historical vigilance and politically effective solidarity, as the case of the CEU suggests, it is easily curtailed. In fact, academic freedom is a commitment rather than a right and it is deeply embedded in the history of higher education. As the 1940 "Statement on Academic Freedom and Tenure" by the Ameri-

can Association of University Professors demonstrates, academic freedom is a continuing pledge of solidarity by all institutions of higher education (including private and religious ones) who endorse and commit to the principle of full freedom in the classroom to discuss appropriate subjects and full freedom in scholarly research and publication. The example of CEU and Hungary reminds us that the right to academic and intellectual freedom is not a given and, in many countries, not even a right.

The case of Hungary also demonstrates that while the primary challenge to academic freedom is financial (which affects public universities such as CUNY directly), the legal implications are extremely important. The nature of the legislative, judicial and executive branches in Hungary is such that constitutional and legal changes are easily implemented. The Fidesz party, which enjoys a majority in the one-house Hungarian parliament, without any difficulty rewrote the Hungarian constitution as its first legislative act in 2010 to reflect its nationalist, conservative ideology, to politicize the judicial system and to centralize all branches of government. As part of this legislative transformation, the Fidesz government also changed, for instance, the Hungarian media laws in a way that has resulted in the exponential increase of pro-government media and the de facto obliteration of most opposition media (especially television, radio and newspapers).

AGAINST CIVIL SOCIETY

In 2014, Viktor Orbán, the prime minister, declared the end of "liberal democracy" in Hungary and has since spearheaded the control of media and the ongoing harassment of nongovernmental organizations not in line with his "illiberal" ideology. The attack on the CEU is part of these efforts, a general frustration on the government's side with an independent Hungarian civil society that has been critical of Orbán's populist nationalist agenda.

Witnessing the fast, dramatic reshaping of the legal landscape in Hungary as well as

the failure to enact such sweeping changes in Washington has taught me to appreciate the system of "checks and balances" – sometimes exasperatingly sluggish legislative processes – in the United States in new ways. Perhaps it is time for us to reassess our sense of urgency and unwillingness to compromise in US politics and to embrace slowness and careful deliberation not only in our classrooms but also in the arena of political and policy debates, especially when at stake are essential rights such as health-care or the right to the freedom of thought and freedom of expression. The case of filibustering also comes to mind here.

UNPRECEDENTED SOLIDARITY

As the CEU finds itself fighting for survival in a hostile political and legislative environment, there is a dim light of hope however. The recent events related to the CEU have brought together Hungarian society in an unprecedented act of solidarity, has triggered a level of civic engagement and peaceful resistance unseen in the last decade or more. The attack on the CEU activated large segments of Hungarian society well beyond academia and public intellectuals. While prominent personalities including Kofi Annan, Angela Merkel, Mario Vargas Llosa and Judith Butler, alongside academic institutions and advocacy groups all around the world have expressed support for the CEU and for intellectual freedom (#IsupportCEU), what really matters is the tens of thousands of Hungarians who are taking to the streets day after day expressing their discontent and criticism of the current government and its overreach.

The future of the demonstrations is unclear; however, if successful, their fight for academic freedom might develop into a galvanizing moment in the struggle of Hungarians against a corrupt, intolerant and authoritarian government. That moment when academic freedom becomes the trigger for transformative political change is a historical moment that all of us at CUNY should watch closely.

Lilla Töke is a graduate of the Central European University and an assistant professor of English at LaGuardia Community College.

Protecting academic freedom today

PROFESSIONAL STAFF CONGRESS/CUNY
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS with SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION
AUGUST 31, 2016 and 2015

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Independent Auditor's Report

To the Executive Board of Professional Staff Congress of the City University of New York

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the Professional Staff Congress of the City University of New York (PSC/CUNY), which comprise the statements of financial position as of August 31, 2016 and 2015, and the related statements of activities and of cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements: Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility: Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the PSC/CUNY's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the PSC/CUNY's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion: In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Professional Staff Congress of the City University of New York as of August 31, 2016 and 2015, and the changes in its net assets and cash flows for the years then ended, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Report on Supplemental Information: Our audits were conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statements as a whole. The supplemental Schedules of Expenses by Category are presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of the PSC/CUNY's management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audits of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the information is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the financial statements as a whole.

NOVAK FRANCELLA, LLC
New York, New York, February 21, 2017

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
AUGUST 31, 2016 AND 2015

NOTE 1. ORGANIZATION AND TAX STATUS

The Professional Staff Congress of the City University of New York (PSC/CUNY) was created by a merger of the Legislative Conference of The City University of New York and the United Federation of College Teachers. It was created to be the collective bargaining representative of the instructional staff of the City University of New York (CUNY). The Professional Staff Congress of the City University of New York is a Local (Local 2334) of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). Through the AFT, PSC/CUNY is affiliated with The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO).

