New Jersey VOICE of Higher Education Labor

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CORZINE'S FINANCIAL RESTRUCTURING PLAN THE MOMENT OF TRUTH

President's Report

Nicholas C.Yovnello

During a recent morning radio talk show, Governor Corzine warned that tuition and property taxes may soar and hospitals may close if money in the State budget is not diverted from debt service to the operational needs of the State and its agencies. That NJ's finances are in deep trouble is indisputable. The State owes $32 billion, which translates into $2.6 billion in annual debt service or 7% of the FY 2008 budget. New Jersey's debt burden is one of the highest per capita in the nation.

Every year we lurch from one budget crises to another. By law, the State's budget must be balanced. Borrowing and skimping on the State's contributions to public employee pension and health insurance reserves has been the favorite method the State Legislatures and Governors used in the past to balance the budget, but there comes a time when the debt burden becomes unsustainable. Governor Corzine has declared that it is time for the State to mend its ways. The moment of truth has come about with the Governor's recently proposed budget. **So what else can be done?**

The Governor proposed an "asset monetization" plan that would pay off half of the State's debt, free up funds in the budget now devoted to debt service and provide a dedicated funding source for transportation infrastructure. It involved transferring NJ toll roads to a non-profit entity called the Public Benefit Corporation, having this entity raise money by issuing its own bonds and securing these bonds with the revenue from massive highway toll increases.

Public opposition has essentially killed this plan. But elements of it are still worthy of consideration. Right now, the average commuter pays $1.20 per trip in tolls for using the Turnpike; $0.35 for using the Parkway and $0.50 for using the Atlantic City Expressway. Compared to other states, this is cheap. Turnpike tolls have risen only four times in the past fifty years, Parkway tolls only once. Doubling the tolls on these three roads could raise about $750 million annually, with out-of-state drivers picking up 44% of the increasesd tab.

Raising the gas tax is also worth considering. NJ's gasoline taxes are among the lowest in the nation—$0.145 per gallon compared to a national average of $0.284. In New York, it is $0.409 per gallon; in Pennsylvania it is $0.323 per gallon. In "low tax" Delaware (but with very high tolls), it is $0.23 per gallon. Gas taxes in NJ have not been raised since 1988. A 20 cent per gallon increase would yield approximately $1 billion in new revenue.

For a more progressive alternative, consider the Petroleum Products Gross Receipts Tax paid by oil companies at a current rate of 4 cents a gallon. A 20% increase would generate just over $ 1 billion. Oil companies have never been more profitable and can clearly afford to pay more in taxes. Home heating oil can be exempted from this tax, so landlords and homeowners would not be affected.

No one likes to pay higher tolls or gasoline taxes, but what is the alternative? Higher sales taxes? Did that last year. Higher income taxes? A "millionaire's tax" on the upper income bracket was enacted a few years ago and so were some new business taxes. Neither the Legislature nor the public will tolerate more.

If you have followed the press, you know that Governor Corzine's critics have not been shy about their solution: massive state budget cuts. In fact, Governor Corzine himself is already calling for cuts of up to $2.7 billion in his next budget without factoring in any revenue increases. As state employees and educators, we know all too well what budget cuts can mean—higher tuition, reduced services and the real threat of layoffs.

Assemblymen John Wisniewski (D-19), Assembly Transportation Chairperson has proposed to raise revenue by a combination of toll hikes (less than those originally projected by the Governor), increasing the gasoline tax and privatizing the State lottery. The Council has always opposed privatization of State agencies, but toll hikes and a higher gasoline

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tax are likely to be elements of any revenue enhancement package.

We support the Governor in his efforts to get State debt under control. The question is how to do it without taking it out on public employees, educators, students and the poor. If you have a better comprehensive package that would adequately reduce the amount of State debt without devastating human services, we're sure the Governor would like to hear it.

The Governor's proposed budget as it relates to us:

Total higher education funding amounts to 6% of the total state budget ($2.1 billion out of $33 billion). The senior public colleges and universities will suffer a $63 million cut—$38 million at Rutgers, $22.4 million at UMDNJ, $6.4 million at NJIT and the remaining $30 divided among our institutions. I want to thank the Governor for inserting a welcome line item in the budget — $38 million to fund our negotiated salary increases. This was not in last year's budget. Funding for fringe benefits drops by $4.9 million, but some if not all of this may be due to the 1.5% employee health insurance co-pay. Tuition assistance programs actually receive a $13.8 million increase.

