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Progress In The Area Of Faculty Course Load Reduction

FIVE CASE STUDIES

Assignment of non-teaching duties within load for faculty members, for any purpose, has been a matter of academic/managerial judgment of the Colleges/Universities. This is commonly referred to as "alternate assignment within load" and has generally been applied selectively to faculty members. However, more of our local unions are slowly but surely making progress in the area of faculty course load reduction on a broader basis.

This trend does not mean a retreat from our mission of teaching. On the contrary, when faculty have the time to conduct research or work on community service projects, their teaching and contributions to the institution will likely be enriched.

Montclair State University AFT Local 1904 was the first local to craft a local procedure allowing for more faculty to apply for reduced teaching loads.

There a *Faculty Scholarship Incentive Program (FSIP)* permits faculty to teach a twenty-four teaching credit hour load or submit a proposal for a scholarship project for up to six credits within load, which is typically three teaching credit hours per semester. The program, which is based on the work of Ernest Boyer (*Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*. Princeton: The Carnegie Foundation for

the Advancement of Teaching, 1990), requires that a faculty member shapes her or his proposal to relate to one of the following three areas of scholarship: Scholarship of Pedagogy, Scholarship of Discovery, Integration or Aesthetic Creation, and Scholarship of Application.

The FSIP approval process commences when a faculty member submits the names of one or two colleagues whose scholarly expertise is related to the FSIP proposal topic. Those colleagues then become designated faculty readers who write a review of the proposal for the applicant. The applicant then submits the review and proposal to the Department Chairperson, who may approve, disapprove or request modifications to the proposal. The entire package, including the Department Chairperson's recommendation, is then forwarded to the Dean. The Dean may also approve, disapprove or request modifications to faculty member's proposal. The applicant may appeal a negative recommen-

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Nicholas C. Yovnello

Don't Balance The State Budget On The Backs Of Retirees

The State's attack on our benefits package has begun. It started with an earlier attempt by the Division of Pensions and Benefits to amend the pension rules to deprive adjunct faculty who work a full academic year of one full year service credit (for the full story see the December 2004 *VOICE*). Then, Acting Governor Cody's Budget Message had several references to the "generous pensions and health benefits of public employees, college faculty, teachers and retirees." Essentially, he blamed our pension and health benefits for the massive state budget gap!

The latest attack comes in the relatively obscure form of a regulatory change. This time, the State Benefits Commission wants to completely remove the cap on prescrip-

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Don't Balance The State Budget On The Backs Of Retirees

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tion co-pays by retirees, which is currently fixed at \$520 per year. Retirees on fixed incomes can least afford to pay more for their medications. And, as senior citizens, they have the greatest stake in defending a decent prescription drug program. There are many active employees who will be retiring over the next several years and soon they too will be affected.

History is full of examples of politicians who use select groups as scapegoats for their mistakes. Unfortunately, the attacks are not confined to the Acting Governor and the appointees to the Division of Pensions and Benefits and the State Benefits Health Commission. Cody's mantra is being echoed by the Chairperson of the Assembly Budget Committee Louis Greenwald and by other Democratic and Republican legislators in both houses of the NJ Legislature.

It is sheer demagoguery for politicians to try to balance their budget on the backs of retirees. Our pension systems have been used as a cash cow for the State budget for decades. Former Governor Christine Todd Whitman borrowed against the system and used a defective formula to determine its value and its ability to meet current and future demands. Both Whitman and former governor James McGreevey relieved the public employers in this State from paying their share of pension contributions for several years. The selective memory of some elected officials in Trenton allows them to forget that for years public employees made payments to the system, while public employers made none.

Over the years, our health benefits package has been modified at the negotiating table. Where once we had a fully paid employer program, we now have premium sharing and co-pays that have increased over the years; and we have PPO and HMO alternatives to the traditional coverage. The Council traded off modest salary increases or pay freezes in some years to keep health insurance premiums and co-pays down. It is bad faith for the State to now propose to unilaterally modify the prescription drug program for retirees. We must be vigilant to ensure that these attempts at significantly modifying benefits don't extend to active State employees.

