

# UCATS Momentum

Union of Clerical, Administrative & Technical Staff at NYU, Local 3882, NYSUT, AFT, AFL-CIO

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## Special new member issue

See page 6-10



### IN THIS ISSUE

**PRESIDENT'S  
LETTER**

**PAGE 2**

**RETIREMENT  
PLANNING**

**PAGE 4**

**DELL COMPUTER  
DEAL**

**PAGE 5**

**OUT AND  
ABOUT**

**PAGE 11**

# Welcome new members

■ Stephen Rechner, Law School

*"The union is not an inheritance; it is an achievement that every generation of members must renew in response to the challenges of their times."*

—Randi Weingarten, *President, American Federation of Teachers*

**O**n Thursday, August 7th, the UCATS leadership team extended a special welcome to all of our new members with a lunch in the Kimmel Student Center. The event was an opportunity for you to meet the UCATS leadership team and for us to get valuable feedback from you on your experiences as new employees of NYU and as new union members.

## Shaping your experiences

UCATS has a proud 29-year history of improving our members' wages, benefits and working conditions. Our most significant achievement is that every new member receives in their starting salary every raise we have negotiated in those 29 years. New members are the future of our local, and a strong union is essential to a financially secure future for each of you.

It is imperative that experienced members share our history and the secrets of our successes with our new colleagues. In addition to showing new members the ropes on the job it is even more important that we educate you about our union and how it will shape your employment experience at NYU.

Most importantly, we simply cannot allow anyone to take the union for granted. You only need to open



Melvena Quillen (c), self-proclaimed "Obama Girl" distributed buttons, t-shirts and posters at the American Federation of Teachers convention after the delegates gave Obama their overwhelming endorsement. Quillen is a building representative with the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers. Representing UCATS at the convention were Steve Rechner (l) and Kerissa Ward (r).

a newspaper to understand the importance of union representation — 48 million Americans without health insurance, 80% of American workers without defined benefit pension plans, declining wages, and no job security. UCATS has successfully protected our members from these national trends, but our ability to exist as an island of privilege rests on the willingness of each new member to learn our history, to embrace our achievements, and to do your fair share to keep our union moving forward.

UCATS is indeed an achievement. Those of us who have been members for over twenty years, as I have been, can look back on almost three decades of wage and benefit improvements. The UCATS achievement is our gift to each new member. It is a gift that includes

wages and benefits we didn't even dream of 29 years ago. Just a few of  
*(continued on page 3)*

## UCATS Momentum

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**Newsletter**

# Marymount College staff vote for NYSUT representation

*NYSUT Media Relations –  
June 16, 2008*

ALBANY, N.Y., June 16, 2008 – Withstanding more than 18 months of an expensive anti-union campaign waged by their employer, non-faculty staff at Marymount Manhattan College voted for union representation with New York State United Teachers. The National Labor Relations Board certified results of the vote on June 9.

“On behalf of NYSUT’s 600,000 members across the state, we welcome our new Marymount colleagues to our organization,” said NYSUT President Richard C. Iannuzzi. “Their unity and courage in the face of such a hostile campaign speaks to the need and desire of many college employees for a voice on the job.”

The campaign was hard-fought because of the college’s use of the expensive and notorious anti-union firm, Jackson-Lewis, whose website proudly proclaims the firm “has assisted many employers in winning

NLRB elections or in avoiding union elections altogether.” That wasn’t the case at Marymount Manhattan — notwithstanding conservative estimates that the college paid Jackson-Lewis more than a million dollars trying to defeat the union drive.

Though an overwhelming majority of MMC staff first petitioned the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) for representation back in September 2006, employer-initiated delays — including a 46-day NLRB hearing and subsequent legal appeals — resulted in the election not being held until March 13 of this year. When the votes were finally counted on May 30, results showed staff voted 65-27 in favor of joining NYSUT.

“It’s a fantastic feeling to have made it this far. Of course, the true finish line is a contract for the staff of the college, but that’s the last leg of what has seemed, at times, like an endless race,” said Ross Chappell, operations director for the Fine and Performing Arts Division,

who spent five days testifying at the NLRB. “Staff deserves to be treated as the professionals they are. We’ve long since left the days of the ‘typing pool.’”

