



Call for Nominations, Constitutional Amendments Through Feb. 1

It's election time again! Look for the Call for Nominations in your work email. This is an opportunity for members in good standing to be nominated for positions that will be open. This year in the general election we will be electing the following:

Term: July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2025

- **Vice President Tier I**
- **Vice President Tier II**
- **Chief Steward**
- **Vice President for Community Outreach**



In a special election, held at the same time, we will be electing officers to complete the terms of the following vacant positions:

- **First Vice President for Collective Bargaining** (July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023)
- **Recording Secretary** (April 1, 2022, through June 20, 2023)

There will also be a handful of opportunities for more union involvement by members who might be interested in becoming a delegate to various conventions and councils. **Delegate nominations** this year will be for:

- AFT CT Convention
- AFT National Convention
- CT AFL-CIO Convention
- AFT Executive Council
- Eastern CT Area Labor Federation
- Greater Bristol Labor Council
- Greater Hartford Labor Council

Nominations for both officers and delegates must be turned in to the UHP office by the close of the first business

day in February, which will be 4 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 1.

This will also be the opportunity to propose any UHP constitutional amendments. **Any proposed amendment also must be received by 4 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 1.**

Watch the [UHP website](#), [Facebook page](#), rep meetings, information tables, and the newsletter for additional information about this year's elections.

If you have any questions regarding the election and the positions open for nomination, or you have an interest in being on the Election Committee, please email ldidden@uhp3837.com.

**—Laura Didden, Recording Secretary
Elections Committee Chair**

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Drinking From a Fire Hose

So much has happened this past month!

Contract Negotiations

After our Dec. 21 members-only contract negotiations email update, I wanted to say thank you to all the people who have posted on Facebook, commented, or written to Dr. Andy or Karen Buffkin. I was copied on a couple of those emails. Since then, and because of your help,

Continued on page 2



Talk to the Hand

See what Chief Steward Jean Morningstar has to say about the latest gesture of appreciation from UConn Health leadership. (*'WOW!' page 3.*)

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

(continued from front page)

we finally at least have gotten some additional dates at the bargaining table. We are still very far apart on many issues and some things may be impossible to move on. We are seeing stall tactics from management.

Mandatory Booster

However, as I'm sure everyone has seen, with the governor's new executive order wanting to mandate the COVID booster, that became a priority for UConn Health to negotiate. We did meet with HR, and nothing has been decided or signed as of this writing. We will not make the governor's Feb. 11 deadline in the executive order.

UConn is trying to put together another program to track reporting of the boosted employees. I'd like to again make my position crystal clear: I believe in vaccines, I believe in the boosters, I think everyone should be vaccinated, and as health care workers and educators we should want to be vaccinated. I draw the line there, as *I do not feel anyone should be forced to take the vaccine.*

With all that said, UHP has a 93% vaccination rate. The original agreement we signed had both religious and medical waivers in place along with deferments for people who had been sick, pregnant or breastfeeding. And in the months since we started the original vaccine agreement, no UHP members have had any disciplinary action placed upon them.

Coalition Bargaining

Back to contract negotiations briefly, SEBAC (the State Employees Bargaining Agent Coalition) has had talks about the possibility of coalition bargaining for a wage package, because individual bargaining units are not making any headway in negotiations. Legislatively with the upcoming session being a short session, there are discussions of trying

to get one package through and voted on at the General Assembly, instead of having them try to pass through and vote on 35 separate contracts.

Engaging Our Lawmakers

I got to speak to the chairs of the Higher Ed Committee recently; anti privatization is always first and foremost on my list when

talking with them, followed closely by maintaining or increasing block grant funding and our pension and health care. However this time we talked about staff burnout: retirements (early of otherwise), people just quitting, replacement factors and subcontracting, and the state of health care in general.

Telecommuting

You may have seen, SEBAC has won an arbitration case against the state on telecommuting. But that agreement does not include UHP/UConn. We have a full labor board hearing on whether UHP can be included in that agreement from the 2017 SEBAC agreement and a separate SEBAC grievance on allowing us in the agreement.

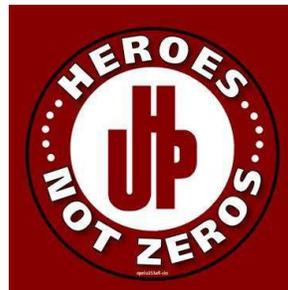
What's Next?

There are no easy answers for what we are going through right now. We — the full UHP membership — will continue to work toward those answers. We are all tired. We have been going through this hell for far too long. Take care of yourself, for if you do not you will not be able to care for others. If our employer can't see what great people we have here, what sacrifices we have put forth, they don't deserve us.

Get your booster, stay safe.

Until next time,

—In solidarity, Bill Garrity





‘WOW!’ — Gesture of Gratitude Misses the Mark

*Editorial by Jean Morningstar,
Chief Steward*

How many of you remember WOW bars? How about those PAWS for your badges? Those were really nice, weren't they? Your coworkers and/or managers could nominate you for doing something above and beyond and you might receive a WOW candy bar or a PAWS if you were part of something outstanding that benefitted UConn Health. I always thought they were a nice gesture, albeit skewed to the "favorite" employees, but nice nonetheless.