Because many politicians are afraid of the pharmaceutical and health care industry's powerful lobby, the state is reluctant to demand costs saving measures from the health care industry. We must step up our own lobbying efforts, in cooperation with other public employee unions and retiree groups, to insist that the State make no changes in our benefit plan that either sacrifices quality of coverage or shifts costs to users. The State AFL-CIO Public Employee Committee (PEC) has already pledged to take the lead.

The State's current fiscal crisis can be likened to one of us accepting a credit card company's offer to skip a payment. The interest continues to mount and the principal must still be paid back. This is what has occurred with the State pen-

sion systems, except instead of skipping a month's payment, the State skipped payments for years. The balloon payment on the loan and the escalated interest payments are now due. And the State expects us to pay the bill!

The Legislature and the Acting Governor must deal with New Jersey's revenue problems in a responsible manner. They need to plan beyond the immediate future and stop passing budgets with one-time gimmicks and fanciful revenue projections. We must move beyond operating in a crisis management model.

New Jersey is one of the wealthiest states in the country but it is near the bottom of the list when it comes to per capita support for public higher education. There are too many autonomous entities in State Government with their own budgets and a license to spend with impunity. These entities include our own educational institutions, where University administrators manage to justify boondoggling trips to Asia and Europe for themselves, notwithstanding the State's ban on out-of-state travel. However, this does not mean that we should discontinue trips for valid academic research and study. What I mean is that its time to place them all under a statewide agency that demands fiscal accountability.

The Council will closely monitor the Budget hearings, relevant legislation and notices of changes in regulations. But we need your help. The Assembly and the Governorship are up for election this year. Please write, phone and visit your NJ legislators in the Assembly and the Senate. Write to the gubernatorial candidates and insist that they stand for the preservation of your state pension and health benefits program. Make it crystal clear to them that your vote will not be forthcoming unless they guarantee that you will not be asked to sacrifice your health benefits and pension after Election Day. Email to info@cnjscl.org or write the Council with their response.

There are a few more steps you can take: (1) If you are an agency fee payer, join the Union today. The professional liability insurance coverage you receive as a privilege of membership is more then worth the extra cost; (2) Sign up for a COPE check-off. You choose the amount. If your local officers do not approach you, please approach them for a check-off card. COPE funds our lobbying and legislative efforts; (3) If you have not already done so, please register to vote.

The more full-dues paying members we have and the more those members contribute to COPE, the more power we will wield in Trenton. It is that simple. Your benefits are at risk and it will be membership participation for collective empowerment that preserves them.

Keep yourself updated on this situation over the summer by logging onto the Council's Website at www.cnjscl.org. If you would like to be an active participant in our email/letter writing campaign, please send the Council your email address to info@cnjscl.org. You will be placed on our list for email alerts. Hopefully, our combined vigilance now will protect our benefits in the future. **Have an enjoyable summer.**

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FIVE CASE STUDIES

Continued from page 1

dation to the President. The applicant is guaranteed the right to respond at every level.

It is noteworthy that the University has proposed a modification of FSIP for local negotiation. The result of the negotiation process could ultimately be a streamlined version of the existing FSIP application procedure or it could result in an entirely new FSIP application procedure. We will keep you posted.

For more details and further information about the MSU *Faculty Scholarship Incentive Program (FSIP)*, visit the Local 1904 website, which is linked to the Council's website and click on Contracts: State and Local.

At **The College of New Jersey**, a transformation of the curriculum enables all full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty to teach 18 "faculty weighted hours" per academic year. Because a few issues related to this change have to be finalized, a formal agreement covering this issue has not yet been signed, although both the College and Local are in agreement on all major points and the key elements were implemented at the beginning of the fall 2004 semester.

