

The Connection

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UUP slates rally to stop SUNY budget freeze

UUP is launching a major public information campaign and will rally at the state Capitol next week, as part of its strategy to get the state Division of the Budget to drop its revenue freeze at the state university.

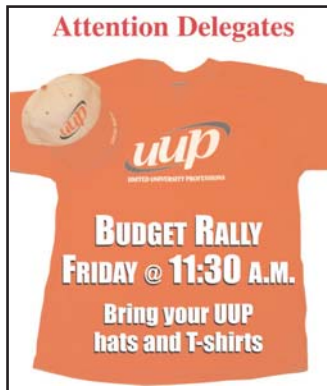
DOB issued a directive this week that prevents all state agencies and SUNY from spending a portion of the revenues they raise, including \$110 million in payments SUNY collects in tuition, dormitory fees and other payments from students and their families, and from hospital revenues collected directly from patients and private insurance.

"This revenue freeze will dismantle SUNY," UUP President Phil Smith warned. "We must be aggressive in urging the state to drop this short-

sighted plan."

UUP will bring the issue to light through newspaper and broadcast advertising, news media outreach and political action, including a rally at the steps of the state Capitol in Albany Friday, May 2, at noon.

Smith will lead the rally, urging the governor to reverse course. He will warn the public about the serious consequences of the cuts, which include a sharp reduction in access to public higher education



for thousands of prospective students, as well as larger class sizes and fewer course offerings, and erosion of academic quality and patient care.

The lunch-hour rally takes place during a break in UUP's 2008 Spring DA, being held at The Desmond in Albany May 2-3. More than 300 delegates and dozens of other union members are expected to participate. NYSUT leaders and members will also participate in solidarity with UUP.

UUPers elected, formulate policy at NYSUT RA

More than 100 UUP members joined the nearly 3,000 delegates who attended the 36th annual NYSUT RA in Manhattan April 10-12. Three UUPers — Treasurer Rowena Blackman-Stroud of Brooklyn HSC, Patty Bentley of Plattsburgh and Tom Matthews of Geneseo — all won reelection to new three-year terms on the NYSUT Board of Directors. UUP President Phil Smith also won election to an at-large seat on the NYSUT board.



UUP members stand and applaud during the NYSUT RA. Pictured from right, Pat Smith and Kiko Franco of Old Westbury, Carol Braund of Upstate Medical University, Atlas Hsie of Utica/Rome, and Steve Rosow and Bruce Altschuler, both of Oswego.

SUNY by \$38 million. Also addressing the RA were U.S. Sen. Charles Schumer, Attorney General Andrew Cuomo, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver and Comptroller Tom DiNapoli. U.S. Senator and presidential candidate Hillary Clinton and state Senate Majority Leader Joe Bruno delivered speeches via telephone. As usual, UUP was active in policymaking, presenting seven resolutions, all of which won approval from the RA delegates. See the May/June *Voice* for details. Also at the RA, two UUP newsletters — *The Active Retiree*, the newsletter for more than 3,300 UUP retirees, and *Unifier*, the Farmingdale Chapter newsletter — drew honors in the annual NYSUT Journalism Contest run by *New York Teacher*.

The RA featured an all-star list of speakers, including Gov. David Paterson. The governor said while this year's state budget increases aid to secondary education, higher education will

get the same treatment next year. "We have to understand that education is a priority. Next year we have to extend that same priority to higher education," Paterson said. The 2008-09 budget cuts operating aid to

Reminders/Upcoming meetings

MAY 2-3 —2008 Spring DA, Albany

MAY 12-13 —Committee of 100, Albany

JUN 12-15 —AAUP Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C.

JUN 20 —UUP Executive Board, Albany

JUL 1-6 —NEA Annual Convention, Washington, D.C.

JUL 10-13 —AFT Convention, Chicago

Poughkeepsie Journal—April 25

Officials: SUNY getting \$109 million less in funding

<http://www.poughkeepsiejournal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/200804250332/NEWS/804250335>

State University of New York officials announced Thursday the 64-campus system's funding is \$109 million less than originally expected.

That's because across-the-board spending reductions required by the recently enacted state budget will apply to revenues it collects from tuition, housing, SUNY hospitals and other services. That money is considered state revenue and has to be appropriated by the Legislature and governor.

The 2008-09 spending plan approved this month includes a 3.35% cut to all state agencies, and SUNY and the City University of New York. Gov. David Paterson has given commissioners and the schools a May 16 deadline for submitting plans on how they will change their budgets accordingly.

For SUNY, 3.35% equals \$148.1 million. That means a reduction of \$38.7 million from general state operating funds — 2.9% less than it received last year — and \$109.4 million from tuition and other fees.

Cutting from SUNY revenues will disproportionately harm the system, trustees and administrators said Thursday.

Trustees and other school officials said they would plead their case with the Paterson administration to see if an exception could be made. The state budget for the 2008-09 fiscal year, which began April 1, is \$121.7 billion, 4.9% higher than last year.