The breakdown, all in the loss column, is as follows: Edison—$ 600,000; Rowan—$4 million; NJCU—$3.4 million; Kean—$4.5 million; WPUNJ—$4.1 million; MSU—$4.9 million; TCNJ—$3.7 million; Ramapo—$2.2 million; and Richard Stockton—$2.6 million.

Since the legislature has yet to approve the proposed budget and there will be inevitable calls from all constituencies for restoration, you can be sure the Council will do all it can to mitigate these cuts. The Governor did add the $38 million for the negotiated salary increases as a result of several meetings and lobbying efforts by our coalition of higher ed unions. Please be prepared to assist us in political action and also participate in COPE as we continue our efforts. – • –

Testimony On State Commission Of Investigation Report Before Assembly Higher Education Committee - February 25, 2008

On February 25, Council president President Nicholas Yovnello testified before the Assembly Higher Education Committee regarding the significance of the State Commission of Investigation Report. He spoke on behalf of the Council, Rutgers Council of AAUP Chapters-AFT and the New Jersey State Conference of AAUP Chapters. Together this coalition of higher education unions represents over 14,000 academic employees at New Jersey's State Colleges and Universities.

The following is a summary of his testimony. For the complete version see the Council website www.cnjscl.org

L. R. Fernando Padro, Nicholas Yovnello & Lisa Klein testifying

The State Commission of Investigation (SCI) report has created an opening to address many of the problems that were created in 1994, when the Legislature abolished the Department of Higher Education and granted NJ's public Colleges and Universities greater autonomy. Our goal here today is not to attack the institutions where our members are employed. It is to offer our perspective on the SCI Report and to endorse many of the SCI executive summary findings. We are also recommending additional measures that will improve public accountability and strengthen our institutions.

For years, we have warned the Legislature that the absence of central oversight of our system of public higher education was detrimental to sound governance and public accountability. On October 25, 2007, the State's Commission of Investigation confirmed our predictions. In a scathing report, triggered by the scandals at the University of Medicine and Dentistry (UMDNJ), the SCI found "the entire system vulnerable to waste, abuse and violations of the public trust" and recommended "comprehensive structure change" to correct these problems.

The SCI focused on practices at UMDNJ, Rutgers University, New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT), Rowan University and Ramapo College, but its findings reveal that there is a "complete absence of any mechanism to ensure internal accountability, independent external oversight and proper transparency" at all senior institutions. In startling confirmation of our worst fears, the report disclosed "virtually unrestrained borrowing practices that have saddled New Jersey's public colleges and universities with some of the heaviest long-term higher education debt loads in the nation." For example last March, Kean University issued another $275 million in bonds, causing Moody's Investment Service to downgrade its rating. Rowan University has just discovered that it cannot sell its bonds and will be forced to pay drastically higher interest rates on its sizable debt.

As a result of these shocking examples of fiscal irresponsibility, "New Jersey now ranks among the states with the highest average four-year cost of public college tuition and fees in the nation."

Our coalition certainly agrees that curtailing reckless borrowing is not enough. Increased State support for higher education is also essential, but only if strict controls are placed on how the institutions raise and spend the money. If the Legislature and the Governor assume more control over how

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Assembly Higher Ed. Testimony

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our institutions are managed, it stands to reason that you would be more willing to increase appropriations.

The root cause of the crisis is plain to see. The report takes direct aim at the State's "wholesale disengagement from higher education," occurring in 1994 when Governor Whitman abolished the Department of Higher Education and along with it "all meaningful elements of state involvement in safeguarding the taxpayer's sizable investment in the system." Since then, our public institutions of higher education have become "islands unto themselves" accountable only to local Boards of Trustees who are oftentimes little more than political appointees. The bitter fruit of this system of institution-based governance has been the "excessive intrusion of politics, including millions of dollars in lobbying expenditures, efforts to solicit state college and university officials for campaign fundraising and influence peddling…"

Although the report does not recommend the restoration of the Department of Higher Education, it does forcefully advocate that institutional autonomy should exist only within a framework of effective State oversight, accountability and transparency.