So, here we are at the start of a new year after one of the most challenging years in the majority of our lives, physically and mentally. We learned to wear masks, social distance, order more takeout, homeschool the kids, and try to stay healthy in the face of a pandemic that just turned our lives upside down. For those UHP members who were able to telecommute and had managers who were reasonable, we are grateful. It certainly helped UConn Health survive and let people navigate those uncertain times with their families. I know homeschooling your children and making it work was difficult, but you did it and I congratulate you.

Now let me discuss those members who were not as fortunate. These are the members who had to come into the workplace not knowing or understanding how much danger they were facing. This was very scary because the knowledge of the consequences of this virus was changing day to day, if not minute to minute. **In spite of that, you did it.** You came to work and you took care of those very sick and dying patients. You held their hands as they struggled to breathe and said goodbye to their families on video. You wore masks for several days in a row, which everyone knows was not a safe or even a good idea, but you had no choice. You worked short staffed and you did it day after day after day, and many of those days were 16 hours long. You did it while management told you it was not enough and you needed to work even more. So, you did! You had

to work extra shifts and meanwhile you had to distance yourselves from your loved ones as you were afraid for their health. This took a tremendous toll on you.

You had the right to expect that a management that gave some people at the top extra compensation for their effort would reward your efforts also. You watched other hospitals give their employees bonuses and pay raises. UConn Health rewarded you, didn't they? I mean, they did offer you a cookie as a "thank you." Maybe some of you even got pizza once in a while. Did they grant you a vacation day? NO! Did they question you when you were so tired and drained that you took a personal or sick day? YES! Management also said you were not deserving of hazard pay and **went to arbitration to fight giving it to you.**

While all of this was going on, management was calling you heroes and thanking you over and over and over. I don't know about all of you, but the blatant disrespect and tone deafness of this UConn Health senior administration is just mind-boggling. Offering zeroes for pay raises and continuing to short staff everywhere is blatant disrespect. When can we get an administration that understands that to "staff by using overtime" is shortsighted and bound to fail? I am stunned that this is happening over and over.

Now, I get to the icing on the cake!!! In December, out came the cookie trays again, and if you were very special (it wasn't everyone), they gave you a gift. You got a **MEDAL**. A medal with a hand and some words about how we are all in this together or some such BS. A medal?? SERIOUSLY, a medal!!! Not a free meal? How about a mask? How about a cup of coffee or even a candy bar? As well-intended as it may have been, this has to be the most demeaning, disrespectful, and completely tone-deaf gift I have ever seen. If the administration cannot recompense those who went above and beyond with money, then how about something respectful? Some recipients have altered the hands on those medals and who could blame them? All I can end with is WOW!



Quick Hits: What You Should Know

Ivonne Hamm, 1st VP for Collective Bargaining

FMLA and Emergency Staffing/Mandation

When members with approved FMLA that restricts them from working more than their regularly scheduled hours are still mandated, hours are counted as FMLA hours, and the member is placed on the bottom of the emergency staffing/mandatory staffing list.

Family Sick Time

Please note, UConn Health does not recognize routine visits, wellness visits, or routine dental cleanings for dependents or immediate family members as an event covered by family sick time. These appointments are covered for the employee (page 17 Article 11.1 f. 1).



Committee Roundup

The **Scholarship Subcommittee** is meeting via Zoom **Thursday, Jan. 20**, at 5:30 p.m. Interested in being reader this year? Email Shaw Brown, VP for Membership Activities (sbrown@uhp3837.com). (Note, members who are applicants or whose dependents are applicants cannot also be readers.)

The **Finance Committee** has prepared a fiscal 2023 budget proposal for Executive Committee's consideration. The final, approved UHP budget will be available for viewing by any member at the annual business convention or by appointment. Email Treasurer Michelle Proper (mdproper@uhp3837.com) to arrange.

The **Steward Committee**, which regularly meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month, has moved the January meeting to **Monday, Jan. 24**, at 5:30 p.m.

The **Communications Committee** is meeting via zoom **Thursday, Jan. 27**, at 6 p.m. New members are welcome. Email VP for Communication Chris DeFrancesco (cdefrancesco@uhp3837.com) for more information.

Union Rep Assembly is meeting every other month via Zoom, convening next on **Tuesday, Feb. 15**, at 5:30 p.m. If you don't know who your union rep is, or are interested in becoming a union rep, please email VP Tier I (salaried) Employees Ray Bennettson (bennettson@comcast.net) or VP Tier II (hourly) Employees Peter Zarabozo (vptier2@uhp3837.com).

The **Elections Committee** will be busy with the 2022 officer and delegate elections (see Page 1) for the rest of the winter. Email ldidden@uhp3837.com for more information.

ON THE SCHEDULE

Jan. 18, 5 p.m., Webex

Contract Negotiations

Jan. 20, 5:30 p.m., Zoom

Scholarship Committee

Details: sbrown@uhp3837.com

Monday, Jan. 24, 5:30p, Zoom

Steward Committee

Jan. 25, 5p, Zoom

AFT CT Intro to Union

Communications Webinar

aftct.org/Jan_22_Union_Comm_Wbnr

Jan. 25, 5 p.m., Webex

Contract Negotiations

Jan. 26, 5 p.m., Webex

Contract Negotiations

Jan. 27, 6 p.m., Zoom

Communications Committee

Details: cdefrancesco@uhp3837.com

Feb. 1, 4 p.m.

Call for Nominations closes

Details: ldidden@uhp3837.com

Feb. 14, 5:30p, UHP office

Executive Committee

Feb. 15, 5:30p, Zoom

Union Rep Assembly

UHP online calendar: bit.ly/uhpcal