The purpose of PSC/CUNY is to advance and secure the professional and economic interest of the instructional staff of the CUNY and other members of the bargaining units of PSC/CUNY. The objectives of PSC/CUNY are to improve the quality of education, research and scholarships at the CUNY; to negotiate and administer collective bargaining agreements; to cooperate with other educational, professional, and labor organizations in order to enhance the quality of education in the nation and to promote the professional and economic interests and the welfare of all workers; to serve as the public representative of the instructional staff of the CUNY and other members of the bargaining units of the Professional Staff Congress; and to cooperate with other CUNY employee and academic organizations and student bodies in order to advance the interests of the faculty, staff and students of the CUNY and the community it serves. The benefits members receive are paid for by contributions from the employer, the CUNY, which are negotiated during bargaining as part of members' compensation. PSC/CUNY and its affiliated organizations have arranged for various special economic benefits for its members. PSC/CUNY also sponsors certain welfare benefits, which are paid from a separate trust fund and are not included in these financial statements.

PSC/CUNY is exempt from Federal income taxes under Section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code under a blanket exemption of the AFT.

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require management to evaluate tax positions taken by PSC/CUNY and recognize a tax liability if PSC/CUNY has taken an uncertain position that, more likely than not, would not be sustained upon examination by the U.S. Federal, state, or local taxing authorities. PSC/CUNY is subject to routine audits by taxing jurisdictions; however, there are currently no audits for any tax periods in progress. Typically, tax years will remain open for three years; however, this may differ depending upon the circumstances of PSC/CUNY.

NOTE 2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Method of Accounting - The accompanying financial statements are prepared using the accrual basis of accounting. Net assets are classified as unrestricted, temporarily restricted or permanently restricted. Net assets are generally reported as unrestricted unless assets are received from donors with explicit stipulations that limit the use of the asset. PSC/CUNY does not have any temporarily or permanently restricted net assets.

Cash and Cash Equivalents - PSC/CUNY considers all unrestricted cash and highly liquid investments, including certificates of deposit with initial maturities of three months or less, to be cash equivalents.

Investments - Investments are carried at fair value which generally represents quoted market prices, or the net asset value of the mutual funds, as of the last business day of the fiscal year as provided by the custodian or investment manager. Certificates of deposit are carried at cost which approximates fair value. Certificates of deposit that have initial maturity dates of more than three months are considered to be investments.

Property and Equipment - Property and equipment are recorded at cost. Major additions are capitalized

while replacements, maintenance and repairs which do not improve or extend the lives of the respective assets are expensed currently. Depreciation is computed over the assets' estimated useful lives, three to thirty years, by the straight line method. Depreciation expense was \$92,629 for the year ended August 31, 2016 and \$106,357 for 2015.

Accrued Compensated Balances - Future employee absences that have been earned but not yet taken are accrued within the contract limits. The accrued compensated balances were \$510,012 for the year ended August 31, 2016 and \$481,472 for 2015.

Membership Dues and Dues Receivable - Membership dues are recognized as revenue over the membership period. Dues come from members through payroll deductions and direct payments. Dues receivable are recorded as revenues are recognized. PSC/CUNY has determined that no allowance for doubtful accounts for receivables is necessary as of August 31, 2016 and 2015.

Deferred Rent - Operating leases are recognized on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease. Deferred rent has been recorded for the difference between the fixed payment and the rent expense. Deferred rent was \$881,203 for the year ended August 31, 2016 and \$893,170 for 2015.

Estimates - The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect reported amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

Reclassifications - Certain reclassifications have been made to prior year amounts to conform to the current year presentation.

NOTE 3. CONCENTRATION OF CASH

PSC/CUNY places its cash with financial institutions deemed to be creditworthy. The balance is insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) up to \$250,000. Cash balances may at times exceed the insurance deposit limits.

NOTE 4. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS

The framework for measuring fair value provides a fair value hierarchy that prioritizes the inputs to valuation techniques used to measure fair value. The hierarchy gives the highest priority to unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities (Level 1) and the lowest priority to unobservable inputs (Level 3). The three levels of the fair value hierarchy are described as follows:

Basis of Fair Value Measurement:

Level 1 - Inputs to the valuation methodology are unadjusted quoted prices for identical assets or liabilities in active markets that the PSC/CUNY has the ability to access.

Level 2 - Inputs to the valuation methodology include: quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities in active markets; quoted prices for identical or similar assets or liabilities in inactive markets; inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the asset or liability; inputs that are derived principally from or corroborated by observable market data by correlation or other means.

If the asset or liability has a specified (contractual) term, the level 2 input must be observable for substantially the full term of the asset or liability.

Level 3 - Inputs to the valuation methodology are unobservable and significant to the fair value measurement.

The asset's or liability's fair value measurement level within the fair value hierarchy is based on the lowest level of any input that is significant to the fair value measurement. Valuation techniques maximize the use of relevant observable inputs and minimize the use of unobservable inputs.

