

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by *Nicholas C. Yovnello*

Rowan issues layoff notices

The richest of the nine state colleges and universities has resorted to layoffs in order to balance its budget. The Rowan academic community was stunned and angered by this move.

The other eight state colleges and universities have indicated that they will take less drastic measures, such as suspending searches and raising tuition, to deal with their budget problems. No doubt Rowan will use similar strategies in its efforts cut costs. So why the need for layoffs?

The layoffs came as a complete surprise. In the past, when budget crises loomed, the Administration consulted the Rowan University Senate and worked with its budget committee to arrive at a solution that the entire academic community could support.

The President's demand for layoffs is particularly outrageous because, immediately prior to announcing the layoffs, the President convinced the Board of Trustees to give him a salary increase and a bonus. President Farish's salary increase of 11% is well above the average 4.7% increases received by college administrators nationwide (The Chronicle, March 26, 2002). (Rumor has it that a number of upper level managers also received bonuses. As of this writing, the rumor cannot be verified). At that same meet-

ing, the Board and the Administration indicated that the Governor's 5% budget cut for FY 2002 would be devastating. Yet, there was no mention of layoffs. When were the layoffs discussed? At a special session? If so, the Board violated New Jersey's Open Public Meetings Act. Shades of Enron!

President Farish's assertion that the layoff of 18 people was absolutely required to bring Rowan's budget in line with Governor McGreevey's 5% budget cut request is simply not believable. If the University is looking for cuts, why not eliminate the speaker series instead? Speakers are paid \$10,000 to appear. There are more possibilities. Construction projects could be deferred, the plan to purchase an apartment complex could be delayed, reserves could be tapped, and yes, the President could defer his salary increase and bonus.

Rowan's failures in handling personnel matters also contributed to its budget woes. For example, Rowan will soon be charged a penalty for its failure to timely enroll an employee in PERS. That penalty could be as much as \$5,000. When every penny counts and jobs are at stake, such errors are inexcusable.

Rowan has not made a credible case that layoffs are unavoidable. It has not



Nicholas C. Yovnello

shown that it has no other alternatives. It hasn't even shown that its finances are in such dire straits. Does it have reserves? Most institutions have such funds. How large are these reserves? Why can't these reserves be used to avoid layoffs? Why can't income from the Rowan Foundation be used to fill the budget gap? The Union is still waiting for hard answers.

The Council leadership and the Rowan Local will take the offensive. In meetings with area legislators to discuss layoffs, its leaders will ask for checks on administrative and fiscal accountability. We will ask the Labor Committee, the Education Committee and the Budget Committee of both houses of the State Legislature to undertake an in depth investigation of the University's finances. One way or another, the Union will compel the University to provide answers to our questions about why it is the only one of our institutions to announce layoffs.

We simply will not tolerate them.



Council endorses remedy for New Jersey's budget woes

Rather than passively accept whatever comes our way, the Council has decided on a proactive approach to protecting our interests. It has endorsed a plan that our sister state employee union the CWA (Communication Workers of America) formulated to find the \$6 billion the Governor tells us he will need to plug the budget hole — **without layoffs or cuts in government services.**

New Jersey is in dire financial distress and Governor McGreevey has administered strong medicine to cure the patient. The previously announced 5% cut in state spending includes a \$64.2 million cut in aid to public higher education. Unfortunately, the measures that McGreevey announced in his February 15 budget message are only the beginning.

McGreevey's proposals:

Because the State will be \$3 billion in the red by the end of the current fiscal year on June 30th, McGreevey proposed to balance the budget by:

- using \$740 million of the State's \$1.2 billion surplus.

- diverting \$325 million from the surplus in the Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund.

- diverting \$50 million from the surplus in the Temporary Disability Insurance Fund.

- diverting an additional \$74 million from the surpluses of the targeted funds.

- declaring a tax amnesty that would hopefully bring in \$150 million from delinquent taxpayers wishing to avoid interest and penalties.

- diverting \$327.6 million from the surplus in the State Health Benefits Plan that is used to pay retiree health benefits.

In addition to these cost saving efforts, the Governor will take advantage of \$443 million in savings from spending freezes that former Acting Governor Donald DiFrancesco ordered in 2001. McGreevey will also seek to cut state spending

for a number of programs including Medicaid reimbursement (\$27.5 million), New Jersey Transit (\$5.6 million) and for beach maintenance along the Jersey Shore (\$25 million). By delaying school construction projects, McGreevey hopes to save an additional \$100 million.

Even if the legislature approves all of McGreevey's proposals to close the gap in the 2002 budget, the worst is yet to come. More trouble is looming. McGreevey has warned that a \$6 billion budget shortfall is projected for the next fiscal year.

The CWA alternative budget states that the State should:

- issue bonds worth \$2 billion against the \$7.6 billion New Jersey will receive from the tobacco settlement between now and FY 2005.

- divert a portion of the Unemployment Insurance Tax to the Health Care Subsidy Fund, for a savings of \$335 to \$600 million. Since the Unemployment Insurance Fund currently enjoys a \$3.25 billion surplus, this can be done without any reduction in benefits.