As part of this curriculum transformation, all courses have been enhanced; however the number of contact hours per week for each class remains the same as under the previous system. The primary difference is that students

are required to engage in more self-directed study and do more work outside of class. The six credits of reassigned time are compensation to faculty for the extra work involved with teaching the new, enhanced courses as well as engaging in research and other forms of scholarship. Faculty will assess their performance as part of their five year review (See Appendix II of the Agreement).

This transformation has been accomplished by selectively reducing the number of courses required for graduation in most programs while improving the quality of the TCNJ educational experience.

For more details and further information about this program, visit the Local 2364 website, which is linked to the Council website, and click on *Curriculum Transformation - Draft MOA # 62*.

At **Richard Stockton College of New Jersey**, faculty have the option of reducing their workload by one course per academic year if they teach independent study for a minimum of 15 students.

At **Rowan University**, a Faculty Workload Adjustment Program will go into effect in September 2005. Faculty will have the option to apply for "alternate assignments" consisting of three credits per semester, up to four consecutive semesters. Proposals may be for either research/scholarship or for major community service projects that specify achievable outcomes. Faculty will submit these proposals to a peer

committee, which then makes a recommendation to the Dean. Should the Dean reject the proposal, the faculty member may appeal to the Provost.

Upon completion of the "alternate assignment," the faculty member will issue a report to the Dean. The Dean will record, but not assess, the report.

At **Ramapo College of New Jersey**, a Faculty Course-Load Reduction Agreement will go into effect in September 2006. All faculty will be assigned no more than six courses per academic year of teaching. Six credits per academic year will be devoted to course development, preparation to teach new courses, research and scholarship, the introduction of new technology in a course, community outreach, continuing education or substantial committee work. The faculty member need only obtain the approval of his/her convening group and Dean for three of these credits. In the case of a rejection, a faculty member may appeal to the Provost. Should a dispute arise in the approval process, faculty are guaranteed union representation.

To make this program possible, Ramapo has cut back on the number of required courses and reduced the number of courses required for graduation.

These locals have negotiated long and hard for these agreements. They can serve as models for locals who have yet to seek faculty course load reductions.

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IMPORTANT PUBLIC EMPLOYEE RALLY IN TRENTON MONDAY, MAY 16 at 12 pm

This issue of the VOICE alerts you to threats to our health and pension benefits coming from the bureaucrats and politicians in Trenton. Show your opposition to any erosion of our benefits by rallying with other public employees in front of the STATE HOUSE on MONDAY MAY 16 at NOON.

This rally has the endorsement of the NJ AFL-CIO and all major public employee unions in the State. After the rally, you will have the opportunity to enter the State House and speak directly to legislators.

Check the Council website for updates and contact your local union for further information, including transportation.

**WEAR YOUR AFT HATS AND BRING SIGNS.
SHOW SOLIDARITY WITH OTHER PUBLIC EMPLOYEE UNION MEMBERS.**

Making Union Values Count

Council Locals Attend AFT Higher Ed Conference

The AFT held its annual national higher education conference jointly with AFT's Civil & Human Rights and Women's Rights in Minneapolis this year with the theme: "Making Our Values Count: Advancing Equality, Education and Economic Security in Challenging Times." AFT's Higher Education Program and Policy Council (known as the PPC) sponsored the higher education portion of the conference and it provided Council representatives with the opportunity to network with higher education activists from across the country. Council President Nick Yovnello is a member of the PPC and played an important role in voicing the Council's concerns to AFT National as well as determining the Higher Education Conference agendas. This year's conference agendas focused on the critical challenges facing higher education, including states eliminating/reducing higher education funding and passing costs on to students, the Congressional debate over the re-authorization of the Higher Education Act, and the so called "academic bill of rights" that, actually, limits free speech on college campuses.



Part-time/Adjunct Pre-Conference Strategic Planning Meeting (Kathleen Henderson, Arlene Schor (KU) & Paul Ragozin (Rowan)

One of the highlights of this year's conference was the pre-conference called, "*Part-time/Adjunct Pre-Conference Strategic Planning Meeting*" for part-time lecturers and adjunct faculty. This event brought AFT part-time/ad-

junct faculty leaders together to address fairness and equity issues in the workplace. This planning session was a result of last year's Higher Education Conference in Seattle, where part-time and adjunct faculty pressed the AFT National to advance their concerns.