The availability of observable market data is monitored to assess the appropriate classification of financial instruments within the fair value hierarchy. Changes in economic conditions or model-based valuation techniques may require the transfer of

financial instruments from one fair value level to another. In such instances, the transfer is reported at the beginning of the reporting period.

For the years ended August 31, 2016 and 2015, there were no transfers in or out of levels 1, 2, or 3.

	Fair Value Measurements at August 31, 2016			
	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Certificates of deposit	\$ 992,000	\$ 992,000	\$ -	\$ -
Mutual funds:				
Fixed income	4,768,949	4,768,949	-	-
Equity	1,121,405	1,121,405	-	-
	<u>\$ 6,882,354</u>	<u>\$ 6,882,354</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

	Fair Value Measurements at August 31, 2015			
	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Certificates of deposit	\$ 992,000	\$ 992,000	\$ -	\$ -
Mutual funds:				
Fixed income	4,359,914	4,359,914	-	-
Equity	975,988	975,988	-	-
	<u>\$ 6,327,902</u>	<u>\$ 6,327,902</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

NOTE 5. SINGLE-EMPLOYER PENSION PLAN

PSC/CUNY contributes to the Professional Staff Congress of the City University of New York Pension Plan (the Plan), a single employer plan covering all non-collectively bargained employees who meet age and service requirements. Contributions are actuarially determined.

The Professional Staff Congress of the City University of New York Pension Plan is a defined benefit plan paying 2.2% of Final Average Compensation for each year of service, up to 25 years. Final Average Compensation is the average compensation over the last highest 5 consecutive years (or highest 60 months) of service. Plan assets do not include any securities of the employer or related entities. No amount of future annual benefits of plan participants is covered by insurance contracts. There were no significant transactions between the PSC/CUNY or related parties and the plan during the years ended 2016 and 2015.

The following are the balances as of or for the years ended August 31, 2016 and 2015 as provided by the Plan's actuary:

	2016	2015
Projected benefit obligation	\$(6,825,437)	\$(4,681,141)
Fair value of plan assets	<u>3,021,253</u>	<u>2,732,837</u>
Funded status	<u>\$(3,804,184)</u>	<u>\$(1,948,304)</u>
Accumulated benefit obligation	<u>\$(1,094,107)</u>	<u>\$(806,475)</u>

Amounts recognized in the statement of financial position:

Noncurrent assets	\$ -	\$ -
Current liabilities	-	-
Noncurrent liabilities	(3,804,184)	(1,948,304)

Amounts in net assets not recognized as components of net periodic benefit cost:

Accumulated net gain or (loss)	(2,710,077)	(1,141,829)
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Weighted-average assumptions:

Discount rate	4.50%	3.75%
Expected return on plan assets	7.00%	7.00%
Rate of compensation increase	4.00%	4.00%

Employer contributions	<u>\$ 215,004</u>	<u>\$ 215,004</u>
Benefits paid	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 13,621</u>
Net periodic pension cost	<u>\$ 502,636</u>	<u>\$ 426,081</u>

The change in unfunded pension benefit obligations consists of the following:

	2016	2015
Net periodic pension cost	\$ 502,636	\$ 426,081
Less: Employer remittances	<u>(215,004)</u>	<u>(215,004)</u>
	287,632	211,077

Increase (decrease) in unrecognized

accumulated net gain or loss	<u>1,568,248</u>	<u>285,028</u>
	<u>\$ 1,855,880</u>	<u>\$ 496,105</u>

PROFESSIONAL STAFF CONGRESS/CUNY STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION AUGUST 31, 2016 AND 2015	2016		2015	
	Assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 134,955	\$ 832,714		
Investments - at fair value				
Certificates of deposit	992,000	992,000		
Mutual funds	5,890,354	5,335,902		
Total investments	<u>6,882,354</u>	<u>6,327,902</u>		
Receivables				
Dues	1,067,000	971,000		
Due from related entities	713,649	624,000		
Due from other	-	774		
Total receivables	<u>1,780,649</u>	<u>1,595,774</u>		
Property and equipment				
Equipment	673,927	657,240		
Leasehold improvements	529,641	529,641		
Furniture and fixtures	339,612	330,967		
	1,543,180	1,517,848		
Less: accumulated depreciation	<u>(1,204,270)</u>	<u>(1,111,641)</u>		
Net property and equipment	<u>338,910</u>	<u>406,207</u>		
Total assets	<u>\$ 9,136,868</u>	<u>\$ 9,162,597</u>		
Liabilities and Net Assets				
Current liabilities				
Accrued expenses	\$ 337,475	\$ 226,646		
Accrued compensated balances	510,012	481,472		
Due to related entities	1,670,575	2,235,282		
Total current liabilities	<u>2,518,062</u>	<u>2,943,400</u>		
Long-term liabilities				
Deferred rent	\$ 881,203	\$ 893,170		
Unfunded projected pension benefit obligation	<u>3,804,184</u>	<u>1,948,304</u>		
Total long-term liabilities	<u>4,685,387</u>	<u>2,841,474</u>		
Total liabilities	<u>7,203,449</u>	<u>5,784,874</u>		
Unrestricted net assets	<u>1,933,419</u>	<u>3,377,723</u>		
Total liabilities and net assets	<u>\$ 9,136,868</u>	<u>\$ 9,162,597</u>		

