

**Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
UUP Albany Chapter
May 19, 2014**

Attendees: B. Benjamin, L. Bickmore, E. Briere, C. Fox, J. Greiman, M. Grosshandler, J. Hanifan, J. Harton, T. Hoey, G. Petry, L. Pyles, B. Pyszczymuka, P. Romain, R. See, M. Seidel, P. Stasi, I. Steen, B. Trachtenberg, R. Vives, L. Wilder, L. Wittner, K. Thompson-LaPerle

I. Presentation/Discussion: Education from the Inside Out (EIO)

This organization seeks to assist students in prison in obtaining educational credentials, help them find employment following release, and remove barriers to their success. Studies show education reduces recidivism.

Mass incarceration and criminal history screenings have made it difficult for the formerly incarcerated to succeed. One third of all adults in the US have been arrested by age 23 and there are racial and socio-economic disparities. The US spends \$52 billion annually in state prisons alone in incarceration costs.

Some difficulties faced include workplaces, public assistance, housing, healthcare and colleges that screen for criminal histories. EIO is working to “ban the box” on college admission forms. Unlike CUNY, SUNY requires self-reporting of criminal history (ie has a required check box on the application). Each SUNY school has a different procedure. When confronted schools believe (incorrectly) that they are required to have this box. The admissions form in itself is a barrier to many, leading to “attrition by application”--up to 80% of applicants. In 2006 formerly incarcerated individuals seeking education were coming to EIO with stories of being locked out of college. They were able to take courses in prison, but once released could not get admitted to colleges or get college credits. A study revealed most colleges require applicants to check a box regarding their criminal history and go through supplemental applications (some application requirements literally make it impossible for these applicants to gain admission for example applicants are asked to write to the Division of Criminal Justice Services and ask them to send a rap sheet to the admissions office (this information includes juvenile offenses that are off the adult record), but DCJS is forbidden by law to send this information to anyone but the student or his attorney, another scenario is schools requiring a “letter of discharge” but there is no such document in NY). If the additional materials are incomplete applicants are denied admission. As a result of the findings, EIO asked schools not to ask. Schools are not voluntarily cooperating so legislative reform is being sought.

Other focal areas include working to restore TAP and Pell grants to the incarcerated, working for a fair access to education act, organizing students on campuses to help raise awareness and making faculty aware of the concerns.

What can UAlbany UUP members do? Raise concerns on campus, in faculty senate and with administration, help students who are organizing, collaborate in joint actions, become a member of EIO, join a workgroup for reinstating TAP and Pell eligibility, promote

legislative change, meet with EIO and legislators, have conversations with statewide UUP, and help identify contacts at other schools.

There was discussion and unanimous support that UUP Albany develop a campaign around these concerns. Benjamin will follow up with EIO, student allies, statewide UUP and prison justice groups in Albany.

II. Minutes

As minutes were not available, all were in favor of a motion (by R See, second T Hoey) to waive the minutes approval for this meeting.

III. Review Labor Management Notes from April 22, 2014

IV. New Business

- a) There was discussion on the Solidarity Committee proposal to support Community LAB Troy Fellows Initiative, a 12-week project through the School of Social Welfare to train 10 Troy community organizers exploring topics such as food justice issues, starting community associations, growing library resources, etc. Concern was raised that such an initiative was also needed in Albany. While the initiative is starting in Troy, Albany can be considered for future trainings. Funds for this would be agency fee—statewide suggested a budget request be made first to the Executive Board and if it was denied it would return to the chapter. A motion was made (Romain, second Hanifan), approved by all, to support one \$500 stipend for one project fellow, with the president preparing a request first to statewide for funding and failing statewide approval, providing chapter support.
- b) The officers met to discuss the summer meeting schedule and proposed having only July and August EC meetings. The officers will continue to meet and if anything concerning comes up an emergency meeting can be called. It was also suggested that one meeting a year when the dining service is not open (for example in July) could be pizza to save money (those who cannot eat pizza could be accommodated). All agreed this was a good plan. Kelly will send meeting times for the year shortly.
- c) A resolution acknowledging the work of Mike Simpson who served UAlbany as coach and football defensive coordinator for over 29 years was discussed. A motion was made (Romain, Hanifan seconded), and all were in favor, supporting the resolution and asking statewide to make a plaque, inviting Simpson to the July meeting and recognizing him there for all his work.
- d) Benjamin circulated the current statewide committee assignments and asked all EC members to email Kelly within the week to indicate whether they wish to remain on their current committee(s) or change.

V. Officers' Reports

Officer reports were provided prior to the meeting. The floor was opened for questions and discussion.

The president is working on the chapter surveys which are undergoing a final round of testing and revisions. The Women's Concerns Committee and Contingent Concerns Committee surveys will be ready for the fall semester. It was felt we should wait to get the

maximum return rate and be able to utilize solid results when speaking with administration. Two other surveys will be ready for the spring semester.

The president congratulated C Fox who was recently elected vice chair of the Faculty Senate (which means she will chair it the following year). He has invited the past Senate chair and co-chair to come to EC meetings without success. He will invite J Stefl-Mabry in fall in the hopes that the two groups can better interact in the future.

T Hoey, B Trachtenberg and M Seidel were thanked for their many and varied workshops this year.

VI. Reports from DA, MayDay event, etc.

There were concerns at the DA about how UUP handles resolutions from the floor. Concerns included whether delegates can meaningfully vote on information they have only just received, that writing resolutions on the fly is difficult, that when the primary votes are done many delegates leave so not as many delegates know about or vote on the resolutions, there were concerns that some decisions are not acted upon, questions about what the procedures are once resolutions are passed and concern that this was a subversion of democracy. F Kowal asked Benjamin to serve on a new Committee of Three that would draft a policy regarding how resolutions be brought to the floor. The committee could study and compromise with delegates, who are the final decision-makers and be mindful of the timeliness of resolutions. All must be mindful that we are delegates representing and voting for the membership, but that membership at large is often not educated and aware of the politics and details. This education is something UUP needs to work on.

M Seidel gave an update on the IP related to current hiring concerns. One concern relates to improper combining of two bargaining unit positions. Another concern relates to whether director titles are equal. Seidel cannot file an IP until there are new hires in the jobs.

VII. Committee Reports

E Briere reported that the Women's Concerns Committee met and is planning fall events. Nuala Drescher was invited to address the campus in November and Drescher Award recipients will discuss what the award meant for their careers. Funding may be requested to assist with some events. The committee's survey will not be ready until fall.

Meeting adjourned 2:15pm.

Minutes submitted by J Harton.