These are some of its most compelling recommendations:

- Elevate the Commission on Higher Education into the Governor's cabinet and empower it with the authority to ensure effective governance and administration.
- Revamp the process by which State college and university trustees/governing boards are appointed and provide them with more rigorous training.
- Create a statewide master plan and enforce a due diligence requirement for all capital improvement projects and for the issuance of bonds.
- Create a Task Force on Higher Education to define and codify state college and university charters in the context of public policy and sound academic practice.

In addition to the SCI recommendations, our coalition proposes the following:

- Require public higher education institutions to report detailed budget and financial information to the Commission on Higher Education and grant the Commission greater authority to exercise oversight.
- Provide more vigorous exercise of the Commission's existing responsibilities under N.J.S. 18A:3B-14 (a), (f) (g), 34. B., 35, 65-33.1, 34, *et al*.
- Empower the Commission to impose limits on the number of management employees and salaries of upper management at the State colleges/universities.
- Expand the Commission staff to enable it to carry out its enhanced responsibilities.
- Require that the new State Comptroller's Office employ or dedicate at least one staff person responsible for reviewing the financial records of the state colleges/universities.
- Require that performance evaluations of presidents, provosts and deans be conducted at each institution. Elements of this evaluation should include:
    - Leadership Institutional Management
    - Leadership Institutional Representation
    - Relationship with Faculty and Staff
    - Educational Statesmanship
- Passage of a bill to place two employees, chosen by campus unions, on all State college/university boards of trustees/boards of governors to provide additional oversight from an employee perspective.

We know that with every year comes a new budget crisis. However, the fact that our public institutions of higher education are mismanaged to one extent or another should not be used as an excuse to cut their budgets. Under the current governance structure, this will only result in layoffs or tuition increases, as presidents and boards of trustees will scramble to preserve their pet programs, new construction projects and sometimes bloated managerial payrolls. What we believe are needed are targeted appropriations — to fully fund the salary and benefits account, to hire more full-time faculty, to catch up on deferred maintenance, to increase Tuition Aid Grants, to ensure professional and equitable treatment to part-time/adjunct faculty, etc.

The SCI Report paves the way for a needed major overhaul of public higher education. We urge you and your legislative colleagues to seize the opportunity and act now, before further damage is done. Our coalition stands ready to work with you to correct the errors of the past and to bring a new and better era to public higher education in New Jersey — one that gives the State a leading role in shaping higher education policies by treating our State colleges and universities as a proper public trust.

The Council urges you to contact your State legislature and ask that they introduce legislation to implement the SCI's recommendations. – • –

We can't say it often enough — Get Involved!

With an ever shrinking State budget it is essential that we increase our involvement in New Jersey's political arena. We have to bolster our ability to influence the future of higher education in our State, but we need your help to do it. Please consider becoming a COPE (Committee on Political Education) contributor.

Please call the Council office or contact your local to request a COPE check-off authorization card NOW! If you have questions about COPE, call Bennett Muraskin, the Council's staff representative on legislative issues or Amy Giovanetti, AFT NJ – State Affiliate Political Organizer/COPE at (908) 964-8476,

AFT Director of Higher Education Meets with Council

On February 8, 2008, AFT Director of Higher Education Larry Gold addressed approximately eighty Council delegates assembled for a Council meeting at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Monroe Township, NJ. He stressed the importance of Federal legislation affecting higher education, in particular the so-called "Academic Bill of Rights", the Higher Education Reauthorization Bill and AFT-sponsored State FACE (Faculty and College Excellence) initiative to restore the ranks of full-time faculty and provide equity for adjunct/contingent faculty.

Larry Gold addressing Council delegates

AFT has over 1.4 million members, 170,000 of them in higher education. Gold is dedicated to ensuring that higher education issues receive the attention they deserve within AFT leadership. Through lobbying efforts in Washington and research on professional issues affecting faculty such as intellectual property and distance learning, the AFT Higher Education Department seeks to be responsive to our needs.

