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Benefits in jeopardy

Regents move to institute retirement copays; unions organize coalition to fight back

At the March 17 UC Regents' meeting in Los Angeles, union members were loud and clear about their position on retirement and benefits changes: do not take any precipitous action given the clear fact that our pension fund is solvent and will be solvent for some years to come.

Members of UPTE-CWA, CUE and AFSCME all spoke before the regents, urging them to consider options other than raising employee contributions.

"We asked that no changes occur for those not represented by a union, and reminded UC that it must bargain over any changes with the system's 70,000 union-represented employees," said Cliff Fried, a UCLA staff research associate and UPTE's executive vice president.

At the meeting, the regents approved a plan to increase contribution rates gradually over time to 16 percent of covered earnings, beginning in July 2007, while acknowledging that changes for union-represented employees are subject to bargaining.

UC has floated some alarming proposals to dramatically change benefits and retirement plans. UPTE has met with UC several times to clarify its proposals, but UC has still not answered most of our questions. Here is what we know at this time.

Pension fund. UC claims the pension fund will require 16% annual contributions to stay fully funded. No agreement has been made about how much of this could be paid by UC and how much by employees. UC wants to exclude new employees from the current defined benefit plan and offer them an inferior plan, a move which could undermine the

stability of the current plan.

Retiree health benefits. New accounting standards require UC to report anticipated costs of retiree health benefits. UC's consultants estimate this liability at \$7.6 billion. UC has hinted that a 15% contribution might be needed to cover this liability, or that alternatively, retiree health benefits could be cut.

Employee benefits. UC has said it wants to reduce its contribution to employee benefits over the next several years from 97% to 68%, which would mean increasing employees' contributions from an average of \$68 to \$337 per month.

"That would amount to a huge pay cut for employees," notes Fried.

Unions organize fightback

UC's move to cut benefits and retirement is not unique. Pensions, health care and retiree health benefits are under attack from coast to coast.

"The situation at UC is a combination of these national attacks, bad management and investment decisions by the regents, and the national health care crisis," notes Lisa Kermish, UPTE's vice president and a staff professional at UCB. "It's going to be a long, complex, multi-layered

battle that's going to take place in the workplace, in the Legislature, and in the community."

UC unions are firing the first salvo by jointly circulating petitions demanding that UC fairly fund the pension plan, utilizing all available UC resources. "Even if there is a need to beef up contributions, there's no reason why employees should bear the burden alone," said Jelger Kalmijn, UPTE's president, "especially since the declines in pension funding have happened in part due to UC's poor management."

Kalmijn and other union leaders say UC has resources it could use to bolster the fund, before taking money out of the already far-below-market paychecks of UC workers. The petition also calls on UC to abandon its plans for a two-tier retirement plan – which would make new employees second-class employees and undermine the system as a whole – and to retain full retiree health benefits.

Sign the petition online at www.upte.org, or obtain printed copies from your local. Coalitions of staff, faculty, students and retirees have formed at most campuses and welcome new members. To get involved, contact your UPTE local.



Joe Biegner, photo

A few of the dozens of UC employees at the union's benefits teach-in held April 1 in Los Angeles

UPTE LOCALS

- Berkeley**
(510) 848-UPTE
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- Los Angeles:**
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- LANL:**
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- LBNL:**
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Legislators criticize UC for lack of disclosure on executive perks

In the second of a series of two Sacramento hearings, the Senate Education Committee grilled UC officials on Feb. 28 about executive pay practices, golden parachutes for high-ranking employees, and senior managers' financially lucrative corporate board service.

UC has been under heavy fire for paying executives more than it disclosed to the public, as well as failing to provide the regents with reports on legal settlements and executive compensation, since the *San Francisco Chronicle* began publishing a months-long series of investigative articles into UC's practices.

Practices under scrutiny

At the Feb. 28 hearing, UC admitted that though it was required to provide annual reports to the regents detailing all settlements of legal claims,

it had failed to do so.

