

## GIVE CREDIT WHEN CREDIT IS DUE — AND ADMONISHMENT WHERE WARRANTED

### President's Report Nicholas C. Yovnelo

I want to commend eight of our nine institutions for living up to the letter and spirit of the July 2009 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on furloughs and wage deferrals. They have balanced their budgets and maintained the integrity of their programs while avoiding layoffs for this fiscal year despite deep State budget cuts.



The administration and board of trustees of Kean University are the only ones of the nine institutions to give notice that at the expiration of the MOA it will be laying off bargaining unit employees (see page 3 for more on this) It alone was unwilling to be as resourceful as its sister institutions in readjusting its financial priorities to protect its employees. This is the same administration that has gone out of its way to disrupt the lives and careers of its workforce and the education of its students by eliminating academic departments and programs. How is it possible that the other eight institutions can manage their fiscal affairs without adversely disrupting the lives of its workforce and students while Kean University cannot? Kean University: Welcome to the public higher education Hall of Shame.

However, I must admonish all of our institutions for the aid and comfort they have given to Governor Christie, the sworn enemy of the public sector. For example, in February 2010, the New Jersey President's Council issued a report "*Regulatory Relief and Unfunded Mandates*". This report contains a wish list of changes that include breaking up our bargaining unit, eliminating pensions for adjunct faculty, revising the State Health Benefit Plan, eliminating civil service for classified employees and restricting the applicability of the prevailing wage law in construction projects.

Six months later, on October 6, 2010, the New Jersey News Room ran a Commentary by Darryl Greer, CEO of the New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities, in which he reiterated portions of the February President's Council Report. (See <http://www.newjerseynewsroom.com/commentary/several-of-christies-took-kit-reforms-will-help-nj-colleges>) Mr. Greer's comments regarding civil service and centralized bargaining are an attempt by the State colleges/universities to eliminate the last vestiges of central accountability. If only he was half as forceful in protesting Christie's cuts to the higher education budget.

Not only have the President's Council and the New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities failed to aggressively lobby for restoration of the Governor's budget cuts, they have taken an active role in advocating for Governor Christie's attack on collective bargaining and employee benefits. This is the same governor who has unmercifully cut their budgets!

The presidents proclaim to their faculty leadership and the leadership of the unions on their campuses that they would do right by their employees if they were bargaining directly. The state college/university presidents want to negotiate separate contracts with individual campus unions, but they have not considered the implications. If the State already fails to fully fund the State-wide contracts the Council negotiates with the Governor's Office of Employee Relations, why would it fund agreements that it has no say in? Will the State pay for the new layer of managers each institution will inevitably hire to negotiate and administer their separate labor agreements? Separate negotiations are the road to ruin for both parties, only the college presidents are too short-sighted and power-hungry to see it.

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## President's Report

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Negotiated salary increases are only a relatively small part of State college/university budgets. The presidents complain that negotiated salary increases are not fully funded but ignore the hundreds of millions of dollars worth of deferred maintenance that the State has also not funded. Furthermore, the presidents take no responsibility for running up excessive debt service that has eaten into the operating budgets of their institutions. According to a Moody's Investor Service report dated July 5, 2010, the median ratio of debt to revenue for New Jersey public universities is 1.4x, nearly three times the national median of .5x.

Governor Christie and his allies in the Legislature are playing a shell game. On the one hand, in the pre K-12 sector, they are calling for shared services, merger of school districts and a centralized statewide salary guideline for teachers. On the other hand, he is simultaneously proposing to de-centralize bargaining in the public higher education sector. This makes no fiscal sense and has other harmful implications. In fact, it is the state-wide salary schedule the Council has negotiated over many years that has been critical in reducing disparity in pay and academic rank based on gender, race and ethnicity.

The governor fashions himself a reformer. His previous office was that of US Attorney. No doubt he was aware of the corruption scandal at the University of Medicine and Dentistry. Considering that this scandal is widely attributed to the absence of central oversight, why would he be so eager to accede to the State college and university presidents' demands to go down the same road? We are further baffled by the governor's failure to implement S-1609, a bill signed into law by Corzine to promote fiscal accountability. S-1609 was a direct response to the State Commission of Investigation report that documented rampant fiscal malfeasance at UMDNJ, Rutgers and several of the State colleges/universities. If Governor Christie is serious about accountability and transparency, he would be implementing S-1609.