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF CONGRESS/CUNY STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES YEARS ENDED AUGUST 31, 2016 AND 2015	2016		2015	
	Revenue			
Membership dues and agency fees	\$ 14,521,393	\$ 14,177,108		
Organizing assistance	4,384,739	3,568,744		
Investment income				
Net realized and unrealized gains (losses)	238,679	(83,499)		
Interest and dividends	150,286	148,512		
Less investment fees	(16,578)	(15,325)		
Rental income	230,220	222,459		
Total revenue	<u>19,508,739</u>	<u>18,017,999</u>		
Expenses				
Affiliation fees	10,526,299	10,222,776		
Salaries, employee benefits, and payroll taxes	5,245,666	4,887,649		
Representational and governance	142,898	241,899		
Public relations	170,962	149,516		
Building expenses	1,393,907	1,359,201		
Administrative, office and general	404,365	434,858		
Professional fees	451,183	478,633		
Contract & budget campaigns	558,421	503,363		
Stipends and reassigned time	398,465	367,075		
Depreciation expense	<u>92,629</u>	<u>106,357</u>		
Total expenses	<u>19,384,795</u>	<u>18,751,327</u>		
Net increase (decrease) in net assets	<u>123,944</u>	<u>(733,328)</u>		
Net assets, unrestricted				
Beginning of year	3,377,723	4,396,079		
Adjustment to pension liability funded status	<u>(1,568,248)</u>	<u>(285,028)</u>		
End of year	<u>\$ 1,933,419</u>	<u>\$ 3,377,723</u>		

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF CONGRESS/CUNY STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS YEARS ENDED AUGUST 31, 2016 AND 2015	2016		2015	
	Cash flows from operating activities			
Change in net assets	\$ 123,944	\$ (733,328)		
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash provided by operating activities				
Depreciation	92,629	106,357		
Net realized and unrealized (gains) losses	(238,679)	83,499		
Pension liability funded status	(1,568,248)	(285,028)		
(Increase) decrease in assets:				
Dues receivable	(96,000)	(84,000)		
Due from related entities	(89,649)	(364,607)		
Due from other	774	(774)		
Increase (decrease) in liabilities:				
Accrued expenses	110,829	(17,816)		
Accrued compensated absences	28,540	9,625		
Due to related entities	(564,707)	989,142		
Unfunded pension liability	1,855,880	496,105		
Deferred rent	(11,967)	21,480		
Net cash provided by (used for) operating activities	<u>(356,654)</u>	<u>220,655</u>		
Cash flows from investing activities				
Purchase of property and equipment	(25,332)	(7,186)		
Purchase of certificates of deposit	(199,000)	(198,000)		
Liquidation of certificates of deposit	199,000	198,000		
Sale of investments	2,873,607	553,204		
Purchase of investments	<u>(3,189,380)</u>	<u>(667,844)</u>		
Net cash used for investing activities	<u>(341,105)</u>	<u>(121,826)</u>		
Net increase (decrease) in cash	<u>(697,759)</u>	<u>98,829</u>		
Cash and cash equivalents				
Beginning of year	832,714	733,885		
End of year	<u>\$ 134,955</u>	<u>\$ 832,714</u>		

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

In 2016 and 2015, PSC/CUNY has recorded a loss of \$1,568,248 and \$285,028, respectively, to its net assets for the additional change in accrued pension payable beyond the current-year pension expense.

The Plan's expected long-term rate of return on assets assumption is 7.00%. This assumption represents the rate of return on Plan assets reflecting the average rate of earnings expected on the funds invested or to be invested to provide for the benefits included in the benefit obligation. The assumption has been determined by reflecting expectations regarding future rates of return for the investment portfolio, with consideration given to the distribution of investments by asset class and historical rates of return for each individual asset class.

At August 31, 2016 and 2015, the Plan's net assets available for benefits were allocated as follows:

	2016	2015
Mutual funds	21.11%	21.55%
Common stock	53.16%	49.15%
United States Government and Government Agency obligations	23.61%	24.95%
Cash and cash equivalents	2.12%	4.35%

The major classes of Plan investments at August 31, 2016 and 2015 are:

	2016 Fair Value	2015 Fair Value
Mutual funds	\$ 637,680	\$ 588,950
Common stock	1,606,195	1,343,214
United States Government and Government Agency obligations	713,194	681,877
Cash and cash equivalents	64,184	118,796
	<u>\$3,021,253</u>	<u>\$2,732,837</u>

For the years ended August 31, 2016 and 2015, there were no transfers in or out of levels 1, 2 and 3.

