

# Clarion

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



MARCH 2005



## AROUND CUNY, PSC UNITES

# STEPPING IT UP

As contract negotiations continue, CUNY has yet to offer a guaranteed salary increase of more than 1.5%. On February 23, faculty, staff and students participated in a picket line at City College for a fair contract and against tuition hikes. Throughout February and March, students, lawmakers and a growing number of members took action in support of the PSC bargaining team.

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## NEW MEMBERS



### RF union victory at City Tech

88% voted for the PSC

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## CUNY SLAMMED

### 'Irrational' and 'nonsensical'

It's a rare instance of judge overruling an arbitrator. CUNY must pay back wages to faculty at LaGuardia, after unilaterally changing their rate of pay in 1998.

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## YOUR RIGHTS

### If non-reappointment happens to you...

Know your rights and act within the time limits. To protect your right to challenge a decision, call a grievance counselor immediately.

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## ACADEMIC LIFE

### CUNY wants dept. chairs out of union

CUNY management wants to take department chairs out of the PSC – but chairs think that is a bad idea. Union membership is critical to representing their departments and maintaining relationships with coworkers, they say.

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# John Jay president bans adjunct

By CLARION STAFF

In response to pressure from law enforcement organizations, the new president of John Jay College has barred Susan Rosenberg, a former member of the Weather Underground who served 16 years in federal prison, from teaching at John Jay in the future.

Rosenberg was convicted in 1981 for possession of more than 600 pounds of explosives, which prosecutors said she intended to use in "nonlethal" bombings. Her sentence was commuted by Bill Clinton and she was released in 2001. Having earned a master's degree in writing while in prison, she was teaching "Women's Prison Writing" as an adjunct lecturer at John Jay in the fall of 2004 and had taught at the College since 2002.

On November 15, 2004, a *New York Post* editorial entitled "Terrorist on the Faculty" opposed her potential employment at Hamilton College this spring. Hamilton became a target of protest by police organizations such as the Rockland

## Faculty protest attack on academic freedom

County Emerald Society, and Rosenberg's employment at John Jay also began to attract media attention. In light of the pickets, letters and national television attention directed at Hamilton, John Jay President Jeremy Travis announced that Rosenberg would not be invited back after the expiration of her contract.

### POLICE SUPPORT

As a college focused on criminal justice, Travis argued, John Jay depends on "the active support and engagement of the law enforcement and criminal justice communities," and could not put that support at risk.

In a December labor-management meeting at the College, John Jay PSC representatives told the President that he had failed to stand up for academic freedom. They said that the decision showed disrespect for faculty governance, illustrated the tenuous position of part-timers,

and sent a dangerous signal that the college administration will capitulate to organized outside pressure. Chapter Chair Jim Cohen noted that the college has a proud history of standing up to outside forces, even powerful ones such as the FBI, when controversial social and political issues are concerned.

John Jay Delegate Francis Sheehan pointed out that Travis's letter to faculty confused Rosenberg's conviction for possession of fire-arms and explosives with her indictment in a 1981 armed robbery of \$1.6 million from an armored Brinks truck. (In the Brinks case two police officers and a security guard were murdered. The charges against Rosenberg, however, were dropped.)

### FEARED PROTEST

President Travis explained that the decision was personally difficult because of his professional commitment to prisoner re-entry, but that he feared potential demon-

strations might damage John Jay's reputation. He said this was not a question of academic freedom – his motivation had been to protect the college, he said, and because there was no media frenzy or picket line, he believes he was successful. In retrospect, Travis conceded that there was insufficient consultation with the faculty, and he agreed to collaborate with faculty representatives on future public discussions of the matter.

"By bowing to political pressure, you have indeed sacrificed academic freedom," wrote Roger Bowen, president of the American Association of University Professors, in a letter to Travis in January. "You have also violated one of the key aspects of academic freedom: the faculty's right to self-governance in matters of curriculum and appointment."

In January the PSC Delegate Assembly unanimously passed a resolution drafted by the union's Acade-

mic Freedom Committee that criticized the decision. The college, it stated, had "acceded to the demands of an external group for reasons completely unrelated to the instructor's qualifications, prior performance [or] peer review."

In February, John Jay's Faculty Senate held a meeting with President Travis to discuss the ban on

### "Bowing to political pressure..."

Rosenberg. Vice President of the Senate Kirk Dombrowski explained that the College had missed an opportunity to educate the public about prisoner re-entry and academic freedom, but instead had ducked the issue. Others expressed support for Travis' action; Patrick O'Hara, associate professor of public management, was among those who said the decision had served the interests of the college.

John Jay Grievance Counselor Avram Bornstein said that because Rosenberg was not scheduled to teach in the Spring it would be a hard case to win before an arbitrator. Rosenberg herself has chosen not to contest the decision.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WRITE TO: CLARION/PSC, 25 W. 43RD STREET, FIFTH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10036.  
E-MAIL: PHOGNESS@PSCMAIL.ORG. FAX: 212-302-7815.

# Loved Lehman but had to leave

● I loved, absolutely *loved* teaching at Lehman, but had to leave on account of salary and conditions at CUNY. When I left, my course load went down to four courses a year and my new salary was significantly higher. Only when I saw the offer from my new employer did I realize the *cumulative* effect of disinvestment in higher education in New York. If I calculate what I get paid *per course*, my salary more than doubled when I left CUNY.

CUNY students have the best faculty around, but that will not remain so for long unless the administration delivers decent salaries and conditions. I know others who have left like me, for similar reasons. Given decent conditions, we would never have left the jobs we loved so much.

*fraternamente,*  
César J. Ayala

Department of Sociology-UCLA

### Don't cast us aside

● I am a retiree from QCC, one who worked hard not only in my classes and profession, but in serving on many committees, with the University Faculty Senate, on Presidential Search Committees, and in other governance positions.

I am distressed at the slow pace of contract negotiations, and especially the suggestion that retiree and other

benefits should be cut to stabilize the PSC/CUNY Welfare Fund. CUNY will not attract the faculty it deserves by showing such an uncaring attitude to those who would devote their careers to CUNY service, only to be cast aside when they retire.

I ask the administration to propose increased funding for Welfare Fund benefits. CUNY needs to show its retirees and future retirees the respect we deserve and have worked for.

R. John Specht  
Queensborough (emeritus)

### Examining Albany

● We can all agree that the \$1.2 billion dollars the chancellor hopes to raise for CUNY is a much-needed sum. I think we can also agree that New York's legislature should not feel it can further underfund CUNY by that amount, or more, in the coming years, assuming the chancellor's plans succeed.

One way to offset any fears that Albany will do just that would be for the chancellor to commit, say, ten percent of the \$1.2 billion to a program to educate the state's citizens about just how "dysfunctional" (to use a polite term) the state legislature has become.

To use private funds to correct state policy through the responsive energies of the university is a nice

thought, since Albany's efforts at self-reform have failed so visibly lately. Thus I propose that there should be a special program – similar to an honors college, and leading to a bachelor's degree – started by the chancellor to make serious study of Albany's corrupt and self-serving ways. The legislature has determined the nature of our lives at CUNY for years; now CUNY can put real effort and resources into improving the legislature for the benefit of all the citizens of the State.

Charles Molesworth  
Queens College



Tony Lu

The PSC Solidarity Committee joined a coalition of more than 40 immigrants' rights groups in a demonstration for drivers licenses on March 2. The activists rallied after a state Supreme Court judge issued a temporary restraining order to stop the DMV from refusing to renew the licenses of immigrants without Social Security numbers. The rule change causes hardship for many immigrants. Mirza Panir, an undocumented Bangladeshi cab driver, died of a heart attack after security personnel questioned him during his shift.

## Mayoral Forum

Sponsored by the Professional Staff Congress

CUNY Graduate Center, 365 Fifth Avenue at 34th Street

Wednesday, March 23, doors open at 5:30 pm

Reception to follow forum, at 9:00 pm

The following candidates for New York City Mayor will give us the opportunity to ask them about their priorities, what they will do to improve our professional life at CUNY, and how they will enhance the learning environment for our students:

Congressman Anthony D. Weiner

Speaker of the Council A. Gifford Miller

Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields

Former Bronx Borough President Fernando Ferrer

Former Queens Councilman Thomas Ognibene

# City Tech RF workers choose PSC

By JEREMY BORENSTEIN

CUNY Research Foundation employees at City Tech have voted overwhelmingly in favor of union representation. In a two-day election on February 15 and 16, the PSC won 88% of the vote.

"Eighty-eight percent in favor of the union is an incredible figure," said Jay Klokker, an ESL instructor at the campus Adult Learning Center. "This is a great victory and a great step forward," he added.

Voter participation surpassed 55%, with 70 voting in favor of unionization and only 10 voting against. An additional 11 ballots were cast by workers whose eligibility was challenged by management.

## CELEBRATION

The ballots were counted as soon as the polls closed at 6:30 pm on the second day of the election, and several RF employees were on hand to celebrate. They were thrilled but exhausted after two long days of getting out the vote. The union had pushed hard for a two-day election so that all 143 employees on the eli-

## 88% vote in favor of union

gibility list, most of whom are part-time, would have a chance to vote.

"I'm very happy we won and excited by the amount of people who showed up to vote," said Sandra Swiney, who works at the Continuing Education Workforce Development Center. "It's not easy for people to come and vote because so many of us are part-timers and a few work at a variety of off-campus locations."

Union supporters worked to make sure that everybody had an opportunity to take part in the election. Jenny Kim, an English-language and civics instructor, organized car pools and drove a number of her colleagues from off-campus sites to the polls. "As the election drew close, people started getting energized," she said. "Working for the election was a real morale booster."

"Obviously, there was a general feeling that we needed some kind of improvement," said Swiney, who was present at the vote count. "This is the opening of a new door for improved relations with the RF."

Indeed, many are looking forward to moving their agenda forward in negotiations on their first contract. "Winning felt great," said Robert Quirindongo of the Access program. "I'm eager to see where we go from here."

