

New Caucus Campaign Literature 2006

Setting the Record Straight 2/22/06

"The CUNY Alliance" is conducting a smear campaign. PSC members deserve better. Many of you may have received an email with inflammatory charges from "the CUNY Alliance." LET'S SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT • There was no "union cover-up" of contingency plans for the Welfare Fund. • It's clear now that "the CUNY Alliance" is conducting a smear-campaign. They have nothing else to offer. Without a political program or experience in top leadership, their only hope is fear-mongering and lies. • The New Caucus is prepared to answer each lie in turn— They will all turn out to be as baseless as this one—but we feel PSC members deserve better. We invite members to examine our record and engage us in open and honest debate. We are confident that when you do, you will re-elect honest, substantive union leadership: the New Caucus. HERE IS THE TRUTH • The union leadership has been completely open – for years – about the financial condition of the Welfare Fund and the need for a contingency plan if employer contributions to the Fund are not increased. That's exactly why the New Caucus leadership is fighting so hard right now for increased contributions in this contract. • In July 2005, Fund Trustees gave the Executive Director the authority to take the necessary actions to keep the Fund solvent, should such actions become necessary; in doing so, the Trustees acted on the recommendation of our auditors about the necessary steps to maintain the Fund as a "going concern" for the next year. • When the Fund Executive Director found an error in the Minutes of the July meeting—even though the record was complete in the Secretary's handwritten notes—he did not simply correct the record. He arranged for the Fund to conduct a re-vote on the contingency plan by mail. The Trustees voted again, and the proposal passed. • No one likes benefit restructuring but the Welfare Fund under New Caucus leadership did the only responsible thing: we cleaned up errors in the books, negotiated additional money for the Fund, and undertook a painful restructuring of benefits. Our actions saved the Welfare Fund.

Welfare Fund: Truth vs. Distortion (2/23/06)

Rina Yarmish, who heads the CUNY Alliance, was part of the problem. The New Caucus inherited a Welfare Fund running annual deficits and in dire straits partly because of the neglect and incompetence of the former treasurer, Rina Yarmish. New Caucus Leadership Has Faced Up to Our Responsibilities over the Past Six Years: • We Saved The PSC/CUNY Welfare Fund from Insolvency. • We Preserved the Prescription Drug Benefit for Actives and Retirees. • We Maintained Health Insurance for Eligible Adjuncts. Nobody likes to cut and restructure benefits. But, choices had to be made or the most vulnerable amongst us would have lost life-sustaining prescription drugs or health insurance. New Caucus leaders took decisive action and we stand by the process for making those decisions and the choices we made. (Click here to get the true story). CUNY Alliance's grumbling from the sidelines about this or that benefit lost and spreading misinformation about the Welfare Fund is no solution to the real world problems of skyrocketing drug costs and CUNY's underfunding of our benefits. CUNY Alliance is attempting to use the Welfare Fund's problems for political advantage. This is pure political opportunism, not leadership. Either CUNY Alliance leaders are willfully misrepresenting the facts about the Welfare Fund or they do not understand what they are talking about. Either way, they should know better because the person at the top of their slate, Rina Yarmish, was appointed

treasurer of the Fund by the old leadership and served out her term from 1998 to 2003. RINA YARMISH'S RECORD AS TREASURER: 1. Starting in 1998 (two years before New Caucus was elected to leadership) and continuing for several years, CUNY underpaid the Welfare Fund by undercounting the actual Fund membership. CUNY pays the Welfare Fund on a per capita basis. Treasurer Yarmish never questioned CUNY's underpayments, even though this is the Treasurer's responsibility. Upon discovering this underpayment, Steve London and New Caucus leaders threatened to sue CUNY unless payment was made. As a result, the Fund received from CUNY: \$1 million for underpayments from 1998-2001 (the disputed period) and \$1.7 million for 2002-2003. 2. From 1998 to 2000, Treasurer Yarmish allowed \$3.8 million owed to CUNY to remain as a liability on the Welfare Fund books. After Barbara Bowen and New Caucus leaders were elected, we engaged in tough negotiations with CUNY to win a favorable settlement with CUNY agreeing to wipe \$2.8 million of liability off the books. If it was left up to Treasurer Yarmish, the Welfare Fund would be millions of dollars more in the hole. 3. Under Treasurer Yarmish, the Fund's bookkeeping and financial accounts were in disarray. Benefits were not properly categorized, bookkeeping software was outdated, and specific benefit costs could only be approximated. New Caucus leaders brought in a new independent auditor and a new consultant to straighten out and modernize the Fund's finances. With this shoddy record, it is not surprising to find "CUNY Alliance's" statements about the Welfare Fund to be riddled with inaccuracies and misinformation:

- "CUNY Alliance Pledge #1" and its linked "Welfare Fund Woes" completely misstates the structure and funding of the Welfare Fund. They claim the Municipal Labor Committee (MLC) is one of two boards that "oversees a package of basic benefits for all city workers including some at CUNY." This is just not true. Welfare Fund Trustees have sole authority over benefits. The MLC negotiates with the City for basic per capita payments to all Welfare Funds. Funds apply those per caps differently. For example, the UFT provides only minimal prescription drug coverage for retirees while the PSC/CUNY Welfare Fund provides the same drug benefit for actives and retirees. President Bowen serves on the Executive Committee of the MLC and has been instrumental in City-wide negotiations.

• "Pledge 1" also contains an outright lie. They say, "...the [2000 – 2002] contract did not require the University to add new funds to the WF." In fact, \$1.5 million in annually recurring funds and a \$1.4 million lump sum amount were added from the contract. In addition, New Caucus leaders brought in millions of dollars more from CUNY's underpayments in the past and saved millions by negotiating away liabilities. This is all verified by independent auditor's reports and has been publicized in Clarion. (click here for the true story in the March 2004 Clarion, page 11).

• "CUNY Alliance Pledge #3" irresponsibly mischaracterizes a prudent and necessary action by the Trustees. New Caucus leaders have made no secret of the dire financial difficulties of the Fund. As required by our auditors, Fund Trustees put in place contingency plans to be certain that the Fund maintains itself as a "going concern" for the upcoming year. On July 27, 2005, Fund Trustees adopted such a contingency plan, which was the responsible thing to do. Using scare tactics ("drug benefits will disappear") and inflammatory charges ("cover-up") to frighten vulnerable members does nothing to resolve the Fund's financial difficulties.

- In CUNY Alliance's constantly changing mission statement, they mistakenly say there is a "\$50 per person deductible for prescription drugs." In fact it is \$50 per family for retirees. (click here for the real story) They also get the end date of the last contract wrong in their mission statement. It was October 31, 2002, not 2001. If they are running for union office they should know the basic facts. With Rina Yarmish's dismal performance as Welfare Fund Treasurer and CUNY Alliance's inability to get basic facts and relationships straight, how can you trust them to

oversee and protect our Welfare Fund? New Caucus leaders have made adequate funding of the Welfare Fund and the enhancement of the dental benefit a goal of this round of bargaining. We continue to seek your support in pursuit of this objective. Meanwhile, we will continue to responsibly administer the Welfare Fund for all the PSC membership.