- raise an additional \$900 million by suspending the New Jersey Saver Rebate Program.

- increase the gas tax by a penny a gallon, add \$.40 per pack in taxes to the cost of a pack of cigarettes and establish a tax amnesty program for another \$900 million in savings.

- obtain additional savings by ending privatization, revamping the State's prescription drug purchase program and continuing to use surpluses that various commissions, authorities and funds maintain.

- use the \$1 billion surplus from the FY 2002 budget.

Naturally there is a margin of error in all these measures, but they show that a solution can be found for the State's fiscal problems without sacrificing our jobs or vital State services.

Your Council will do everything in its power to protect public higher education from irreparable harm and represent our members' interests.

Librarians' and Professional Staff Committees

The Council has several unit-wide committees that bring representatives from all campuses together to discuss common issues and concerns. Two of these are the Librarians' Committee and the Professional Staff Committee. They were formed when a Librarian Representative and a Professional Staff Representative to the Council were added to the Council's Executive Committee in the mid-1980s.

The Librarians' and Professional Staff representatives to the Council are elected annually by the delegates to the Council. Each chairs the committee that functions as the voice of their con-

stituencies. The current Librarian representative to the Council and chair of the Librarians' Committee is Maureen Gorman, a reference librarian at The College of New Jersey. The current Professional Staff representative to the Council and chair of the Professional Staff Committee is Robert Murphy from Media Services at William Paterson University. Each committee is made up of one representative from each campus. The committees meet 2-4 times during the academic year.

Besides providing a way for librarians and professional staff to express their concerns to the Union, the com-

Parking mess at MSU

Parking has long been a problem at MSU. Faculty and staff have lodged endless complaints about the lack of spaces and the extraordinary measures they sometimes have to go to get a space at certain hours of the day. Council staff, who visit all the campuses, know what MSU faculty and staff are facing and sympathize. At no other campus do visitors like Council staff have to go to such great lengths to make sure they can find parking in time for their appointments. They must arrive at the campus at least one half hour before a scheduled appointment or risk being shut out or being

late.

Recently the University compounded the space problem by instituting an outrageous schedule of fines. Under this schedule, fines escalate rapidly. A first offense carries a \$25.00 fine, the second offense costs \$50.00, and a third offense runs a whopping \$75.00. This is quite a change from the past when all fines were set at \$15.00.

Why such a steep schedule? At the same time that MSU set up these fines, it outsourced parking services and hired an outfit known as Standard Parking part of APCOA/Standard

Committees *(Continued from page 1)*

mittees have studied the working conditions of the members they represent, and have, over the years, undertaken several special projects.

Librarians' Committee

The Librarians' Committee has conducted studies of the use of titles in the various libraries, promotion patterns and working conditions. Its members provided invaluable assistance to Senior Staff Representative Barbara Hoerner in securing the reevaluation of Librarian titles. Over a period of two years, from 1992-1994, several committee members worked with Barbara to change their job descriptions to reflect the vastly different duties associated with being a librarian that had developed since 1970, when the pay ranges for their titles were set. They helped write the narratives that supported the reevaluation, and worked on the job specifications that formed the basis of a new evaluation of their duties. Librarians at Paterson, Rowan and TCNJ made arrangements for Barbara to visit their libraries for the purpose of conducting detailed interviews with librarians in the different titles. The reevaluation was successful. The salary ranges for all librarian titles were increased by two: Assistant Director went from Range 27 to 29; Li-

brarian I went from Range 25 to 27; Librarian II went from Range 22 to 24 and Librarian III was reevaluated from Range 20 to 22.

Professional Staff Committee

The Professional Staff Committee has studied identical jobs across campuses for the purpose of gathering information to support reclassifications. Committee members have also visited the campuses to assist in membership recruitment. Recent meetings have provided a forum for an exchange of proposals for local negotiations on compensatory time, Performance-Based Promotions and reclassification procedures. During the last negotiations, committee members were instrumental in pushing for new contract language on reclassification. The result was a major restructuring of Article XVI in the State-Union **Agreement** that governs professional staff working conditions.

Both committees are now reviewing past contract demands and working on new demands for the negotiations that begin in January 2003.

Librarians and members of the Professional Staff should feel free to contact their campus representatives to these Committees.

Parking Mess *(Continued from page 1)*

Parking, Inc. According to the University's contract with Standard Parking, Standard Parking will receive a \$67,800 "management fee" per year. Certainly the steep fines would help defray the University's costs.

The University did not consult with the local Union over its plans to hike the fines. Nor did it let the Union know that, even though it had ostensibly outsourced the parking and traffic function, it would advertise for a Director of Parking Services to oversee the whole operation as well. According to the University's ad, it would seem that this individual will do the same things that MSU is paying Standard Parking to do: direct and manage the University's parking services.