Fair Value Measurements at August 31, 2016

	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 64,184	\$ 64,184	\$ -	\$ -
Common stock:				
Basic materials	235,349	235,349	-	-
Consumer goods	167,521	167,521	-	-
Financial	178,652	178,652	-	-
Healthcare	\$ 138,941	\$ 138,941	\$ -	\$ -
Industrial goods	51,131	51,131	-	-
Services	335,602	335,602	-	-
Technology	498,999	498,999	-	-
U.S. Government and Government Agency obligations:				
United States Treasury	279,632	279,632	-	-
Government agencies	433,562	-	433,562	-
Mutual funds:				
Fixed income	409,637	409,637	-	-
Equity	228,043	228,043	-	-
	<u>\$3,021,253</u>	<u>\$2,587,691</u>	<u>\$433,562</u>	<u>\$-</u>

Fair Value Measurements at August 31, 2015

	Total	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 118,796	\$ 118,796	\$ -	\$ -
Common stock:				
Basic materials	185,187	185,187	-	-
Consumer goods	155,715	155,715	-	-
Financial	161,506	161,506	-	-
Healthcare	170,883	170,883	-	-
Industrial goods	76,730	76,730	-	-
Services	310,548	310,548	-	-
Technology	282,645	282,645	-	-
U.S. Government and Government Agency obligations:				
United States Treasury	195,242	195,242	-	-
Government agencies	486,635	-	486,635	-
Mutual funds:				
Fixed income	333,317	333,317	-	-
Equity	255,633	255,633	-	-
	<u>\$2,732,837</u>	<u>\$2,246,202</u>	<u>\$486,635</u>	<u>\$-</u>

PSC/CUNY's investment policies are designed to ensure that adequate plan assets are available to provide future payments of pension benefits to eligible participants. Taking into account the expected long-term rate of return on plan assets, PSC/CUNY formulates the investment portfolio composed of the optimal combination of cash and cash equivalents, equities, fixed income and mutual funds.

Future Cash Flows

The projected contribution for next fiscal year is \$215,004.

The following benefit payments, which reflect expected future service, are expected to be paid as follows:

2017	\$ -
2018	-
2019	-
2020	1,067,228
2021	1,129,124
2022	860,880
2023 - 2027	1,214,401

NOTE 6. MULTIEMPLOYER DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION PLAN

PSC/CUNY participates in the Office and Professional Employees International Union, Local 153 Pension Fund, a multiemployer defined benefit pension plan, under the terms of a collective bargaining agreement that covers its union-represented employees who meet age and service requirements. The risks of participating in multiemployer defined benefit pension plans are different from single-employer plans in the following aspects:

a. Assets contributed to the multiemployer defined benefit pension plan by one employer may be used to provide benefits to employees of other participating employers.

b. If a participating employer stops contributing to the multiemployer defined benefit pension plan, the unfunded obligations of the multiemployer defined benefit pension plan may be borne by the remaining participating employers.

c. If the Plan chooses to stop participating in the multiemployer defined benefit pension plan, the Plan may be required to pay the multiemployer defined benefit pension plan an amount based on the underfunded status of the multiemployer defined benefit pension plan, referred to as a withdrawal liability.

PSC/CUNY's participation in the multiemployer defined benefit pension plan for the annual periods ended August 31, 2016 and 2015, is outlined in the table below. The zone status is based on information that PSC/CUNY received from the multiemployer defined benefit pension plan and is certified by the multiemployer defined benefit pension plan's actuary. Among other factors, pension plans in the red zone are generally less than 65 percent funded, pension plans in the yellow zone are less than 80 percent funded, and pension plans in the green zone are at least 80 percent funded.

SEE TABLE 1

* PSC/CUNY participates in the Local 153 Pension Fund through a collective bargaining agreement between PSC/CUNY and the Office & Professional Employees International Union, Local 153 AFL-CIO (Local 153). The collective bargaining agreement has a three year term of October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2018.

SEE TABLE 2

* The employer contribution rate of the Pension Plan was \$177 per week per employee effective June 1, 2014, \$195 effective June 1, 2015, and \$215 effective June 1, 2016.

SEE TABLE 3

NOTE 7. MULTIEMPLOYER PLAN THAT PROVIDES POSTRETIREMENT BENEFITS OTHER THAN PENSIONS

PSC/CUNY contributed to one multiemployer defined benefit health and welfare plan during the years ended August 31, 2016 and 2015 that provides postretirement benefits for its full-time support staff employees. PSC/CUNY's contributions to the welfare plan on behalf of its full-time support staff employees, contribution rates, and number of employees covered are as follows:

SEE TABLE 4

* Effective January 1, 2015 under a collective bargaining agreement between Local 153 and PSC/CUNY, regular contributions for support staff employees to Local 153 Health Fund ceased, and PSC/CUNY established coverage under an insured Preferred Provider Organization Plan to provide medical, dental and prescription benefits. Effective October 1, 2015, PSC/CUNY contributed \$66 per month to Local 153 Health Fund per active employee and \$8 per month per retiree under a collective bargaining agreement between Local 153 and PSC/CUNY to provide supplement benefits for life insurance coverage and vision benefits.