Empty Seats, Empty Promises (2/27/06)

HOW CAN YOU TRUST THE "CUNY ALLIANCE" TO RUN THE UNION WHEN THEY HAVE BEEN MISSING IN ACTION? Our opponents are long on promises; short on work. A few have held PSC office (only 7 out of 27 according to their bios); most have zero to minimal experience in the life of the union -- missing in action at chapter meetings, in the contract campaign, on PSC-CUNY committees, and in lobbying for increased CUNY budgets. What's most dismaying, however, is that the "missing in action" tag sticks to two of the leading members of the "CUNY Alliance" slate who are members of the Delegate Assembly, the highest policy -making body of the PSC. It is here that as delegates they could have played a constructive role in engaging and shaping union policy, raising questions and presenting alternatives. The other two leading members of the slate have little or no union involvement over the last 15 years – the period when CUNY and unions have been under attack. More>> • Rina Yarmish, who heads their slate, has missed the last 18 D.A. meetings. From September 2002 to the present, she has attended only five of thirty-six meetings. • Howard Ross, running for Treasurer, missed more than half of the D.A. meetings from September 2002 to April 2005 (when his tenure on the D.A. ended). • Lilia Melani, 1st VP candidate, did not attend chapter meetings at her campus from 1993 to 1999, ran for Brooklyn College PSC chapter office in 1999 and lost, and has not been sighted at a chapter meeting or other union function since. • Mona Fabricant, Secretary candidate, has neither run for nor held union office at any level, and she has been absent from any CUNY-wide PSC activity. "CUNY Alliance" leaders' chronic absenteeism and unwillingness to participate in the deliberations of the D.A. is a violation of their duty to represent the membership who elected them. Their absence from the campaign to win a fair contract, from PSC lobbying for better CUNY budgets, or from speaking out publicly for our students and public higher education demonstrates their lack of commitment. If they have shirked their duty and demonstrated a lack of commitment, how can you trust them now?

There They Go Again (3/1/06)

MORE MISINFORMATION FROM CUNY ALLIANCE. There they go again; spreading more misinformation about the Welfare Fund and this time picking on the Fund's Executive Director, Larry Morgan. They say he has caused "damage" to the Fund and question why his salary was raised in his second year of employment. Typical of "CUNY Alliance," they provide no substance for their charge and are content to smear the name of a good and valued employee who has worked tirelessly and competently to manage the Fund during a difficult period. THE FACTS: Larry Morgan was hired in August 2004 to the Fund Administrator position after an extensive search. His experience included directing 1199's Home Care Industry Benefit Fund and was the Chief Financial Officer of UNITE. He is well known as a top-flight fund administrator in the City and we were lucky to get him. Since the Fund has been under fiscal stress, Mr. Morgan agreed to a starting salary well below what his experience dictates and other similarly situated fund administrators receive. He also agreed to a bare bones benefits package

for himself. In return, his contract stipulated that he would be considered for an 8% wage increase after a year if his performance merited it. His management of the fund under extraordinarily difficult conditions has been exemplary and the Welfare Fund Board of Trustees unanimously voted him an 8% increase for his second year of employment. Even with this increase, his total compensation package is unremarkable for someone of his caliber. Mr. Morgan has accomplished a great deal in his short tenure:

- Hired new and experienced staff
- Successfully managed the Fund's pick-up of psychotropic and asthma medication when the City dropped that coverage.
- Revamped the financial operations of the Fund.
- Negotiated more favorable contracts with vendors, saving the Fund millions of dollars.
- He managed the Fund's difficult transition to Medicare Part D coverage by doing all necessary administrative work and providing timely advice to protect members

New Caucus leadership will continue to competently manage the Welfare Fund and continue to bargain to provide the Fund the needed funding to maintain its financial viability.

“CUNY Alliance” Breaks the Law and Jeopardizes PSC Members (3/6/06)

On its website, the “Alliance” published the names of PSC/CUNY Welfare Fund plan participants which are “protected health information” under the Federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). In its zeal to use the Welfare Fund to get elected, the “Alliance” utilized documents removed from the offices of the Welfare Fund without permission and in violation of the law. This irresponsible action by “CUNY Alliance” places the Fund in legal jeopardy, since it is charged under HIPAA to maintain the privacy of member health information.

UNETHICAL AND ILLEGAL BEHAVIOR: What CUNY Alliance has done is serious. It has used members’ private health information for its own perceived political advantage. This behavior is unethical and illegal. It follows a pattern we have spoken about in past e-newsletters. The “Alliance” will do or say anything to get elected and has little regard for the truth or the interests of the membership. Further, there was no reason to publish Fund documents, because the information contained in the documents is not contested by the New Caucus. In fact, none of “CUNY Alliance’s” so-called charges about the Fund is news. We have published in Clarion and spoken about these facts for years:

- The Welfare Fund reserves are in decline and dangerously low. In fact, the chart the “Alliance” published on Fund reserves looks like the one the PSC leadership published in Clarion in 2002.
- Unless we get more funding for the Welfare Fund our benefits will be further cut.
- A three-page Clarion article presented the crisis and choices members faced in September 2002 ([click here](#)) and the PSC website explains why and how the fund was restructured ([click here](#)).

THE NEW CAUCUS LEADERSHIP OF THE PSC HAS MADE ALL OF THIS CLEAR SO THAT MEMBERS UNDERSTOOD WHY WE HAD TO RESTRUCTURE BENEFITS. In September 2002 leadership initiated a several-month discussion at chapter meetings, in Clarion, on the Website and at the Delegate Assembly so that members could (1) effectively participate in the decision-making process to restructure the fund and (2) understand why we are fighting to increase CUNY’s contributions to the Fund. The story the “Alliance” wrote about the Fund’s Executive Director, Larry Morgan, was completely misleading as we said in our last newsletter ([click here](#)). There was no reason to violate the law to put out that story. The “Alliance” should have investigated the circumstances first, before making reckless charges.

NOW “CUNY ALLIANCE” HAS SOME QUESTIONS TO ANSWER: Rina Yarmish, who heads their slate, was Treasurer and a Trustee of the Fund and knows the HIPAA law. Why did she allow a violation of Federal Law to occur in her

campaign? Who stole the documents from the Welfare Fund? Since these documents are dated after Rina Yarmish's tenure as Treasurer, they should not have been in her possession. Who is the Webmaster who posted these documents? He or she has responsibility for violations of the law and must be identified.

"CUNY Alliance" Broke the Law and Now They Think They Can Evoke Responsibility By Denying That It Ever Happened (3/8/06)

Welfare Fund legal counsel saw what we saw and what you saw (if you opened their link): the "Alliance" posted a legal report which named three Fund participants. Executive Director Larry Morgan instructed them to REMOVE THOSE REFERENCES AND -- THE "ALLIANCE" DID. * The fact remains that the "Alliance" used private members' information for their own political purposes and violated the federal law protecting patient privacy - HIPPA; putting partisan interests before member interests. The "Alliance" thinks it can say or do anything and nobody will notice: In front of a room full of people at the Retirees' Chapter debate on March 2nd, where she was held accountable for her statements, Rina Yarmish said, "The problem of the Welfare Fund is not mismanagement." She then acknowledged that the Fund had indeed introduced cost-saving initiatives. Yet, within 24 hours, an email posting from the "Alliance" contradicted her. CUNY Alliance still has questions to answer about their illegal actions: Rina Yarmish, who heads their slate, was Treasurer and a Trustee of the Fund and knows the HIPAA law. Why did she allow a violation of Federal Law to occur in her campaign? Who stole the documents from the Welfare Fund? Since these documents are dated after Rina Yarmish's tenure as Treasurer, they should not have been in her possession. Who is the Webmaster who posted these documents? He or she has responsibility for violations of the law and must be identified.