## FACULTY SUPPORT

Jenny Kim is also looking ahead. "Now that we are going to be in a union, I can go about making my voice heard," she told *Clarion*.

They can count on support from other PSC members at City Tech. "It pleases me to see that our colleagues in the RF, who have been intimidated, arbitrarily reassigned, or summarily dismissed, now have the benefits of PSC representation," said Bob Cermele, chair of the faculty PSC chapter at City Tech. With collective bargaining, Cermele said, RF employees will have a chance to win improvements.

This is the third straight victory for the PSC among campus-based RF employees. Despite management opposition, the union has won every time with more than 80% of



Elaine Sohn (left) and Sandra Swiney celebrate their new union status.

the vote. RF employees at the CUNY Graduate Center have also asked for a union election, and last year the National Labor Relations Board

ordered a vote. However, RF management appealed in an attempt to prevent an election, and the case is not yet resolved.

# 'Irrational' and 'nonsensical'

By PETER HOGNESS

A New York judge has ruled that an arbitrator's decision favoring CUNY was "irrational." Judge Marcy Friedman described CUNY's defense of that arbitration as "nonsensical," and ordered that CUNY pay back wages to the affected union members.

The February 1 court ruling is the latest development in a long-running grievance by cooperative education faculty at LaGuardia Community College. As Judge Friedman wrote, "the relevant facts are largely undisputed." LaGuardia's Cooperative Education Department, which organizes credit-bearing internships, runs a year-round program, and its faculty often work during the summer (Spring II, in LaGuardia's quarter system) instead of taking annual leave.

## 25-YEAR PRACTICE

For 25 years, the judge found, "the Coop Ed department members were paid for 150 hours at the teaching rate during the Spring II session. Commencing in 1998, however, CUNY decided to pay them 175 hours at the non-teaching rate for the Spring II session...notwithstanding that their teaching responsibilities had not changed." These faculty filed a grievance in June 1998 – but in 2004, arbitrator Arthur Riegel ruled that

## Judge's decision slams arbitrator and CUNY

they had been paid appropriately and that CUNY owed them nothing.

Judge Friedman rejected this conclusion, and ordered a new hearing to determine the amount that CUNY owes.

"It's extremely rare for an arbitration award to be vacated," said Stuart Lichten, an attorney with Kennedy, Schwartz & Cure, argued the case for the PSC. "The whole point of arbitration is that it's normally supposed to be final and binding – unless it just doesn't make any sense, which is what happened here."

Riegel will no longer be used in arbitrations between CUNY and the PSC, said PSC First Vice President Steve London. "This arbitrator's performance provided the impetus for the union to reexamine the arbitrators' panel and seek his removal," London said. "That led to discussions with CUNY that resulted in three arbitrators being removed, and three new names added. The result, we feel, is a more balanced panel."

The long-running grievance involved many twists and turns. "The Cooperative Education faculty at LaGuardia have shown an incredible spirit in pursuing this," London said. "I've been very moved by

their resolve. They have also shown tremendous flexibility – but unfortunately management rejected every attempt to find a reasonable settlement."

Judge Friedman's ruling was "a narrow decision on a point that we would all agree on," insisted LaGuardia President Gail Mellow. "The judge ordered that they be paid at the teaching rate" for time spent teaching, she said. "We actually would agree on that." While the union and management disagree over what constitutes teaching, Mellow said, "there was never any desire not to award back pay."

Judge Friedman's ruling, however, states, "CUNY cites no authority for its nonsensical assertion that it was within the discretion of the arbitrator not to award back pay..."

## CUNY MUST PAY

"CUNY's position was that they didn't owe a dollar," said Lichten. "Their position at the arbitration was that the grievance should be denied in full, which meant no back pay. And in court they defended the arbitrator's decision in every aspect."

London noted that management had in fact insisted on a settlement

that included no back pay. "The grievants agreed to give up all past claims and move forward on the original terms," London explained. "Although LaGuardia had unilaterally changed their conditions of employment and they deserved the back pay, these members were willing to compromise in order to reach an agreement."

"We thought we had a deal," said London, "but President Mellow balked when she learned that two additions to the list of grievants and two faculty already on the agreed-on list were substitutes." Although this was only four people out of 24, the other faculty voted unanimously not to settle if it meant leaving out four colleagues. "After years of struggle it was an extraordinary act of solidarity, in the face of mean-spiritedness by President Mellow," London said.

Asked why this settlement had been rejected, Mellow said only, "There are a lot of things that were in discussion. This has been going on for seven years."

At *Clarion* press time, CUNY had not yet filed a notice of appeal. "If CUNY is interested in settlement talks, the PSC is always willing to listen and take appropriate action," London said.

## CALENDAR

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16:** 6:00 pm/ Solidarity Committee Meeting at the PSC office, 25 W. 43 St, fifth floor. Contact Jim Perlstein, 212/354-1252, jperlstein@bassmeadow.com.

**TUESDAY, MARCH 22:** 6:00-8:30 pm/ Health and Safety Watchdogs meeting, at the PSC office. Contact Dave Kotelchuck, dkotelch@hunter.cuny.edu; or Bob Wurman, bob.wurman@yahoo.com.

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23:** 5:30 pm/ PSC Mayoral forum. See page 2.

**FRIDAY, APRIL 1:** 1:00-4:00 pm/ Creating the future for women: global and local perspectives, including Susanne Paul, Electa Arenal and Bertha Lewis. At 25 W 43rd St., 19th floor. RSVP to mnewfield@pscmail.org.

**FRIDAY, APRIL 1:** 4:00 pm/ DA Part-time personnel committee, at the PSC office, 25 W43rd St., fifth floor. Contact Marcia Newfield at 212/354-1252, mnewfield@pscmail.org.

**MONDAY, APRIL 4:** 1:00 pm/ Retirees Chapter meeting. Francine Brewer speaks about nutrition for seniors, at CUNY Grad Center, C201-202. Contact Jack Judd at jjudd18@optonline.net, 914/941-4315.

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6:** 9:15 am–5:00 pm/ TIAA-CREF representative Vito Ruvolo at the PSC office. Call Linda Slifkin, 212/354-1252.

## Learning from history

# Academic labor action

By PETER HOGNESS

When the PSC Delegate Assembly declared a “state of emergency” in contract negotiations on January 27, it called for a “broad-based discussion of the full range of actions in which unions have historically engaged and their relevance to our current campaign.” Here is a quick look at three labor struggles in public higher education, each related in different ways to the history of the PSC. A longer version is at [www.psc-cuny.org/communications.htm](http://www.psc-cuny.org/communications.htm).

## The PSC takes a strike vote

The PSC’s first president, Belle Zeller, was clear about how the union won its first contract in 1973: “The settlement was reached only after we decided to strike.”

Bargaining began in June 1972. In September, after management demanded the elimination of salary increments, 300 members of the new union protested outside CUNY headquarters on East 80th Street. The head of the University Student Senate joined the picket line, declaring USS support for PSC demands to limit class size.

A mass membership meeting on October 5 drew more than 1,000 PSC members.

“Teachers must earn their dignity by their actions,” UFT President Albert Shanker told the crowd. PSC members applauded loudly, *Clarion* reported, when Shanker said “the Board will never respect them...unless the instructional staff at some time show they are militant enough and united enough to go on strike.”

In late October, PSC President Belle Zeller decried management’s demands for “salary freezes, increased workload, more ‘productivity.’” An unsuccessful mediation effort ended October 28, and a lengthy fact-finding process began in late November.

### READY TO WALK?

A general policy of “No Contract, No Work” was approved on January 3 by a mail ballot, 3,836 to 577, and the PSC began to prepare for what might come next. The union created a Job Action Committee and appealed to members to contribute to a PSC Defense Fund. There was discussion in *Clarion* of whether the union was really ready for a walkout.

Consequences of any strike would be serious, for both the union and its members. New York’s Taylor Law, then six years old, prohibited strikes by public employees. Penalties included the loss of two days’ pay for each day of a walkout,



In October 1972, more than 1,000 PSC members attended a mass meeting at the Marc Ballroom in Union Square.

and huge fines against the union that could eat up its entire treasury. Union leaders who broke the Taylor Law had been jailed.

“What is driving us – a responsible, professional group of City employees – to the brink of a strike?” asked Belle Zeller in a talk at the City Club of New York in December. The problem, she said, was “the dead end of the Taylor Law” – the fact that the law imposed no pressure on CUNY management to reach a fair settlement. “Rather than encouraging good-faith bargaining, the law discourages it,” she said.

### FACT-FINDING

In Spring 1973 the union organized informational pickets across CUNY, starting at Brooklyn College and Baruch on February 15 and ending in mid-May at York. Eight City Council members joined PSC members on the picket line, as did many students.

On May 25, the fact-finding panel issued its unanimous recommendations, and the PSC agreed to accept them as the basis for a settlement. CUNY management refused to do so, and a June 9 *New York Times* editorial criticized its stance as an “assault on the stability of the fact-finding process.”

In a mail ballot sent out in June, union members were asked to authorize a strike beginning October 1, 1973, if no contract was in place by that time. The results were announced July 8: an October 1 strike had been overwhelmingly approved, 3,904 to 1,023.

Negotiations resumed on July 11 – “this time in earnest,” according to *Clarion*. Management decided to accept the fact-finding report as the basis for a settlement, and the two sides reached agreement on July 19.

## ‘Teach CSU’ in California

In October 2001, the California Faculty Association (CFA) organized teach-ins on all 22 campuses of California State University (CSU), linking its bargaining demands with the future of public higher education in California. The teach-ins, dubbed “Teach CSU,” were in part inspired by the PSC’s “Teach CUNY” campaign earlier that year.

