



# TECH TO TECH

## Newsletter

of the College Laboratory Technician Chapter of the PSC/CUNY

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No. 2

## CLT Union Leadership

What does leadership mean? It means that you will take action for the benefit of all. It means that you will try to implement ideas within the political climate. It means that you will push ahead with your successes in spite of your failures. It means that you will never sit back and become complacent just because you have succeeded in accomplishing an agenda. There are always more agendas to fill, and reasons to make sure you do not lose the rights you've gained.

What union leadership does not mean: Taking the job for a title to enhance your own image or taking the job because you have a personal grievance to settle. These may be offshoots of the job, but should never be the reason for taking it. Group agendas should never take a back seat to personal agendas. The good of the group, your CLT colleagues across the University, should always be primary.

What are the makings of a good leader? A good leader is able to take responsibility but share credit for work done, and to give credit where due. What you do as a leader should be to bring people together and to let others know that what they have accomplished for all is appreciated.

The makings of a bad leader is someone who wants absolute control over others, who will not delegate work, who tries to take credit only for themselves, and who will not express appreciation.

A good leader will be able to learn about and test the political climate and to work within it to make change. We are, after all, employees of a very political system at CUNY. You must find out how change is made before you can make it happen.

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## Workload Violations

In the February 2006 edition of Clarion, the newspaper of the Professional Staff Congress, the issue with the words "BAD FAITH?" in big bold letters on the front page, there is a very important article titled "HEOs Grieve Together for Fair Pay". The PSC has heard many HEO complaints about working more than 35 hours a week (which is what CUNY has agreed to in our contract) and about having onerous workloads, especially at various times during the year such as the registration period. This is the first time a group has had the courage to come forward and challenge CUNY on its continuous disregard for the terms of our contract with respect to workload for non-teaching staff members.

I encourage every CLT to read the article in Clarion very carefully. It can be found on the PSC website at [www.psc-cuny.org/communications.htm](http://www.psc-cuny.org/communications.htm). Click on the Feb. 2006 issue, then go to page 4. In my years as a CLT grievance counselor I have heard from several CLTs who complain that it is common for them to work more than 35 hours a week without additional pay. None have been willing to document the time and carry forward a grievance on this issue. Perhaps, this article will light a fire under some of us!

### What can you do?

Become familiar with the terms of the PSC/Cuny Agreement which can also be found on the PSC website at [www.psc-cuny.org/documents.htm](http://www.psc-cuny.org/documents.htm), then click on the link that reads "1996-2000 Contract". Under the terms of the agreement a CLT workload is 35 hours a week, to be completed in not more than 5 days in a week. Article 24 lists CLT overtime rates for assignments in excess of 35 hours. Also, there are

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## CLT Union Leadership

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We want you to be a leader at the PSC and on your campus. So, your PSC-CLT Chapter is arranging to have a Leadership Workshop to orient CLTs in running for and participating in chapter offices. You will be receiving both e-mail and written notices of this Leadership Workshop shortly.

Why this workshop now? Do you want to have a union chapter?

I started my Travia leave February 1st. While that gives me more time now to address CLT issues, it also means that I will not be able to run for PSC-CLT Chapter officer in 2008 (chapter officers have three year terms). If a retirement incentive comes along within the next year, your other officers may want to take advantage of it. If you don't act now, then in 2008 (chapter officers can complete their terms in office after Travia or while on retirement), you will have no one to train you for what you will have to face as a CLT officer of the union, if CLTs want your own chapter.

This is a serious issue, and one that you will have to address as a CLT. This is your future. Whether you are vocal or non-vocal: put some action behind your voices and become part of the PSC-CLT union leadership.

The date of March 25th has been scheduled for the Leadership Workshop. Snacks and lunch will be provided. Please make every effort to attend. Look for the Leadership Workshop notice, and attend.

**Ellen P. Steinberg**

## Workload Violations

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specific holidays listed in section 14.7 of the agreement which are an entitlement, meaning you do not work on those days. I remember one instance when a Chief Librarian at Medgar Evers insisted that a CLT had to work on Dec. 31st. If something like this happens to you, notify the PSC immediately.

If you are a CLT who works more than 35 hours a week with some regularity, keep an accurate log. Record the hours you work on a daily basis. Include specifics about the duties you perform during the extra hours. Keep a copy of the log and have a copy placed in your personal file. Send a memo to your Chair or supervisor requesting pay for the overtime hours worked. If your request is denied, contact a PSC grievance counselor.