Debate – The Ball is in the Alliance's Court (3/313/06)

The New Caucus is ready to debate at every campus and unit of the City University. We understand that the head of each slate cannot possibly participate in every debate. But both slates are fielding 27 candidates for Executive Council, any one of whom can debate. Thirteen chapters (listed below) have extended invitations to both caucuses for a debate. We accepted every invitation and are flexible if adjustments are necessary in scheduling. WE CALL ON THE "CUNY ALLIANCE" TO MAKE A SIMILAR COMMITMENT. THE NEW CAUCUS BELIEVES THAT PSC MEMBERS ARE BEST SERVED BY THE OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR EACH SIDE IN A DEBATE FORMAT. This reflects our commitment to democratic unionism. Debates will enable members to make informed choices, to compare platforms and ideas, to ask tough questions and to make judgments based on the performance of and interaction among the candidates. New Caucus candidates will also visit campuses for question and answer forums and other forms of campaigning. But none of this is in lieu of debates. Chapters that have made debate overtures to both caucuses are: • BCC, Baruch, BMCC, Brooklyn, CCNY, Hostos, Hunter College, LAGCC, Lehman, NYCT, Retirees, QCC and York. The New Caucus is ready to debate at all thirteen chapters -- and more if other chapters call for debates. To date, the Alliance has only agreed to four debates: • Retirees, March 6 • BMCC, March 15 • BCC, March 28 • QCC, March 29 Of the thirteen chapters that have extended debate invitations, the New Caucus leadership heads twelve. The leadership of the other chapter, Lehman, is not affiliated with either caucus. Neither of the campuses led by CUNY Alliance candidates -- Kingborough

CC and Medgar Evers -- has issued an invitation for a debate. WILL THERE BE ELECTION DEBATES ACROSS THE CUNY SPECTRUM – OR NOT? THE BALL IS IN THE "ALLIANCE'S" COURT.

Fifteen Reasons to Vote New Caucus (3/15/06)

Salary increases in the 2000-2002 contract that were the best for the PSC in a decade. ▶ The first-ever paid research time for CUNY junior faculty. ▶ The first-ever paid office hours for CUNY adjuncts. ▶ The first-ever professional development funds for CUNY staff. ▶ A reversal of the twenty-year trend of declining State and City funding for CUNY. ▶ A more than 50% increase in union membership. ▶ Active campus chapters that win victories on issues such as workplace safety, faculty computer access, timely pay for adjuncts, movement up salary steps. ▶ A landmark legal victory on the right to bargain intellectual property rights. ▶ A vigorous defense of academic freedom. ▶ Protection of members' rights to Travia leave through an arbitration victory. ▶ A major legal victory on pensioning overloads. ▶ Legislation passed defending the rights of immigrant students to in-state tuition. ▶ Legislation passed permitting the 20,000 CUNY students on welfare to continue their classes. ▶ Maintenance of prescription drug benefits for active and retired members, health insurance for eligible adjuncts in the face of underfunding of benefits. ▶ A principled, energetic fight in this round of bargaining for a contract worthy of our members.

The High Road, or the Low Road? (3/20/06)

What the “CUNY Alliance” calls “misplaced priorities” has brought tens of millions of dollars more to CUNY and provided crucial support for our students as a result of lobbying in Albany, at City Hall and in Washington, D.C. Look closely at the method of argument and distortion in the “Alliance’s” last “e-missive.” It takes a positive, and then manipulates language and numbers to recast it as a negative. In effect, it disparages the lobbying and political endorsements of the PSC and its affiliates on behalf of CUNY faculty, professional staff and students. Make no mistake. What the Alliance’s attack reveals is a conservative political agenda that opposes the New Caucus leadership’s (along with our affiliates: NYSUT, AFT, and AAUP) hard work and attendant expenses that have: • Restored public funding for CUNY budgets • Defended faculty governance and academic freedom • Addressed health and safety conditions affecting PSC members • Enhanced pension benefits • Resulted in a range of legislation from establishing a \$4.5 million financial aid “safety net” program for our students to transit checks. Under the reporting categories of federal labor law, lobbying, political endorsements, and taking positions on issues not directly related to terms and conditions of employment (e.g. support for students) are classified as “political” and “ideological.” The Alliance distorts these words and then plays with numbers to imply that a perfectly proper and vital union activity on behalf of the entire CUNY community is something sinister. It suggests that all this money could have gone to the Welfare Fund, when this is not true. Not a cent of union dues money can legally go to the Welfare Fund. Its graph shows non-chargeable expenses* at zero dollars in 2001 – a preposterous total. Our affiliates' share alone has been a constant component of non-chargeable expenses. The PSC has always had these expenses. This is nothing new. Even the link the Alliance provides disproves its graph. The graph implies that the PSC spent close to \$1.5 million

in 2004 when actually the figure is the combined expenditure of affiliates (55%) and the PSC (45%) – \$1,489,353 directed toward political and legislative initiatives on behalf of our members. The PSC's finances are completely transparent and the Alliance quotes from a union financial publication. But its selective use of information from that publication to distort PSC expenses and activities reveals that it is truly up to no good. The Alliance's attacks have nothing to do with concern for the union or our welfare fund, but rather a conservative political agenda that opposes the political and legislative initiatives of both the PSC and its affiliates in support of our members, our students and CUNY.

Debate – or No Show? (3/21/06)

In a previous email, we made the following commitment: Thirteen chapters [now fifteen]...have extended invitations to both caucuses for a debate. We accepted every invitation and are flexible if adjustments are necessary in scheduling [emphasis added]. We call on the "CUNY Alliance" to make a similar commitment. The "Alliance's" response was: Maybe...Possibly...We'll Get Back to you. No! The "Alliance"" has every right to raise issues about the contract and the welfare fund -- but not if it refuses to participate in Delegate Assembly and chapter deliberations and now debates across the CUNY spectrum about these very issues. What is the record of engagement of "Alliance" candidates with the work of the union?

CUNY Alliance's Fuzzy Math (3/27/06)

Either "CUNY Alliance" (see its last email) cannot count or it purposely distorts contract comparisons. Look at the actual comparison between UUP (the SUNY State Union) and the PSC. UUP Settlement PSC Proposal Under Discussion \$800 in cash in 1st year \$800 in cash in 1st year 2.5% in 2nd year 2.5% in 2nd year 2.75% compounded in 3rd year 2.75% compounded in 3rd year 3% compounded in 4th year 3% compounded in 4th year \$800 on base at end (worth approx 1.4%) \$800 on base at end (worth approx 1.2%) Approximately 1.1% more in improvements (Some non-recurring) Approximately 2.5% more in improvements (all recurring) 4% in discretionary increases decided by management over term of contract (meaning management decides who gets an increase and who doesn't) 6.8% in step increases over term of contract (value attributed by State is 1.4% per year). For individuals in the steps, this is worth 3.5% - 4.5% annually. If the discretionary increases are counted in the total package, then over 4 years the package is worth 15% plus \$800 in cash. If the step increases are counted in the total package, then over 4 years, 10 months the PSC proposal is worth 19% plus \$800 in cash The fact is: ►The PSC contract under discussion compares favorably with UUP's contract. ►The City agreements with other unions included major concessions: working longer hours, lowering starting salaries, and give-backs on work rules. The New Caucus PSC leadership will continue to make advances by building on the solid foundation we have created: a large core of union activists; coalitions with other unions, community groups, and students; strong relationships with influential political leaders; deep knowledge of how contractual provisions impact on all PSC members; and a commitment to CUNY's mission.