“Teach CSU was the most ambitious project ever attempted by the California Faculty Association,” the CFA’s magazine reported. They built on public hearings that the CFA had organized the previous spring on the future of the CSU. Work on the teach-ins began over the summer, and by September hundreds of students had joined faculty members in planning and outreach. “We couldn’t have done it without them,” the CFA later reported.

### MANAGEMENT THREATS

Management threatened faculty with disciplinary action, claiming that the teach-ins could “violat[e] the contract’s prohibition against concerted activities.” The CFA re-

jected these warnings as infringements on both free speech and academic freedom, and management soon backed down.

Under the slogan “Faculty working conditions are student learning conditions” – earlier used at “Teach CUNY” – the teach-ins examined why both had been on the decline. The events were wide-ranging, combining scholarly presentations, music and dramatic performance, Q&A sessions, and talks by students and state legislators.

When appropriate, many faculty integrated the teach-in into their classes. For example, students in a public relations class at CSU Hayward analyzed the resulting media coverage, examining which tactics had been effective in getting public attention and which had not. “They loved being in the position of critic,” their professor later wrote.

The CFA’s own evaluation concluded that “the response of the news media exceeded all our hopes,” with coverage in every major daily and on local TV and radio. Sympathetic editorials highlighted the faculty’s dedication to teaching. The CFA attributed these results to a “one-two effort” of local chapters and the statewide organization. “Faculty members serving as CFA Campus Media Reps devoted hours to faxing and calling local reporters about their events,” *CFA Update* reported.

More than 20,000 people attended,

and the success of “Teach CSU” soon had an impact on contract talks. Management stopped stalling and got more serious about negotiations. But the system’s chancellor later backed away from a settlement, citing state budget problems.

The union responded with a series of large rallies at the chancellor’s public appearances. “I did not anticipate the large welcome,” the chancellor told the press, when 1,000 protesters greeted him at the San Francisco Marriott on February 9. Meanwhile the CFA was preparing for a possible strike. In New York, the law bans public employee strikes and courts have imposed increasingly strict sanctions. But in California, most public employees have the right to strike if mediation and fact-finding fail.

Finally these converging pressures led management to sign a new contract on March 2. CFA President Susan Meisenhelder called it “a victory for all Californians...concerned about maintaining the quality and accessibility of the CSU.”

## Tracking unpaid labor

Usually it’s management that wants employees to fill out time sheets – but in 1997, a group of part-time faculty activists at CUNY began to circulate time sheets of their own.

“Adjuncts at CUNY are not paid to hold office hours, but most do so anyway because of their professional commitment and moral obligation

# Baruch journalism MA program closes

## Education faculty surprised by new academy

By DANIA RAJENDRA & PETER HOGNESS

The semester began with the announcement of a new program – a “CUNY Teachers’ Academy” – and the demise of another, Baruch’s graduate program in business journalism. In both cases, faculty raised concerns about a lack of consultation.

Chancellor Matthew Goldstein announced on February 1 that CUNY will create a new CUNY Teachers’ Academy, which press reports said would be modeled on CUNY’s Honors College. “I want to create a competitive environment for teacher education and have it run parallel, and let the market decide,” Goldstein told *The New York Times*.

### BLINDSIDED

The announcement came as a surprise to City University’s education faculty. “I was absolutely blindsided by it when I read it in the *Times*,” said Shirley Steinberg, program head of graduate literacy at Brooklyn College. CUNY spokesperson Michael Arena could not name any CUNY education faculty with whom the chancellor had consulted before making this decision.

Not everyone in CUNY’s teacher

education programs considered this a problem. “He’s the boss – he doesn’t have to call me,” said Alfred Posamentier, dean of the School of Education at City College. “It doesn’t bother me,” he said of the lack of consultation. “I’m just happy he did something for teacher education.”

Helen Johnson, chair of the Department of Elementary and Early Childhood Education at Queens College questioned whether a new Teachers’ Academy would turn out to be “an expensive new initiative that is essentially a duplication of existing programs.”

### WHO WILL DECIDE?

“It is difficult to comment on the idea,” Johnson cautioned, a month after the initial announcement, “since I still have been given very little information about either the impetus for this proposal or the substance of the plan.” But she said that members of her department had raised a series of questions that needed answers: What is the decision-making process for the proposal? Who would teach at the Academy, and who would design its curriculum? What resources will be used to support it?

The *Times* reported that a task

force led by Selma Botman, CUNY’s new vice chancellor for academic affairs, will guide the creation of the Academy. CUNY has announced no further details.

On the idea that sharper competition between programs would improve teacher education at CUNY, Johnson raised a further question: “What type of pressures might such a competition exert on existing programs to substitute economic considerations for issues of program quality?”

Johnson noted that CUNY’s existing education programs are meeting tough national accreditation requirements and that 90% of their students are passing state exams. In a time of tight budgets, she suggested that support for and expansion of existing education programs should be a priority.

Now that the decision to create the Academy has been made, CUNY faculty are getting involved. “I wasn’t asked if it’s a good idea,” said Tibbi Dubois, associate professor of childhood education at Brooklyn College. “I think it might be an excellent idea. I know I will be working on it and that other educators will be doing so, too.”

Journalism faculty at Baruch also got news of a major decision only after it was final. The school’s masters’ program in business journalism, highly regarded but under-enrolled, will be scrapped after this semester.

### Answers are scarce on the new CUNY Teaching Academy

“It was not about the quality of the program,” said Weissman School of Arts and Sciences Dean Myrna Chase, who said she decided to end the program because of its low enrollment and Baruch’s budget crunch. Joshua Mills, the six-year-old program’s director, said it currently has 24 students enrolled in classes and 6 more completing their theses, compared to a goal of more than 50.

Baruch faculty have been among those involved in planning the new CUNY-wide School of Journalism, set to open in Fall 2006, and some will likely teach there. But the creation of the new, high-profile school did not help the Baruch program’s prospects.

### LACK OF SUPPORT

Faculty at Baruch seemed less inclined to argue with the final decision than with what led up to it. “It seems as though there was a clear

lack of support for this program,” said one. “The question is why it didn’t get it, particularly money for advertising and recruiting.”

Others said that while low enrollment was a problem, consultation on the decision and on possible alternatives should have been stronger. “It would have been nice to have been involved in the process,” said faculty member Sarah Bartlett.

“We wish it hadn’t happened,” said Chase, “and we wish it could have been more gentle” – but she argued that the decision was ultimately inevitable. As for the level of promotion, she said, “We haven’t advertised a lot in any of our [graduate] programs.”

### GOOD JOBS

The program had a placement rate of better than 90%, and its graduates have gone on to work at *Newsday*, Bloomberg, Reuters, AP and elsewhere. “I’ve heard the Chancellor’s stump speech on ‘the integrated university,’ and locating ‘centers of excellence’ within CUNY and spreading their best practices,” Mills told *Clarion*. “This led me to think we would be integrated into the new school. My inference was wrong.”

## Academic labor action

to their students,” declared CUNY Adjuncts Unite! (CAU!) in 1997. “Our position, of course, is not that we shouldn’t keep office hours, but that, like full-timers, we should be paid for our time and work.”

That Fall, CAU! distributed “Office Hour Time Sheets” to part-time faculty on every campus. Adjuncts were asked to keep track of time spent consulting with students, to make visible their unpaid labor by putting a number on it.

### TIME SHEETS

“Just the process of getting these blank time sheets into the hands of thousands of adjuncts on all the different campuses was a huge undertaking,” said Alex Vitale, now assistant professor of sociology CK at Brooklyn College. Eric Marshall, now an organizer with NY State United Teachers, said that it was also a great organizing opportunity. “When you gave someone a time sheet, that was a chance to talk with them about getting more involved in the union,” Marshall said.

The sheets were gathered up and tallied at the semester’s end, with some startling results. By a conservative estimate, CAU! calculated, CUNY’s part-time faculty had worked approximately 20,000

office hours during the Fall 1997 semester – over \$1 million of unpaid labor.

To get the word out, CAU! organized a demonstration to deliver the time sheets to CUNY’s headquarters on East 80th Street. Reporters came from *The New York Times*, *Newsday*, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *El Diario* and more, plus local television stations. “We got a giant Xerox enlargement of one of the time sheets and put the totals on it,” said Vitale. “It looked like when someone wins the lottery and they give them a giant check.”

“When I walked into Fairway a few days later, someone I didn’t know came over and said, ‘I saw you on television!’” said Shirley Rausher, adjunct assistant professor of English at BMCC. “It blew my mind.”

### ON THE MAP

CUNY wrote back to CAU! that this was a collective bargaining issue which it could discuss only with the PSC. Lacking support from the union’s bargaining team, in 1998 the campaign for paid office hours got no further than 80th Street’s door. But it had not failed.

“The campaign put the demand for paid office hours on the map,”



Cecil Canton, a professor at CSU Sacramento, during the California Faculty Association’s October 2001 “Teach CSU” teach-ins.

said Vitale. “It made clear to both management and the union that adjuncts were upset about this. And it energized us – it got a lot of adjuncts involved in organizing.”

By the time bargaining for the next contract began, PSC members had elected a new leadership. When the Delegate Assembly adopted the union’s contract de-

mands, the list included paid adjunct office hours.

But management strongly resisted the idea. “We heard for 18 months at the bargaining table, ‘You will never get office hours for adjuncts,’” Bowen said. That did not change until very late in the negotiations.

PSC negotiators made clear that they would not sign an agreement without some key elements in addition to salary increases – including an increase in Welfare Fund contributions, expansion of research time, and paid adjunct office hours. But it was not just strong words that convinced management to say ‘yes.’

### BEYOND THE WALLS

“For what you say at the bargaining table to have any teeth, it has to be backed up by an organized membership,” Bowen said. “We kept reminding them of those time sheets and the attention they’d received. It was a reminder that they had to look beyond the walls of our meeting room – they had to offer a deal that would satisfy our membership.”

“When this demand got pursued by the union and it finally went through, we really felt that our grassroots effort had paid off,” Rausher said. “When we started, who knew if anything would come of it? But we figured it was worth a try.”