"It's embarrassing," said Republican Senator Abel Maldonado of Santa Maria (Santa Barbara County), a member of the committee. "There is no accountability."

The admission from UC came only when the *Chronicle* requested the reports and UC could not produce them. In the first committee hearing on Feb. 8, the university was criticized for a secret settlement reached last year with former UC Davis vice chancellor Celeste Rose. In exchange for Rose dropping her claims of racial and gender bias, UC agreed to give her \$50,000 plus a job that pays \$205,000 a year with no job description or regular duties.

A UC spokesperson promised senators that UC would reveal all such settlements in the future.

Non-monetary compensation is also an issue, such as the

\$30,000 UC spent for a dog run at UCSC chancellor Denise Denton's house. The improvements were part of her recruitment package, according to the March 30 *Chronicle*, and included remodeling three bathrooms, two guest rooms, and purchasing a new SubZero refrigerator and other appliances. The project cost up to \$600,000, though it wasn't clear whether the entire cost was part of Denton's package. Denton's declared salary is \$283,000.

Hiding from the public

Senators were also frustrated with UC's old information on executives' total compensation and paid service on corporate boards of directors. No reports on these topics have been produced since 2002-2003.

The *Chronicle* noted that even when the reports exist, they are not readily available to the public.

"UC doesn't post the reports on its web site, for instance," wrote reporters Todd Wallack and Tanya Schevitz in the February 28 edition. "And it took the university more than a month to provide a copy of its most recent report on outside board service, even after [we] filed a Public Records Act request for the document."

This is a fact UC's unions know well, because the university routinely stalls on providing information needed in bargaining. Union reps have repeatedly brought UC's lack of disclosure to the attention of legislators in prior legislative hearings on UC labor relations, laying the groundwork for much of the current investigation.

As Senator Maldonado said of the issue: "They are violating the public trust.... They need to be on their game and disclose everything they have. Disclose, disclose, disclose."

Organizing for justice

Demonstrating for immigrants' rights

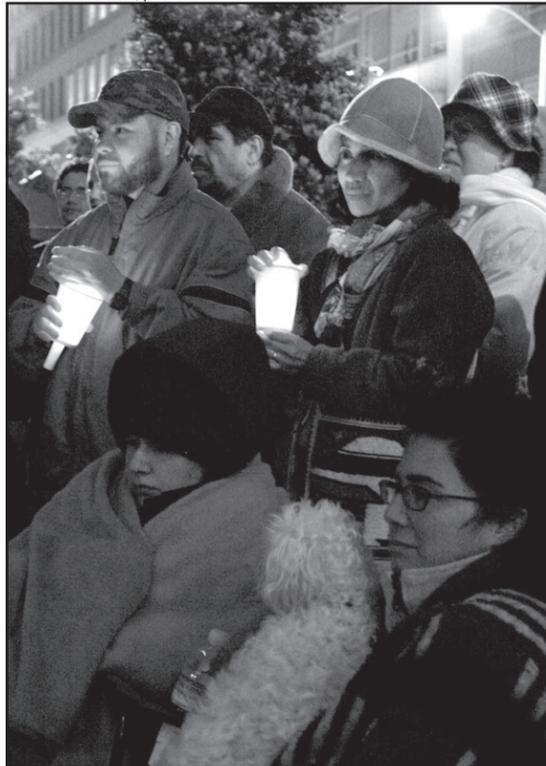
A US House bill on immigration has sparked a fury of protests across the country. In one of the largest demonstrations in recent US history, an estimated 500,000 immigrants and their supporters turned out in Los Angeles on March 25, while others held rallies from Boston to San Diego.

HR 4437, passed last December by the House, would make being an undocumented immigrant a felony. It also targets religious and community groups who provide assistance for undocumented workers and their families, and calls for the construction of a 700-mile fence along the U.S.-Mexico border. In the wake of the demonstrations, the Senate Judiciary Committee rejected this mean-spirited approach, and is currently debating other approaches to immigration reform.