NOTE 8. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Identification of Related Organizations

PSC/CUNY has the following related entities:

- American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
- New York State United Teachers (NYSUT)
- Professional Staff Congress of the City University of New York Welfare Fund
- The American Association of University Professors (AAUP)

The entities listed above share common trustees, officers or affiliation with PSC/CUNY.

PSC/CUNY is affiliated with New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) through arrangements whereby PSC/CUNY pays dues to each entity in order for its members to participate in affiliated programs and, in turn, is reimbursed for various expenses, including reimbursements for meetings, organizing, legislative representation, training programs, and arbitration.

Dues paid to NYSUT for the years ended August 31, 2016 and 2015 were \$6,868,292 and \$6,604,035, respectively. As of August 31, 2016 and 2015, PSC/CUNY owed NYSUT for dues \$1,103,000 and \$1,460,512, respectively. Dues paid to AFT for the years ended August 31, 2016 and 2015 were \$3,373,994 and \$3,333,962, respectively. As of August 31, 2016 and 2015, PSC/CUNY owed AFT for dues \$559,000 and \$762,630, respectively.

Reimbursements from NYSUT for the years ended August 31, 2016 and 2015 were \$3,641,829 and \$3,315,113, respectively. As of August 31, 2016 and 2015, NYSUT owed PSC/CUNY \$447,649 and \$585,000, respectively. Reimbursements from AFT for the years ended August 31, 2016 and 2015 were \$737,081 and \$247,801, respectively. As of August 31, 2016 and 2015, AFT owed PSC/CUNY \$266,000 and \$32,000, respectively.

PSC/CUNY pays NYSUT a monthly fee for dues processing. Dues processing fees totaled \$70,200 and \$67,000 for the years ended August 31, 2016 and 2015, respectively. As of August 31, 2016 and 2015, PSC/CUNY owed NYSUT \$5,850 and \$5,650, respectively, for dues processing.

PSC/CUNY reimburses the Welfare Fund for shared computer services. PSC/CUNY's portion of shared computer expenses totaled \$29,557 and \$32,433 for the years ended August 31, 2016 and 2015, respectively. As of August 31, 2016 and 2015, PSC/CUNY owed the Welfare Fund \$2,725 and \$6,490, respectively, for shared computer services.

Office Space Leases

PSC/CUNY leases office space from 61 Broadway Owner, LLC (the Realty Corp). On September 30, 2005, PSC/CUNY entered into a sixteen year lease with the Realty Corp for Suites 1500 and 1615 of the 61 Broadway building. The lease was amended on August 4, 2009 and May 17, 2012 to include Suites 1630 and 1610, respectively. The leases, all which expire on August 31, 2022, are classified as operating leases and provide for minimum annual rentals, plus certain additional expense escalations and utility charges. Per the agree-

ment, PSC/CUNY is also responsible for its portion of real estate taxes.

The minimum annual future rental payments under the three leases are summarized as follows:

Year ending August 31,	
2017	\$ 1,171,395
2018	1,195,401
2019	1,219,899
2020	1,247,967
2021	1,282,830
Thereafter	<u>1,309,149</u>
Total	<u>\$ 7,426,641</u>

Rent including utilities was \$1,197,099 for the year ended August 31, 2016 and \$1,206,201 for 2015.

PSC/CUNY subleases office space to the Professional Staff Congress of the City University of New York Welfare Fund, a related party. The Welfare Fund pays PSC/CUNY a sum equal to 23.90% of the lease of Suite 1500. The sublease expires on August 31, 2022.

The minimum annual future rental income under the sublease with the related party is summarized as follows:

Year ending August 31,	
2017	\$ 200,055
2018	204,056
2019	208,137
2020	212,300
2021	216,546
Thereafter	<u>220,877</u>
Total	<u>\$ 1,261,971</u>

Total rental income for the years ended August 31, 2016 and 2015 was \$230,220 and \$222,459, respectively. As of August 31, 2015, the Welfare Fund owed PSC/CUNY \$7,000 for rent. The Welfare Fund reimbursed PSC/CUNY in full during the year ended August 31, 2016.

NOTE 9. FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

PSC/CUNY expended \$19,459,795 for the year ended August 31, 2016 and \$18,751,327 for 2015. PSC/CUNY has estimated that on a functional classification basis these expenses would be allocated as follows:

	2016	2015
Union activities	79%	83%
Management & administrative	21%	17%
Total	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>

NOTE 10. LITIGATION

Certain claims, suits, and complaints arising in the ordinary course of business have been filed or are pending against PSC/CUNY. In the opinion of PSC/CUNY's management and legal counsel, the ultimate outcome of these claims will not have a material adverse effect on the financial position of PSC/CUNY.