I Am Voting for the New Caucus Because... (3/29/06)

"As one of the members of the Welfare Advisory Council representing the Baruch College Chapter of the PSC, I have seen first-hand the professional manner with which the members of the New Caucus carry out their responsibilities. Their approach to the issues confronting the Fund is fiscally prudent and morally responsible" Terrence F. Martell, Saxe Distinguished Professor of Finance, Director, Weissman Center for International Business, Baruch College The so-called "CUNY Alliance" promises to "make union business our only business." It's nice of them to forthrightly admit that electing them will be a return to old style "business unionism," but any CUNY faculty member who votes for that should have his or her head examined. We know what business unionism meant for us in the bad old days and what it will mean again. • Weak, compliant leadership • A please-be-nice to us attitude toward management • A top-down leadership style that ignores the membership • Zero increase contracts that also give away hard won gains The New Caucus bargained seriously and tirelessly for three years. Management agreed to the basic framework only to renege. Now the New Caucus is bargaining hard again for us. Michael Krasner, Professor, Political Science, Queens "The New Caucus has set a place at the table for part-time faculty. We still have a ways to go, but now we have a fighting chance of winning our right to be treated as professionals and to have equity with our fulltime colleagues." Vincent Tirelli, Adjunct, Political Science, Brooklyn College "Under the leadership of the New Caucus, the PSC is finally addressing the full range of HEO contributions to CUNY and the challenges we face in our daily working lives." Joshua Brown, Executive Director, American Social History Project/Center for Media and Learning, The Graduate Center 888 "The New Caucus is navigating us through very hostile anti-union waters. At Hostos, the New Caucus leadership of the PSC has played an absolutely crucial role in defending faculty and enforcing the contract." Norma Pena del Lorenz, Chapter Chair, Hostos "It is a pleasure and relief to work with the PSC leadership, who understand the importance of the electoral process. I see candidates for public office who once laughed at the PSC now come to see me and ask what they need to do for our support and endorsement." Ken Sherrill, Professor, Political Science, Hunter College "This is a team that does not buckle under pressure and comes up with out-of-the-box creative approaches to obtain faculty and staff needs. As a science and engineering representative, I greatly appreciate the advances made for released time for new faculty, the strong stand taken to increase support for sabbaticals, and willingness to bargain for the seven year tenure clock." Shelly Weinbaum, CUNY Distinguished Prof. of Engineering, Elected member of all three U.S. National Academies: Science, Engineering, and Medicine Some...have expressed...the idea of voting for the opposing slate in order to "send a message" to the current union leadership. But that is exactly the wrong message to send to an intransigent CUNY management—one that would prefer to bargain with a more docile, compliant, and less activist union leadership.... Providing the New Caucus with an overwhelming election victory would be far better.... In my three-plus decades of observing union leadership, I can frankly affirm that no other union group has been more proactive and dedicated to advancing our interests. Howard Prince, Professor/Retired, BMCC

Re-Elect the New Caucus (4/3/06)

Ballots Will Be Mailed To Your Home This Week The Choice Is In Your Hands THE NEW CAUCUS A LEADERSHIP THAT STANDS UP TO MANAGEMENT, FIGHTS FOR ALL ITS MEMBERS, AND IS BUILDING A UNION VOICE FOR CUNY OR RISK OUR UNION

GAINS WITH THE "CUNY ALLIANCE" A GROUP THAT HAS NO STRATEGY OR PLAN TO WIN A DECENT CONTRACT AND BEAT MANAGEMENT PRESSURE.

Read the Fine Print (4/5/06)

On Monday, the American Arbitration Association sent out ballots for the PSC-CUNY election. In making your decision, we urge voters to go beyond bullet points -- to read and analyze literature from both sides for substance and method of argument. In particular, we ask you to consider two pieces of New Caucus literature: 1. A letter from Barbara Bowen sent to your homes ([click here](#)). 2. "Ten Approaches to Academic Unionism" that we think distinguish us from our opponents ([click here](#)) **READ FURTHER**. We want to make a distinction between our opponent and us on two key points of difference (and we want to do this in full paragraphs, not bullet points). 1. How to negotiate a contract 2. A vision of the union

1. **HOW TO NEGOTIATE A CONTRACT:** In her letter to members, Barbara Bowen writes: On the basis of no history and no record of achieving any victories for members, they promise that they could win a better contract simply by having a "professional relationship" with management. For about five minutes, such a view might have an appeal. Who would not like to hear that all you have to do is sit back and wait for your negotiators to deliver a contract that answers every need? But that's magical thinking, and it's dangerous thinking. It takes no account of the real political situation in which every public employee union in New York State operates. A union leadership with that view would offer PSC members up to every concession management demands. The New Caucus has a very different approach to bargaining. Yes, we do our homework, presenting volumes of data and figures to bolster rational argument in hour after hour of contract negotiations. But ultimately union negotiations are about power – the power of an engaged, active membership and the power to build alliances with and mobilize support from "friends" of CUNY -- labor, students and politicians who believe in public higher education. Bargaining is also about patience – resisting the temptation to get a settlement for its own sake when that means making major concessions and short-changing our membership. Had we agreed to a settlement earlier, departmental chairs would no longer be in the bargaining unit, HEOs would no longer have 13.3b (tenure) protection, instructional staff would return to teach on August 15th, faculty and professional staff would have a sub-standard wage package and the Welfare Fund would continue to be under-financed for another four years.

2. **A VISION OF THE UNION.** We cannot defend the interests of our members – our pocketbooks, our professional integrity, our rights and our dedication to educating our students – without defending public higher education, in general, and CUNY, in particular; without participating in the life of the city, state and nation that defines the social and political context in which we work and teach. Whether it is in the legislative bodies in Albany or at City Hall or in the policy deliberations of our affiliates (AFT, AAUP, NYSUT), we have put CUNY and public higher education on the agenda. The results are real – budget restorations at City Hall and in Albany and major legislative initiatives from pension reforms to transit-checks to increased full-time lines. Our opponents define the work of the union in the narrowest of terms – contract negotiations between a small group from management and a small group from the union. Members become spectators and in this dream world there are no larger political, economic and social realities that drive negotiations. All that counts is the logic of our arguments and the civility of our tone. Dream on!

Do PSC Members Have the Right of Free Speech (4/7/06)

DO PSC MEMBERS HAVE THE RIGHT OF FREE SPEECH? Free speech and academic freedom are at the heart of university life. Under the leadership of the New Caucus, the PSC has promoted the free exchange of ideas, open debate and democratic unionism. The PSC has a strong record of defending academic freedom and the free speech rights of its members. **FREE SPEECH? NOT ACCORDING TO...** Free speech, however, is under attack at Kingsborough Community College. KCC management, at the request of Rina Yarmish, who heads the CUNY Alliance slate, violated the First Amendment free speech rights of KCC Professor Patrick Lloyd by cutting off his access to the KCC faculty listserv. The reason? Prof. Lloyd circulated New Caucus e-newsletters. We think it is particularly egregious that Yarmish colluded with KCC management to deny Professor Lloyd, a PSC member, his free speech rights. Yarmish, Chair of the Math Department at KCC, contacted the chair of Professor Lloyd's department, informing him that "unless this stops immediately, I will take action against him.... We've got to shut this guy down." Then, Yarmish emailed KCC President Regina Peruggi, Professor Lloyd again used the KCC full time faculty list to campaign.... It is my opinion that access to the full_time faculty list and to the all_staff list be denied to Professor Lloyd, since he has been informed by his Chair of the illegality of his activities, and has chosen to ignore him. I will also be consulting with my attorney regarding possible charges of violence against Professor Lloyd, for spreading false and slanderous accusations against me to the college community. Thank you very much. KCC Provost Stuart Suss then suspended Professor Lloyd's access to the listserv "...for the duration of the PSC election...." All that Professor Lloyd did was what other KCC faculty have the right to do: express his political preference in a PSC election by circulating New Caucus literature to the listserv. His actions were nothing new. Postings on the list serve have addressed all manner of political issues, from internal university matters to global affairs. **DEFEND FREE SPEECH RIGHTS** The New Caucus' legal counsel sent a letter to President Peruggi demanding that she restore Professor Lloyd's access to the listserv. ...The KCC listserv is a public forum. The "content-based" restriction on postings to the listserv imposed by Provost Suss violates the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution, as well as the New York State Constitution. It is also an improper practice under the New York Fair Employment Act ("Taylor Law") Furthermore, Provost Suss' attempt to silence voices in support of the New Caucus, simply because one candidate objects to criticism during a union election campaign, constitutes an improper interference in the internal affairs of the PSC and in effect favors one caucus over another. The college cannot interfere with an individual's basic free speech rights. The Choice Couldn't Be More Clear.