Some 50 activists began a hunger strike at San Francisco's federal building on March 21, part of a week-long series of events including marches, rallies and candlelight vigils. Legendary United Farm Workers union co-founder Dolores Huerta told supporters, "It's time we said, 'You are here, we embrace you as citizens.'" The hunger strikers called for earned legalization for immigrants and a guest worker program to allow workers to enter the country legally.

Hunger strikers and their supporters at the San Francisco Federal Building protest anti-immigrant legislation

David Bacon, photo



San Diego union president wins job back

After a long legal battle, UPTE's local San Diego president, Carolan Buckmaster, has been reinstated at her job as a staff research associate at the campus' Cancer Center. Buckmaster has received back all the vacation, sick leave, retirement credit and other benefits she is owed, and says the case shows "how important it is to organize UCSD workers."

UC had illegally dismissed Buckmaster for her union activities, saying she had broken rules about when union activists could visit employees on the job. UPTE immediately challenged the move, maintaining that her organizing activities were fully protected. The union filed a grievance as well as an unfair labor practice charge with the state's Public Employment Relations Board.

It was the threat of an independent arbitrator deciding the case that convinced UC to reinstate Buckmaster. "They knew they would lose, so they gave in," she said. Her colleagues at the Cancer Center (pictured at right), as well as campus-wide and across the state, played an important role, writing letters and signing petitions on her behalf.

"UC is trying to stop the union from talking to workers," said UPTE's president Jelger Kalmijn. "What are they afraid of? Perhaps it is that Carolan has been one of the most consistent activists reaching out to UCSD researchers to make sure we have a union that truly speaks for all of us."

UCSD's poor track record

A medical researcher for 25 years, Buckmaster arrived at UC from Australia in 1990, specifically to work at UCSD's renowned Cancer Center. Little did she know that after years of dedication to her UC work, she'd be in a battle to keep her job, due to the particularly anti-union slant of UCSD's labor relations department.

"Labor Relations at UCSD is unlike that of the other campuses," she explained. "Ours is extremely vindictive and obstructionist, with a long record of selecting union presidents as their target, but their strategy was a dismal failure," said Buckmaster. She called it a "pathetic attempt" to scare her colleagues away from supporting the union; rather it has "achieved the opposite."

Buckmaster became active in the union during the 1996 vote for UPTE representation, running for office and also learning to be a steward, which she says, "has been one of the most rewarding roles of my life. To empower and assist fellow employees in achieving justice and resolution is a great reward and one of the main values of a union in my mind."

Now formally reinstated, Buckmaster is planning to take a leave from her UC position for union business, as allowed under the UPTE contract, which will permit her to continue building the union. She wishes to thank everyone across the state that supported her, from petition cards and emails, to personal expressions of support. "You helped me get through the difficult times to the inevitable joy of vindication," she said.

Solidarity works! Carolan Buckmaster (third from left) with her coworkers (left to right): John Faranial, Melinda Stafford, Bernie Etzel, Karen Saye-Franisco, and Mercedes Garcia-Mohr



HX team prepares for bargaining

UPTE-CWA's health care professionals' (HX) bargaining team has submitted initial proposals to UC for a new contract. The proposals are aimed at improving wages and working conditions, and making the system fairer for everyone.

Overwork and understaffing is a major problem for many health care professionals. "When we cannot do our jobs properly, our patients suffer. At times the workloads are just not manageable," explains bargainer Wendi Felson, a clinical lab specialist at UCSF. Problems include too many patients to cover, too many tests to run, the difficulties of using sick leave and vacation, or even having weekends and holidays off.

Below market compensation and a lack of fairness are other areas needing improvement. Health care professionals have told the union they want to focus on goals such as annual step increases based on years of experience in the field, and equitable pay at all medical centers. They also want comparable pay to employees doing similar work outside UC, and like other UC employees, are working to prevent increases in the cost of benefits and retirement.