Participants in the two-day session developed recommendations on issues such as political action and public campaigns, professional control of work, union structure and organizing. These recommendations will be included in the AFT Higher Education Program and policy council strategic plan. The Council was well represented during the two-day session. Local Union members who participated in the pre-conference were Bob Arey, Christine Carmody-Arey and Newton Burkett from New Jersey City University; Kathleen Henderson and Arlene Schor from Kean University and Paul Ragozin, Winnefred Rowell-Bullard and Mary Lee Donahue from Rowan University.

Council members Bob Arey, Christine Carmody-Arey and Sarah Ann Harnick (NJCU), Karen Siefring (RO), Yvette Hall (MSU) and Cristina Damiao (KU) attended a workshop called, "*Job Security and Fair Workloads for Professional Staff*," which addressed among other issues, the trend towards increased workloads for professional staff without corresponding

increases in compensation and recognition. Workshop participants engaged in lively discussions over a proposal that AFT should publish a research paper on best practices for professional staff as it does for full-time and part-time faculty, adjunct faculty and contingent faculty. Attendees noted that one of the most critical items for such a paper should be how professional staff can bargain for the elimination of language that connects performance evaluations to "academic judgment."

Steve Young, the Council's Managing Staff Representative was a presenter for a session titled, "*Lobbying Workshop: Winning Victories in the States*." Given that AFT locals must work with state legislatures and other state officials to get adequate funding for higher education and to protect our labor agreements, this session reviewed the latest trends in state legislation and effective state-level lobbying. Young's presentation included an overview of who we are and the partnerships the Council maintains in New Jersey. Two of his most important points highlighted the Council's lobbying efforts to work with a number of statewide groups so it can be visible and support labor and social issues beyond those that affect only the Council's interests. By doing so, the Council gains broader support for issues important to its members. The other point was that Council representatives as well as its political lobbyist



NJCU delegation

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meet with legislators regularly and not just when the legislature is in session. Young noted that legislators enjoy meeting with constituents not only about business but also socially when constituents *do not* discuss legislation. In his closing remarks, Young listed the Council's legislative victories and provided a synopsis of how the Council achieved its legislative goals.

In the "Meeting Challenges to Unionization Today" workshop, presenters and participants looked at what the AFL-CIO considers three critical challenges facing organized labor. One of



Cristina Damiao (KU), Sarah Harnick (NJCU), Paul Almeida (DPE), Ivan Steinberg & Howard Singer (NJCU)

those issues is the Bush administration's efforts to weaken workers rights and protections in the administrative and regulatory arenas; another is the challenge of organizing professional workers to address the loss of industrial union membership; and the third issue framing this discussion is the efforts that labor leaders are taking to strengthen the power of organized labor in the United States. Paul Almeida, President of the AFL-CIO's Department for Professional Employees commented that, "white-collar workers are the future of America's labor movement."

Plenary sessions featured William Scheuermann, AFT Vice President & New York State United Teachers President, who eloquently framed the conference's goals of finding practical responses to the many challenges from budget cuts, privatization and the ideological impositions on academic freedom, hiring practices and curriculum development and teaching. Scheuermann emphasized the importance of shifting public discussion on higher

education from ideological distractions back to the core discussion of providing quality and affordable public education.

Scheuermann recognized the lifetime achievements of Lou Stollar, who, after a thirty-five year tenure as President of the United College Employees, FIT/SUNY, retired in 2004. In 1967, Stollar and his faculty colleagues negotiated the first two-year college

faculty contract in the nation. Stollar noted that as president of the



AFT Vice President William Scheuermann

UCE, FIT/SUNY, his most important accomplishment was bringing FIT classified employees, adjunct faculty and professional staff into the union's fold. He called it a "wall-to-wall Union of College Employees." Stollar is planning an active retirement by organizing immigrant workers and working with the ACLU.

