



PPE From AFT National



Keith Petit (left) from logistics management helps Bill Garrity and Chris DeFrancesco unload a delivery of 14,000 surgical masks and 800 face shields June 2. The American Federation of Teachers invested \$3 million to supply PPE for its members throughout the country. (Photos by Ivonne Hamm)

About That Raise...



As you likely are aware, there is a growing voice in opposition to the contractual raises for state employees due next month.

This is one of those times when it's important to know where your lawmakers stand. Do they blame us for the state's financial challenges from this public health crisis? Or do they respect the work we've done to mitigate its effects? Are they aware that the same SEBAC 2017 agreement already had saved taxpayers \$1.7 billion before anyone had even heard of COVID-19, and is projected to save \$24 billion over 20 years? Do they know you're in their district and you plan to vote?

Find your lawmakers and how to reach them at bit.ly/UHPlawmakers.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



4 Years in, Much More to Do

First, a point of personal privilege: With this newsletter, we are completing four years as a team in UHP leadership. **Ivonne Hamm, Michelle Proper, Laura Didden, Shawn Brown, Robin Addison, Chris DeFrancesco** and myself. July 2016 we did not have a newsletter, but since then, we've kept you informed every month without fail. With our other officers, **Doug Kingsbury, Ray Bennettson, Jean Morningstar,** and **Dawn Thomas,** we will continue to fight to uphold the UHP contract. On to the meat and potatoes:

COVID at UConn Health: Thank you for all you've done and continue to do. Our numbers continue to go down, that's a great thing. We had discussions with management and as most of you know, the on-call for nursing units has stopped; those members who were redeployed are back in their home units (mostly) and we are trying to get back to normal. But a word of caution, I fear for the second or third waves. Do what you can do to protect yourselves. Hopefully we will be in a better spot when the second wave hits us.

Arbitrations coming: We have two separate grievances that were denied by HR at step 2. One is over hazard pay/emergency coverage, the other is over hiring nurses at clinical ladder 3 level. We have voted to take these to the next step, which is arbitration. In each case, a neutral third party will hear both sides and make a ruling.

July's raises: We know there are elected officials and others out there who believe we should give up those raises. It seems the governor has given up seeking a delay. We are front-line workers and first responders. You do not get to call us heroes in one breath and then stab us in the back in the next. In this newsletter, there is a call to action, to get in touch with your legislator to give him/her that message.

Thank you all for everything you do. Hopefully very soon we can all be together again.

—In Solidarity, Bill Garrity

Benefits Update

HEP on Hold, Other Timetables Impacted



The Office of the State Comptroller is out with several changes to our benefit plans in acknowledgement of the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Health Enhancement Program (HEP) requirements are suspended until further notice.
- Open enrollment for state employee medical and dental plans is **on hold until September**. You'll stay in the plan you're currently on until Oct. 1; all rates will remain the same until then.
- A window to add or remove dependents is open through the end of June and will be effective July 1.
- There are several modifications to the DCAP and MEDFLEX program.

We're aggregating the latest information at bit.ly/2005openenroll.

Zooming With Rep. Hayes

While waiting in the well of the House to vote on the Heroes Act May 15, Congresswoman **Jahana Hayes** held a web conference with the UConn Health Labor Coalition. UHP and locals representing other fellow UConn Health employees reminded Hayes about our members' contributions during the pandemic and advocated for UConn Health as a public institution serving the public good. **Dawn Thomas**, our VP for political activities, and **Bill Garrity** represented UHP on the call.



REMINDER: For up-to-date resources on the COVID-19 situation: bit.ly/2003UHPcovid. Report symptoms or potential exposures to the COVID-19 call center: 860-679-3199.

A Voice From Our Front Lines Goes National



Trung Le (right), one of our front-line nurses, is back on the job after recovering from COVID-19. Before he got sick, he took part in a virtual town hall with former Vice President Biden, stressing the importance of protecting health care providers, helping them with child care, and providing mental health resources from dealing with a pandemic. During his recovery in isolation he shared his perspective with AFT Voices: bit.ly/2005TrungAFT. Thank you, Trung, for your dedication to your patients and for your leadership!

Workers' Comp/COVID-19 Guide

Connecticut's essential workers have been going to work, feeding and protecting our communities, and taking care of the sick. These courageous workers have kept our state running during this pandemic, often without adequate personal protective equipment. With thousands of essential workers already having been exposed and potentially infected with the novel coronavirus, if they get sick with COVID-19 on the job, workers should file a workers' compensation claim to protect their rights to access benefits, such as paid healthcare, partial wage replacement and other benefits.

To assist workers in filing a workers' compensation claim related to COVID-19, the Connecticut AFL-CIO has prepared a guide: bit.ly/2005covidwc. It is meant to be a helpful resource for affiliates and their members, but is not intended to be substitute for legal guidance. Workers who need additional assistance should contact their union or an attorney.

—CT AFL-CIO