There is a better way. For example, the 12 senior public institutions have different computer systems reporting information in different formats and sometimes use different criteria in reporting statistical data. Years ago, all this

information was retained at a central computer facility. The State and its institutions could achieve significant savings by using a single computer system. It would ease the collecting and reporting of data and the transmittal of student information between institutions. Currently the institutions negotiate separately for these systems, sending personnel out of state for training and investing time and money in attempting to perfect their systems. Centralizing this function would provide for greater financial accountability and reduce costs.

It is high time that the Governor, the Legislature and Commission on Higher Education address some of the concerns raised by the AFT and other campus unions. Indeed, how are out of unit administrators' salaries and compensation packages established? Why is there no statewide salary guideline for out of bargaining unit administrators? In evaluating faculty for re-contracting and promotion, the institutions insist on obtaining input and performance reviews from students, faculty peers, and campus administrators. Why doesn't a comparable process exist for campus administrators? When faculty were furloughed and took a wage freeze, why was there no statewide imposition of the same kind of salary freeze and furlough for administrators? Why did one board of trustees during this period award a deferred retention bonus to its president? Are the compensation packages given upper level administrators truly appropriate to their responsibilities? Some have state-paid housing, automobiles and pension packages that are richer than what any state worker gets as well as country club memberships, entertainment allowances, and a host of other perks. In some cases the total compensation package is hidden from the public view because it is subsidized by foundations or donor gifts. These are funds that could be put to better use updating the technology in the classroom and other student programs.

All sources of institutional income and the total compensation packages of upper management should be made available to the campus unions and to the public. Darryl Greer's and the presidents' statements are an attempt to create a thick veil of secrecy over the operations of our public higher education institutions. When will the NJ Controller conduct forensic audits of its public higher education institutions? **We suggest he starts with Kean University.**

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## MEMBER ASSISTANCE SERVICE AVAILABLE

If you need assistance with stress, mental health problems or substance abuse that is affecting your job performance—or if anyone in your family is experiencing similar problems—help is available from Healthcare Assistance with Member Support (HCAMS). **This is a free**

**service available to the entire bargaining unit**—and yet another good reason to join the UNION.

For more information on this service, please visit the Council's web site at [www.cnjscl.org](http://www.cnjscl.org)

# PROFESSIONAL STAFF at KEAN UNIVERSITY TARGETED for LAYOFF

On September 7, 2010, Kean University notified twelve professional staff members in our AFT unit that they will be laid off in six months. Ten out of the twelve are women and 8 out of twelve are minorities. Although seniority typically protects long term employees from layoff, five out of these 12 have been employed at Kean from 19 to 31 years. Two are elected members of the KFT Executive Board. Some are Kean alumni and have children enrolled there.

Among the positions to be eliminated are four that serve disadvantaged students: The director of the Passport to Academic Success Program, a financial service coordinator and an academic counselor in the EEO program and one of two academic advisors in the Spanish Speaking Program.

Kean University is the only State college/university that has decided to cut costs by laying off employees. In addition to the twelve professional staff in our unit, nine low level managerial employees and four employees in the CWA unit have or will soon lose their jobs.

The egregious nature of these layoffs was highlighted in a protest by the Kean Federation of Teachers Executive Board at the Kean University President's opening day remarks. About twenty-five KFT leaders and Council staff stood outside the main entrance to the University holding signs opposing the layoffs and linking them with reduced student services. One sign publicized the faculty's recent 83% no-confidence vote in the Farahi administration and others contrasted the layoffs at Kean with the absence of layoffs at kindred institutions.

*New Jersey Network* sent a reporter to interview KFT President James Castiglione and a segment appeared on television that evening. Castiglione challenged the layoffs as unjust and



Members of the Kean Federation of Teachers Executive Board Protest Layoffs

easily avoidable. In a show of solidarity, AFT/New Jersey State Federation President William Lipkin and Communications Director Nat Bender also walked the line.

On September 13, 2010, KFT and Council representatives denounced the layoffs at a Kean Board of Trustees meeting. In a statement read by Staff Representative Bennett Muraskin on behalf of President Nicholas Yovnello, Muraskin stated: "The facts show that the ratio of students to professional staff at Kean is already the highest among the state college/university sector, by a significant margin. The same holds true for the ratio of students to full-time faculty. Yet Kean is laying off almost 6% of its professional staff. Under these circumstances, eliminating these 12 professional staff positions will only make a bad situation worse." He also noted that other state colleges/universities with enrollments, tuition rates and debt service comparable to Kean have managed to avoid layoffs entirely and urged the Kean trustees to consult their counterparts at Montclair State University, Rowan University and William Paterson University to see

how it could be done. After this meeting, the Council learned that Rowan plans to hire additional professional staff to serve as academic advisors.