Gold characterized the "Academic Bill of Rights" as an attempt to dictate what faculty teach in the classroom. He stated its premise is that tenured radical professors dominate higher education and use their classrooms to indoctrinate their students with left-wing propaganda. Its backers, who come from right-wing backgrounds, claim that the federal government must intervene to ensure that diverse views are respected and that faculty and students are not judged on political criteria. The AFT rejects the premise of the bill and will resist any government role in defining or limiting faculty speech in the classroom. Faculty must enjoy the academic freedom to express their views and there are well established mechanisms and procedures on campuses to ensure that they do not abuse this privilege.

A broad coalition has emerged to defeat the "Academic Bill of Rights" both on the federal and state levels called Free Exchange on Campus. Among its members are the AFT, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), the AFL-CIO, the American Library Association, the United States Student Association, the Center for Campus Free Speech and the American Civil Liberties Union. The Council is also a member. Your locals can do the same. So far, the Democrats in the House of Representatives have managed to keep the Academic Bill of Rights out of the Higher Education Reauthorization Bill that is making its way through Congress. You can be sure that AFT lobbying had a lot to do with this.

Gold recommended that faculty visit www.freeexchangeoncampus.org for more information. He further noted that adjunct/contingent faculty are especially vulnerable to administrative infringements on their academic freedom and stated that AFT seeks to sponsor campus forums on this issue.

Gold also made reference to Congressional efforts to impose "assessment" requirements on public institutions of higher education, modeled after the No Child Left Behind legislation. This would entail the extensive use of standardized tests. Forcing faculty to concentrate on teaching to prepare students to pass these tests would be detrimental to good teaching and yet another threat to academic freedom. According to Gold, AFT is also working on developing "best practices" to promote racial diversity on campus.

On the State level, Gold said that the AFT is committed to continuing its major campaign, FACE (Faculty and College Excellence), which is already linked to the Council website at www.cnjscl.org The FACE campaign is meant to reverse the alarming national decline in full-time tenure track faculty in favor of full-time non-tenure track faculty and adjunct/contingent faculty. In the Council's nine State college-university system, we have succeeded in sharply limiting the number of full-time non-tenure track faculty, but the proportion of adjunct faculty in our institutions has exploded in recent years along with the percentage of courses taught by adjunct faculty at our campuses. For example, there are now about 2700 full-time faculty in our unit compared to 3847 adjunct faculty. Eight years ago, in February 2000, there were about 2100 full-time faculty compared to about 1700 adjuncts.

Adjunct faculty are by definition piece workers. Underpaid, lacking job security and most benefits, they do not have the opportunity to participate in governance or pursue scholarly activities. Often employed at multiple campuses, they lack the time to and are not compensated for conferring with their students or attending departmental meetings. At Kean University, the worst offender, there are over 900 adjunct faculty compared to 374 full-time faculty. This ratio is more typical of county/community colleges. Recognizing that most adjunct faculty are excellent teachers does not change the fact that excessive reliance on them is detrimental to educational quality.

Currently, there is a bill in the Legislature, S-803, introduced by Senator Stephen Sweeney (D-3) entitled the "Restoring the Ranks of Full-Time Faculty Act." The bill requires State colleges and universities to adopt a "faculty development plan" to raise the percentage of undergraduate courses taught by full-time faculty to 75% by the 2013-14 academic year in depart-

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A pre-retirement checklist for employees in the Alternate Benefits Plan

This checklist applies to employees enrolled with the following providers that are authorized to offer annuity investments: AIG VALIC (973) 285-8200 or 1-800-448-2542; AXA Financial (Equitable), 1-866-786-0856; The Hartford, 1-800-243-7782, ext. 54400; ING Life Insurance and Annuity Co., 1-877-0321; MetLife (formally Travelers/CitiStreet), 1-800-545-0108 or (732) 602-0500; Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association/College Retirement Equities Fund (TIAA/CREFF), 1-800-842-8412.

- Determine your retirement date.
- Request the following information and/or material before your retirement dates:

What you will need	When you will need it
A retirement illustration from your carrier	12 months before retirement
Social Security earnings record	6 months before retirement
Retirement forms package	3 months before retirement

- Ask you carrier about such things as asset allocation, Rollover IRAs, retirement income options, Long Term Care, etc.
- Confirm your beneficiary designation (s). Be prepared to submit proof of your birth date. If you claim 25 years of credited service, confirm it with SHBP.
- *Employees who were hired effective September 1, 1972, receive service credit for July and August 1972, and therefore have twenty-five years of service credit as of June 30, 1997. If you run into problems regarding service claims for July and August of 1972, please call the Council office at (908) 964-8476.
- Call your Human Resources Department to discuss retirement related issues, e.g., Health Benefits, Medicare, COBRA, Life Insurance. *Obtain forms.

