

# NEIU UPI

## Newsletter / Update

### May 2019

#### Summertime...

The Spring 2019 semester has been put to bed (mostly). Here are some things to keep in mind:

May is benefits choice time. Make sure you go online to [MyBenefits.illinois.gov](http://MyBenefits.illinois.gov) to update any items you want to change or continue. See the May 13 email from Mary Griesinger for details.

**DONATE to the Sick Leave Bank!** Benefits Choice time is your opportunity to donate – initial donation is 2 days, and thereafter 1 day annually.

**Instructors not teaching summer**—We worked with the administration to make sure that last year's fiasco with access to email, computers, and your NEIU identity generally is not repeated! If you suffer a loss of access to NEIUport, email, or D2L, please let Nancy know ASAP.

We were NOT able to fix the problem of instructors not teaching summer school disappearing from the campus directory, but will continue to press them on that.

#### April House of Delegates Report

In mid-April about a dozen of your elected House of Delegates representatives attended the annual meeting of the UPI Local 4100. The meeting started with workshops that we split up to attend: a Student Debt Workshop, one on using FOIA requests to advance union work, and one on communication. We'll be using some of the information gained in the coming year.

**Legislative Updates:**  
Nick Yelverton, the IFT Legislative Director (i.e., our lobbyist in Springfield) and Dan Montgomery, IFT President, gave some insights on what's happening there.

The FAIR TAX proposal is going to be a priority this year, so watch for calls to be involved in supporting this big change in Illinois. It will require a constitutional amendment, but labor and social justice groups all believe it is necessary to be able to adequately fund all of the public goods that we need in this state, including higher education! We heard that this can be done without jeopardizing the constitutional provision that protects our pensions from being diminished.

The pending disaster of Tier II pensions is also on the agenda, although the specifics were unclear at this time. UPI / IFT are supporting repealing the law passed last year that limited the amount of salary increases that could apply to pension contributions.

A good chunk of the HOD was a POWER meeting – mixed table conversations with our colleagues from other UPI chapters about our wins and

challenges, and then chapter meetings about the same, with brainstorming plans for addressing challenges. Hearing the differences and similarities from different campuses was useful.

Our chapter group had a lively discussion about working to make our union a location where we do more to address diversity and inclusion, especially of marginalized – instructors, faculty of color, and ASPs.



#### Our Contract and Negotiations

Our bargaining team (Cyndi Moran, Jerry Moreno, Nik Hoel, and Stephen Frankel) began meetings with the administration on April 1 (no fooling).

The Exec Board along with a few additional members are acting as a support team to the bargaining team. They have been called on for consultations already, and that will continue for the period of bargaining.

#### UPI Technology

As you know, we have an on-campus email list and an off-campus email list. If you never receive off-campus emails (must be a non-NEIU email address), then contact Nancy Matthews and Chris Schroeder (our tech guru). Chris and Nancy have been slowly working to update the website. Thanks to Ahmed Khaled and Mary Thill for consulting with us on this earlier this year!

#### FAST Fund

Our FAST Fund – the emergency fund for students we started this year with a matching grant from Believe in Students – has given 15 students grants so far (from November to May), totaling \$6,544. Applications are continuing to come in as summer session gears up.

If you need to share the application with a student, it is now available on our UPI chapter website: <http://www.upi4100atneiu.org/about-the-fast-fund/>

We still need to raise the rest of the matching grant! Please participate in funding this effort to help our students by contributing to the FAST Fund! <http://www.upi4100atneiu.org/ways-to-donate/>