Speakers from the KFT including President James Castiglione and past President Richard Katz noted that the number of full-time faculty at Kean has fallen as enrollment has risen. Bringing in new students, they noted, is not a path to academic success when 75% of the courses are taught by adjuncts and retention rates remain alarmingly low. By Kean's own calculations, it is actually running a surplus, leaving it with no economic justification for reducing staff. "The budget cuts are happening at all institutions," Katz said, "but the institutions have different priorities. The priorities of this administration are public relations, construction and beautification." Castiglione stressed that students in need of academic advisement will be the primary victims.

Over fifty students from the Spanish Speaking Program were also present in a show of support for Miriam Quinones, an academic advisor selected for layoff. Two spokespersons from this assemblage praised the work of the Spanish Speaking program and Quino-



Andrea Evans-Chestnutt (R) & Sharon Foushee speak at emergency KFT meeting

nes and urged the board to reconsider.

At an emergency meeting of the Kean Federation of Teachers called to discuss the layoffs, Quinones commented "I am passionate about what

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## How the Christie “Toolkits” Could Affect YOU

The Governor who bungled and lost \$400,000,000 in federal education grants has also proposed a series of “tool kits” that are a blatant attack on public sector employee unions’ collective bargaining. Governor Christie’s massive attack has been waged through proposed legislation, press conferences and staged “town meetings”. Teachers and other public employees have been systematically scapegoated for the State’s fiscal troubles.

Although not yet in the form of legislation, Christie proposes to shift the burden of an underfunded pension system from the state government (which is entirely to blame for this mess going back to Gov. Whitman) onto the shoulders of the pension’s participants. Other proposals, which are already in the form of legislation, would disrupt a statewide public college/university system of collective bargaining for no substantive reason and place a tight limit on what percentage wage, benefits and other items can be negotiated.

It is difficult to sort out which parts of such a broad-based attack most affect AFT members employed in higher education, but here are the “lowlights”:

**Tampering with Tenure:** A-2964 and more recently from the Democrats A-3357 are bills that would empower each state college/university to add to the five year probationary period faculty must navigate before qualifying for tenure. The current procedure for obtaining tenure is an arduous process that involves five years of annual reviews and requires sustained excellence in teaching, scholarship and service to the college and community. We have heard no complaints from college/university presidents that the existing

five year probationary period is not long enough to enable them to make responsible tenure decisions.

Allowing individual institutions to establish longer probationary periods will undermine faculty morale and cause faculty turnover at those institutions that extend the probationary period the longest. College/University presidents could set arbitrary probationary periods for academic disciplines depending upon which department is favored at the time. Untenured faculty are more easily intimidated by management and are less likely to speak out about issues that affect their campuses.

This bill is not about cost savings but about strengthening management’s hand by weakening faculty rights and job security.

**Breaking up the State college/universities bargaining unit.** Senate Bills 2026/ 2337 and Assembly Bills 2963/ 3219 are a frontal assault on our system of collective bargaining. They would change the entire landscape of labor relations with the State.

The existing state-wide unit was created 40 years ago by the Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC) with the last strike occurring over 30 years ago. PERC has ruled time and time again that broad-based units are in the public interest.

College/university presidents or their designees participate in state-wide bargaining and there have been many provisions negotiated in the master agreement to accommodate their concerns. There is plenty of latitude for local negotiations, which have resulted in hundreds of local letters of agreement.

Currently there are ten sets of negotiations for State college/university employees: AFT College Council (2 units), CWA (4 units), IFPTE (3 units) and campus police unions (2 units). If negotiations were to be conducted locally at each campus, the total number of negotiations would increase to over 90. Simply put, the Christie plan is a recipe for chaos and would be a scandalous waste of money in the current fiscal climate.

The current system provides a uniform salary guide that ensures all employees are fairly compensated. The statewide salary guide and promotional and hiring procedures limit unequal competition between institutions for hiring the same faculty or staff and has helped ensure pay equity for women and minorities.