It was only after the May 30 count that MMC President Judson Shaver sent an e-mail to all college staff, saying: “We are pleased that this process is concluded and look forward to putting this matter finally behind us.” Many of the union activists are taking the president’s remark as a change in philosophy and, hopefully, action, as well.

The new NYSUT affiliate, calling itself Marymount Union of Staff Employees or MUSE, will now prepare for contract negotiations.

UCATS is delighted to have another private sector higher education sister local in New York City. Just three years ago our sisters and brothers at Cooper Union also joined the NYSUT family, calling themselves, *The Union @ Cooper Union*. They negotiated their second contract in 2007. \$

## Welcome

*(continued from page 2)*

those achievements include a four-fold increase in wages, pensions increased over 125%, domestic partner benefits, improved transfer/promotion policies, and longevity increases.

The question for each new member today is what will your generation achieve over the next twenty years to pass on to the generation following you? How will you respond to the challenges of your times? Will you defend your contract and make a contribution to building and shaping the union that has made NYU the

place you want to work for today, so that it’s an even better place to work for the next generation?

Looking ahead toward the next twenty years, one thing is certain: every UCATS member currently active in the union will have moved up or moved on. Suggesting to new members that you get active in the union is a daunting proposition. For sure, none of you applied for a job at NYU with the intention of becoming a union leader or even a union member. The fact remains, however, that more than a few of you will decide to make your career here, if

only because of the benefits package which just isn’t available without a union contract anymore.

The participation of new members in the union is essential to our continued success. You are our eyes and ears in the workplace. It is every new member’s responsibility to learn and understand what rights and benefits the contract provides because, at the end of the day, the only rights and benefits you have now, and will have in the future, will be the ones you are willing to defend with knowledge, commitment and effort. \$

# Retirement planning for new members



Are you squirrelling enough away for retirement?

■ *Stephen Rechner, President*

## RETIREMENT PLANNING? I JUST STARTED WORKING AT NYU!

**T**hink you're too young to worry about saving for retirement? Consider this, the younger you begin saving, the less you will have to save in your later years for a financially secure retirement. This is because of the magic of compounding; appreciation on a few dollars invested earlier in life has a snowball effect on your savings over time.

Now is a good time to begin saving because you just got a raise *and* because you have an opportunity to put those dollars to work for you in a depressed stock market (buy low...).

Go to any retirement income planning seminar and most often the presenter will begin with the analogy of a three-legged stool. The first leg being Social Security, the second an employer provided defined benefit pension plan, and last but not least, your own retirement savings.

For UCATS members, Social Security and a defined benefit pension plan are easy because they are automatic — you don't have to do anything to make them happen. The government is responsible for your Social Security and, after five years of employment at NYU, every UCATS member is vested in the NYU Staff Pension Plan that we have negotiated into our contract (article 20).

Unfortunately, too many members haven't made provisions for the third leg of the retirement income stool — savings. Personal saving is hard — it requires

fiscal discipline and a willingness to forgo things you want today in anticipation of what you will need when you retire.

## Strategies to save

There are strategies that can make it a little easier. As an NYU employee you are eligible to fund a 403B and/or a Roth IRA defined contribution retirement savings account through payroll deduction.

You think you can't spare even a dime to save for retirement? Try this: every UCATS member received a 3.25% raise the first pay period of September; since you have survived the last twelve months or less without it, now is a great time to begin contributing 2% of your income to a retirement savings account. You will still have 1.25% more in your take home pay, but you will have taken the first step toward a sound financial future. Going forward, when you get your raise each September increase your contribution by 1%.

## Some basics

The NYU Staff Pension Plan is a *defined benefit pension plan* — when you retire it guarantees you a fixed amount of income for the rest of your life based on the formula articulated in the union contract.

A 403B *defined contribution retirement savings account* is funded by the employee through a voluntary salary reduction agreement with the employer. You decide how much to contribute and it is deducted from your paycheck on a pretax basis; so, if you decide to have \$10 deducted each pay period your take-home pay is only reduced by about \$7. Sometimes employers match your contribution, but NYU does not because they already fund your NYU Staff Pension Plan. With a 403B you get a tax break now on what you contribute, but when you retire and begin taking distributions from your account you pay taxes on both what you contributed today and the additional dollars you have from the appreciation of your investment choices.