The Contract: Fact vs. Fiction (4/7/06)

We are reluctant to engage in further email wars. But when our words are turned on their head and distorted to create misinformation, we must respond. **UNPROFESSIONAL**. First, what the "CUNY Alliance" has done in its 4/7/06 email is unprofessional. It takes a personal communications out of context and mischaracterizes it. **DISTORTIONS**. Second, the CA distorts the nature of the contract proposal made by the PSC on March 1st: • Using inflammatory language like "giveback" and "kickback" they imply that 2% of rate money will permanently go into the Welfare Fund. This is not true. • Also, it is not true that money going into the Welfare is taxable. • They claim settlement money going to the Welfare Fund is "unprecedented." This is

not true. In past contracts, a variety of techniques have been used to create pots of money for the Welfare Fund. Third, PSC President, Barbara Bowen gave a full report to the membership on the March 1st PSC proposal to settle the contract. The New Caucus PSC leadership has been transparent and honest with the membership. (Click here) If CUNY agrees to the PSC proposal, you will receive upon ratification, an immediate increase of 8.48% in base pay and approximately a 6% of your current salary in retroactive pay and \$800 on each step at the end of the contract. Also, members in the steps will continue to receive the 3.5% to 4.5% step increases as they have in the past. There are also many other favorable provisions to the proposed settlement and the overall proposal compares favorably with the SUNY Union's (UUP) contract. (Click here) COMPLAINTS, BUT NO PLAN. Fourth, "CUNY Alliance" complains about the Welfare Fund, but It has no plan to fix it. (Click here) FACT -- NOT FICTION. Fifth, one of the main issues holding up the contract is funding for the Welfare Fund. We are negotiating with the City, State, and CUNY to add resources (on top of salaries) to the Welfare Fund so we can stabilize its finances and enhance benefits. Part of the mix of funding is to use a portion of the retroactive money to reestablish the Fund's reserve (the \$800 in cash from year one and 2% of the retroactive pay -- NOT the permanent increases -- from year two). This money will be spent on your benefits. Without reestablishing a reserve, deductibles and copays would have to go up. Contrary to CUNY Alliance's claim, this money will go into the Fund at full value and you will not have to pay taxes on it. If it came to you, you would have to pay taxes on it. By putting it directly into the Fund, we maximize the use of these resources. If you care about getting a contract and the financial stability of the Welfare Fund, Vote to Re-elect New Caucus leadership

New Caucus Campaign Literature 2009

Our Record

Every three years, the Professional Staff Congress (PSC) has CUNY-wide elections for leadership. This April, the New Caucus is running for re-election.

The New Caucus is the leadership caucus of the Professional Staff Congress (PSC), the faculty and staff union at the City University of New York. Union caucuses are like political parties within the union. The New Caucus nominates candidates for union offices and develops a progressive vision for the union and CUNY that unites all its candidates and members.

First elected 2000 and re-elected twice since then, the New Caucus slates have won the lead officer positions (**Barbara Bowen, Steve London, Mike Fabricant and Arthurine DeSola**) and the 27-member Executive Council. The current HEO and CLT cross-campus leadership and most campus-based chapter Executive Committees prevailed in elections as New Caucus (or New Caucus supported) slates.

Even in the face of two economic crises (post 911 and the current economic meltdown), New Caucus leadership has mobilized membership, built strategic alliances and accomplished the following:

ENHANCED THE PROFESSIONAL LIVES OF OUR MEMBERS

- Won equity increases resulting in salary jump from 35% to 60% in lower-paid titles.
- Increased the very top salary steps by 34% over three contracts (e.g. the very highest step from \$86,619 to \$116,364).
- Enhanced equity in the following titles – lecturer, CLT, assistant-to-HEO and adjunct)
- Increased adjunct pay through the creation of a fully paid "professional hour."
- Won extensive release time for non-tenured faculty.
- Increased sabbatical pay to 80%.
- Created a Professional Development Fund for CUNY HEOs, CLTs, CETs and adjuncts.
- Won paid parental leave and sick-leave banking provisions.
- Won major overtime pay lawsuit for HEOs.
- Won 35-hour workweek arbitration for HEOs.
- Saved 13-B Protections for HEOs.
- Won approval for 200 new full time lines for existing adjuncts.
- Won annual reappointment for eligible adjuncts.
- Defeated a so-called "Academic Bill of Rights" in Albany, which would have threatened Academic Freedom.
- Protected members' rights to Travia leave through an arbitration victory.
- Won Pension equity for TIAA/CREF members with TRS. (resulting in a 3% increase in take-home pay).
- Stabilized the Welfare Fund so that it now has its biggest reserve fund ever.

By going to our website at www.newcaucus.org/WhoWeAre.htm, you can learn more about our caucus, including how we have:

- **Increased the Power of the Union**
- **Built a Stronger CUNY**
- **Built a national Agenda for Social Justice**
- **Expanded Access to CUNY**

We're running on our record -- and ask for your vote in April.

CUNY Alliance Can't Count

CUNY ALLIANCE CAN'T COUNT

From the New Caucus

In their first e-missive of the campaign, CA claims, "Our negotiated raises failed to keep up with cost of living increases." First, they intimate this is for the last nine years and then they say it is "since 2002." Their language is deliberately imprecise.

In fact, across-the-board salary increases have kept pace with inflation, and by next October, they will exceed the rate of inflation (see below). If annual step increases were to be included in the calculation, increases would be even higher, and New Caucus leadership preserved salary steps against intense management pressure to eliminate them.

We negotiated these increases through the 9/11 recession and the current economic crisis. Of course, these increases are in addition to other major economic advances; e.g. 80% paid sabbatical, 24 hours reassigned time for untenured faculty, paid parental leave, additional funds for professional development, and pension reform which adds 3% take home pay after 10 years of service.

CA IS ALSO WRONG ABOUT THE WELFARE FUND

CA's wild claims about New Caucus leaders' management of the PSC-CUNY Welfare Fund are equally ridiculous. When we assumed leadership, the Welfare Fund had a history of annual operating deficits and was headed for bankruptcy. This occurred while Rina Yarmish (CA candidate for Treasurer) was the Welfare Fund Treasurer. We took the tough decisions needed to bring the Welfare Fund back to financial health. Today, the Welfare Fund Reserve is over \$35 million. (Click [here](#) to view the financial statements of the Welfare Fund).

CA does not seem to understand that Welfare Fund benefits have always been funded out of our negotiated settlements with CUNY and settlements reached between the City unions and the City of New York. Since its beginning, the Welfare Fund has received funds from both sources. Complaints by CA that a fraction of the economic settlement in a prior contract went to the Fund demonstrates their naiveté and, worse, their readiness to bankrupt the Fund.

New Caucus leaders have a record of real accomplishment, established in turbulent times. How can you trust people with your future if they can't even count?

Here is the truth about wage increases that anybody can check out. Below are sample salaries as reported in our contracts for selected titles, starting with the salary on July 31, 2000, the day before the first contract negotiated by New Caucus leadership. Others show similar increases.