Longtime members marched out, but left their signs at the Trustees meeting.

## PSC People: Peter Weston Joining the campaign

Peter Weston is associate professor of psychology at Brooklyn College. After undergraduate work at St. John's University and Hunter College, he earned an MS from Howard University and his PhD from University of Michigan. He grew up in Bed-Stuy, now lives in Crown Heights, and has been at Brooklyn College for 29 years.

Weston spoke with Clarion about his work, and why he decided to volunteer with the PSC's contract campaign.

### RESEARCH INTERESTS

I've always been interested in how people think. Why does a person see the world in a particular fashion? I was practically a double major in philosophy and psych. I'm really a personality psychologist by training, but I later got involved in health psychology through a colleague.

I've recently examined the relationship between stress and cardiovascular reactivity. How racism, as a stressor, affects an individual's cardiovascular health. My research is on disseminating information about prostate cancer and Hepatitis C.

### TEACHING AT BROOKLYN

Most of our students are first or second in their families to go to college. I enjoy showing them their dreams are possible. I hope I serve as a role model while giving them the skills and the training they need to succeed, and giving them the sense that they can do this.

### THE NEGOTIATIONS

I think the 1.5% offer is absurd. We have a substantial teaching load of 21 hours.

I wonder how many other universities have such a teaching load while requiring research, administrative duties, etc.? And while we don't have the amenities of a Harvard or Yale, how can we be expected to perform as though we have similar resources?

What kind of thinking is going to let someone consider 1.5% a serious starting point? Why is it that we are worth that little compared to SUNY?

Is CUNY not valued as highly as SUNY? The disparities really trouble me. Moreover, I would think that these wages make it more difficult for CUNY to attract the best faculty.

### WHY DID YOU GET INVOLVED?

I think we are continually being asked to do more and more with less and less. And money is not the only issue. Working conditions, are also the union's bailiwick and really do impact our ability to carry out our academic mission, our teaching and research. My colleagues and I are deeply concerned about this.

### WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING?

The first thing I did – back in the Fall – was sign a petition. People on campus were handing out a letter and asking for signatures. I read it and I thought it was worth adding my voice to the chorus of people saying, “We want a decent contract.”

The union has asked us to make phone calls, and I've been more than willing to do that. I called Chancellor Goldstein's office. I identified myself, then I called the 1.5% offer unacceptable, and asked, “why can't we have parity with SUNY?”

I went to a meeting on my campus last week. I told my colleagues who “My Five” were – that's five people that we agree to stay in touch with. I tell My Five what's going on with the contract, the things I'm doing and that it's important for us to pay attention and get involved.

Only one of My Five was somewhat timid about getting more involved. I tried to encourage him. One said that he's busy, too, but he agreed that it's very important.

### KEEPING IT ALL IN BALANCE

I really don't have the time, but this is important. You can't do everything, so you try your best to do what you can, given your time and energy levels. I did take an afternoon to get to the [February 12] organizers' training. I got there late, but I got there.

Each of us has to do what we can. A whole bunch of raindrops will make a flood.

# Many angry at CUNY's su

By ELLEN BALLEISEN  
BCC

Retirees are angry that CUNY negotiators have suggested cutting Welfare Fund benefits. “When for-profit businesses do this to their retirees, we all know it is scuzzy,” said Harriette Kaley, a retiree from Brooklyn College. “But for an institution like City University to even think of doing it is a disruption of the implicit covenant under which we operated when we gave [CUNY] the best years of our lives.”

For years, management has not contributed enough to meet the expenses of the Welfare Fund (WF), which provides prescription drug coverage to both active and retired

## Retirees feel betrayed

faculty and staff. The gap has grown with the national rise in drug costs. The resulting deficits have been covered by the Welfare Fund's reserves.

### RESERVES DWINDLING

But those reserves are dwindling. Unless CUNY increases its contributions, the Fund's reserves will be exhausted before the end of this summer. This would force more cuts in benefits, even though Welfare Fund members have already shouldered increased costs.

At the bargaining table, CUNY management has taken a hard line. Instead of offering to contribute

enough to maintain current benefits, management negotiators will consider additional WF contributions only if that money is subtracted from potential salary increases.

Iris Schickerling-Georgia, of BMCC, says she does not understand “how the university can treat its staff and faculty in such a contemptuous way, as if our health didn't matter.” While recovering from surgery last summer, she had very large out-of-pocket expenses for prescription drugs, even with the current level of coverage. A single parent who had to take a two-month unpaid leave of absence for this surgery, Schicker-

# A growing wave of contract action

## Coordinated protests set for March 23

By DANIA RAJENDRA & PETER HOGNESS

After the PSC Delegate Assembly declared a “state of emergency” in contract talks on January 27, PSC members responded with a wave of local organizing. Union activists have been talking with members one-on-one and hosting campus events, building toward University-wide actions in March and April. With this increasing pressure on management, the union aims to convince CUNY to abandon its hard-line stance and agree to a fair contract.

### Step one: Visibility and outreach

On every campus, faculty and staff are snatching up – and pasting on – the “No 1.5%” stickers, protesting the message sent by management's opening economic offer. The stickers have been a hit with many students, too.

At Bronx Community College, members used the college's Spring Convocation as an organizing opportunity. “We had 100 people wearing our ‘No 1.5%’ stickers,” said Marianne Pita, BCC chapter chair. “When a speaker mentioned ‘the low salaries that we are paid at CUNY,’ people burst into applause. We felt good about having a strong presence at the administration's event.” The BCC chapter is planning a “Town Hall Meeting” about the contract during CUNY week.

### Step two: Action on campus

The PSC chapter at City College organized a picket line outside the CCNY Administration Building on February 23. “We made it a joint demonstration with students, for a fair contract and against a tuition increase,” said Steve Leberstein, CCNY chapter chair. “Some people who had been reluctant to speak out before now saw that they could, and they did. More rallies and tabling are planned together with student activists,” he said. Picket lines have also been organized at Queens College and other campuses.

Some chapters have met with college presidents to urge them to speak out for better salaries and more support for the Welfare Fund. At BMCC, a delegation of 17 union members met with President Antonio Pérez for an hour and a half, and

Pérez agreed to discuss the points raised by the PSC with 80th Street.

While these campus actions have put pressure on local college administrations, other efforts have taken the PSC's message directly to CUNY central administration. Each week on “Contract Wednesday” union members have phoned or e-mailed a key CUNY decision-maker, urging him or her to move negotiations forward. In late February, for example, members called Chancellor Goldstein's office to ask why CUNY negotiators have suggested cuts in Welfare Fund benefits. A professor emeritus, who years ago had Matthew Goldstein as a student, said he was writing to the Chancellor to say, “We taught you – and we taught you better.”

After Board of Trustees' Chair Benno Schmidt was selected as the phone-call target, Schmidt responded with a letter assuring callers of his support for “a new contract that provides salary increases for our instructional staff in recognition of their needs and their important contributions to the University.”

“It shows he is forced to respond, which is good,” said BMCC Chapter Chair Jane Young.

### Step three: Working CUNY-wide

Retirees turned out during a snowstorm for a protest at the February 28 meeting of the Board of Trustees, and they arrived in an angry mood. Instead of offering to

# uggestion to cut benefits

ling-Georgia seriously considered forgoing her medications, but her doctor said that they were essential for her recovery. She says she can't imagine how she would have coped if her prescription coverage were even less generous. "Now you have to live in complete fear of getting sick," she says.

Cutting retiree benefits would be "an outrageous way to save money," says Howard Seeman, a retiree from Lehman. "Increased funding for our benefits is essential."

Marcella Bencivenni, an assistant professor who just started at Hostos in September, thinks that reducing benefits or sacrificing pay raises for active members is also unacceptable – and harmful to the Universi-

ty. Bencivenni points out that the large pool of recently hired junior faculty, such as herself, may well start leaving CUNY if they and their families receive substandard health benefits or pay that slides below the rate of inflation. She added that if she were a retiree listening to management's suggestions, she would "feel betrayed, left with nothing."

## HURTS RECRUITMENT

Peter Hoberman, a retired HEO from Bronx Community College, agrees that CUNY will be unable to recruit and retain new faculty and staff if its benefits get worse. Management's stance will "come back to haunt them," he says.

The Welfare Fund "has parallels

to Social Security," says Peter Ranis, a retired professor from York and the Graduate Center. "People pay into Social Security for years without using the insurance," Ranis explains. "For years when I was working, I never used prescription drugs, but I was supporting the system. Now that I've retired and may need one or another medication, my benefit should be there for me."

Tess Tobin, a library faculty member at City Tech, told *Clarion* she is glad that the PSC leadership is "keeping us all as one" and not letting management encourage a division between retirees and active members. Tobin says the growing crisis has only one solution: "CUNY has to put in its fair share."



Members Marie Nazon (above) and Elizabeth Starčević (below) participated in the escalation of the contract campaign at a picket line on the CCNY campus on February 23. Other chapters rallied, held meetings and made phone calls.

boost CUNY's payments to the Welfare Fund (WF), management negotiators have suggested that the Fund cut benefits, starting with retirees.

"I think the idea of cutting WF benefits is atrocious, and I support the union's demands," said Sidney Emerman, who retired from Kingsborough nine years ago. Prescription drugs and dental care are basic needs for everyone, Emerman said. "Even though I'm retired, I support better benefits for active members, too."

The sign that Emerman carried at the protest said, "I've worked at CUNY for 29 years" at the top, and "WE'RE NOT DEAD YET!" at the bottom. Other signs also cited decades of service at CUNY – 33 years, 35 years, 43 – and added, "DON'T CUT RETIREE BENEFITS!" or "SAVE OUR WELFARE FUND!" below.