A Roth IRA, is also a defined contribution retirement savings account but one that is funded with after tax dollars; so, \$10 deducted each pay period reduces your take home pay by \$10. With a Roth IRA you get no tax break now, BUT, when you retire and begin taking distributions from your account the amount you contributed today and the additional dollars from investment appreciation are all tax free. ☺

# Dude, you're gettin' a Dell discount!

**U**CATS members and agency fee payers can receive discounts ranging from 2% to 12% on Dell computers through the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) Member Benefits Trust discount program. NYSUT is our state affiliate so UCATS members and agency fee payers are eligible for all of the benefits and discounts they offer. For Dell computers:



- ☑ You have the ability to double the discount by purchasing a 3- or 4-year at-home service contract. Discount only applies to select computers and laptops when using the link below.
- ☑ For a per system price up to \$800, the discount is 2%. Add a 3- or 4-year at-home service contract, and the discount doubles to 4%.
- ☑ For a per system price costing between \$800 and \$1,600, the discount is 4%. Add a 3- or 4-year at-home service contract, and the discount doubles to 8%.
- ☑ For a per system price costing more than \$1,600, the discount is 6%. Add a 3- or 4-year at-home service contract, and the discount doubles to 12%.

The discount may be combined with other select offers or discounts. All orders are subject to approval and acceptance by Dell. Pricing, specifications, availability or other terms of offer may be withdrawn or changed without notice. Taxes, fees and shipping charges are extra, and vary. Discount applies to new purchases only.

You can also choose from discounted bundled selected systems pre-configured by Dell, including 3-year warranties. Or you can shop the Dell catalog, which may include some discounted items.

You can purchase from Dell by phone or online using the link below. To order by phone, call a Dell sales representative toll-free at (866) 535-3580 to assist you with your purchase. Be sure to mention the NYSUT Member Benefits Trust ID# **KS72614970** to ensure you receive the discount.

To order online, go to [www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org), and from the tool bar on the left hand side, select "NYSUT Member Benefits Trust", and then "Discounts", and then "Dell".

A quick price comparison with the NYU Computer Store on identical computers showed that prices were slightly lower when purchasing through the NYSUT discount program. If you need a payment plan you can apply for the Dell Preferred Account Payment Plan on the regular Dell web page ([www.dell.com](http://www.dell.com)) and pay over 12 months with 0% interest. Beware, however, that if you miss a payment on this plan you will then be charged for the interest accrued from the date of purchase. 💰

## NYSUT Benefits News Flash!

### Insurance Rate Decrease

If you're like us, you're getting pretty tired of everything going up—gas, food, airfare—is there anything that's not increasing in price? Yes! We have great news! Home insurance rates through the NYSUT Member Benefits Trust-endorsed home insurance program, MetLife Auto and Home, have decreased 10 percent. What does this mean for NYSUT/UCATS members? Through the endorsed MetLife program, NYSUT/UCATS members were already receiving rates 10 percent less than the general public.

Now, you'll receive an additional 10 percent less, or 20 percent less than the general public! This new 10 percent decrease applies to New York state only. If you already insure your home, apartment or condo with the endorsed program, you'll see the 10 percent decrease with your next renewal. If you don't insure with the endorsed program, maybe now's the time to request a no-obligation quote. Use this link [http://www.nysut.org/cps/rde/xchg/nysut/hs.xsl/3455\\_2943.htm](http://www.nysut.org/cps/rde/xchg/nysut/hs.xsl/3455_2943.htm) to go the Personal Property & Liability section of our website. Check out the "Features" and "How to Apply" for information, phone numbers and a link to getting a quote.

# UCATS welcomes new members

The UCATS leadership team welcomed new members to the union at a luncheon on August 7th in the Kimmel Student Center. New members had an opportunity to meet the officers and stewards and to ask questions about their employment/union experiences so far in an informal, friendly setting. The event provided the leadership team with valuable insight into what our new members are experiencing, how they are processing those experiences, and their questions informed us about what our new members need to know.

Attendees had many questions ranging from:

**“How are my union dues calculated?”**

*A: .065 x 1 week's base pay, deducted from the first paycheck of the month*

**“Do I get vacation time during my probation?”**

*A: You accrue vacation time during probation but you can only take vacation time after you have been employed 6 months.*

**“Can I take advance vacation?”**

*A: No.*

**“Who decides who is on the UCATS leadership team?”**

*A: The members decide. We have an election every two years; the next election will be in April 2009.*

Eric Marshall, our New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) Labor Relations Specialist, was our guest speaker. Eric described the role of the Labor Relations Specialist, his relationship to the local, the kinds of services he provides, and he reviewed the many benefits available to UCATS members from NYSUT, our state affiliate.