If contracts are negotiated locally, it will wreck any semblance of a *system* of public higher education in NJ.

**Eviscerating collective bargaining:** S2310/A3283 imposes a 2 % cap on the annual negotiated wage and benefit increases in all public sector collective bargaining agreements. One need only review the increases over our past contracts – both full-time and adjunct agreements – to see the devastating impact of these bills, if enacted. There would literally be nothing left to negotiate in terms of wages and benefits. In fact, annual cost of living increases, which often exceed 2%, would mean wage cuts. In other words, kiss collective bargaining good-bye.

**Pension cuts:** Christie’s proposed changes in the pension systems affect State employees and local teachers en-

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### Kean University Layoffs

(From previous page)

I do. I feel satisfaction when my students learn English adequately, enter the mainstream and do well.” She predicted that “the elimination of my position will have a devastating effect on the students I serve and on the Hispanic community at large...[and]

signals the possible elimination of the entire program.” Sharon Foushee, with thirty-one years’ service to the EEO program at Kean, commented, “I’ve not only worked with freshmen, but generations of freshman whose children then come here. We have a fight in front of us.” Andrea Evans Chestnutt, an EEO counselor, predicted that layoffs in this essential program will

overburden remaining counselors and harm students.

The Council has filed a grievance on behalf of the employees designated for layoff and many of the affected employees have filed their own charges with the Division on Civil Rights alleging gender, race and age discrimination.

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COLLEGE VOICE

# Life after the Memorandum of Agreement on Wage Freezes and Furloughs

*Whereas the current economic crisis has caused an unforeseen and unprecedented reduction in actual State revenues for FY 2009 and in projected revenues for FY 2010;*

So begins the preamble to the Memorandum of Agreement: July 7, 2009 on wage freezes and furloughs between the Council and the State. The document goes on to recognize that the union would agree to do its part — to sacrifice income in the form of wage freezes and unpaid furlough days to save our institutions money and to avoid layoffs and as the agreement states, to achieve “substantial budgetary savings.”

It's pretty obvious that Governor Christie doesn't like public employees. It's also obvious that he has influenced the public's opinion — all negative — about the value of public employees. You cannot open up a NJ newspaper without reading that public employees are greedy and that we haven't shared in or felt the same economic pain that the private sector feels. Yet, we hear little about the sacrifices state workers made last summer by agreeing to a wage freeze and unpaid furlough days which saved our colleges and universities millions of dollars.

Fortunately, while the newly elected Christie administration made noises last spring about not having to honor the

MOA provisions that guaranteed pay increases effective July and September 2010, we received the increases as scheduled. We anticipate that the January 2011 increases will occur in the same manner — without incident.

Unfortunately, our union brothers and sisters at Rutgers University, the Union of Rutgers Administrators (URA) and AAUP/AFT faculty had their negotiated salary increases rescinded in June 2010 and are currently in litigation over the matter. To stay abreast of the Rutgers struggle or to show your support for your union brothers and sisters go to: <http://www.rutgersaaup.org> OR <http://www.ura-aft.org/>

Our MOA on wage freezes and furloughs was supposed to have saved our colleges and universities money so as to avoid layoffs; and it did **except** at one institution. Yes, that's right — Kean University is laying off twelve AFT professional staff members effective in February 2011. This is an outrageous violation of our good-faith willingness to sacrifice and the union is making available all of its resources to fight back against the Farahi administration (see related article on page 3). To find out how you can support your AFT sisters and brothers, call the KFT office at 908-737-3925 or send an email to [kft2187@rcn.com](mailto:kft2187@rcn.com).

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## Christie “Toolkits”

*(From previous page)*

rolled in plans other than the Alternate Benefits Plan. Employees enrolled in PERS or TPAF are looking at increased contributions, rollbacks in cost of living adjustments when they retire and other regressive changes.

**Health benefit cuts:** Christie has stated his intention to increase premium sharing to 30%. No doubt the State will make this demand in the next round of negotiations. Currently you pay 1.5% of your gross salary toward the cost of health benefits, which amounts to under 10% of the total premium, depending on your plan.