About a half hour into the Trustees' meeting, PSC officers Steve London and John Hyland stepped forward to present the Board with messages from more than 500 members, demanding that CUNY maintain the current level of

WF benefits. Board Chair Schmidt acknowledged London and then quickly tried to move on – but London insisted on finishing his statement, as about 50 union members stood behind him with placards raised. Members then circled the room and exited, leaving their signs in the now-empty audience chairs.

While some members protested at the Trustees' meeting, others braved the snow to lobby in Albany. They asked legislators to sign a letter to CUNY management that read, in part, "I write in support of the 20,000 members of the Professional Staff Congress...Such an offer [of 1.5%] not only insults people who have given their professional lives to CUNY, it risks undermining the City University itself."

At *Clarion* press time, 33 City and State lawmakers had signed on. "They want to support the union," said PSC Legislative Coordinator Cecelia McCall. "They told us that we've built a constituency for CUNY, and it can't be written off." McCall encouraged union members to reach

out to their representatives, speak to them about the contract, and make sure they have the letter and have signed it. (For more information, call the PSC office at 212-354-1252).

## Step four: Preparing for militant action

On CUNY Day, March 23, PSC chapters across the University will stage simultaneous contract protests. The events will build momentum toward a University-wide mass action in April. "We need to keep increasing the pressure until management agrees to arrive at a fair settlement," said PSC President Barbara Bowen.

On March 31 the PSC Delegate Assembly will consider a resolution to build a Union Defense Fund. If it passes, members would be asked for voluntary contributions to prepare for extraordinary expenses in the contract campaign. Union defense funds have been a traditional way to provide resources for unions that contemplate militant job actions.

# Bargaining update CUNY's hard line on Welfare Fund, wages

By CLARION STAFF

Negotiators from the PSC and CUNY management met frequently through February, but made no progress on the main objective – an economic settlement. Management still refused to offer enough money to provide for raises above the level of inflation and also maintain Welfare Fund benefits.

The February 16 session was attended by the General Secretary of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), Roger Bowen (no relation to the PSC's president). He stated his support for the PSC's bargaining agenda and his shock at management's 1.5% salary offer, commenting on the damage that such a low offer does to academia. Roger Bowen also expressed concern about the "hollowing-out" of the profession, as universities like CUNY continue to rely on underpaid part-timers.

## "PRODUCTIVITY"

Management continues to demand union concessions for "increased productivity" as a condition of a settlement. One "productivity" demand, which CUNY representatives described as one of their most important, is a significant reduction in full-time faculty's annual leave.

Currently, annual leave in the summer ends on August 30. CUNY wants full-timers available by August 20 for activities specified by college presidents, though classes would not start that early. "The PSC voiced our strong opposition to this proposal, especially in the context of an economic offer vastly below the level of inflation," said PSC President Barbara Bowen.

Union negotiators pointed out that this change would decrease real academic productivity, as CUNY's inordinate teaching load means that time for research and curriculum development is already scarce.

The PSC persisted in its fight against the abuse of the contractual workweek for employees in the Higher Education Officer series, but there was no progress on this issue.

## DIVERSITY DEBATE

In an effort to move negotiations forward, the PSC offered to accept management's proposal to increase the maximum number of Distinguished Professors by 50, if CUNY would add some mechanisms to help improve diversity in this title, such as additional funding for searches. According to CUNY's most recent data, out of 110 Distinguished Professors, 25 are women, 2 are African

American, 3 are Asian American and 4 are Latino. CUNY, however, said it would not negotiate any provisions to increase diversity. The PSC also proposed that "armed service veteran status" be added to the contract's anti-discrimination provisions.

## SICK LEAVE

In the February 1 session, the PSC emphasized part-time faculty and staff's need for adequate sick days and the ability to accrue sick days from one semester to the next. "As an example," said Barbara Bowen, "we cited one part-time staff mem-

**Despite many meetings, CUNY won't boost offer**

ber who had worked at CUNY for a number of years and then was granted no sick days when she had to undergo treatment for cancer." The union also presented a proposal for seniority in adjunct assignments.

The union and CUNY did reach tentative agreement on management's demand to include the Medical and Law Schools in provisions on over-scale salaries and on the PSC's demand to extend to Library and Counseling faculty the provision won in the last contract for 12 hours of reassigned time for untenured faculty.



# Challenging non-reappointment

By DEBRA BERGEN

PSC Director of Contract Administration

For many members of the instructional staff, the time when colleges send out notices of reappointment and non-reappointment is approaching. These members – full-time faculty and College Lab Technicians in their first year of service, those in Higher Education series titles in their first two years, and all part-time employees – should know their rights under the PSC contract.

One of the most important rights you have is the right to grieve a decision of non-reappointment. (This applies to non-reappointment with or without tenure, or Certificate of Continuous Employment, or Certificate of Continuous Administrative Service.)

## KNOW THE DEADLINES

To protect your rights you should be familiar with the timeframe for challenging a negative decision, and should know what actions to take if you are notified that you have been denied reappointment.

For most of the members described above, notice of the decision must be received by **April 1, May 1, or May 15.** (See [www.psc-cuny.org/ContractualReappointment.pdf](http://www.psc-cuny.org/ContractualReappointment.pdf) for the time frames for different titles.)

What should you do if you are no-

## Act within the time limits

tified that you have been denied reappointment? Upon receiving notice, there are three things you should do **immediately**:

1) **Contact a grievance counselor** if you want to challenge the de-

## YOUR RIGHTS

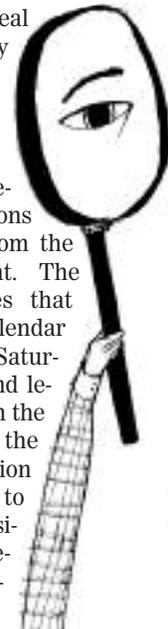
cision, so that a grievance may be filed within the specified time limits. *This is of critical importance.* Under the terms of our contract, a grievance relating to reappointment must be filed within 30 days, excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays, of your individual scheduled date of notification. You may contact your local campus grievance counselor or one at the PSC central office.

2) If you are a full-time employee, **initiate an appeal** through academic channels in addition to filing a grievance. Because the appeals process varies from campus to campus, contact your chapter grievance counselor or chapter chair for details. (For a list of chapter grievance counselors, go to [www.psc-cuny.org](http://www.psc-cuny.org) and click on "Grievance.") If no academic appeals procedure exists at your college, or where such procedures do not culminate in an appeal

to the president, full-time instructional staff have the contractual right to appeal a negative decision directly to the president.

Should the appeal be denied, faculty and some instructional staff have the right to request and receive a written statement of the reasons for the denial from the college president. The contract specifies that you have ten calendar days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays) from the date of receipt of the president's rejection of your appeal to submit to the president a signed request for a statement of reasons. Within ten calendar days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays) after receiving your request, the president must provide you with a written statement of reasons.

3) **Arrange to review your personal personnel file** to make an in-



Joseph Hart

ventory of its contents to ensure that it complies with Article 19 of the contract. If any negative material has been added to it without your knowledge, contact a grievance counselor.

For full-timers, grievances challenging a decision of non-reappointment will be held in abeyance until after the academic appeal process is

complete and, if the appeal has been denied, a statement of reasons from the president has been requested and received. *However, the grievance still must be filed within the relevant time limits.* Once you have received the president's statement of reasons, notify your grievance counselor. The counselor will then meet with you, investigate the facts of the grievance and discuss with you whether the union will proceed with the grievance based on its merits.

## VIOLATIONS

The contract recognizes the role of academic judgment, and that the president has a duty to support the appointment, reappointment and tenure of only those persons who he/she is reasonably certain will contribute to the improvement of academic excellence. But a grievance may be pursued if the decision was in violation of the agreement or was not made in accordance with the By-laws or written policies of the Board of Trustees, or if it constituted an arbitrary or discriminatory application of Bylaws or written Board policies.

Your rights in this area of the contract are set forth in Article 9, Article 10, Article 13, and Article 20 and it is worth taking the time to review these provisions. In order to defend your rights, you first need to know what they are.

# Joining the Retirees Chapter

By IRWIN YELLOWITZ

Chair, PSC Retirees Chapter

If you are nearing retirement, make plans to join the PSC Retirees Chapter. Membership is not automatic, so be sure to return the membership card you will receive when you retire.

Retirees Chapter dues are \$71 per year on a voluntary basis, and our renewal rate is extremely high. Why have our 2,200 members decided to join, and why do they stay?

Membership in the chapter is a way to protect your interests as a retiree. We played a major role in gaining from New York City the full reimbursement to retirees and their spouses of the premium paid for doctors' services under Medicare. This year that amount is \$78.20 per month per person. We also contributed to the campaign that won an annual cost-of-living adjustment for retirees in the NYC Teachers' Retirement System, and we are currently seeking an equivalent payment for members of TIAA-CREF.

Although all our work is important, at present our most critical function is to represent the needs of retirees in the PSC-CUNY Welfare

## A way to protect your interests

Fund. The financial crisis faced by the Fund makes our activities more needed than ever.

In the current contract bargaining, CUNY's negotiators have so far rebuffed the PSC's call for substantial new money to stabilize the Welfare Fund. Instead they have called for subtracting any additional contributions from salary increases. They have suggested significant benefit cuts, with retirees as the first target, to address any shortfall.

The Retirees Chapter will fight this as strongly as we can. As in-service members, current retirees provided income to the Fund, that greatly exceeded what we used in benefits. When we leave CUNY, we should enjoy the full benefits offered by the Fund.

## CONTINUUM

The Welfare Fund is a continuum: it cannot be fractured for current retirees without destroying the very structure of the Fund. If sacrifices are required, we stand for equity.

All members of the Fund should bear any burden equitably rather than placing a disproportionate load on retirees. The Trustees of the Fund have followed this approach, and the chapter will work to continue in this direction.

## BENEFITS

The Retirees Chapter also represents retirees' interests within the PSC's state and national affiliates. We strongly opposed President Bush's Medicare prescription drug plan because it provides too little to retirees and too much to the drug companies. Currently, we are working to protect Social Security from President Bush's attempt at privatization.