TIMES UNION—April 22

Paterson limits state hiring

<http://timesunion.com/AspStories/storyprint.asp?StoryID=682664>

Gov. David Paterson on Monday prohibited all but essential hiring in a sternly worded directive to state agencies.

Paterson said that if his cost-savings targets aren't met, he will impose a hard hiring freeze and other measures on agencies. He says he is willing to withhold budgeted funds.

The Democrat said the measures are necessary because of declining revenues projected in a worsening economy.

Paterson required a detailed savings plan from each agency by May 16.

"The reductions you propose must be achievable, recurring and serious," Paterson said in the memo released Monday. "Your plan must reflect the creativity needed to provide the services the public expects at a lower cost.

"Above all, you must rethink your hiring practices. Only job openings absolutely essential to your agency's operations and protecting the health and safety of New Yorkers are to be filled," he said. "Positions that do not fit this criterion must be left vacant." ...

Paterson has set a goal of cutting the budget for

(*excerpts of selected newsclips*)

the 2009-10 fiscal year by 5 to 10% before it is sent to the Legislature. Monday's memo is the first order in that effort.

"There are several corrective actions that I am prepared to take," Paterson told department heads. "These include withholding an amount of budgeted funding needed to hit your savings target or implementing a hard hiring freeze at your agency.

I sincerely hope and expect such measures will not be necessary."

His plan faces several obstacles. Chief among them are the public employee unions that hold great power in New York, especially in the Legislature, which can reverse a governor's budget cuts.

TIMES UNION—April 5 (Letter to the Editor)

SUNY needs more faculty for student growth

Marc Parry's March 26 article notes how admission to SUNY schools has become much more selective even as enrollment continues to grow. That increased competition for admission is threatening the core mission of the state's public university system, eroding access to an affordable education that is SUNY's mission.

The growth in enrollment and increased competition means there's a need for more faculty, but funds for additional faculty were not included in the executive budget. SUNY needs 1,600 more full-time faculty just to restore the student to faculty ratio that existed in the early 1990s.

Without additional faculty, many of the high school students who are being shut out of SUNY face a double whammy. They may elect to enroll in community colleges and try their luck two years later.

But tens of thousands of community college graduates have been denied admission to the four-year SUNY school of their choice because there aren't enough faculty to teach them. Today's high school graduates may find the doors to an affordable higher education are closed to them as well.

New York state needs to fuel its economic engine by providing state funds now to teach tomorrow's work force. More than 80% of SUNY graduates live and work in New York after graduation, infusing the state's work force with bright, energetic employees who help attract quality businesses with high-paying jobs.

By investing direct state support for additional full-time faculty and enrollment growth now, New York will have a brighter tomorrow.

—Phillip H. Smith, President, UUP

THE BUFFALO NEWS—April 3

Public universities question state assistance to private colleges

<http://www.buffalonews.com/cityregion/buffalo-erie/story/314127.html>

With budgets tight, higher education aid formula gets increased scrutiny.

When it comes to higher education in New York, much of the talk has been about finding money to turn the public system into one of the nation's best

— even making the University at Buffalo a "flagship."

But New York also has a rich tradition of providing to the private institutions, too.

Nearly a half billion dollars in state money was distributed to New York's private colleges and universities over the past 10 years to be used however they wanted — making New York one of the most generous in helping out its independents.

The biggest benefactors are some of the nation's most prominent schools, state figures show.

Syracuse University has received \$20 million in direct state aid since 1998, Columbia University collected \$32 million, and New York University was given \$50 million in public money, known as "Bundy Aid."

Some at the state's public colleges question giving state money to wealthy independent colleges, particularly when there's interest in bolstering the state system.

Syracuse charges \$32,000 a year for tuition and fees.

Columbia has a \$7 billion endowment.

NYU is in the midst of a \$2.5 billion fundraising campaign.

"At a time when we're facing budget cuts, is it appropriate?" asked Marsha S. Henderson, vice president for external affairs at UB.

Absolutely, argues Abraham Lackman, president of the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities.

Lackman, whose lobby group represents more than 100 private New York schools, said, "I probably have 25 to 30 schools that are really high end, but I have 80 schools that struggle every day."

The issue — how to adequately fund public colleges and universities while lending a hand to their private counterparts — is by no means unique to New York.

When states began expanding public higher education in the 1960s and 1970s, some started giving money to their vast network of private institutions to acknowledge their role in educating state students, explained Kelli Parmley, a policy analyst with the State Higher Education Executive Officers.

Many states set aside some form of tuition assistance directly to qualified residents attending private state colleges.

Fifteen states, though, also provide some form of direct public aid to private institutions.

New York, which has the nation's largest sector of private colleges, was second only to Pennsylvania last year, handing out more than \$46 million in Bundy Aid, records show.

In all, New York's independents directly and indirectly receive around \$350 million a year in state aid, according to the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities. ...

New York's independent colleges have been the fastest-growing part of New York's employment sector, graduate more students than the public and are a bargain for the state, Lackman's group said.

State aid to the privates is a fraction of the more than \$2 billion a year for SUNY the group adds. ...