Rather than pursuing his anti-labor agenda, Governor Christie would do well to immediately implement S-1609, which former Governor Corzine signed into law as PL 2009, Chapter 208. This bill, which garnered bi-partisan support, implements many of the recommendations in the October 2007 State Commission of Investigation Report entitled “Vulnerable to Abuse: The Im-

portance of Restoring Accountability, Transparency and Oversight to Public Higher Education Governance.” The new law creates a much needed cabinet-level position — the Secretary of Higher Education — to be appointed by the Governor with approval of the Senate, who will serve as executive director of the Commission on Higher Education. The bill also makes various statutory changes to improve the structure, financing and fiscal management of higher education in NJ.

It is worth noting that nothing in the Christie toolkit addresses the indebtedness of the State colleges/universities. A recent Moody's Investor's Service report on our institutions debt is alarming. New Jersey public universities are more leveraged and more reliant on tuition than their peers in other states. A recent report shows that New Jersey's public State colleges and universities have debt-to-operating revenue ratio that is nearly triple the national median. This is a harsh indictment of the financial decisions made by local boards of trustees and makes a strong case for immediate implementation of S-1609.

While he is fundamentally hostile to unions in general, Governor Christie and his allies are provoking a higher level of hostility against public sector unionized employees. The Council has a long and proud history of working to improve the economic and working conditions of its members. And while negotiating for bread and butter issues is the *raison d'être* for any labor union, the Council has also played an important role in working on progressive social causes at the state and federal levels. Our central mission — which is to protect the rights and privileges of the employees we represent, not only includes working in solidarity with other progressive groups to improve the lives of all workers but also to help NJ's students get an affordable, quality public higher education. The governor's practice of blaming public employees for the State's economic crisis is antithetical to our mission. Instead of making health care more expensive for public sector employees, he should be working to make health care affordable for all New Jerseyans. Instead of laying off hard working teachers, police and

## IN MEMORIAM — Hank Frundt

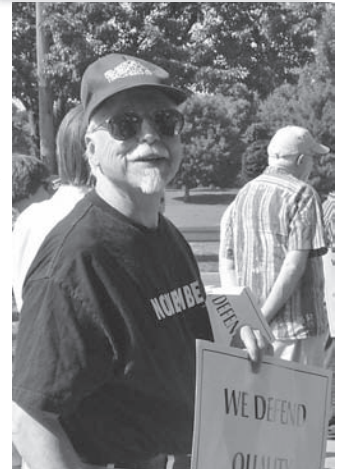
The Council lost a founding member and long-time delegate on September 16, 2010, when Henry J. (Hank) Frundt of Ramapo College died after a long battle against cancer. His obituary cites his birthplace — Blue Earth, Minn., that he was a college professor, union activist and Central American scholar, a husband, a brother, a father and grandfather — but he was much more. Hank's soft spoken and gentle manner belied his strength and his sense of commitment to the labor movement and human rights, both at home and in the international arena.

Hank began teaching sociology at Ramapo in 1973. He was a founding member of Local 2274 and during the Council's tumultuous beginning Hank was an integral force behind the early strikes and labor actions against the State's pernicious behavior at the bargaining table. His longtime colleague and friend Wayne Hayes (former president of Local 2274) remembers Hank, as bringing "insight and integrity and a much needed level of civility" to the table. He said while Hank was steadfast in his convictions, it was "never disagreeable to disagree with him."

Hank was a unique scholar because his work was informed by his ardent activism in the labor and social justice movements and because his scholarship had practical development policy implications on a global scale. He wrote books on worker rights in Latin America, one of which he just recently completed; he documented one of the first truly

cross-border labor solidarity campaigns in Latin America; he was a fierce critic of transnational corporations and he had been a witness for peace on delegations to Central America since the 1980s.

Hank served as a special expert to the United Nations NGO Commissioner for Disarmament Education and has received prestigious awards from the Organization of American States, the Fulbright Association, the Mid-Atlantic Council of Latin American Studies and N.J. Peace Action.



Hank at HPAE picket line in Bergen County

Council president Nick Yovnello remembers Hank as someone "who could be counted on to be a voice of reason and respect during heated negotiations and that Hank never let us forget that we were part of the international community meant to protect the rights of all workers in the struggle for dignity in the workplace." Ramapo local 2274 president Irene Kuchta said fondly of Hank, "he was the nicest socialist I ever met."

He will be missed. — • —

## State Health Benefit Plan Now Covers Dependents Up to Age 26

On September 23, several provisions of the new federal health reform became effective. One provision of particular interest to our members is the requirement that health plans that offer dependent coverage must offer health care coverage to child dependents up to age 26 starting with the next health plan year.