At a lecture/luncheon, Professor Norma Cantú, former Assistant Secretary of Education for Civil Rights in the Clinton administration and an AFT American Academic Advisory Board member, spoke about civil rights and equity issues in education. Cantú worked for fourteen years as regional counsel and education director of the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Educational Fund. In that capacity, she litigated scores of important cases affecting educational funding, disability rights, student disciplinary policies, access to special services for English-language learners and racially hostile environments. Rowan delegate Nicholas



Rowan delegation

DiObilda commented, "Norma Cantú's speech and her personal knowledge of events in the Department of Education emphasized the differences between the supportive Clinton administration and the neglect of the Bush Administration." Barbara Bowen, AFT Vice President and President of the Professional Staff Congress at City University of New York, moderated the discussion that followed.

The centerpiece event at the Conference was the Keynote and Dinner event, where a number of Council delegates had the chance to meet and chat with AFT President Edward J. McElroy at a reception before the dinner.



AFT Pres. Ed McElroy & Dierdre Glen Paul, Acting Pres. MSU Local 1904

President McElroy's keynote speech encapsulated the overall feeling of what it means to be trade unionists and educators at a time when labor

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Council Locals Welcome New Adjunct Faculty Members

This spring several dozen adjunct faculty members in the Colleges/Universities made the decision to say "I am a member" of the AFT. This increase was due in part to the Council's ongoing outreach efforts to newly hired and returning agency-fee adjunct faculty and to the Council's successful defense of the PERS pension contributions (see the December 2004 VOICE).

Many of the new members responded to Council mailings, some joined after attending "mixers" that Locals sponsored in order to provide a venue for them to meet and greet members and officers from their locals, while others signed up when they were approached by their colleagues or by Council recruiters. In some instances, more than a few adjunct faculty simply sent in their cards after finding out about the Council's record of accomplishments on their behalf after visiting its website at www.cnjscl.org.

The Council's record on behalf of adjunct faculty speaks volumes to its dedication to improving your working conditions on campus and to increasing the level of your State benefits. Access to the State health benefit program, proper pension credit for adjuncts who teach in the fall and spring semesters and substantial pay increases in the current State-Union Agreement are only the beginning. Your Local and the Council are committed to the goals of improving your

working conditions with each subsequent contract and to fighting for your employment rights in the political arena.

Increased adjunct faculty membership helps to achieve those goals. For those of you who have been members since the Council first organized the adjunct faculty workforce in the 1990s, you only need to look back at where you were then to see how much we have accomplished — together. You also know that increased membership tells the State that the Union has your support at the bargaining table. This is a fact that newly hired faculty should know when they begin their campus employment.

Over the years, the Council has found that the most successful adjunct recruitment efforts come from AFT members who take the time to seek out their newly hired colleagues to discuss the benefits of Union membership. When new hires ask about the AFT — please tell them about your Local. If you know of a colleague who has not yet joined the Union and you want to give him or her Union membership information, contact your Local office or call the Council office at 908-964-8476 to receive new member packets.

Joining the Union means that together we are one voice at the bargaining table for better employment contracts, respect and rights in the workplace and access to State benefits. It is the solidarity of union membership that forms the basis for our collective power.

SIGN UP SOMEONE TODAY!

AFT Higher Ed Conference

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rights and the principles of academic freedom are under assault. He pressed home the point that it is up to the labor movement and social progressives to reclaim the idea of what the word values means. "In the last election," he stated, "we allowed people to attach the word values to things that were not." McElroy noted that "proponents of measures such as the so-called 'Academic Bill of Rights' want to take us back to the good old days—as far back as Joseph McCarthy." He was referring to the measure that would regulate intellectual diversity through forcing a 'hiring balance' of Democrats and Republicans in departments on campus. In his passionate closing remarks, McElroy warned that it is no longer good enough to only fight takeaways; labor must be

proactive by gaining even more for the people we represent.