Professional development opportunities are too few and far between. "Our team has also proposed important additions to training and development opportunities, and proposed an article guaranteeing fair and respectful treatment," said Bob Dawson, a bargaining team member from UC Berkeley.

New team elected

HX employees elected a new 7-member bargaining team earlier this year. Felson, the representative from UCSF, said her campus has one of the largest groups of HX workers. "I feel a real sense of responsibility to fight for a better contract. We have a great team and a wonderful group of members to stand behind it," Felson told the *Update*.

Chairing the bargaining team is Ellen West of CWA District 9. "In my work as a union rep since 1977," she said, "I've bargained many contracts, and I'm looking forward to negotiating with this great team."

Berkeley member Bob Dawson, a clinical lab specialist, says his aim is to improve staffing ratios and salary inequities, and "get the HX unit on automatic steps."

Bargaining team member Sheila Stittiams, a clinical social worker at UCSD, wants a contract that is "truly reflective of the hard work of our membership, and which includes fair wages, maintaining our benefits, and a safe work environment."

Also on the team are Larry Freed, a clinical social worker from Irvine, and clinical lab specialists Sue McCormick (Davis) and Cindy Yuge (Los Angeles).

Members of the team want to hear questions and concerns from health care workers. Contact information, as well as the latest bargaining news, is at www.upte.org/hxactions.html.

RX/TX committees win certification pay

While UPTE-represented technical (TX) and research (RX) employees are enjoying pay raises averaging over 13% under their new three-year contract, they have also turned their attention to issues of parking, hazardous work and pay equity.

The contract granted local committees the power to "meet and confer" on these issues with UC reps at the campus and systemwide levels. UPTE is currently surveying members to ask what improvements they would like to see in these three areas.

"Parking is crucial at some campuses, but pay is the biggest thing overall," reports Kevin Rooney, a UCSF tech and UPTE's RX/TX coordinator. Rooney says members are volunteering to work on these committees, which will exist at each campus according to local interest.

One victory has already been won. Animal technicians and animal health technicians at some campuses will now be eligible for "certification pay" – essentially, extra pay for training that they have completed. A monthly stipend will be paid to the employee by UC after completion of the American Association of Lab Animal Scientists' certification program. "If certified at the first level, they'll get \$50 extra per month, and at the next two levels, the stipend rises to \$100 a month," said Rooney.

UPTE reps are negotiating a similar deal for staff research associates at UCSF certified by their professional organization. The process could be precedent-setting for other campuses and job titles.

New toxic discoveries at UC's Richmond Field Station

In May 2005, when Cal/EPA bowed to community pressure and made its Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) “the lead regulatory oversight agency” for toxic sites located next to each other on the bay in southeast Richmond, including UC Berkeley’s Richmond Field Station (RFS), a number of UC offices moved into high defensive mode. When a coalition of six UC unions formed a safety committee and joined forces with concerned residents and others in Richmond, UC strengthened its armor.

Reading UC and other sources of information about Richmond’s contaminated sites leads to an eerie feeling of living in parallel universes. UC has more than 200 employees working at RFS who are concerned for their health and safety. On March 17, UCB Labor Relations sent a barely readable fax to CUE’s chief steward in response to an information request, claiming that the contamination “poses no significant health risks to employees working on site.”

Contamination remains

The California Cap Co. was supposed to have cleaned up the site before handing it over to UC. According to a UC consultant’s report, it didn’t. Moreover, only 31 sampling locations were selected in the uplands (non-marshy) parts of the site. Although UC has cleaned up part of the site, other parts remain to be tested.

In January, the state and Contra Costa County health services departments issued a second “Provisional Joint Health Statement Summary” and noted “limitations” in the air assessments that have been done. Although they haven’t found “short-term exposures at the levels” that would result in “noncancer” health problems, they added two cautions: 1) the data were collected to monitor short-term exposures for workers doing remediation work (who can be expected to have protective equipment), not for people who work or live nearby; and 2) no one knows the effects of low-level exposure to multiple contaminants. The health specialists recommended setting detection limits in future sampling “as low as feasible to ensure to allow for the best opportunity to understand the air quality in the area and the potential impacts on people.”