Enrollment in the state health benefits program as a retiree is not automatic. You need to check with your HR department prior to retirement to obtain the correct application; enrollment in medicare is a must at age 65.

- Calculate your budget. Your carrier has materials to enable you to prepare a cash flow analysis.
- Find out about taxation of your income in retirement. Request Fact Sheet #12 from the Division of Pensions and more from the Division of Taxation or visit their websites (below). If you are moving out of state, review that state's tax laws with regard to pension income exclusion. If you wish federal withholding, you need to file a W-4P form.

You can obtain fact sheets directly from the Division of Pensions on these subjects. Ask for fact sheets #11, 12, 22, 26, 30, and 36. All these and more fact sheets are available online by going directly to this link: http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/pubslist1.htm#fact

Important telephone numbers and websites

Division of Pensions and Benefits: (609) 292-7524 to speak to counselors and order fact sheets

Visit: www.state.nj/treasury/pensions for a detailed discussion of your pension, health benefits and fact sheets.

The Social Security and Medicare number: (800) 722-1213. The website is: www.ssa.gov

The New Jersey Division of Taxation number is: (609) 292-6400 or (800) 323-4400 in New Jersey. The web site is: www.state.nj/treasury/taxation. – • –

Higher Ed. Director meets with Council

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ments that have at least eight full-time equivalent faculty positions. Furthermore, the institutions must give preferential consideration to adjunct and part-time faculty in hiring for newly established full-time faculty positions. The terms of this plan are deemed fully negotiable.

Increasing the ranks of full-time faculty comes with a cost. Under the terms of S-803, a special fund will be created entitled the Faculty Restoration and Equity Fund that will be administered by the State Treasurer in consultation with the Commission on Higher Education. The bill does not mandate any appropriation, but does mandate that State appropriations, private contributions or interest on both will be exclusively dedicated to carrying out its provisions.

The Council expects a second bill to be introduced that would guarantee that adjunct faculty receive salaries and benefits pro-rated to that of full-time faculty based on the number of courses they teach. Both of these initiatives are considered vital components of the FACE campaign. As the bills move through the legislature, the Council and your locals will ask you to do your part. For more information about the Council, visit our web site at www.cnjscl.org

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Round 1 goes to the Union as it forces Richard Stockton State College to keep employees in the bargaining unit (for the time being)

Last summer during negotiations, Richard Stockton State College informed Mike Frank, President of the Stockton Federation of Teachers that it planned to remove seven professional staff employees serving in the local title of Assistant to the Dean from the bargaining unit and place them into management positions. It wasn't clear at the time what management had in mind because the College couldn't decide what to call the new position. What was clear was that it was the beginning of what will most likely be a protracted battle with the College and the Office of Employee Relations (OER) at the Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC).

The Back Story

Before the Union received official notice of the College's plans in early June, it did some behind the scenes investigating and learned that over the last few years, the Assistant to the Dean's job description at each of the College's Divisions expanded in roles and responsibilities, but not to the extent that the employees were no longer performing unit work. In late June, the College notified Mike Frank and the Council that it had decided the new title for the Assistant to the Dean would be a generic management title of Director III with a local title of "Academic Administrator". The provost sent a proposed job description and after reviewing it, the Union determined that is was merely an Assistant to the Dean's job description with a new job summary that gave the so-called Academic Administrator the authority to make some very low level "non-personnel" decisions in the Dean's absence. The Union also surveyed Assistant to the Dean job descriptions from other institutions and found that many of the same duties and jobs were very similar to those in Stockton's new proposed title.

On July 5th, the Union wrote to the Provost to demand that the College "immediately discontinue its plan to remove AFT members from the bargaining unit." We also strongly urged the College to meet with the Union to discuss a creative solution to provide its valuable employees with an appropriate upward reclassification commensurate with their added responsibilities; it would also give the College the increased flexibility it needed to efficiently operate the affected academic divisions. A few days later, the College informed the Union that it would take its proposal under advisement. In September, we received notice that at that time, the College would not be acting on its Academic Administrator title, thus giving the Union time to craft a reasoned proposal to the College. It was our intent to reach a mutually beneficial agreement to this situation.