Over 20 new members attended the lunch over two sessions. A free raffle was held at the end of each session and two lucky new members each won an American Federation of Teachers book bag containing a NYSUT t-shirt and a \$50 Barnes and Noble gift card.



**Desi Carmichael, Central Supply/Asset Management**

■ *Veronica Johnson, 726 Broadway*

Nayadez (Desi) Carmichael came to NYU from Staples. Previously she had worked on the NYU campus as a Staples Representative for six years before accepting her

current position at NYU. Desi is a true multitasker in that she not only juggles multiple tasks but also multiple departments. She spends about 60% of her day working for Central Supply and 30% of her day working for Asset Management and the remainder of her time is lent to Purchasing Services.

A good working relationship with her NYU supervisor led her to apply for an open position in his department. Better salary and benefits also helped in her decision. She likes the atmosphere of being on a college campus and the location, the heart of the village, is a plus. Desi is a native New Yorker, born and raised in Harlem, and has had many adventures in this neighborhood in her well spent youth.

Desi wasted no time taking advantage of NYU's tuition remission benefits, and recently completed the Paralegal Studies program at SCPS.

Desi intends to start attending UCATS meetings now that her classes are completed. Union membership is very important in her family, many of whom are union members. Her mother has been a union member in the United States Postal Service for 10 years. Before Desi accepted the job at NYU her mother asked if the position was a union position. When her mother heard there was indeed a union at NYU she encouraged her daughter to accept.



**Sarah Lewin, Law School**

■ *Stephen Rechner, President*

**Sarah Lewin** recently graduated from Cornell (May 2007) and NYU is her first full-time job! During her summers in college she had internships at a variety of places including a real-estate development corporation and the University of Illinois School of Law. Sarah is now the administrative assistant to vice dean Friedman at NYU School of Law where she works on a variety of different projects that help enrich the quality of life for faculty and students.

She enjoys the academic environment and working in a place that fosters the idea that education is important. Sarah says, "At my job I enjoy working with people who strive to be the best at what they do. At NYU I love the feeling that it is this amazing university right in the middle of the city. The union gives me a sense of security."

Not only is this Sarah's first full-time job it is also her first union job. She has already noticed and appreciated the willingness of UCATS leaders to reach out and make her aware of what's going on from fun events to policy updates, and she says, "It's great to have people who care to inform everyone. I know that UCATS offers deals on services from legal to fun discounts and I would like to know how to access them. I'm sure this information is in one of the many pamphlets I've yet to read."

Sarah is eager to take advantage of her tuition remission benefits and will be starting a master's program this semester at Gallatin, majoring in Communication and Political Science. In her free time Sarah enjoys spending time with her dog at the different parks in the city, reading, painting, people watching in the city, fashion, and traveling (most recently to Sweden, favorite place being Kenya).



**Javian Richard, Accounts Payable**

■ *Anita Prokesch, 726 Broadway*

**Javian Richardson** is one of NYU's new accounts payable assistants. Her primary responsibility is accurately and efficiently entering invoice information into the AP system for payment processing. Prior to working at NYU Accounts Payable Javian worked in the IT industry as a help desk assistant. She was attracted to a career at NYU because of their prominence in the community and has been appreciative of the helpful attitude her coworkers have shown her. Javian has also been impressed with the many benefits of employment at NYU and will be taking advantage of tuition remission to pursue a master's degree in the Public Administration field. This is her first union job and she says, "I like that UCATS is actually involved with the employees and keeps us informed and updated about the issues that affect us." In her spare time Javian enjoys reading, listening to music, playing volleyball and scrap booking.



**Michele Lamorte,**  
*Bobst Library*

■ *Mathias Sias,*  
*Bobst Library*

**Michele Lamorte** is a serials receiving assistant at Bobst library, a position she began in January of 2008. Her duties include adding issues of periodicals to the online database as they arrive, the maintaining of e-journals available to the

NYU community, and various special projects. Like many people who end up in the library profession, Michele has a deep love of books, and her reading habits span the entire spectrum of subjects and genres. Michele decided to pursue library work after a few years in the cutthroat world of publishing.