When the unions asked specifically about plans for testing the groundwater and soil gas near Building 478 (the former Forest Products Lab and proposed new site of the Facilities/Operations Department, which is close to the Zeneca border and UC’s main gate), UC wrote that “Building 478 is not being adversely impacted by contaminants in the Zeneca groundwater plume.”

But as one health expert explained, “Air monitoring is the technique used in regular industrial hygiene, where the chemical originates inside the building itself. Air monitoring results are notorious for going up and down tremendously,

depending on when and where you take them, and how the ventilation is working at that moment. So, a sample or two showing ‘none detected’ is good, but doesn’t rule out the possibility that the next sample will show something. Soil-gas monitoring is a technique used for waste sites. . . . [I]t is much more reliable for telling us whether the chemical is there, or is it not there, in the ground. If it is not there, we can stop worrying about where it is going next inside the building.”

In early March DTSC ordered “extensive new tests looking for radiation, dioxin, asbestos, hexavalent chromium, cyanide, methyl mercury and other hazardous substances” on the site next door to RFS (*Berkeley Daily Planet*, March 10, 2006). Elevated groundwater levels of trichloroethylene (TCE), tetrachloroethylene (PCE), and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) – volatile organic compounds that are suspected carcinogens – have been found very close to the main gate of RFS, and it is not yet clear whether it is flowing towards the bay or towards UC’s property. Soil and groundwater sampling was to begin on March 9 for the next 30 days using two different methods (known as split-sampling).

The search for radiation was prompted by a recent discovery of a superphosphate fertilizer plant alongside the RFS/Zeneca border, which used radioactive ore and may also have been the site of uranium testing by the federal government. A DTSC toxicologist expressed concern that “phosphate production could have produced increased concentrations of radioactive compounds in the slag (waste) generated by the process,” and “may still be present on the site.”

Reading the UC Berkeley “RFS Remediation and Restoration Project Fact Sheet” gives the impression that all the cleanup in the area is proceeding smoothly and there is no cause for concern.

CWA discusses its future

What can labor activists do more effectively respond to attacks on pay, pensions and organizing rights?

That’s the question that the Communications Workers of America (UPTE’s parent union) “Ready for the Future” discussion seeks to answer. Dialogue about the union’s strategies and structure are occurring in CWA-affiliated locals, including UPTE, as well as online at www.cwa-union.org/future.

Much discussion is revolving around the concept of fostering “activist unions,” where members and stewards are empowered to take on representation, organizing and legislative work.

If you’d like to be part of the dialogue, contact your UPTE local or check out the website above. As a result of the union-wide process, CWA expects to release a new strategic plan this summer.

UPTE lobbies Congress over lab contracting; lawsuit in the works

A delegation of four high-level UPTE representatives spent three days on Capitol Hill last week, visiting legislators and government officials about the effects of contracting out the UC-run national laboratories at Los Alamos and Livermore.

The group included Jeff Colvin, legislative co-chair of the UPTE-affiliated Society of Professionals, Scientists and Engineers (SPSE) at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL); Manny Trujillo, UPTE president at Los Alamos National Lab (LANL); Jelger Kalmijn, UPTE’s systemwide president; and Rodney Orr, UPTE’s legislative coordinator.

The UPTE lobbying team asked Congress to delay the transition to the new corporate contractor at LANL to allow employees more time to understand and decide among their options for retirement plans, particularly since numerous questions remain as to whether the new contractor’s site-specific pension plan is “substantially equivalent” to the UC Retirement Program (UCRP) as was required in the LANL Request for Proposals. The LLNL contract will also shortly be out to bid.

Kicked out of UCRS

While a new management contract for Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) made dramatic headlines late last year, the lab’s 10,000 employees now face the possible loss of their UC pensions. Under the new contract, they will no longer be UC employees but will work for Los Alamos National Security, LLC, a partnership of UC, Bechtel, Washington Group and BWX.

