



Ray's Retiring

Ray Bennettson, UHP elected officer for the last 11 years, is retiring from UConn Health after nearly three decades of service.



Ray at the 2010 AFT convention in Seattle

Ray arrived in 1996 as a facilities operations manager, and started his involvement with UHP on the negotiating team the following year, and as a steward the year after that.

He first joined the executive committee when he was elected chief steward in 2013.

"I was a steward at my last job [at Ensign Bickford]," Ray says. "It's always been a matter of protecting myself and my fellow employees."

In 2015 Ray switched to his current officer role, VP for Tier I (salaried) employees.

"Ray has been an integral part of UHP since his arrival at UConn Health," says Chief Steward **Jean Morningstar**. "He has served in so many roles that it is hard to pinpoint what has had the most impact. In addition to being an officer, steward, and rep, he's been a member of the reclass committee and on every negotiating team since arriving, all while working full-time. To say his retirement will create a void in UHP is an understatement. We will sorely miss him and his wise judgment."

For a large portion of his UHP activism, Ray was involved with the State Employees Bargaining Agency Coalition (SEBAC) and

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

UHP Represents

Spring and summer start our convention season, and as usual, UHP represents. We are one of the largest locals in AFT CT and we normally bring the most people.



We had a delegation of 24 at the **AFT CT convention**, where I was proud to present our 1st VP, **Shawn Brown**, with the Unionist of the Year Award. I was asked to be a panel speaker on membership engagement and organizing. See our home page for more on the convention.

It is with some trepidation I have to say goodbye to one of our longest-standing officers. **Ray Bennettson is retiring**. His contributions to the membership over the past 28 years can never be measured. Ray, from the heart, I will miss you.

And, the **Cain Brothers' report** has finally been released. It is a long read, but there is very little new in there that we did not already know, including more attacks on public employees. As I told the CT Mirror, "Taxpayer investments should not be used to boost private profits at the expense of patient care and over my dead body would I allow my members, who provide vital services at an affordable rate, to lose the critical benefits they rely on so that they can show up to work each day."

Pay attention to the news reports floating around about the report or responses about it. Gov. Lamont has apparently decided to let Dr. Agwunobi have input. This fight to keep UConn Health a public hospital for the public good continues. Let's find out what Dr. Andy 2.0 has to say. Stay tuned.

—In solidarity, Bill Garrity

Summer Lambert Brings Home Organizing Intel

Summer Lambert, our recording secretary, is back from Topeka, Kansas, where she was part of an AFT mobilizing training blitz tasked with organizing state employees in a so-called "right-to-work" state.

"If considering going on a trip like this, be prepared for long hard-working days, also adapting to a lot of different personalities," Summer says. "Once you get that first card signed when you're out door knocking or at a worksite meeting, it makes you want to go get more. Remember, we are all doing the same thing and for the same reason You will definitely be brought out of your comfort zone, but at the end, you will be glad you did."

Scan or click the QR code to hear more from Summer.



Ray

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at the table for a number of key negotiations for the benefit of not just UHP but all state employees.

"Ray is an amazing person, loyal friend and union advocate," says VP for Community Outreach **Robin Washington Addison**. "I'm so proud of his remarkable career at UConn and UHP and everything he has accomplished. His leadership, guidance, commitment and presence will be greatly missed."

"I personally will miss his loyalty and his always judicious and smart counsel," Jean adds. "Ray always said yes when UHP (and I personally) asked for his help."

Ray's accolades include Steward of the Year, the UHP President's Award twice, and the AFT-CT's Soifer Award for Unionist of the Year.

"He will be missed so much," adds President **Bill Garrity**. "He is a man who took pride in what he did, both in his job at UConn Health and his work in UHP."

"It used to be 'fun' to battle with management, but it's just gotten ridiculously stupid, there's no reasoning with them," Ray says. "There used to be give and take, and logic, but now it's often, 'No, because we say no.'"

He offers these parting words of wisdom:

"My experience with management has taught me: I know what they would have done if they could. I know how the people in those positions behave and the choices they make. We're only as strong as everybody who gets involved. The sad part is, people get involved when it affects them. They need to get involved before problems arise."

Ray says his plans for retirement include traveling and spending more time with his grandchildren. His retirement is effective at the end of June.



Ray and Chief Steward Jean Morningstar at our 2018 business convention

ON THE SCHEDULE

Steward Committee

June 25, 5:30p, UHP office

CT AFL-CIO Political Convention

June 27-28, Omni, New Haven

uhp3837.ct.aft.org/events/2406aflcio

Executive Committee

July 8, 5:30p, UHP office

Union Rep Assembly

July 11, 12p, Onyiuke Dining Room

AFT Convention (National)

July 21-25, Houston

uhp3837.ct.aft.org/events/2407afthouston

Special Election VP Tier I

Coming later this year; details to follow

UHP calendar: bit.ly/uhpca