Other conference workshops included: "Healthcare and Pension Issues," "Contingent Faculty Issues," "Faculty Control of Work on Campus," "Affirmative Action and Minority College Enrollment," "Meeting Challenges to Unionization Today," "Using the AFT Higher Education Data Center and AFT LeaderNet to Assist in Bargaining," "Equity Issues in Education and Pay," "Election Workshops: Political Action on Campus," "Defending Intellectual Freedom from Government Intrusion," "Contracting Out Your Community: Facing Down the Privateers & Winning" and "Public Support for Public Education."

Local Union members attending the conference were: Rowan delegates Nicholas DiObilda, Karen Siefring, Antoinette (Toni) Jennings, Anthony (Tony) Ihunnah, Mel Moyer (Retiree Chapter), Richard Grupenhoff, Frances Johnson, Faye Robinson, Paul Ragozin and Winnefred Rowell-Bullard; James



James Castiglione (KU) & John DeBrizzi & Sarah Harnick (NJCU)

Castiglione and Cristina Damiao represented the KFT, Local 2187; Kathleen Henderson and Arlene Shor attended for KUAFF, Local 6024; Dierdre Glenn-Paul and Yvette Hall represented MSU Local 1904; TCNJ Local 2364 sent John Kimmell; John DeBrizzi, Robert Arey, Christine Carmondy-Arey, Sarah Ann Harnick, Ivan Steinberg, Rubina Vohra, Newton Burkett represented New Jersey City University Local 1839. Steve Young and Debra Davis represented the Council. — • —

New AFT Leadership at Rowan University

The F.O.R.C.E. AFT Local 2373 at Rowan University notified the Council that it has a newly elected president. Ms. Karen Siefring, a professional staff member and former vice-president of F.O.R.C.E., is the Local's new president.

Karen is a professional staff member who works as Assistant to the Dean for Undergraduate Advising in the College of Business. She began her employment at the institution in 1982 when it was still Glassboro State College. She served in the Division of Student Affairs and Institutional Advancement before she moved to Academic Affairs thirteen years ago. Karen attended Douglass College ('76), Rutgers University where she earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in American Studies with a concentration in Women's Studies. In 1982 she earned her Master of Arts in Student Personnel Services at Glassboro State College.

Karen is well-known on campus. Over the two decades of service to the University she has been a professional staff member who teaches; in the 1980s, Karen taught some of the first freshman seminar classes that Rowan offered to students. She has also taught for the Department of Composition and Rhetoric and has long been an advisor to many campus student organizations.

The various campus leadership roles she has held include service to the Rowan University Senate and of course, to the AFT. Her University Senate experience includes elected positions as Chairperson of the Tenure and Recontracting Committee, the Career Development Committee and the Re-



F.O.R.C.E. President elect Karen Siefring with AFT Pres. Ed McElroy

cruitment, Admissions and Retention Committee.

Ironically, Karen's introduction to the AFT came just three days into her employment in 1982, when she joined the Strike Coordinating Committee. Her AFT experiences include: Vice-President I (2001-2005); Grievance Representative (2005); Membership Chairperson (1991-1995); Negotiating Team (serving with each chief negotiator since 1982); Local Strike Coordinating Committee for three contracts.

Karen not only has been a Council delegate for ten years and but also she has a presence at the National AFT. In 2001, she was a presenter at the AFT Issues in Higher Education Conference and a participant in the Higher Ed Conferences in 2001 through 2005. She has served three times as a delegate to the AFT National Convention (1990, 2002 and 2004).

Besides her service to the AFT and to Rowan University, Karen has a history of community involvement. She served as a board member of PASA, the Gloucester County's Women's Shelter. Karen believes that it is her "history of community involvement and leadership that has given [her] the foundation, the understanding and

the commitment to serve the local AFT membership as its president."

Out-going president Nicholas DiObilda stated, "Karen has been Vice President of our local for four years and held many other leadership positions in the Union. She is an experienced union leader who has provided guidance and assistance to other officers and members. All who work with her have confidence in her capabilities and appreciation for the gusto she brings to the job. I am sure our local will continue to thrive with her as President."