If you use any of the supplemental insurance benefits provided through the PSC's state affiliate, NYSUT – its legal service plan, auto insurance, homeowners' insurance, etc. – you must join the Retirees Chapter if you want to maintain your eligibility in retirement. If your PSC membership is not maintained, your coverage for supplemental benefits will lapse.

In all the activities of the Retirees Chapter, we depend on our members' support and participation. We hold monthly meetings, with speakers on both nuts-and-bolts issues and topics of general interest. Members receive the monthly Retiree Newsletter, which keeps us up-to-date on important issues, and also *Clarion*, which

keeps us informed on what is happening in the PSC at large. Twice a year, in January and June, we hold very modestly priced luncheons, which allow for pleasant contacts with colleagues, plus an interesting program. In all matters, we are open to new ideas for programs and activities.

We will welcome you into the rewarding life of the retiree and the positive experience of the PSC Retirees Chapter. For more information, contact me by e-mail at [IYellowitz@aol.com](mailto:IYellowitz@aol.com), or call Linda Slifkin at 212/354-1252.

## PSC PRE-RETIREMENT CONFERENCE

The annual PSC Pre-Retirement Conference will be held on Wednesday, May 18, 2005, from 9 to 4 at the CUNY Graduate Center. This conference is designed for members who are about five years away from retirement. The conference will feature speakers on financial planning, health benefits and taxes. Please return the form below. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. If you wish kosher food, please send a note with your registration.

### I will attend the PSC Pre-Retirement Conference.

Enclosed is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ registration fee for \_\_\_\_\_ places at \$20 each.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Retirement System \_\_\_\_\_ College \_\_\_\_\_

Date of original CUNY employment \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to Professional Staff Congress and return by May 11, 2005 to: Clarissa Gilbert Weiss, PSC, 25 W. 43rd Street, New York, NY 10036

In November, a federal court in Philadelphia ruled that government funding cannot be withheld from universities that limit military recruiters' access to campus. The case focused on the military's exclusion of those who are openly lesbian or gay, which several law schools said was inconsistent with their own policies against discrimination.

The decision, now under appeal, touched off renewed debate over on-campus military recruitment. This discussion has not been limited to the issue of discrimination: when recruiters at City

College were greeted by a spontaneous protest on December 9, most of the signs protested the war in Iraq. The deaths of three CUNY students in Iraq has further spurred local debate.

This issue of Clarion presents two opposing views on military recruitment on campus. A. B. Chitty is library systems officer at Queens College, and a disabled Navy veteran of two deployments to Vietnam. Stanley Renshon is professor of political science at Lehman College and the Graduate Center, and a certified psychoanalyst.



US soldiers in Iraq comment on the Army Reserve's recruiting pitch.

## MILITARY RECRUITMENT – PRO

# Let CUNY students choose for themselves

By STANLEY RENSHON

Beyond the sight of CUNY's anti-military activists lies an American national community of which CUNY is most certainly a part. The American military that protects that community is part of it as well.

Given the importance and complexities of its roles, the modern military does its job best with volunteers, not conscripts. To fulfill its vital national functions. It needs and deserves access to the widest swath of American institutions, including educational institutions – that includes CUNY.

But isn't it true that there are more working-class and ethnic minority volunteers than those who are upper-class and white? Yes. And further, isn't the reason for this purely economic? No.

True, the military doesn't draw many volunteers named Rockefeller, but it is a well-established and legitimate institutional source of educational, economic and status mobility. Just ask CUNY graduate Colin Powell. Moreover, the view that volunteers are forced economic recruits isn't a very accurate or nuanced argument.

People join the military for a mix of motives. Certainly economic incentives count, but they aren't necessarily primary. My students are a good example. They are certainly ethnically diverse and generally not rich, but they have a more balanced view of this country and its military than most CUNY anti-military critics.

CUNY students, I find, are both angry at America's past failures to honor its ideals, and at the same time, admiring of what they feel are its many virtues. They feel America is a country worth preserving and protecting and so are respectful of our military and what it represents. Economic incentives? Yes. Patriotism? Definitely.

### PARADOXICAL

Recruitment critics are essentially trying to take away the right – and the opportunity – of CUNY students to make their own choices. It seems paradoxical to say that any good college's mission is to help students learn to think for themselves while ensuring they don't get the opportunity to do so. This is same authoritarian presumption at the root of what Marty Peretz recently characterized in *The New Republic* as “the death of liberalism” – the philosophy of “I know what's best for you, whether you like it or not.”

The irony of a university dedicated to de-

veloping adults, while treating students like children will not escape outside attention. Nor should it. The larger world has identified CUNY with left-wing excess. The evidence is legion: faculty hurling charges of racism at those who think CUNY should not admit students to senior colleges regardless of academic skills or readiness, activists disrupting midtown traffic to demonstrate rage at modest and necessary tuition increases, law students honoring an indicted and now convicted terrorist lawyer/facilitator... I could go on.

Senior CUNY administrators have made a number of difficult, courageous and necessary changes to restore CUNY's damaged reputation and prospects, and to return the university to its status as an educational in-

stitution where merit, ambition and hard work – not skin color, ethnicity or economic circumstances – are the basis for educational advancement. They have been fought every step of the way by a small group of self-appointed arbiters of what is educationally or politically correct. If CUNY becomes embroiled in a fight over military recruiting, it will be a significant setback in the effort to salvage CUNY's reputation.

Clearly there are far deeper currents operating here than opposition to the military's somewhat accepting “don't ask, don't tell” policy. Most opponents of on-campus recruitment are quite open about their deep and generalized antipathy toward the US military. Some dissent against the use of force as an instrument of policy. Others dis-

like the military because they believe that *American* armed might is always deployed to a bad end. In a country that finds itself at war with terrorist groups in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere, it is no surprise that neither view is widely shared.

### NO BETTER OPTION

And what if they succeed in hobbling military recruitment? Will our country be any safer? Will our students have other equal and immediate opportunities to serve their country and advance their prospects? Will they have any more experience in wrestling with the hard issues at the intersection of politics and life, and come to their own conclusions? Do CUNY's anti-military activists care? I doubt it.

## MILITARY RECRUITMENT – CON

# Dishonest, dangerous sales pitch

By A. B. CHITTY

Our colleges are not exactly swarming with eager employers. Many students need more financial help than we can give them. Some could perhaps profit from a little practice in discipline to get the maximum benefit from their college education.

Many would argue that military service is a career open to merit, an honorable profession, even a patriotic duty. So what's wrong with letting them onto CUNY campuses to recruit our students?

Plenty.

It's not just that the work is dangerous – every combat video game and combat comic book makes that clear. It's that the dangers aren't limited to hostile fire. Meningitis breaks out in boot camps; anthrax inoculations cause debilitating reactions; weapons and equipment turn toxic. Already one out of every three veterans of the first Gulf War is rated disabled, mostly from “friendly fire,” exposures to some combination of experimental vaccines, carelessly dispersed chemical agents, and particulate residues of depleted uranium armaments.

It's not just that the military life is hard – though combat does change you, and not always for the better. It's that so many military hardships have little relation to combat. One out of every three women veterans reports

being harassed, abused or raped by fellow soldiers. Domestic violence is twice as common in military families. Most military commands condone contempt for homosexuals as a contribution to “unit cohesion,” at the cost of the careers, and sometimes the lives, of soldiers rumored to be lesbian or gay.

### DISABLED VETS ABANDONED

It's not just that injury can be severe – though soldiers now survive multiple amputations, and head and spine injuries that used to be invariably fatal. It's that so many injuries could have been avoided or eased. Our government sends our soldiers into combat without proper equipment, then reneges on its obligation to care for them when they come home. Post-traumatic stress can be a lifelong condition, and can also afflict the soldier's family and friends. As very severely disabled veterans begin to crowd Veterans Administration facilities, the government moves to limit (and in effect reduce) public funding of the VA, while charging elderly veterans more for their prescription drugs.

It's not just that war and killing are bad – though combat is certainly cruel and the occupation of hostile territory indoctrinates soldiers in casual brutality. It's that the people who design the policies of brutality leave it to the soldiers on the ground to reap the consequences of remorse or revenge. The same officials who excuse abuse and torture in the misbegotten expectation of intelligence and vengeance let the lower ranks be scapegoated if and when such crimes come to light.

Even if we could fix everything that's wrong with the military, make our government treat our soldiers with respect and honor our obligations to those sent on our behalf into harm's way, we still might not want CUNY to sponsor the military recruitment. Whatever we call military manpower policy, the fact is that our military depends on economic conscription to fill its ranks. Our students already fit the target profile: as we raise tuition and reduce or defer financial aid, we move our students right onto the bull's-eye.

It's not just that young people sometimes seem to hear only what they want to hear about military life. It's that military recruiters really are in sales. In their zeal to complete the mission, sometimes they fail to make completely sure that their recruits thoroughly understand how easily college benefits can be lost, what kinds of training and duty assignments are likely, how few rights they will have. Sometimes they lie.

### UNABLE TO QUIT

Of course our students have the right to explore any career options. And if they take and then quit jobs at Burger King or the Bank of New York, they might lose some pay. But when they try to quit the military, they go to prison. Military recruiters are easy enough to find, but under these conditions “questionable” hardly begins to describe City University sponsorship of military recruitment. “Criminal facilitation” would be closer to the mark.

## Debating CUNY-sponsored recruiting

## THE CONTRACT

# Productivity: we've already delivered

By **SHELLY MENDLINGER**  
Chair, CLT Chapter

**M**anagement has repeatedly stated at the bargaining table that salary increases will come only with increased productivity. But increases in productivity have been implemented for years by CUNY's instructional staff. By that standard, our raises are long overdue.