The Proposal Stage

In late fall, the Union drafted a proposal and submitted it the College. The proposal addressed the problem of compensating the Assistants to the Deans, most of who are in the highest salary steps in their State generic titles. One of the issues in this matter was that the College wrongly assumed these employees had nowhere to go but out of the unit in order to receive range and pay increases. This is not the case. Letter of Agreement X allows a performance based promotion for individuals serving in these titles so the Union proposed that the College promote the six individuals who are serving as PSSI, ADI and Administrative Assistant I to Range 29, and to promote the one individual serving as an ADIII according to Article XVI. Mike Frank and Council staff representative Debra Davis met with the administration to pitch the proposal. They calculated new salaries and, at its request, gave the College information about professional staff at the other institutions who, after having been promoted pursuant to Letter of Agreement X, remained in the bargaining unit. In the meantime, from the time the Union first learned of the College's ill-conceived plan, the Council had been having informal conversations with OER about the appropriate way that the College should have proceeded with its plan to remove unit work and the professional staff performing it from the bargaining unit.

PERC Rulings as Precedent

When an employer believes that duties of employees make the continued inclusion of their positions in a bargaining unit inappropriate, the employer is required to file a Clarification of Unit Petition (CU) with PERC. The clarification of unit process is intended to resolve confusion concerning the composition of an existing collective negotiations unit for which the exclusive representative has already been selected. Typically, clarification is sought as to whether a particular title is contemplated within the scope of the unit. In this case, no such petition was filed. In short, the Union contends that Richard Stockton State College will commit an unfair practice — in other words, it will violate the law were it to go ahead with its plan to remove our people from the unit.

The Council, OER and the College

On December 12, 2007, the College notified Mike Frank that it intended to "reclassify the current Assistant to the Deans into the existing title of Assistant Dean." Immediately, the Council lodged a protest with OER over the College's latest intended action. This letter made formal the discussions that it had been having with OER about the appropriate venue for resolving unit disputes. The Council claims that the College has no right to unilaterally remove incumbents from the bargaining unit and, after having once again reviewed another of the College's proposed job descriptions — this time for Assistant Dean— it determined that the proposed new duties do not satisfy the definition of managerial ex-

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Round 1 goes to the Union

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ecutive or supervisor within the meaning of the New Jersey Employer-Employee Relations Act. The Council also argued that the College should have filed a CU petition with PERC; in fact, it is well established that this is the preferred mechanism for resolving these types of disputes. The Council also demanded that the College abandon its plan and negotiate with the Union over its September 21st proposal in an effort to resolve the matter in a non-adversarial way to the benefit of both parties. However, the Council was very clear that should the College continue on its intended path, it would have no choice but to file an unfair practice charge against the College and the State. In addition, the Council found OER's response to its first letter of protest non-responsive in that it skirted around the issue entirely, demanding clarification on the points raised in that letter. Finally, after an exchange of several letters in which the Council and OER argued their respective positions, on February 15th, OER notified the Council that the employees will remain *status quo* within the unit and a clarification of unit petition will be filed at PERC.

The Union considers this second reprieve a minor victory because the Stockton bargaining unit will remain undisturbed —for the time being. However, this is just the beginning of a difficult but worthwhile legal battle the Union will undertake to protect the integrity of the bargaining unit.

Watch for updates in future VOICE issues. – • –

Member Health Benefit Changes Seminars Conducted

With the April 1st date for the new State Health Benefits Program (SHBP) health plans to take effect, the Council staff have been busy conducting campus Q&A sessions and fielding members' telephone and email queries to ensure a smooth transition.

Over the winter the Council gathered information from State Health Benefits as well as attended a SHBP workshop at which Horizon Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Aetna and Cigna representatives made presentations about their respective plans.

Below are a few of the activities the Council undertook on your behalf:

- The office sent out several update bulletins to the Local offices for general distribution to members;
- Answered numerous questions as they came into the Council office, either by email or telephone;
- Updated information on the Council website as new details emerged;

WPUNJ meeting

Rowan meeting

At the invitation of the local presidents, Managing Staff Representative Steve Young conducted campus Q&As at Montclair State University, William Paterson University and Rowan University.