She is particularly interested in the way libraries must adapt themselves to compete with the myriad other ways information is shared in our contemporary, on-line lives. The NYU libraries are definitely going along this path, and Michele is happy to be involved with these new approaches.

Michele grew up on the Jersey shore, where a unique high school program fostered an interest in oceanography and marine biology which led to an appreciation of the environment, and continues to influence her endeavors. She also is fond of animals and has a particular obsession with baking and baked goods. She is happy in her new job, and has already proved herself to be a valuable new addition to the Bobst Library team.

**Jonathan Sparks,** *Bobst Library*

■ *Rick Victorino,* *Bobst Library*

**Jonathan Sparks** is a new member in Bobst Library's Technical Services Acquisitions Department. Before coming to NYU, Jonathan spent 2 years at the Harvard Medical School Library and then worked briefly at the reference desk of the library at Brooklyn College. His present job includes ordering and receiving books as well as copy cataloging responsibilities. Jonathan applied for his current position because he was intrigued by the sheer size of Bobst Library and because of the "amazing benefits" that UCATS has negotiated for its members.

Jonathan was a member of the staff union at Harvard, but says the distance from the central Harvard campus limited his union participation there. Of his experience with UCATS, Jonathan says, "Having 2 stewards in my department has been very helpful. Though I know that isn't necessarily the norm, I do find it helpful in staying up to date and engaged with the activities of UCATS."

Outside of NYU, Jonathan is a talented drummer with a rock band and he enjoys making sculptures out of old typewriters. He also intends to use his tuition remission benefits to pursue a master's degree as soon as he decides what major he wants to pursue.

## WHAT EVERY NEW MEMBER SHOULD KNOW

**UCATS IS THE LARGEST PRIVATE SECTOR** higher education clerical/technical workers union in the state of New York

Your wages, rights, and most of your employee benefits have been negotiated by UCATS and are codified in the union contract.

NYU does not require the faculty and managers we work for to know and understand our contract, therefore every UCATS member must know and understand the union contract.

Every UCATS member has the right to participate in the decision making of our union

by attending membership meetings, by seeking election to the executive council, and by election to our contract negotiation team.

The UCATS executive council meets monthly and as needed.

UCATS is affiliated with New York State United Teachers (NYSUT), the largest union in the state of New York, and at the national level we are affiliated with both the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the National Education Association (NEA).



**Henrietta Jones, College of Nursing**

■ *Mary Baptiste, Steinhardt*

**“I’ve always worked** at universities. I like the educational system.” Henrietta Jones has come full circle in her search for finding the right fit in her career. Henrietta worked at NYU in 2000 when it was not mandatory to join the union. UCATS was negotiating a new contract and Henrietta said, “I figured it would be a good idea to join the union. I didn’t see any cons against joining!” She worked at NYU as an administrative aide in Skirball for 2 years before leaving for personal reasons.

Henrietta moved to Washington where she worked at George Washington University. They did not have a union for administrative staff. She then moved back to New York, and worked at Fordham University for 2 years as a secretary for Vision Educational and Psychological Services. They had a clerical staff union (local 153), but their contract was not as good as UCATS. After leaving Fordham, Henrietta applied to Baruch College and worked there for two years also, again she left.

Henrietta came back to NYU in 2008 and works as an administrative aide at the College of Nursing in the undergraduate program. Henrietta likes working in the department. The best thing she likes about her department is the people. She went on to describe them by saying, “They are very friendly, and nice.”

Last fall, Henrietta began a part-time program in Higher Education and Administration for a master’s of science degree at Baruch College. When not at work or in school her passion is taking pictures with her Nikon D70 single reflection lens camera. She intends to take advantage of tuition remission for a course in photography at the School of Continuing and Professional Studies. Henrietta moonlights as a photographer and takes pictures for friends at weddings. She hopes to one-day visit Spain, Italy and Israel, and to see them through the eyes of her camera lens.