"Doing more with less" has become standard procedure for everyone who works at CUNY. Faculty and Higher Education Officers could tell countless stories of their own; here I'll describe how productivity has increased through the everyday work of College Laboratory Technicians – the people who prepare and maintain CUNY's science labs, art studios, computer labs, theaters and more.

First comes the obvious: the increase in the number of lab/studio sections serviced by each CLT, and the increase in the number of students in each section. But then comes what goes on behind the scenes. CLTs have to tread water faster and harder just to keep from going under; we must produce more and more just to deliver the same standard of technical service we did years ago.

## TEST TUBES

Test tubes are one example. Due to budget cuts, the tubes that CUNY buys have thinner walls and are of poorer quality glass than before. Lowest-bidding vendors cut corners to keep costs down and pack the tubes less securely than higher bidders. The result is that many more tubes arrive broken, chipped and/or cracked. Consequently, to have the same number of tubes as before, I have to spend much more time carefully extracting tubes from the shards and splinters of glass in the box, and examining tubes closely for chips or cracks so students won't be put in jeopardy.

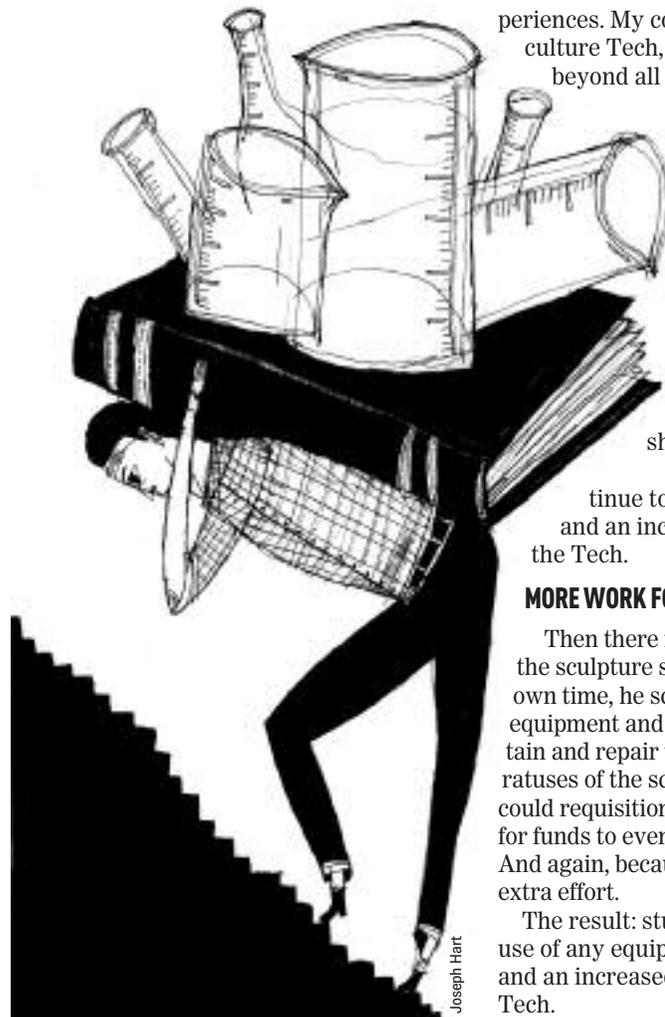
For those who may wonder why I'm making a big deal about picking out a few tubes, calculate this: I prepare about 5,000 tubes each semester.

The result: CUNY saves money and an increased workload falls upon the Tech.

Another example: the microbiology area head recently suggested that we use a more modern diagnostic test in the teaching lab. It sounded good to me. But, there was a caveat: the department didn't have money for the new test medium, a chemical mixture that costs \$100 per pound.

## PRODUCE CHEAPLY

I was asked to figure out how to prepare the new test medium cheaply. Of course, loving a challenge and being a CUNY CLT, I tinkered around – er, experimented and figured out how to prepare it practically from scratch. Is the new medium more labor-intensive than the old? Compare for your-



Joseph Hart

self. The old: weigh out one reagent, stir to dissolve in water, pipette aliquots into tubes, cap the tubes and sterilize. The new: weigh out three reagents, heat to dissolve in water, pipette aliquots into tubes while hot, cap the tubes, sterilize, and while still hot from sterilization, place each tube on a slanted surface to cool and solidify into a "slant."

## CUNY SAVES

The result: students get a better, modern test, CUNY saves money and an increased workload falls on the Tech.

These are only two of many examples I could give, and most Techs have similar ex-

periences. My co-worker, a microbiology culture Tech, has kept cultures alive beyond all expectations through her determination and expertise, going far beyond the call of her job description. She could simply requisition fresh cultures every semester – but since funds are always short, this would mean that students do without in some other area. To her, that's unacceptable. And because she cares, she puts in the extra effort.

The result: students continue to learn, CUNY saves money and an increased workload falls on the Tech.

## MORE WORK FOR TECHS

Then there is the Tech who works in the sculpture studio on my campus. On his own time, he scavenges for discarded equipment and materials in order to maintain and repair the various tools and apparatuses of the sculpture studio. Again, he could requisition the needed parts and wait for funds to eventually become available. And again, because he cares, he puts in the extra effort.

The result: students are not denied the use of any equipment, CUNY saves money and an increased workload falls on the Tech.

Do you see a pattern here? In spite of the downward pull of austerity, the services provided by Techs have stayed constant or even increased. Now multiply this by many situations handled by many Techs in many departments on many campuses. This is increased productivity in anybody's book, and it's saving CUNY real money.

Where's the concomitant salary increase from management? It hasn't been seen at the bargaining table. To management, our efforts are worth only 1.5% over four years! Even as a starting point, that's not an offer – it's an insult.

And it's certainly not a "productive" approach to negotiations.

## We already do much more with less

## Clarion MARCH 2005

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## POEMS

## Two by Sam Hamill

### Unsolicited

So much ambition  
and such futility in  
everyone's poems.  
It's galling and quite lovely  
that we dare write them at all.

### State of the Union, 2003

I have not been to Jerusalem,  
but Shirley talks about the bombs.  
I have no god, but have seen the  
children praying  
for it to stop. They pray to different gods.  
The news is all old news again, repeated  
like a bad habit, cheap tobacco, the  
social lie.

The children have seen so much death  
that death means nothing to them now.  
They wait in line for bread.  
They wait in line for water.  
Their eyes are black moons reflecting  
emptiness.  
We've seen them a thousand times.

Soon, the President will speak.  
He will have something to say about  
bombs  
and freedom and our way of life.  
I will turn the TV off. I always do.  
Because I can't bear to look  
at the monuments in his eyes.

*Sam Hamill is the author of thirteen volumes of poetry; three collections of essays; and two dozen volumes translated from ancient Greek, Latin, Estonian, Japanese, and Chinese. His new and selected poems and translations, Almost Paradise, will be published by Shambhala in March. He is founder of Poets Against the War ([www.poetsagainsthewar.org](http://www.poetsagainsthewar.org)) and is featured in the film Voices in Wartime (see [www.voicesinwartime.org](http://www.voicesinwartime.org)).*

## THE CONTRACT

# Department chairs must remain in the union

By **STEVE LONDON**  
PSC First Vice President

**M**anagement's demand that department chairpersons be removed from the PSC bargaining unit is a non-starter. The PSC has defeated this demand for increased managerial control in past contract negotiations, and we will do so again.

Removing department chairs from the PSC would be bad for the University. It would ignore the clear choice of chairpersons and other instructional staff that department chairs remain PSC members. It is long past time for CUNY to withdraw this demand from the bargaining table.

If CUNY were to succeed in removing department chairs from the bargaining unit, chairpersons would no longer have contractual due process and other important protections. There would be no contractual obstacle to CUNY appointing – rather than electing – department chairs, and with these structural changes their academic freedom would be greatly compromised.

## POWER GRAB

This is a power grab, pure and simple. It would increase the hierarchical control of CUNY management over the instructional staff – and for no good educational or professional reason.

The underlying reason for inclusion of department chairs in the bargaining unit more than 30 years ago was the recognition that chairs and other departmental members of the instructional staff share a “community of interest.” Based on the principles and practices of collegiality, professionalism, and choice, the first PSC-CUNY contract placed department chairs in the PSC bargaining unit as part of the “recognition clause.”

Integral to the construction of this “community of interest” are the terms and conditions for selecting department chairs: i.e., election by their peers. The PSC's position has always been that the election of department chairs is protected by the “recognition clause” of the contract.

This “community of interest” reasoning is as strong today as it was then. With the election of chairs, CUNY's Bylaws institutionalize a “bottom-up” approach to departmental governance. The chair represents the department in other college-wide bodies and to the administration. Chairpersons are responsible not only for the administrative work of a department, but also for the professional development of its members. They provide the academic leadership necessary for the advancement of the professional interests of members of the instructional staff.

## ACADEMIC LEADERS

Chairpersons also carry out supervisory activities when they evaluate departmental colleagues, assign courses, arrange programs, or oversee departmental affairs. Many of these activities are a service to department members and facilitate smooth

departmental operation and professional advancement. Chairs can perform these duties best when they act as senior colleagues, not estranged bosses – a point emphasized by the chairs themselves in the article below.

In his/her exercise of these supervisory responsibilities, a chairperson certainly has to act in accordance with the department's policies, the policies of the college's faculty and CUNY's Board of Trustees, the PSC-CUNY contract, and applicable City, State and federal law. However, acting in compliance with these mandates does not give departmental chairs “managerial status” as CUNY management claims.

## COMMUNITY OF INTEREST

In fact, the New York State Taylor Law generally provides for supervisory workers' inclusion in a bargaining unit where a “com-

munity of interest” exists and members have made that choice. Under the Taylor Law, CUNY department chairs have met the criteria for inclusion in the PSC bargaining unit since the first PSC-CUNY contract. For 33 years, department chairs and all PSC members have made clear to management that the removal of chairpersons from our bargaining unit would do grave harm to the collegial nature of our professional work.