This requirement applies to both public and private sector health plans if those plans offer dependent coverage. Dependents over the previous cutoff age but under age 26 who have been terminated from a parent or guardian's health plan must be offered the opportunity to re-enroll in that health plan.

**Dependents in this group must be treated in the same manner as other dependents.** In other words, if the employer normally pays the entire health insurance premium or fee for a dependent, the employer must pay the entire

amount for this group as well. Or if the employee is required to pay part of the cost of dependent coverage, they can only be required to pay that same percentage for the dependents who are re-enrolling.

Dependents in this group CANNOT be denied coverage due to marital status, living out of state, employment status, or failure to live with a parent. They can only be denied coverage if they are employed and they have a bona fide offer of health insurance through their employer.

Again, this applies to all contracts and can be a very important new benefit for our members.

### State Health Benefit Plan

Both state and local government members of the State Health Benefit Plan (SHBP) can re-enroll their dependents over age 23 and who will not be

come 26 until 1/1/11 or after during the open enrollment period beginning on October 1.

Dependents under age 23 who were terminated when they married or moved out are also eligible for re-enrollment as long as they are not receiving or haven't received an offer of reasonable insurance through their own employer.

For state employees and some, but not all, local government employees in the SHBP this coverage of dependents will be at no cost to our members.

For more information from the NJ Division of Pensions and Benefits homepage including links to further information go to this website: <http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/hb-age26.shtml>

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## ROSE GLASSBERG HONORED BY AFT and SOUTHERN NEW JERSEY CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL

At the July 2010 AFT Convention, AFT awarded Rose Glassberg its "Living the Legacy Award" "in recognition of fifty years of exceptional leadership and union advocacy in support of women's rights." In September, she received the 2010 George E. Norcross Jr. Humanitarian Award from the Southern New Jersey Central Labor Council. Both were richly deserved.

Rose Glassberg was elected the first President of Local 2373, our Rowan local (formerly Glassboro) in 1973 and was re-elected many times until her retirement in 1991. It was under her leadership that Local 2373, now better known as FORCE (Federation of Rowan College Educators) joined the Council of New Jersey State College Locals, AFT. Rose was at bargaining table when our first collective bargaining agreement was negotiated in early 1974 and led her local during the two strikes waged by the Council in late 1974 and in 1979. For eighteen years, she was the Council's Executive Vice President. Soon after Rose retired, she formed a retiree chapter and has served as its President since 1993.

Long active in the Southern New Jersey AFL-CIO Central Labor Council, she was instrumental in the creation of the Peter J. McGuire Scholarship Program whereby local unions provide college scholarships for the families of union members.

Rose grew up in Philadelphia and began her career as a high school teacher after graduating with a degree in secondary education from West Chester State College. She received a Master's in English from Middlebury College in 1954 and a PhD in English from Temple University in 1972.



As a Glassboro/Rowan faculty member, she prepared thousands of students for the teaching profession and participated in programs such as Engineers Without Borders that sent students to developing countries to work on clean water projects. From 1981 to 1984, she served on the Washington Township Board of Education, where she fought gender discrimination in hiring practices. She has also volunteered at local hospitals and food banks and spearheaded voter registration drives.

Rose Glassberg's commitment to the principles of progressive trade unionism is absolute. She overcame obstacles to become the first woman to serve as one of our local presidents. As an organizer and an administrator, she became the chief architect of one of the Council's strongest locals. At the Council level, she was a voice of reason who never let anyone forget

that our first priority was to our membership. Her clarity, honesty and work ethic kept the Council on track during difficult times. And her witty barbs were unforgettable.

Asked about her role as a woman labor leader, Rose writes, "I think I was seen by women on the clerical staff on campus as something of a role model—proof that a woman could hold a leadership position. Since many of the women in our era were not encouraged to do anything after high school except get married, I think my position as union president was really encouraging to them. At least, that's what some of them said."

Recently, Rose has been actively recruiting her retiree chapter members to write to their legislators and newspapers. One of them was printed in the Philadelphia Inquirer recently and is reprinted below.

Any local that is interested in organizing a retiree chapter should contact Rose through the Rowan local. She still has plenty to contribute. — • —

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### William Kushner Ph.D. Professor Emeritus, Rowan University - Letter Printed in September Philadelphia Inquirer

Governor Christie's proposal for state employees, particularly teachers, lacks the vision and understanding hoped for in any elected official.