The employees will no longer accrue service credit with UCRS. If they retire and lock in their retiree health benefits, they lose their right to a job at the new employer. If they do not retire, they can either have their public pension converted to a private “clone plan,” or become an inactive UCRS member and be put into the new company’s “market-driven plan.” This means that many employees now have decades of service credit on the chopping block.

In addition to no longer being an

active part of UCRS, the new employer will hire all workers as “at will” employees, which means they can be fired without any reason, at any time.

Cooperation from legislators

UPTE reps also pressured the Department of Energy (DOE), which oversees the national labs, to write a different Request for Proposals for the LLNL management contract, so that LLNL employees will not have to face the same dilemma of retaining their vested interest in UCRS or retaining their employment, and will not have to face being converted to “at will” status.

“We got agreement for concerted and cooperative effort on our issues from both senators from both states (California and New Mexico), as well as from the key legislators in both parties in the House,” reported Colvin. “By the time we showed up at Senator Feinstein’s (D-CA) office in the afternoon of the second day, the key staffer there had already talked to the legislative director from Senator Bingaman’s (D-NM) office with whom we had talked the day before. All the legislators are now working together on our behalf,” he said.

The team also got assurance from a key DOE official that union concerns would be accommodated in the LLNL Request for Proposals.

Jelger Kalmijn, photo



UPTE’s Rodney Orr, Jeff Colvin and Manny Trujillo in front of the Capitol

After consulting with legal advisors, the UPTE reps began plans to file a lawsuit, seeking an immediate injunction to stop the LANL management transition. “UPTE’s attorneys advise us that the choice being offered LANL employees in the transition may violate as many as three federal laws,” said Colvin, adding that the team informed all the officials visited in DC that the union may be taking legal action. Stay tuned for more information.

Regents vote to divest from Sudan

Responding to the continuing genocide in the Darfur region of Sudan, the UC Regents voted unanimously at their March 16 meeting in Los Angeles to divest from companies that do business there.

The move comes after a student-led group, the UC Sudan Divestment Taskforce, began pressuring UC to take action more than a year ago. Many legislators, human rights groups, and unions (including UPTE-CWA) had endorsed the campaign.

The total amount to be divested is not yet known, but estimates put the figure in the tens of millions of dollars. It is the largest university portfolio targeted by activists to date, and the first time a public university has voted to divest, according to Jason Miller, a UCSF student and co-chair of the UC Sudan Divestment Taskforce.

"Today's vote puts the university on the right side of history," said Adam Rosenthal, the student regent who first introduced the divestment issue at the November 2005 meeting. He added that it was only the second time in UC history that the regents have voted to take a stand on an international human rights issue. In 1986, UC divested its funds from firms doing business in apartheid South Africa, after a long campaign by a broad coalition of activists. In 2001, it divested funds in tobacco companies.

The UC campaign is part of a nationwide movement for Sudanese divestment, and the regents' action is already influencing state policy on the issue. State Assemblymember Paul Koretz (D-West Hollywood) says he will revise his own legislation urging CalPERS to use UC's plan as a model in its possible divestment of state public employee retirement funds from Sudan.

"This will make a very dramatic difference," Koretz told the *San Francisco Chronicle*. "I believe that it will ultimately save tens of thousands of lives."

UC students win back \$33 million in fees

A San Francisco judge has ruled that UC breached its contract with students when it raised fees, and ordered it to pay back \$33.8 million to some 47,000 students.

Most of the award will go to a group of 9,000 professional school students in law, business and medicine. Warren awarded about \$28 million to that group, including interest and \$23,901 in fees, while smaller amounts were designated for other graduate students and undergraduates who suffered financially from UC's charges.

All were enrolled in 2002 and 2003 when UC explicitly stated in its catalogs and brochures that future fee increases would only apply to new students. UC breached its contract for those students, according to San Francisco Superior Court Judge James Warren.