Young noted that the Q&A sessions were well attended and that he was able to dispel many of the worries and concerns members have regarding the elimination of NJ Plus and the Traditional SHBP plans. On the whole, most members were relieved to know that the changes in SHBP will have little if any affect on the quality of care they are used to receiving.

Basic information you need to know about the new SHBP health plan changes effective April 1, 2008:

Employees in NJ Plus and Traditional Plan will be automatically moved to NJ Direct 15 **UNLESS** they elected to change to either Aetna or Cigna HMOs.

Employees in the Amerihealth, Healthnet or Oxford HMOs will be automatically moved to NJ Direct 15 **UNLESS** they elected to change to Aetna or Cigna HMOs.

Retirees in Traditional Plan will move to NJ Direct 10.

NJDIRECT 10 and NJDIRECT 15 are exactly the same with one exception: the out-of-network co-pay for NJDIRECT 10 is 20%, which Traditional membeErs have always paid for any service. The out-of-network co-pay for NJDIRECT 15 is 30%. Both plans are administered by Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield

Most members in the Traditional Plan who will be in NJDIRECT 15 will find it more cost effect with more in-network benefits than they had in the old plan.

NJ DIRECT 10 is available to: State retirees who attained 25 years of service on or before June 30, 2007 or who retired on disability on or before July 1, 2007.

Active employees and retirees who live out of state in NJDIRECT will use the nationwide Horizon Blue Cross/Blue Shield Blue Card network of providers.

You can find more details about the changes to the SHBP at www.cnjscl.org

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New Jersey VOICE of Higher Education Labor

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MEMBER ASSISTANCE SERVICE AVAILABLE

If you need assistance with stress, mental health problems or substance abuse that is affecting your job performance—or if anyone in your family is experiencing similar problems — help is available from Healthcare Assistance with Member Support (HCAMS).THIS IS A FREE SERVICE AVAILABLE TO THE ENTIRE BARGAINING UNIT—and yet another good reason to join the UNION.

For more information on this service, please visit the Council's web site at www.cnjscl.org

Of Interest to Adjunct Faculty

Have you received your contract this semester? *Article XIII - Appointment Of Employees* in the new agreement requires that you must be provided with a written letter of appointment or employment contract. Your contract must include the name of the college/university, the dates for which your appointment is effective, your salary rate, which course(s) to be taught and the dates and times you are scheduled to teach.

We are currently waiting for the State to print the new Agreement. When it is available, your employer should provide you with a copy along with a copy of your campus's adjunct faculty handbook, if one exists.

If your course is canceled the new Agreement contains language to provide the following: If a course is reassigned to any other employee or is cancelled fewer than two weeks before commencement of the relevant semester, an adjunct faculty member will receive ½ of a credit hour for the course. If a class is cancelled or reassigned after the first class is taught, an adjunct faculty member will receive one credit hour payment. In the first year of the Agreement this will be a tenfold increase over the previous rate of $100.

You cannot be penalized if summoned to jury duty or to appear as a witness. Employees who are summoned to jury duty or to appear as a witness before a judicial or a quasi-judicial proceeding to which they are not a party during regularly scheduled work hours, will not lose pay for their absence from the class room.

AFT now offers a Limited Supplemental Medical Program for Adjunct Faculty who are members in good standing. The two new plans offer benefits that can include doctors' office visits, X-rays and hospital stays, which can be extended to eligible dependents. An additional feature is a prescription drug benefit that provides generic drugs for a $10 co-pay (30-day supply). There are dental and vision plans available as well.

If you have any questions about the contract, or would like details about the AFT's Limited Supplemental Medical Program, we encourage you to contact your Local or call the Council office at: 908-964-8476. A pdf version of the new Agreement is on the Council's website at www.cnjscl.org. We also have print literature about the medical program ready to send to you.

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NOT A MEMBER YET? BECOME INVOLVED!

Make **your** voice heard in the workplace by joining the union today. Occupational Liability Insurance comes with membership!

Visit your local office for a membership card or visit the council's website (www.cnjscl.org) for membership information.