	Salary in July 2000	Salary in Jan 2009	% Increase	Salary in Oct. 2009	% Increase
Prof/HEO (Top Step)	\$86,619	\$109,674	26.62%	\$116,364	34.34%
Lecturer (Middle Step)	\$42,569	\$55,350	30.02%	\$58,011 (3/10)	36.28%

CLT (Bottom Step)	\$25,346	\$35,723	40.94%	\$36,795	45.17%
Asst to HEO (Middle Step)	\$39,710	\$51,690	30.17%	\$53,241	34.07%
Adj Lect (Top Step) (6 Credits)	\$5,308	\$7,791	46.77%	\$8,473	59.63%

The Bureau of Labor Statistics “All Urban Consumers” CPI for New York increased 27.47% from August 2000 to January 2009. Assuming a liberal 2% annual CPI increase by October 2009, inflation for the period August 2000 to October 2009 will be 29.38%.

CUNY Alliance Engages in Fear Mongering

CA says in their latest email that CUNY Faculty is “poised” to lose control of the PSC-CUNY faculty research program. Then they go on to charge the PSC leadership has been “silent” about this “pending loss.” Both charges are not true.

On February 19, 2009, First Vice President Steve London posted the following statement to the PSC Delegate Assembly list serve:

To PSC Delegates:

Several delegates have raised concerns on this list about the review of PSC-CUNY grants now being undertaken by CUNY. Please be assured that the PSC-CUNY Grants are a negotiated benefit. The University cannot change the grant process without negotiating with the union. The PSC was invited to participate in the University Task Force On The Restructuring of the PSC-CUNY Research Award Program. In response, the PSC's stated position has been that any proposed changes regarding eligibility, scope of grant activity, and the practice and processes regarding decision-making in the awarding of PSC-CUNY grants must be negotiated with the union. Deborah Bell, PSC Executive Director, has attended the two task force meetings that have been held to report back to union officials about the progress of discussions.

While an alternative approach to reviewing and making decisions about PSC-CUNY grants emerged from the most recent meeting (1/29/09), it is the union's position that the Task Force should meet with the Executive Committee of the University Committee on Research Awards for discussion of substantive issues before a formal proposal is put forward by the Task Force. The PSC leadership will also meet with faculty serving on the UCRA Executive Committee to discuss substantive issues. And, if the University puts forward a formal proposal that involves contractual changes, it will have to be negotiated with PSC.

This statement was also circulated on February 24, 2009, to the panel chairs of the University Committee on Research Awards (UCRA).

The PSC leadership has been in constant communication with members of the Executive Committee of the UCRA since early February and has a meeting with the Executive Committee scheduled for March 17th.

Secondly, the contractual language protecting faculty governance and decision-making in the awarding of grants is very strong. To assert that CUNY management's takeover of these functions is "pending" because management asserts a position in a preliminary report of a management-formed task force is to show a lack of understanding of the contract and weakness as a negotiator.

The New Caucus leadership has a strong record of defeating management demands when they are put across the table because we have a strong record of rousing membership to defend hard-won contractual rights (something CA has criticized us for in the past). It was the current New Caucus PSC leadership who defeated CUNY management's contractual demands that Department Chairs be removed from the bargaining unit, that HEO 13.3 (b) job security protections be gutted, that salary steps be removed, that HEOs be paid less than faculty, and the list goes on.

And where was CA when these contractual fights were taking place? Do you remember any CA emails then? Of course not, because they were sitting on the side lines when the real work of the contract campaign was to be done.

Now that there is an election, CA hopes to capture your attention with fear-mongering and falsehoods.

New Caucus leaders have a record of real accomplishment when it comes to protecting contractual rights, established in turbulent times. How can you trust people with your future if all they can offer is fear mongering and falsehoods?

CUNY Alliance's Politics of Swift-Boating

CUNY Alliance has engaged in a campaign of lies and distortions about New Caucus leadership. Used by Karl Rove against John Kerry in the 2004 campaign, "swift boating" is a campaign tactic that turns the truth upside-down. The politics of "swift boating" is meant to distract and create false issues so that real concerns don't get discussed and the attackers can hide their record and political views behind a smoke-screen of accusations.

The New Caucus rejects this type of politics, because it does not address the real issues of the membership, it does not allow for an honest debate over differences, it is negative and meant to be disempowering, and it is divisive.

For the record, here is the truth about the more blatant lies they have told:

- Salaries have kept pace or beat inflation. For more information click [here](#).
- The Welfare Fund is well managed and financially healthy. For more information click [here](#).
- Survivor benefits were not cut. For more information click [here](#).
- The three contracts negotiated by the New Caucus PSC leadership have been as good as or better than those negotiated by other State and City unions. For more information click [here](#).
- The New Caucus PSC leadership has been effective and vocal in our opposition to proposed changes in the PSC-CUNY Research Awards. For more information click [here](#).

When you read their often hysterical and exaggerated charges, please consider the source.

In the next 10 days, you will receive New Caucus print literature on campus and at home that speaks to the real issues of the membership and lays out our impressive record of accomplishments since assuming leadership of the PSC. Please take the time to read it.

Since CA uses “swift boating” to hide their politics, in the remaining week of the campaign, we will also take on the responsibility for naming their politics, even if they won’t, and drawing clear differences between us and our opponents. Stay tuned.

The New Caucus Slate, Headed By Barbara Bowen, Is The ONLY Choice For Our Future!

CUNY ALLIANCE: THE POLITICS OF INVISIBILITY

When there is union work to be done, CUNY Alliance sits on the sidelines. Lacking a record of accomplishment or union work, CA emerges from hiding at election time, once every three years, to sling mud at the accomplishments of others.

Let's Review the Facts:

1. Fred Brodzinski, CA candidate for President, was elected as an alternate Delegate (2000-2007) and had the opportunity to attend any one of 67 meetings to learn more about the PSC on matters including but not limited to contract

negotiations, the contract campaign and or lobbying. In that time period, his interest and commitment did not rise to the level of attending a **single** Delegate Assembly meeting.

2. Other CUNY Alliance candidates who have served as DA delegates have similar dismal records: they have attended less than 50% of Delegate Assembly meetings.
3. Over the past nine years three of the four CUNY Alliance candidates for top officers have not participated in a single PSC sponsored lobbying event in either Albany or City Hall.
4. During the last contract campaign the four CUNY Alliance candidates for top officers did not attend a single meeting, rally or event associated with the PSC's contract campaign.

Because CUNY Alliance's top candidates are invisible in the union when it comes to winning good contracts and more money for CUNY, they want their very sorry record of disinterest and non accomplishment to be invisible in this campaign. That is why they attack.

The New Caucus has Delivered Over the Past Nine Years

1. The last contract was delivered by the New Caucus PSC leadership in record time and just before the economic meltdown. *The timing and achievements of that contract was a product of experienced, imaginative leadership.*
2. In the past nine months, the New Caucus PSC leadership's lobbying work in Albany has resulted in the restoration of budget cuts proposed by Albany to CUNY community colleges and increased investment of public dollars in CUNY.
3. Over the past nine years, contract negotiations, lobbying and organizing campaigns led by New Caucus PSC leaders has produced salary increases of 30% to 60%, 1200 new full time faculty positions, release time for junior faculty, an office hour for part time faculty, over-time for HEO's and 80% salary levels for sabbaticals. Importantly, all of this was accomplished during a period in which a cross section of public programs were being cut back.