After two years in the Army and two years of graduate school, I began teaching high school in 1958. From my first day in the classroom, I knew I had chosen the right profession, but with a wife and anticipating our first child, it was necessary to supplement my income. I sold tickets at football games,

taught evening classes and summer school. Yet, even with a Veteran's loan we couldn't afford to buy a home in the town in which I taught.

Three outstanding, young teachers who began with me, had also been in the service and had taken teaching jobs. Within three years they left teaching, each saying "I couldn't raise a family on a teacher's salary."

At the end of my first year of teaching a member of our history faculty

retired. Within four years he was distraught. Inflation devastated his retirement pension...at that time there was no cost of living increase.

Over time, the teachers' lot improved in New Jersey with salaries and benefits increasing, but there were still many complaining that teachers were over-paid and under worked. I often said, "Walk in my shoes for a week and tell me the same thing." There were no takers. Periodically outside speakers

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**Vote ‘Yes’ on Employee Benefits Ballot Question #1  
on November 2, 2010**

Below is information from the New Jersey AFL-CIO concerning an important ballot question on a proposed state constitutional amendment that would stop NJ’s governors from raiding public employee benefit funds. The ballot question will receive an up or down vote by voters on November 2.

Additional information, including the wording of the ballot question and a leaflet about the question is available at: <http://www.njafclcio.org/pages/news/300>.

We urge all union members, their families, and friends to vote ‘Yes’ on the 2010 ballot question to prevent State raids of employee benefit funds. This question impacts every sector of the labor movement; your support is essential to ensuring that the benefit programs we as workers pay into, such as unemployment insurance, paid family leave, and worker’s compensation, are there when we need them.

A ‘Yes’ vote would amend the New Jersey State Constitution and prohibit the state from diverting money out of employee benefit programs for unrelated purposes, such as being transferred to the State General Fund. We have seen state raids of employee benefit programs time and time again, leading to severe underfunding of worker benefit programs such as unemployment insurance. Several funds that would be covered by the constitutional amendment include::

- Unemployment Compensation
- Paid Family Leave
- Workers Compensation
- Workforce Development
- Second Injury
- Basic Skills
- Temporary Disability

We urge you to vote ‘Yes’ on this ballot question to stop future raids of employee benefit programs and to ensure that the benefit programs we pay into are there when we need them. – • –

**Kushner letter**

*(from previous page)*

visited our classes to discuss their professions. Often they would leave, per-  
spiring, saying “How do you hold their  
attention. I would smile and respond,  
“Teaching isn’t for everyone.”

After twelve years of teaching high  
school and returning to graduate school  
for a Ph.D., I accepted a college position.  
However, state college salaries had not

kept up with public school salaries. I  
had given up my public school tenure,  
increased my professional knowledge,  
yet took a considerable salary cut to be-  
come a New Jersey State College pro-  
fessor. I didn’t take early retirement!  
I taught in New Jersey for forty years.  
My concern now, is about New Jersey’s  
educational future.

I won’t delve into the past misman-  
agement and political expediency,  
which has our present governor clam-

oring for salary cuts and paybacks.  
What does concern me are our future  
(potential) would-be, or should-be  
educators who read his negative com-  
ments about teachers and public em-  
ployees. I fear many will say, like my  
colleagues years ago, “I’d love to teach,  
but given the current climate, I better  
look elsewhere.”

William Kushner Ph.D.  
Professor emeritus, Rowan  
University

**Christie “Toolkits”**

*(Cont. from page 5)*

firefighters, he should be using his of-  
fice to work towards full employment  
and a living wage for all citizens in  
New Jersey.

Just because the governor’s policy  
wonks and employer buddies propose  
these changes does not mean they are a

done deal. We’re going to have to fight  
for ourselves – and not from the side-  
lines.

Your Council representatives have  
been meeting with State legislative  
leadership and other key legislators  
to make our case against these oner-  
ous bills and proposals. We urge you  
to contact your local union and visit  
the Council website ([www.cnjscl.org](http://www.cnjscl.org)).

There you will find facts, figures and  
plenty of links to keep up with devel-  
opments as they unfold. Click on “Po-  
litical Action”; identify, write and visit  
your legislators, attend “town meet-  
ings” and tell them in your own words  
why these proposals are bad for higher  
education professionals, bad for our  
students, and bad for New Jersey.

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