NOTE 11. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

PSC/CUNY has evaluated subsequent events through February 21, 2017, the date the financial statements were available to be issued, and they have been evaluated in accordance with relevant accounting standards.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION SCHEDULES OF EXPENSES BY CATEGORY YEARS ENDED AUGUST 31, 2016 AND 2015

	2016	2015
Affiliation fees		
New York State United Teachers	\$ 6,848,292	\$ 6,604,035
American Federation of Teachers	3,373,995	3,333,962
The American Association of University Professors	251,653	233,640
Municipal Labor Committee	20,584	20,019
Other	31,775	31,120
	<u>10,526,299</u>	<u>10,222,776</u>
Salaries, employee benefits, and payroll taxes		
Salaries	3,537,730	3,312,043
Payroll taxes	271,117	265,856
Health benefit expense	736,669	732,815
Pension benefit expense	629,946	534,614
Other	70,204	42,321
	<u>5,245,666</u>	<u>4,887,649</u>
Representational and governance		
Conferences and conventions	114,908	149,594
Elections	15,095	82,786
Committees	12,895	9,519
	<u>142,898</u>	<u>241,899</u>
Public relations		
Mobilization and outreach	135,989	114,592
Community relations	27,890	27,365
Cultural activities	7,083	7,559
	<u>170,962</u>	<u>149,516</u>
Building expenses		
Rent and services	1,197,099	1,206,201
Real estate taxes	87,557	78,444
Repairs and maintenance	109,251	74,556
	<u>1,393,907</u>	<u>1,359,201</u>
Administrative, office and general		
Office	\$ 252,805	\$ 280,125
Postage	36,262	45,384
Insurance	38,692	36,292
Dues processing	70,200	67,000
Other	6,406	6,057
	<u>404,365</u>	<u>434,858</u>
Professional fees		
Legal	168,336	234,122
Consulting	147,755	88,878
Accounting and auditing	40,000	39,375
Computer	95,092	116,258
	<u>451,183</u>	<u>478,633</u>
Contract and budget campaigns	558,421	503,363
Stipends and reassigned time	398,465	367,075
Depreciation expense	92,629	106,357
Total expenses	<u>\$ 19,384,795</u>	<u>\$ 18,751,327</u>

See accompanying notes to financial statements.

TABLE 1

Legal Name of Pension Plan	Pension Plan's Employer Identification Number	Pension Plan's Plan Number	Pension Protection Act Zone Status				Expiration Date of Collective Bargaining Agreement
			Zone Status	Extended Amortization Provisions Used?	Zone Status	Extended Amortization Provisions Used?	
Local 153 Pension Fund	13-2864289	001	Red as of 01/01/16	No	Red as of 01/01/15	No	*

TABLE 2

Legal Name of Pension Plan	Contributions paid by the Plan directly to the Pension Plan		Contributions to the Pension Plan greater than 5% of total Pension Plan contributions (Plan year ending)		Employer Contribution Rate of the Pension Plan		Number of Employees Covered by the Pension Plan for which the Plan contributes directly to the Pension Plan	
	8/31/2016	8/31/2015	8/31/2016	8/31/2015	8/31/2016	8/31/2015	8/31/2016	8/31/2015
Local 153 Pension Fund	\$ 127,310	\$ 108,533	No, Plan year ending 8/31/16.	No, Plan year ending 8/31/15.	*	*	13	13

TABLE 3

Legal Name of Pension Plan	Funding Improvement Plan or Rehabilitation Plan Implemented or Pending?	Surcharge paid to Pension Plan by the Benefit Funds?	Minimum contributions required in future by CBA, statutory requirements, or other contractual requirements?	
			No?	If yes, description
Local 153 Pension Fund	Rehabilitation Plan Implemented	Yes	No	N/A

TABLE 4

Legal Name of Plan providing postretirement benefits other than pension	Contributions to Plan		Employer contribution rates		Number of employees covered by Plan	
	8/31/2016	8/31/2015	8/31/2016	8/31/2015	8/31/2016	8/31/2015
Local 153 Health Fund	\$ 11,312	\$ 104,736	*	*	18	17



15-MINUTE ACTIVIST

Union launches member survey

The union wants to know what members think. Be on the lookout for an email from President Barbara Bowen titled, "PSC SURVEY: What matters most to you?" in your inbox some time in May. This new survey is essential to finding out what is on members' minds and what issues in the field need to be addressed.

Some of the subjects covered in the survey will be priorities for the union, participation, workload issues, professional issues and the effectiveness of the union. Most of all, the union is interested in hearing what members think is important to achieve in the next collective bargaining agreement.

Professional Staff Congress/CUNY
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SINGLE PAYER

NY can lead the way on health care

By LEONARD RODBERG

To understand the significance of the so-far failed effort to "repeal and replace" Obamacare, we must go back to the origins of the health care reform that Barack Obama and the Democrats carried out in 2009-10. Health care costs had more than doubled in the previous decade, and a million more Americans were losing insurance each year. Something had to be done. Many progressives advocated for a single-payer, Medicare-for-All program, but the Democrats settled instead for a scheme whose origins went back to the Nixon era and the Heritage Foundation – though in this setting the plan could garner no Republican votes. And, for the next six years, the Congressional Republicans tried more than 40 times to repeal it, all attempts stopped in the Senate or were vetoed by President Obama.