Now More than Ever We Need a Proven, Accomplished and *Visible* PSC Leadership

Vote the New Caucus Slate headed by Barbara Bowen -- The Only Choice For Our Future

CUNY ALLIANCE'S POLITICS OF DISINVESTMENT

Compare and contrast New Caucus and CUNY Alliance approaches to public investment in CUNY. The New Caucus lobbies government for more stimulus money for CUNY – and saves CUNY jobs (see below). Fred Brodzinski, the CA candidate for president, wants to shrink the public sector:

"The mission of the Republican Party is to promote, preserve, and protect individual liberty, free enterprise and limited government."

Hamilton Township Republican Party Committee, Fred Brodzinski, President --

- <http://htrcmercer.org>

Nothing appears in CUNY Alliance about public investment in CUNY, let alone Brodzinski's political approach to CUNY funding. Instead, CA presents misinformation, more misinformation and lie after lie. Why?

They want to hide Fred Brodzinski's public record of supporting small government. All of us are entitled to be involved in political activities, but PSC members are also entitled to know about the public record of a candidate running for union president and what this would mean if he were our representative. Consider what Brodzinski, the CA presidential candidate, doesn't tell you anywhere in his published CA biography.

- That he is a longtime Republican Party activist in Mercer County, New Jersey.
- That he ran (and lost) on the Republican Party ticket for Princeton Borough Mayor in 1999.
- That he is currently president of the Hamilton Township Republican Committee (HTRC).
- That in the 2008 elections, he trained Republican candidates in the Mercer County "campaign school."

What does Brodzinski's "small government" agenda mean for CUNY?

Make no mistake, Fred Brodzinski is partisan. He says in a message on the HRTC website:

"Be aware that the Democrats emboldened by the Obama victory will direct very large amounts of money and manpower into Hamilton to disrupt one of the very few municipalities in New Jersey that has a government totally composed of Republicans!!" Fred Brodzinski --- <http://htrcmercer.org>

The Republican agenda, in practice, has meant reducing taxes on the wealthy, deregulation of the financial industry, threatening to privatize Social Security, destroying the power of unions, and bankrupting the public sector. What will this mean for CUNY in this time of economic crisis? We can expect from Brodzinski – as we have seen with his Republican counterparts – hostility to exactly the increased public investment CUNY needs.

Contrast this with a different scenario. New Caucus PSC leaders were in Albany this week meeting with legislators and the Governor's representatives to push for more public investment in CUNY. We argued for allocating more stimulus money to CUNY and reversing the Pataki-era tax-cuts for the wealthy to allow for greater public investment.

SAVING JOBS: What was the immediate outcome of our representation in Albany – **CUNY jobs were saved.** As many news outlets reported, CUNY would be EXEMPT from workforce reductions applied elsewhere.

**VOTE FOR THE NEW CAUCUS SLATE HEADED BY BARBARA BOWEN
THE ONLY CHOICE FOR OUR FUTURE**

**At a Time of Economic Crisis When Other Unions are Struggling to
Preserve What they Won in the Past**

Barbara Bowen and The New Caucus Have Delivered New Benefits and Preserved Past Victories

- **The current contract settlement** in record time and above inflation -
 - delivered *before* the budget crisis hit
- **New benefits** including; paid parental leave, a sick bank and a parttime development fund
- **A roll back of budget cuts to** community colleges
- **Preservation of jobs and wage increases** that were at risk in the present budget crisis
- **Stopping the threatened** introduction of a new pension tier and threatened givebacks in health insurance

The New Caucus Has Won Innovative Advances for Faculty and Professional Staff

- **80% sabbaticals** for tenured faculty
- **Extensive Release time** for untenured faculty, counselors and librarians
- **Overtime compensation** for HEO's
- **Paid office hour** for part-time faculty working 6 hours
- **1,200 new full-time positions**
- **200 full-time conversion lines** for adjunct faculty
- **Equity Salary increases** from 35% to 60% for the lowest ranks over three contracts
- **Increases of 34%** for the very top salary steps over three contracts

The CUNY Alliance thinks it can do better. Really? They have been invisible when there was work to be done and their politics will cost CUNY jobs and lead to a reduction in salary and benefits.

- **Invisibility:** Fred Brodzinski, "the man who would be president," from 2000 to 2007, missed all 67 sessions of the PSC Delegate Assembly. Neither he, nor his caucus, has ever lobbied with the PSC in Albany or at City Hall

- **Disinvestment in CUNY:** For the full story on what Brodzinski's political agenda of disinvestment in government means for CUNY, go to www.newcaucus.org/CApoliticsofdisinvestment.htm

**VOTE FOR THOSE WHO HAVE DELIVERED:
BARBARA BOWEN & THE NEW CAUCUS SLATE**

**If The CUNY Alliance Can't do
the Basic Math of Calculating the
Value of a Contract, How
Can They Lead a Union?**

Let's Review the Facts, NOT CUNY Alliance Fiction

- They misrepresent the value of our last contract by leaving out the \$800 added to salary steps on September 19, 2007 and which represents an approximate 1% value
- On October 6, 2008 every salary step was increased by 4%, NOT the 3% they report
- The current contract is 37 months and includes three wage increases NOT the four they report
- When they state the overall percentage increase to salaries, they leave out the 4% increase in October of 2008 and the 1% increase added in September 2007
- Their analysis does not calculate the value of individuals moving through the step structure. The value of a step is 3.5% to 4.5%. Aggregated, all of the individual steps are worth 1.4% annually.
- You can see the true increases in the value of salary steps by linking to www.newcaucus.org/raisesandinflation.htm. When you do the basic math it is clear that our salaries have beat inflation.
- Also, our salary increases compare favorably to UUP, the SUNY union CUNY Alliance fails to tell you the UUP contract has four increases and runs four years and ours has three increases and runs for three years. And, UUPhas no salary steps.

Why can't the CUNY Alliance accurately report the value of our contract settlements?

Is the CUNY Alliance knowingly and repeatedly misrepresenting the settlements to Win Votes?

Or does it simply lack the competence to do the Basic Math necessary to negotiate and conclude a settlement agreement?

This much is clear, no matter the explanation they cannot be trusted to lead the PSC.

Vote for the New Caucus Slate Headed by Barbara Bowen

The Only Choice for Our Future

A LETTER FROM BARBARA BOWEN

April 2009

Dear PSC Colleague,

I'm writing as the New Caucus candidate for re-election as president of the PSC. I am seeking the honor and the challenge of serving as your union president for another three years. While I hadn't planned to write another personal letter about the election, I feel it's important to speak to you directly and honestly, above the noise of the election.

There is a real political choice in this election, and I think the only serious choice is the New Caucus. The New Caucus has a record, a strategy and a political analysis. We do not have to rely on accusations and empty promises. I am writing to ask you to vote on the basis of the facts.

Most of us don't expect people to lie. We assume that when someone sends a printed message with what appears to be information, the sender has taken pains to make sure it is true. Not so the CUNY Alliance. They do not scruple to circulate lies if they think it will help them to win votes. With zero experience either negotiating a contract or leading a union, they are apparently hoping that a barrage of accusations—regardless of whether the accusations are true—will conceal their lack of substance and their real politics.

THE TRUTH ABOUT PROMISES

The truth is that the New Caucus has delivered on salaries—for example, the top professor salary step will show a 34% increase by the end of this contract, and the bottom CLT step an increase of 45%. Those are substantial economic gains. But we have gone beyond salaries to deliver a whole array of new benefits that lift the quality of our professional lives: well-paid sabbaticals, junior faculty released time, paid office hours for adjuncts, paid parental leave, 200 new full-time lines for former part-

timers, professional development funds, and more. We were able to succeed because we built the political leverage of the membership: it was political leverage that forced CUNY to drop its demand to remove department chairs from the union, and political leverage that won the 6% increases to the top salary steps this October. Of course there are things we have not yet achieved, and of course all of us feel acutely that salaries and working conditions at CUNY must be further improved. But the way to achieve that is to do the hard work of organizing for greater power—not to make irresponsible promises without a plan for achieving them.