The PSC believes that students, our members, and the University's educational project are all best served under the current arrangements. CUNY should remove their demand from the bargaining table for the good of the University and to help move negotiations forward.



Joseph Hart

## Chairs explain why they want to stay in PSC

### Sanford Wurmfeld

Art Department, Hunter College

**I**f CUNY persists in the idea of removing department chairs from the bargaining unit, I believe many chairs may well resign. We view ourselves as representatives and leaders of our faculty, and taking us out of the union would have a very negative effect on that.

Right now deans serve as the arbiters between department and faculty interests and those of the college administration; discussions and negotiations between deans and the chairs are how that gets sorted out. If you bring chairs closer in to the administration, you're undermining that system and creating a recipe for a much more chaotic situation. I'm afraid chairs would then become something like mini-deans, leaving the rest of the faculty with the necessity to represent themselves individually.

### Jane Gallagher

Biology Department, CCNY

**I**n the sciences, we have a lot of trouble finding people to be department chair. It's done as a duty to our colleagues – not as a duty to the administration. Nobody I know wants to be chair anyway. If we were mainly accountable to the administration, why would anyone in his right mind want to do this job?

We were laughing about this the other day – what do you get if you're the chair? You get to give up your vacation, you get to do a whole lot of secretarial work, you get to get stressed out...

I got pressured into doing this by my colleagues, and I put some conditions on them before I'd do it. No infighting, everybody had to work together, and so on. A chair

who's seen as management may not get that kind of cooperation.

### Mary Alice Browne

Radiologic Technology Dept., City Tech

**I**f we are not in the union and a department chair has a problem with the administration, who's going to represent the chair? Where does the chair go? We wouldn't have that support, that shield that the union provides.

The rationale for this change is not clear. It makes you wonder if they want to start appointing chairs, instead of having chairs who are elected. If they move in that direction, what does that mean for academic integrity? Choosing a department chair is an academic decision – it shouldn't be based on whether administrators like you or not.

If chairs were not in the union, I think there would be even fewer black department chairs than there are today. Particularly if there is a change to appointed chairs – would we be in the pool that they would consider? I don't see it now, if you look at who seems likely to end up on different committees and so on. I think we may have a better chance of being elected than appointed, even though there are so few of us now.

### Ellen Tremper

English Department, Brooklyn College

**A**lthough, ideally, faculty and administration should be at one in their efforts to support and advance the interests of the college, the chair's interaction with the administration, in furthering the interests of her department, may be adversarial in the short run. The pull and tug of the chair-administration relationship, in this respect, is a useful

one. That healthy friction would no longer exist, or exist in a diminished form, if the chair were a member of the administration.

The advocacy for untenured members of the department would be compromised, from the perspective of the untenured member, if the chair were an administrative appointee – which could well be the next step. It may not be on the table now, but once the chairs were in administration, there might be a natural progression to appointing rather than electing them. Removing us from the bargaining unit would also make it easier to remove chairs with whom the administration is unhappy.

### Roman Kossak

Mathematics Department, BCC

**C**hairs are sometimes put in very confrontational situations – not as an individual but as a representative of their department. Sometimes I have to represent a department position that might be unpopular, and if I am a union member I can be more confident in that role.

It seems to me very important that the chair act as a senior colleague rather than simply as an administrator. The point is to really listen to your colleagues, not simply respond to certain requirements and requests. I don't think I would agree to be chair if it meant suspending my membership in the union and separating myself from my colleagues.

I am very much in favor of chairs not being bosses, but rather sharing this difficult administrative work simply because someone has to do it. In the larger departments I think it is very important to have deputies – I have two deputy chairs and also an evening chair. If chairs are taken out of the union, would these people also be non-unionized? How far would this extend?

## HOW TO MOVE FORWARD

# Response to the chancellor

By **BARBARA BOWEN**  
PSC President

**E**arly in March, Chancellor Goldstein emailed a message to the entire University on the state of contract negotiations with the PSC. The implication of his message was that the problem in the negotiations is the PSC, and that the way to reach an agreement is for the union to take most of its demands off the table, accept a settlement below the level of inflation, and hope for better things in the next round. I'd like to take this opportunity to reply.

Chancellor Goldstein starts by referring to the tentative settlement reached last month with the DC 37 local unions at CUNY. Without saying so directly, the Chancellor suggests that the same economic settlement would be acceptable for the PSC. But would it? Leaving aside for a moment that the offer on the table for the PSC is still the ludicrous 1.5%, I'd like to look more carefully at what is not said in Chancellor Goldstein's account of the DC 37 settlement.

## BELOW INFLATION

The Chancellor mentions that the settlement includes an increase of 8.5%, but he doesn't tell you that that amount is stretched over four years, or that 1% of that amount is not new money, but simply payment for concessions of "increased productivity." It would be more accurate to say that the DC 37 agreement is for 7.25%, compounded, over four years – and that there is a 0% increase in the first year and a year-long delay in part of the final increase. It would be more honest still to say that the entire package does not rise to the level of inflation, and thus that a settlement at this level would represent a *decrease* in the real value of our salaries.

Everything I have heard from PSC members has told me that a decrease in salary is unacceptable. The idea that the lost value could be recovered in future contracts is a myth. Have the losses in the real value of our salaries – up to 30% since 1972 – ever been made up? If PSC salaries had simply kept pace with inflation since 1972, the top salary in the professor and higher education officer series would now be more than \$130,000. It's a fallacy that later contracts typically make up salary losses of previous years. The PSC's most recent contract was the first in a decade to make real advances



Our Welfare Fund is not expendable, members told CUNY trustees.

beyond inflation. I'm not willing to reverse that progress; nor, do I think, are you.

When Chancellor Goldstein suggests that the PSC defer some issues "to another round of bargaining," he implies that it would be easier to win those issues in another round. All the evidence points the other way: there is no indication that the political forces that work against a fair contract now will do anything but harden in the next round of bargaining. The history of collective bargaining with CUNY is not one of recovering in the later rounds what you lost in previous ones.

## PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

The Welfare Fund is the obvious case in point. It's interesting that Chancellor Goldstein is silent on this issue, possibly the single most important reason we cannot accept a minimal settlement. Years of underfunding by CUNY management mean that the

Welfare Fund is facing insolvency. In the ten years since 1995, CUNY's contributions to the Fund have increased only 28%, while the cost of prescription drugs, the Fund's major expense, has nearly *tripled*. CUNY is simply not paying its share, and the ground lost in one contract has not been made up in the next. In the last two years, the Fund has preserved our benefits by shifting a substantial portion of their cost onto the members, but the costs continue to rise.

Without a substantial increase in contributions by the employer in this contract, the Welfare Fund will be forced to implement steep increases in out-of-pocket costs for prescription drugs before the year is out. In his message, Chancellor Goldstein asks for our "continued support"; I don't see how we can extend "support" in collective bargaining to an employer who has yet to support us in something as fundamental as maintaining health benefits.

## "PRODUCTIVITY"

The Chancellor's message raises other issues, too. A central thread of his argument is that he is waiting for the PSC to make a counterproposal to management's 1.5% offer, as if management cannot raise its offer until the PSC lowers its sights. That is misleading. It is perfectly possible, at any time, for the Chancellor's representatives to make us a higher offer. We have repeatedly asked them to do so at the bargaining table, and they have repeatedly refused.

But there's something else at work here: the Chancellor's representatives have made it clear that they want the union to agree to concessions as part of the final settlement. It might be useful to ask the Chancellor some

questions about the positions his representatives have taken, especially in the context of an economic offer below the level of inflation.

Ask the Chancellor why, if he is seeking "an appropriate recognition of our dedicated faculty and staff," he has demanded a *reduction* in annual leave for full-time faculty, forcing us to return to campus on August 20. Ask him why he is insisting that a decrease in our precious time for research and our own lives is a necessary "productivity increase." Ask him whether he realizes that the massive decreases in budget and increases in student enrollment have already forced us to increase our "productivity." Ask him why he wants to remove department chairs from the union and thus ensure that CUNY operates as a corporation, not a university. Ask him why he wants to weaken job security for over 2,000 members in higher education officer titles. Ask him why he continues to deny even one paid sick day to the hundreds of lab technicians who work part-time.

## \$2.5 BILLION SURPLUS

Chancellor Goldstein's message ends with a discussion of his advocacy with the City and State, whom, he tells us twice, he is bound "by law" to consult. The union is fully aware of the legal provisions that require authorization for the funding for our contract, and we share the Chancellor's commitment to bargaining in good faith. But I question Chancellor Goldstein's rhetorical strategy of emphasizing how limited he is – and his use of the phrase "the patterns established by both government entities." True, Chancellor Goldstein has been an advocate for increased funding for CUNY, and I don't doubt that in response to union pressure, he has sought increased funding from the City and State for our contract. But the City has a \$2.5 billion surplus this year; the University's position should be that a below-inflation "pattern" is out of the question. There is enough public money for a fair contract for the PSC, and a good contract for us means a better education for our students.

There is a disconnect between the Chancellor's public position of advocating for the faculty and staff and the reality of what management has demanded. If the Chancellor wants to "generate momentum," as he says, in the negotiations, I call on him to make an economic offer that represents an actual salary increase and to take off the table his regressive demands. *That's* the way to move these negotiations forward.

## Welfare Fund, real salary increases are key

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## 15-MINUTE ACTIVIST

### Focus on the forum

Make sure everyone in your department knows about the Mayoral Forum. All the candidates seeking to oust Mayor Bloomberg will attend and speak about their visions for the City and their ideas about CUNY – including funding issues and our contract. Find out what questions your colleagues have for the candidates, and think up

some of your own. The forum will be March 23 at 5:30 pm in the Proshansky Auditorium at the CUNY Grad Center. See page 2 for more information.

If you have more than 15 minutes, you could attend. If your department goes as a group, take the chance to exchange ideas about the contract campaign on your way to the Grad Center.