**Gregory Ferguson, Bobst Library**

■ *Rick Victorino, Bobst Library*

**Gregory Ferguson** joined the Bobst Library team after a five-year stint at Columbia University’s Architectural and Fine Arts Library. In his new position at Bobst he orders and receives books and other materials. Gregory thinks his new co-workers are “great” and says he enjoys working in an academic environment. Of his UCATS experience he said, “I’ve been impressed with the union’s efforts to reach out to members and keep them informed about what’s happening with the local.” Gregory was a member of SEIU-1199 at Columbia and noted the benefits and efficiency of their central office. On his own time, he loves music and co-hosts a weekend radio show on WKCR-FM. This semester Gregory will be studying German through SCPS, and will soon apply to NYU’s joint MA/MLS program with Long Island University.



**Eyleen Hernandez, Medical Assistant Women’s Health**

■ *Diana Corzen, 726 Broadway*

**Eyleen Hernandez** is new to NYU and UCATS.

Eyleen comes from Columbia Health Services which she says, “is much smaller, and just focused on primary and women’s

health care.” Student services are a multidisciplinary health initiative that focuses on wellness and continuity of patient care. Eyleen is highly energetic and eager to learn every aspect of working in health services. She has already made herself a reliable asset to the Women’s Health program. With her outgoing personality and easy going style she is able to put students at ease who are using our services for the first time. I have no doubt that she will bring that enthusiasm to our union, to our different work groups and, with some encouragement, to our executive council. Eyleen is the proud mother of a 22 month old daughter named Samantha who is the light of her life.



**Joan Hutcheson,**  
*Bobst Library*

■ *Mathias Sias,*  
*Bobst Library*

**Joan Hutcheson** is a monograph acquisitions assistant at Bobst Library, a position she has held since December 2007.

The Acquisitions Department is the first stop for books arriving at the library, and Joan's duties include ordering new books from vendors, processing them as they arrive, and then sending the books along to the catalog department where they are added to the on-line catalog, and finally to the shelves. Joan does some cataloging as well. The technical services department is a dynamic work environment, as the library is constantly adapting to new ways of information sharing. Joan has worked at many different libraries, including a stint at the New York Public Library, and says she enjoys the encouraging, positive vibe of a university library like Bobst.

She has been in New York about three years, after living all over the midwest, studying biochemistry and audio engineering. Joan is a musician and a visual artist, recording and performing her own brand of folk music, and making unique mixed-media artworks. Some of her projects can be seen at her website, [joan'smusic.com](http://joan'smusic.com). Joan is a great new addition to the Bobst Library staff.

**Joan Mosco, Medical Assistant Primary Care**

■ *Diana Corzen, 726 Broadway*

**What can I say** about Ms. Joan Mosco? First, let's start with fun, energetic, an awesome party planner, and she makes great chocolate lollipops (but that's for another time). Joan has been a medical assistant since 2002 and recently came to NYU from a private practice that specialized in family health; prior to that she worked in retail. She believes that the customer service skills she honed during her retail experience helps her to work with the patients and different providers.

Joan's private practice experience was much different than her present position. In private practice she did everything from injections to patient counseling; at NYU's Student Health Services, she is assigned to assist the Provider, whether they are doctors or nurse practitioners. The registered nurses in her department are responsible for the medication delivery and patient education. Joan finds this to be more refreshing and less stressful for herself as it allows her more time to connect with the different providers and participate in outside activities to promote the Wellness initiative.

Joan has participated in numerous campus activities, from the annual Health Fair to HIV Counseling and Testing that is done around campus.

## CALLING ALL ARTISTS!

*Mathias Sias, Bobst Library*

**UCATS LOCAL 3882** is exploring the idea of arranging an art exhibition for code 106/104 University employees. It's time we showed off the creative talents of our members! We would like to put together a show that encompasses all of the visual arts: painting, photography, sculpture, video, new media... The date and venue of the exhibition are still to be determined, depending on interest. If you would

like to participate or help organize, we would like to hear from you! Please send an e-mail to [code106arts@gmail.com](mailto:code106arts@gmail.com), and tell us the kind of work you do, and/or at what level you would like to be involved.

For questions or more information please contact: Liz Schnore [liz@lizschnore.com](mailto:liz@lizschnore.com) x81420 or Mathias Sias [ms181@nyu.edu](mailto:ms181@nyu.edu) x82476.