**Document! Document! Document!** Evidence in the form of credible documentation or witnesses is critical to pursuing a grievance for workload violations. Since there are very few individuals courageous enough to come forward and testify against their department and college administration, documentation is usually the only way to support your claims.

If you believe your contractual rights have been violated with respect to workload, and if you have the evidence to support your claim, contact a CLT grievance officer at the PSC as soon as possible. Also, pay close attention to the outcome of the HEO workload grievance. It could have significant impact on workload violations for all non-teaching staff across the university.

**Steve Trimboli**

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## PSC GENERAL ELECTIONS

### **Election of the Top Officers, the PSC Executive Council and Delegates to the Affiliates' (AFT, NYSUT) Conventions**

Ballots will be mailed by the American Arbitration Association (AAA) on April 3. Ballots must be received by the AAA by 5 pm on April 24 and will be counted the following day.

If you have not received your ballot by April 10, contact the AAA at 800-529-5218 for a duplicate ballot.

**IT IS IMPORTANT THAT EVERY CLT VOTE**

# To Your Health

## The Virus

Viruses are the scourge of mankind. In the 21st century, with all of our scientific advances, humanity fears the virus more than anything else. There is good reason for this. Viral genetic adaptation to different hosts and imperviousness to our antibiotics make them public enemy number one. The following series of articles will discuss what they are, where they may have come from and, most importantly, what dangers they pose to humanity. Any hypotheses which seem outlandish are mine.

### The Virulent Vagabond

Viruses are different. All living organisms metabolize, have a nucleus within each cell which regulates metabolism, reproduce, and have a cell wall and/or cell membrane surrounding their individual cells. Viruses do and have none of the above in vitro. A virus consists of nucleic acid (DNA or RNA) surrounded by a protein coat. When it enters a living cell (host) it becomes active. It sheds its protein coat and induces the host cell's replication machinery to reproduce the virus's DNA or RNA and manufacture vital protein based on instructions from the viral nucleic acid. The newly created viral bits assemble and more virus is produced which may infect other cells. All this from an entity which can be crystallized and kept in a bottle on a shelf for

years. In biology it is axiomatic that the cell is the basic unit of life. It is the smallest unit of matter of which we can meaningfully say "this is alive." Usually the largest distinct body in a cell is the nucleus. It is the controlling center. It contains the chromosomes which are the carriers of the cell's heredity. The nucleus guides the development of the cell and of the organism, and is the ultimate seat of the controls that maintain order and organization within the entire living system. Viruses do not fit into the evolutionary model (unicellular organisms through the complex, such as man and his fellow mammals). They exhibit few, if any, of the properties we use to define life as we understand it. What are they? Where are they from? Viruses have a genetic program written in the universal language of life. If indeed it is possible for life to develop elsewhere, it makes as much sense to consider viruses "outsiders" as to define them as home-grown. Most cosmologists agree that the laws of physics are the same or similar in most, if not all, of our galaxy, (the Milky Way) which contains well over 100 billion stars. It is not inconceivable that conditions on planets circling some of these stars have developed climactic conditions favorable to the genesis, growth and development of life.

**Ezra Seltzer**

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## Health and Safety Articles

Be sure to check out the health and safety monographs on the PSC web site--  
[www.psc-cuny.org/health.htm](http://www.psc-cuny.org/health.htm).

If you would like reprints of any health and safety articles that have appeared in *Tech To Tech*, contact Ezra Seltzer at [eseltzer@pscmail.org](mailto:eseltzer@pscmail.org).

# DID YOU MISS THE CLT LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP?

*How to Perpetuate The CLT Chapter*

Topics included:

- \* CLT Status in the PSC
- \* CLT Status in the Contract
- \* CLT Status in the Bylaws
- \* Inside the CLT Chapter
- \* Grievance Work
- \* Workplace Safety and Health
- \* Organizing CLTs

**If you want to be active in the CLT chapter contact:**

Ellen Steinberg at epspsc@yahoo.com or

Shelly Mendlinger at Shellym@brooklyn.cuny.edu

**IT'S YOUR FUTURE.  
YOU CAN STILL HELP SHAPE IT!**



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### PSC/CUNY

- Central Office ..... (212) 354-1252
- Central Office Fax ..... (212) 302-7815
- Credit Union ..... (212) 354-2238
- Welfare Fund ..... (212) 354-5230

### E-Info

- PSC web page ..... [www.psc-cuny.org](http://www.psc-cuny.org)
- CLT Info-list ..... [cunyclt-l@hunter.cuny.edu](mailto:cunyclt-l@hunter.cuny.edu) (to send e-mail)
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