The decision "proves what we've been saying all along — that UC can't balance its

budget on the backs of students," Mohammed Kashmiri, a student at Berkeley's Boalt Hall School of Law who initiated the class action lawsuit, told the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

Fees have skyrocketed for students, particularly in business and law schools. In 2002-2003, they stood at about \$6,000; by fall 2005, professional school students paid \$15,258.

Students won't be seeing their refunds any time soon, however, because UC is appealing the decision.

Organizing for single payer health care

The benefits issues that UC employees face (see story page 1) are part of a larger fight for public health care coverage.

That was evident on February 23, when over 200 people crowded into the historic Los Angeles City Council chambers for a "Citizen Congressional Hearing on National Health Care." The grassroots hearing was chaired by Congresswoman Diane Watson (D-Los Angeles), with Congressman Xavier Becerra (D-Calif.) participating, and brought together a broad array of concerned residents, including the uninsured, union members, health care workers and retirees.

Family medicine resident Anje Van Berkelaer testified that many of her uninsured patients find themselves using emergency rooms for care. "Universal health coverage is the decent thing to do," she said.

Many backed the new single payer "Medicare for all" system proposed by Congressman John Conyers in pending federal legislation, HR 676. The bill would create a publicly financed, privately delivered health care program that uses the already existing Medicare program by expanding it to all US residents. It would ensure access to health care services regardless of employment status or income.

Under HR 676, a family of three making \$40,000 per year would spend approximately \$1,600 per year for health care coverage, down from the current average of over \$9,000 per year. Employer costs would be reduced by as much as half.

For more information about HR 676, see <www.healthcare-now.org>.



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Newly elected leaders of UPTE's Santa Cruz local, after being sworn into office by UPTE president Jelger Kalmijn. Front row, left to right: Janet Bryer (trustee), Jessica Hayden (board member), Ethan Mora (secretary). Back row, left to right: Lance Bracht (board member), Sean McStay (vice president), Susan Arnold (treasurer), Phil Johnston (local president), Jelger Kalmijn (UPTE systemwide president)



Scott Harris, photo

Santa Cruz local wins retroactive pay awards

UPTE leaders at UCSC moved quickly after discovering that the raises called for by the new RX and TX contracts would be paid much later than at other UC campuses, and that some UCSC staff might lose out altogether on the retroactive pay increase as a result.

UPTE Local 3 President Phil Johnston, surrounded by half a dozen other UPTE leaders, brought this injustice directly to the attention of Chancellor Denice Denton at a winter staff forum. He told the chancellor that while seven other UC campuses were issuing the increases in March, the delay at UCSC meant economic hardship and added "insult to injury for those people who will be laid off or reclassified before the payout date, and who therefore will not receive either the wage increase or the retroactive pay owed to them for five months already worked."

The chancellor responded that she had been generally pro-worker in her tenure at UCSC but was unaware of this particular problem. She recognized a senior manager from the Staff Human Resources department who said they had encountered technical difficulties in implementing the raises.

Emergency negotiations successful

Union leaders met in an emergency session two days later with representatives of the Labor Relations and Staff Human Resources departments.



Amy Newell, photos

Matt Salcido and Katharine Van Horn

While the increases won't be paid out on an earlier schedule due to technical problems, UPTE organizer Amy Newell told the *Update* that an agreement was reached to make sure that no one loses out on the five months of retroactive pay increase because of UCSC's late payment. Instead of having to be on the payroll "on the date of payment" of the retroactive increase, UCSC agreed that anyone on the payroll as of March 1 will receive the 3% increase back to Oct. 1, 2005. "This means that

anyone laid off, retiring or reclassified out of the research and technical units between March 1 and May 1 will receive five months of back pay that they otherwise would have lost out on — a big victory," said Newell.

Katharine Van Horn, an SRA II retiring March 31, and Matt Salcido, a CRS II laid off during March (pictured above), say they are both "very pleased" to be receiving their five months of back pay thanks to the vigilance of UPTE activists at Santa Cruz.

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