Local 1904 is actively challenging the new parking regime. It used the New Jersey Right to Know Act to ob-

tain copies of MSU's contracts, past and present. It asked the Union's attorney, Mary Crangle, to review them and MSU's authority for instituting the fines and booting.

Attorney Crangle found that the New Jersey statutes governing penalties for violations of parking and traffic regulations on the grounds of state institutions limit any fines assessed to \$15.00. She also questioned the University's having non-police personnel perform police functions.

On April 4, 2002, Attorney Crangle wrote to MSU president Susan Cole notifying her that the fines and booting currently in effect were illegal and that MSU had no authority to use non-police personnel to perform police functions. As of this writing, the University has not replied. Look for an update in the next issue of the **VOICE**.

Kean adjunct faculty local becomes a presence on the campus

In November 2000, Kean adjunct faculty chose a new group of officers to staff the Kean University Adjunct Faculty Federation (KUAFF), AFT Local 6024. Since then, the KUAFF has made great strides in providing effective representation for Kean's adjunct faculty.

Kathleen Mary Henderson, an adjunct in the Physical Education Department, was elected president. Kathleen, known as "Kate" immediately went to work to recruit an Executive Board. Together, Kate and her officers, 1st Vice President Lillian Kartischko (Fine Arts), 2nd Vice President and PAC Legislative Chair William Lipkin (Political Science), Secretary Arlene Schor (Fine Arts) and Treasurer Richard Conti (Psychology) put the Local on a sound financial footing and straightened out records and files. By February 2001, the Local had secured a large office on Kean's East Campus. Over the next three months, the Local acquired furniture and office equipment and now has 3 computers and printers, multiple phones, a fax, file cabinets, storage cabinets, tables, desks and even artwork decorating the walls. The office also has a lounge area with all the amenities of home, including a refrigerator and microwave. It has become a place to relax between classes, to talk shop, and gather for small meetings. In February 2002, the Local hired a part-time Administrative Assistant.

Once it had a functioning space, the Local got down to organizing. It started a monthly newsletter "The Adjunct Insider." Following some distribution problems, the Local went electronic. Now it publishes a monthly e-newsletter. Next, it divided up the University into the Five Colleges and appointed Liaisons to communicate

with the adjunct faculty in each area. Once that was done, it began recruiting Department Representatives for each Department. To date it has 32 active Department Representatives out of a possible 42. The Local has asked the Reps to keep the union informed as to who is teaching what within a department, monitor changes going on within various disciplines, recruit new members and keep the KUAFF Board informed of campus concerns. The Reps have done a good job: over 60% of the current adjunct faculty are members of KUAFF.

Local 6024 also has been able to get together a full complement of Council delegates. They are, in addition to Kate, John Tooker, George Pierson, T.C. Hagaman, Bill Lipkin and Lillian Kartischko (Alternate). The Local has several committees, such as Legislative Action, Membership and Health and Safety.

In the past two years, the Local participated in Campus Equity Week, sent representatives to Trenton to testify at hearings on legislation affecting adjunct faculty, filed an Unfair Practice Charge concerning the University's failure to negotiate with the Local over adjunct compensation, secured full library privileges for adjunct faculty and obtained for them the right to have Kean University business cards. The Local's next goal is to get a Tuition Waiver Program for adjunct faculty.

It's been a number of years since the locals representing full-time faculty were start-ups and had to create smoothly functioning locals from scratch. In one year and 3 months Local 6024 has accomplished a lot.

As for the future, Kate says "We've have only just begun...Look out, we are quick learners..."

Here's a list of Committee Representatives:

Librarians

Edison - none
Kean - R. Davis X 2282
MSU - M. Chow X 4195
NJCU - S. Kirven X 3471
Ramapo - I. Kuchta X7577
RSC - C. Gutierrez X 4857
Rowan - W. Garrabrant X 4979
TCNJ - M. Gorman X 2263
WPUNJ - J. Matthew X 3192

Professional Staff

Edison - D. Trucksess X 8448
Kean - L. Bradbury 629-7079
D. Farrokh X 2413
MSU - Y. Hall X 4409
NJCU - S. Harnick X 3585
Ramapo - Vacant
RSC - P. Shields X 4987
Rowan - J. Peterson X 4596
TCNJ - J. Valentin X 2718
WPU - R. Murphy X 2985

More benefits for you

Union Plus

Union Plus designs programs that help union members purchase consumer goods at discount prices. Union Plus is able to offer a variety of high quality, discounted products and services **exclusively** to working families because it uses the collective buying power of unions.

The Union Plus program offers:

Union Plus credit card — competitive rate and useful features, including strike skip payment.

Loan Program — low rates, longer terms.

Car Rentals — up to 15% savings.

North American Van Lines — savings on interstate moves.

Mortgage & Real Estate — easier, more affordable buying, selling and refinancing.

Legal Service — discounted legal service.

Education Services — information on higher education loans and resources.

Health Savings — savings on most health care needs.

Flower Service — send flowers for less.

Visit the Union Plus site at: www.unionprivilege.com to learn more about the ways your union purchasing power can get you the products and services you and your family need at discount prices.