# Out and About

## **LEADERS OF EMERGING HIGHER ED CONSTITUENCY MEET**—NEW YORK STATE

**UNITED TEACHERS (NYSUT)** higher education professional and support staff leaders (i.e., college and university employees who don't teach classes) met on June 24th to discuss how NYSUT can better meet the needs of this emerging constituency. Juliette Romano, President of the United College Employees Union at the Fashion Institute of Technology, hosted the lunch time meeting which was attended by Iris DiLutro from the Professional Staff Congress at CUNY, John Marino, VP of United University Professionals at SUNY Stonybrook, and UCATS president Steve Rechner. Suggestions discussed included easier access to information on the NYSUT website, a conference specifically for this constituency, and presenting these and other suggestions through the existing NYSUT Higher Education Council. Higher education locals are one of the fastest growing constituency groups in the NYSUT family, but current services to the higher ed constituency are heavily skewed toward the needs of teaching professionals. As NYSUT looks to organize more locals in the college/university industry the job titles represented by these new locals is diversifying exponentially, creating the need to reexamine what, and how, services are delivered.

## **LABOR JOURNALISTS AND EDITORS**

**GATHER**—ALMOST 100 AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS (AFT) editors and communicators from around the country gathered at the Hyatt Regency on July 9-10 for the annual AFT Communicators Network pre-convention conference. The event featured hands-on workshops, roundtable discussions, and plenary sessions on the November 2008 elections, the connection between communications and organizing, and strategies for communicating more effectively about the vital role of government in society. The conference, "Many Voices, One Message," opened with an address by retiring AFT president Edward J. McElroy, who was honored with a special lifetime achievement award for his efforts to improve communications throughout the AFT during his tenure. *Momentum* editor Steve Rechner attended the conference.

## **AFT DELEGATES ENDORSE OBAMA**—

**SENATOR BARACK OBAMA** was overwhelmingly endorsed by delegates to the American Federation of Teachers

(AFT) convention held in Chicago, July 10-14. Also notable were the elections of Randi Weingarten as President of the AFT, replacing Ed McElroy, Antonia Cortese as Secretary Treasurer, replacing Nat LeCour, and Loretta Johnson as Executive Vice President. Both McElroy and LeCour had announced their retirements earlier in the year. The election of Johnson is historic in that she is the first school-related professional to be elected to an officer position in the AFT. Johnson was the president of the paraprofessionals chapter of the Baltimore Teachers Union and an AFT Vice-President for over two decades. UCATS was represented at the convention by shop steward Kerissa Ward and Steve Rechner.

## **NYSUT ENDORSEMENTS CONFERENCE**—

**STEVE RECHNER** attended the New York State United Teachers Endorsements Conference with other local presidents August 11-12, to finalize NYSUT's endorsements of candidates for state senate and assembly seats. Of particular interest was NYSUT's opposition to Governor David Paterson's proposal of a property tax cap which they believe will have a negative impact on local public school budgets. Conference attendees decided to make the tax cap issue a litmus test for all candidates—regardless of a candidate's previous voting record on educational and labor issues they did not receive a NYSUT endorsement if they support the Governor's proposed property tax cap. For more information on NYSUT's position on the property tax cap proposal, and NYSUT's proposed alternatives to solving the state's budget crisis, go to [www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org).

## **SRP LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE**—NYSUT

**SCHOOL RELATED PROFESSIONALS** (a.k.a. everyone but the teachers) will meet in Albany September 26-28 for their annual leadership conference. The conference is a weekend of workshops on job skills enhancement, labor organizing, improving membership participation in the local, and running a union local more efficiently. Leadership conferences are held throughout the year at the regional, state, and national levels. If you are thinking of running for a leadership position on the UCATS executive council in the spring of 2009 and would like to attend a future leadership conference, contact Steve Rechner at [ucatspres3882@hotmail.com](mailto:ucatspres3882@hotmail.com) for more details.

# Save the Date!

## The UCATS Holiday Party!

**Friday, December 19 \* 5-9 p.m.**

Join your coworkers for  
dinner, dancing, great fun, and a raffle!

Rosenthal Pavilion  
Kimmel Student Center,  
10th Floor



Family, Significant Others,  
Friends, and Agency Fee  
Payers welcome.

Non-dues paying non-members  
must join at the door.

## UCATS THANKS

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for their donation of a \$25 gift card.

The advertisers on this page have all made generous donations of prizes to our holiday party charity raffle. All proceeds of the raffle will be donated to the NYSUT Disaster Relief Fund which provides financial assistance to union members who are victims of natural disasters.