It's clear that the CUNY Alliance has no record. Just as disturbing, however, is that they have no strategy for doing as well as—let alone better than—the New Caucus. One of their recent missives promises that they will “negotiate” everything from large salary increases to reduced teaching loads. (They also announce that they will negotiate provisions the New Caucus leadership has already won—such as increased annual leave for counseling faculty.) The critical question, however, is how. For all their chatter, the CUNY Alliance is silent about strategy. The gains they promise would cost at least two or three times the value of any contract won by any New York union. Making extravagant promises without a strategy, especially in this economic climate, is irresponsible—if not worse.

In the seven years he was an elected member of the union's Delegate Assembly, CUNY Alliance candidate Fred Brodzinski never attended once, in 67 sessions. He never participated in the strategy discussions that produced our contract gains and never joined in the analysis of the obstacles we have faced. He has never won a single gain for colleagues on his campus. He was defeated two-to-one in the election for leadership of the higher education officer chapter. He offers no basis for trusting him with your future.

In 2000, when I first ran for union leadership, I had spent five years as the union chapter chair at Queens College. I had been a leader in the successful fight against retrenchment at Queens in the 1990s, fought and won the battle over increasing our teaching load, and ended the practice of failing to pay adjuncts on time. Steve London had been a chapter chair at Brooklyn College even longer before he ran for union-wide office and had a similar record of accomplishment. The New Caucus did not seek your vote and your trust until we have proven ourselves union leaders. Brodzinski asks you to vote for him on the basis of fantasy.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CONTRACT

Failing to offer a strategy, Brodzinski and the CUNY Alliance have resorted to lies. Theirs is the familiar strategy of “the big lie”—tell a lie so blatant and so often that no one will doubt that it's true. That practice alone should discredit them, especially in an academic community. They constantly repeat the mantra that our salary increases have not kept up with inflation, when they know that is false. Their recent missive about our salaries comes up with a figure below inflation because it omits both the September 2007 increase and the October 2008 increase. You can make the numbers say anything if you are willing to lie.

I would welcome honest debate about what the PSC has and has not been able to achieve in our contracts. But what CUNY Alliance offers is not honest debate. We should build on the heightened interest in the union generated by this election and begin a union-wide conversation on strategy, but a conversation based on facts, not lies.

I do not plan to refute every one of the CUNY Alliance's lies and distortions here; I just ask you to go to the public record. You will find that CUNY Alliance has distorted the truth on everything from Welfare Fund benefits to my expenses. For instance, it is an outright lie that the New Caucus “has eliminated benefits for spouses of deceased members”: the Welfare Fund's policy on spouses of deceased members has not changed since 1989. It is also a lie that we “hid” the state of the Welfare Fund from the membership. The exact opposite is true. We conducted a series of public meetings across the campuses

to discuss the Fund's finances and wrote about them repeatedly in *Clarion* articles. CUNY Alliance's accusations on stipends, expenses and other subjects are equally unfounded.

THE TRUTH ABOUT POLITICS

The New Caucus leadership stands for public investment in institutions that serve the public. All of our work is based on the belief that a public university with CUNY's historic mission should be a great university, not one constantly strapped for funds—and that our own working conditions as faculty and staff should be supportive of our work. As recently as last week, we saw the results of the New Caucus leadership's work: in a grueling year for the New York State budget, the PSC agenda of progressive tax reform (in coalition with many other unions) was enacted; CUNY was excluded from Governor Paterson's announcement of 8,900 layoffs of State workers, and millions of dollars in proposed cuts to CUNY were reversed. That record is testimony to years of patient analysis and organizing.

In contrast, Fred Brodzinski, who heads the CUNY Alliance slate, does not mention in his many campaign emails that he is an activist in the Republican Party and an avowed opponent of public investment. "The mission of the Republican Party is to promote, preserve, and protect individual liberty, free enterprise and limited government," states the website of the Hamilton Township Republican Committee, of which Brodzinski is president. PSC members are entitled to participate in political activities, but I think you are entitled to know what CUNY Alliance stands for. At a time when the PSC under New Caucus leadership has devoted every resource it can to increasing public investment in CUNY and preserving CUNY jobs, Brodzinski espouses "limited government." That is exactly the agenda that plunged CUNY into decades of poverty.

POLITICAL CHOICE

I am sure you will continue to get CUNY Alliance emails until the vote is counted, and that they will contain the familiar mixture of the big lie about our record, empty promises about their own candidacy, and "revelations" about the other candidates and me. Check their accusations against the record. When you do, I think you will share my sense that people who are willing to be dishonest to get your vote are not people you should trust with union leadership.

I do not expect to write to you again as a candidate in this election, because the current moment is perhaps the most important in a generation for the State and City budgets. During this period I have been testifying at City Hall, advocating for CUNY in Albany, meeting with the governor's office to press for more federal stimulus funds for public higher education, participating in budget hearings on the campuses, and working with our representatives in Washington to maximize federal stimulus funding for public colleges and universities. In short, I have been doing and will continue to do the work of the union president. I feel that is the only principled thing to do, especially in this economic moment.

I am proud of what we have been able to accomplish together, under New Caucus union leadership. The PSC has grown exponentially in effectiveness and influence and success. We have raised members' expectations of their union, and that's a great thing. We have much more to accomplish, and I would like to do it with you. I ask you to repudiate the dishonest politics of the CUNY Alliance and show your support for transparency, integrity and principled leadership—for the New Caucus.

In solidarity,

Barbara Bowen

CUNY ALLIANCE IS AT IT AGAIN. THIS TIME IT IS LIES ABOUT ISRAEL.

CUNY Alliance presidential candidate Fred Brodzinski has been circulating emails to hundreds of individuals charging that the New Caucus and PSC leadership are anti-Israel. **The charges are absolutely false.**

He is circulating a discredited article published several years ago that quotes current CA candidates and ultra-conservative National Association of Scholars members.

First CA circulated lies and disinformation about salary increases and the Welfare Fund. When PSC members rejected these falsehoods, they accelerated a new disinformation campaign.

What are the facts about the PSC and resolutions on Israel?

The PSC leadership took a public position opposing the proposed boycotts of two Israeli universities by the British faculty union, the Association of University Teachers. (DA Resolution, June 21, 2007). Barbara Bowen, a member of the Executive Council of our national affiliate, the American Federation of teachers, helped to craft the Council's resolution opposing the boycott (<http://www.aft.org/about/resolutions/2005/aut-boycott.htm>)

The PSC's representative to the AAUP Committee on Academic Freedom helped to create the AAUP's statement, also in opposition to the boycott.

The PSC has passed two other resolutions touching on Israel. One, recently passed, declared "that the Delegate Assembly take no position on the Israeli/Palestinian conflict at this time and that it encourage delegates to the DA to hold conversations with members on whether the union should take a position on this issue." That resolution was preceded by a respectful debate among delegates, during which two proposed resolutions opposing Israel's actions in Gaza failed. In a democratic union, all delegates are entitled to offer resolutions and open debate is encouraged.

A second resolution passed on December 13, 2007, by the PSC Delegate Assembly included the following statement in a resolution opposing expansion of the Iraq war into Iran, "Resolved, that NYSUT unequivocally condemn the reactionary regime of Ahmadinejad and his shameful, anti-Semitic Holocaust denials."

To foster the innuendo that the New Caucus PSC leadership is anti-Semitic or "anti-Israel" is simply malicious. It's also a familiar technique of those who wish to stifle free speech and suggest that any discussion and analysis of the volatile situation in the Mideast is out of bounds.