What did the Affordable Care Act or ACA – named Obamacare by the Republicans – actually do? Beginning with the declaration that "all Americans should have access to high-quality affordable health care," it established means to ensure that everyone (except undocumented immigrants) had access to health care within the existing insurance structure.

MORE INSURED

If you were over 65 years of age, you would be eligible for Medicare. Otherwise, if your income was below 138 percent of the federal poverty level, you would be eligible for Medicaid. If your income was above that level, you would be expected to purchase private insurance. You would receive a subsidy to help purchase it, and you would pay a penalty if you didn't (that's the "individual mandate"). This type of insurance mandate was first created at the state-level in Massachusetts under then-Governor Mitt Romney.

Insurance companies were required to sell you coverage; they could not charge you any more if you were ill, and the insurance had to be comprehensive, including all "essential benefits." It could not, for instance, exclude maternity care or mental health coverage. And if your income was below 250 percent of the poverty level, deductibles and co-pays would be subsidized.

As a result, today more than 10 million people who were previously uninsured have private insurance coverage and another 14



Unionists have been pushing for progressive health care reform in New York state.

million are covered by Medicaid. The uninsured rate has fallen to 8.9 percent, the lowest level in our history.

Then came the earthquake of the 2016 election, giving Trump the presidency and the Republicans control of both houses of the Congress. They are now in a position to repeal at least the financial portions – the taxes and the subsidies and the Medicaid payments – of Obamacare; Democrats can filibuster any change to the structure of the program. But what, if anything, would replace it?

Trump promised "insurance for everybody...much less expensive." Paul Ryan, the Republican Speaker of the House of Representatives, and his allies instead wanted to go as far as they could in getting the federal government out of the health care business. And, as part of that, they want to replace Medicare coverage by giving each Medicare recipient a limited voucher to use in purchasing private insurance.

Their replacement was the American Health Care Act (AHCA), a plan that was quickly labeled a "tax cut for the rich disguised as a health care bill." It eliminated the ACA taxes on individuals making more than \$200,000 that helped pay for subsidies

for the needy. (The AHCA retained some subsidies, but based them only on age, not on income.) It eliminated Medicaid's safety-net guarantee of coverage and replaced it with a cap of 10 years, the Republican balloon burst. The public outcry, already visible in the angry constituents storming congressional offices across the country, became overwhelming. The plan was withdrawn when the Republican leadership realized that it did not have the votes to pass it. (The House Democrats were united in opposition to it.) As of this writing, there are still efforts by Republicans to revive the bill, possibly in even worse form than before.

RISING COSTS

In other ways, too, the Trump administration can still harm those who depend on Obamacare. It can discourage young, healthy people from enrolling and fail to enforce the individual mandate. It can impose premiums, cost-sharing, and work requirements on those who depend on Medicaid. However, during the eight years since the health reform debate began, the American public has come to believe that access to health care should be available for everyone. Recent

polls indicate that 64 percent of Americans, including 86 percent of Democrats and 37 percent of Republicans, believe that government should guarantee health coverage for seniors and lower-income individuals.

So, for the moment, Obamacare has survived, and it continues to help many people, but more than 25 million people are still uninsured. Costs continue to rise twice as fast as anything else we buy. Huge deductibles are becoming common, and we still depend on wasteful, unreliable profit-maximizing insurance companies to pay for much of the health care in this country.

ADVANCING SINGLE PAYER

Many see this as the time to push for a universal Medicare-for-All, single-payer program. Every other advanced country has found a way to cover all their residents while spending little more than one-half what we spend. All rely on government to oversee and regulate health care, including administering the prices that doctors and hospitals charge. Our own Medicare program has shown how such a program can provide reliable coverage while containing costs.

Congress is not likely to act in the near future, but here in New York State, the New York Health Act would extend the principles of Medicare and Medicaid to every resident of the state. Under this legislation, which has passed the State Assembly and has 30 co-sponsors in the Senate – 32 votes are needed for passage – every resident of the state would be entitled to comprehensive coverage for all medical needs. There would be no co-pays or deductibles. The program would be funded through progressive taxes on payroll and non-payroll income, with employers paying 80 percent of the payroll tax.

Studies have shown that such a program, which is similar to that in many advanced countries, including Canada, would cover everyone while costing less than we are now spending. PSC, along with many other statewide unions, is supporting this progressive legislation, and PSC members have an opportunity to reach out to their lawmakers and tell them to support a progressive health care plan for the state.

Leonard Rodberg is professor emeritus of urban studies at Queens College. This article is based on a presentation delivered to the union's retirees chapter.

Activists must push the State Senate.