Karen wishes to thank Nicholas DiObilda for his inspiring leadership. "I am fortunate," she said, "to have served under such an outstanding president and I hope I can follow his example."

Karen notes that she is proud to have received almost all of her education from the public education system in New Jersey. She knows that "promoting public higher education while remaining vigilant to attacks on all public education is a job for those of us committed to keeping the opportunities that a public education provides to students." She summed up her role as the newly elected local president by saying that, "a colleague's comment best encapsulates my vision for our union, *'We can establish an era of inclusiveness over elitism, hope over intimidation and a better understanding of the interrelatedness of all groups on this campus.'* We are at our strongest when we work together, when we fully utilize the wealth of expertise of our members and when we act in solidarity. I look forward to the opportunities awaiting us!" — —

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.

RUTGERS AAUP Affiliates with AFT

by Jon Erickson
 (Kean Federation of Teachers & Council
 Legislative Representative)

Faculty, graduate employees and counselors at the three campuses of Rutgers University have voted 575 to 222 to form a joint affiliation with the American Association of University Professors and the American Federation of Teachers. This affiliation will bring more than 4,000 new members to the AFT. The affiliation is for a three-year period, after which Rutgers' membership will vote again on making the arrangement permanent. It is anticipated that the Rutgers AAUP Executive Council will vote in favor of the document that codifies the affiliation.

When the Rutgers AAUP Executive Council formalizes the affiliation, AFT will represent more than 10,000 employees at the senior public institutions of higher education in New Jersey. Although the Council and Rutgers AAUP will continue to negotiate their own contracts, the joint affiliation should increase our political strength in Trenton. It is true that we have coordinated our legislative efforts for several years, however, now the Legislature will see us as one united voice. In fact, we will become the only union speaking for senior higher education professionals in the State of New Jersey.

Council President Nicholas Yovnello stated, "I commend the Rutgers AAUP members on their strong affirmative vote to affiliate with the



AFT President Ed McElroy & Rutgers AAUP
 Pres. Rudy Bell

American Federation of Teachers. Their vote strengthens our already excellent working relationship. We look forward to united action with Rutgers AAUP in fighting for justice for public employees and for adequate funding for our New Jersey's institutions of higher education."

Some Council of New Jersey State College Locals members have expressed concerns that Rutgers would dominate AFT higher education in New Jersey. This is not the case. The Council alone will continue to negotiate our collective bargaining agreements. The structure of the AFT in New Jersey will be that Rutgers AAUP/AFT will join AFT/New Jersey as an equal member with the NJSFT (representing the K-12/County and Community College sector) HPAE (representing nurses and other health care professionals) and the Council. Rutgers AAUP/AFT will not be a member of the Council, but rather a valued AFT partner.

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Legislative Alert

Please Take Action Now!

The Council strongly urges you to contact your legislators regarding two important pieces of legislation that are essential to: (1) give us a real voice on our institution's Board of Trustees and (2) establish greater equity in contract negotiations.

A-2795 adds two employees from labor organizations on our campuses to the Boards of Trustees of each state College/University. These employees would be selected by the campus unions that represent them. This bill already passed out of committee. We want the Assembly leadership to post this bill for a vote as soon as possible.

A-693/S-1838 are "companion bills" that would prohibit the State from imposing its "final offer" on public employ-

ee unions. Under current law, when negotiations reach an "impasse," our institutions can unilaterally change terms and conditions of employment without agreement from the Union or its members. The local K-12 unions already have this protection and we need it too. We want this legislation to be posted for a vote in the Assembly Labor Committee and in the Senate State Government Committee as soon as possible.

We have made it easy for you to send your legislators a letter supporting these bills via our Council's CAPWIZ program. If you click on or type in this link - <http://capwiz.com/cnjscf/state/main/?state=NJ> - you will be taken directly to a page that has both bills listed. Please TAKE ACTION on both bills. If you choose to do so, you can easily edit the letters. When you send them, they automatically go to legislators in your voting district.

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