



EQUITY □ OPPORTUNITY □ EXCELLENCE

AAP Advocate

Association of Academic Professionals
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Affiliate, Illinois Education Association (IEA/NEA)
217/384-2906, aap@shout.net, www.shout.net/~aap/

Vol. 9, No. 1, February 2006

VAPs Begin Bargaining!

The effort took a little over a year, but at press time, the University was set to begin bargaining with the Visiting Academic Professionals on January 24, 2006!

We are looking forward to contract bargaining with the University. In December the Illinois Appellate Court denied the University's request for a stay of bargaining. That same day, representatives of the VAPs and Illinois Education Association President Ken Swanson had a previously scheduled meeting with University President B. Joseph White to discuss a partnership in lobbying the Illinois legislature for better higher education budgets.

Working together we'll not only negotiate a contract, but also bring our collective strength to bear in Springfield. □

Step-by-step through the Visiting Academic Professionals' Campaign

2006

Jan. 24 Bargaining between VAPs and UIUC begins.

2005

Dec. 14 University President B. Joseph White meets with IEA President Ken Swanson and VAP/AAP members to discuss partnerships between the IEA/NEA and UIUC administration.

That same day, the Illinois Appellate Court rejects UIUC's appeal for a stay of bargaining.

Dec. 7 General VAP membership meeting.

Nov. 15 The Illinois Education Labor Relations Board (IELRB) denies UIUC's motion to stay.

Oct. 24 UIUC files a motion to stay with the IELRB, asking them to waive their bargaining responsibility until the appellate court appeal is decided.

Sep. 20 VAP's IEA/NEA Representation serves UIUC with a demand to bargain.

Aug. 26 UIUC files a petition for review with the Illinois Appellate Court for the Fourth District, in which UIUC challenges the IELRB's certification of the VAP bargaining unit.

Aug. 9 The IELRB certifies AAP as the exclusive bargaining representative of UIUC's Visiting Academic Professionals.

Aug. 1 Sequestered votes from the April election are counted by the Illinois Labor Relations Board in Springfield. The voting results affirm the creation of a union to represent UIUC's Visiting Academic Professionals by the AAP/IEA/NEA.

Jul. 14 The full Illinois Labor Relations Board issues an official Opinion and Order denying UIUC's claim that Visiting Academic Professionals are not an appropriate group to collectively bargain. The decision affirms the VAP unit's legitimacy and directs that the election ballots be counted.

Apr. 14 Election is held to choose AAP to represent the VAP unit. Ballots are impounded pending the result of UIUC's appeal of the IELRB Administrative Law Judge's 3/16/05 decision to the full IELRB Board.

Mar. 16 An IELRB Administrative Law Judge issues a Recommended Decision and Order approving the petition of 11/17/2005 and directing an election in the VAP bargaining unit.

2004

Nov. 17 Association of Academic Professionals files a petition with the IELRB to represent the ~400 Visiting Academic Professionals at UIUC.

The Association of Academic Professionals is a group of academic professional employees at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign that is organizing for the purpose of collective bargaining. The AAP is affiliated with the Illinois Education Association and the National Education Association. We are part of a national movement of academic professionals who seek collective bargaining rights.

In order to maintain and improve on the benefits of working at this great university, we believe that we need to organize so that our voice commands attention when administrators make decisions that affect our jobs.

The AAP seeks to ensure certain rights such as:

- clear paths for career development and advancement
- third-party resolution of disputes with supervisors
- fair, timely, and consistent evaluation procedures
- safeguards against arbitrary dismissal
- rewards for good job performance
- compensation for mandatory overtime
- paid and unpaid leaves
- *a meaningful voice in decisions that affect our employment*

AAP Advocate—UIUC Association of Academic Professionals

AAP Officers:

Chairperson: **Jenny Barrett**, *Psychology*
 Vice Chairperson: **César Romero**, *ACES/ITCS*
 Secretary: **Rose Morefield**, *Krannert Center*
 Treasurer/Finance Committee Chair:
Roni Kann, *La Casa Cultural Latina*
 Membership Committee Chair:
David Schug, *Int'l Programs & Studies*
 IEA Region Council Representatives:
Jenny Barrett; César Romero; Sam Smith, *Uni Laboratory HS*

Executive Committee Members:

Geoff Bant, *retired*
Cheryl Berger, *Psychology*
Chris Beuoy, *Veterinary Medicine*
Charlie Clark, *Extension*
Katherine Johnson, *Rehabil.-Educ. Svcs*
Lydia Khuri, *Housing/Residential Life*
Eric Keeley, *Center for Teaching Excellence*
Daniel Lewart, *Veterinary Medicine*
Nancy Mickenbecker, *Extension*
Chris Migotsky, *Center for Teaching Excellence*
Robin Orr, *Extension*
Maeve Reilly, *WILL*
Bobbi Trist, *Integrative Biology*

IEA Staff: Gene Vanderport, Steve Vaughan, and David Vitoff

SURS Retirement Forum Highlights Need for Democratic Representation

An interesting question arose at the November 15 panel discussion about University retirement benefits and Senate Bill 27.

The event, cosponsored by AAP and the Union of Professional Employees (UPE) featured Rep. Naomi Jakobsson; Janette Weatherall, an Illinois Education Association (IEA) lobbyist; Mitch Vogel, president of the retirement board of the State University Retirement System (SURS); J. Fred

Giertz, faculty member in the Institute of Government and Public Affairs and former board member of SURS; and Steve Rugg, University vice president of administration and comptroller.

**Who represents the workers
of the University? UI lobbyists
have a conflict of interest.**

After each panelist spoke briefly about the pension changes in Senate Bill 27 (SB27), an audience member asked, "Who represents the workers of the University?" He pointed out that there was no call from the University to hear the employees' side, which is one of the primary roles for unions.

Addressing Rugg, he continued by saying that the University is balancing the budget on the backs of employees. There is a conflict of interest between working for an adequate budget and also working for benefits when the University has one pot of money.

Rugg agreed that there is only one pot of money. He said the University *does* stress the importance of employee benefits in its dealings with Springfield, and that the University needs someone to document the effects of a two-tier system on recruitment and retention.

Is the University less concerned about our pensions and employees who are already here and more concerned about getting a large pot of money so that it can carry out projects that it considers higher priority than salaries and benefits? Who's out there fighting for the employees themselves? Even if the administration is working for us, they don't solicit our opinion and we have no voice in the matter.

The gentleman in the audience was right; we do need a union to represent the interests of the employees.

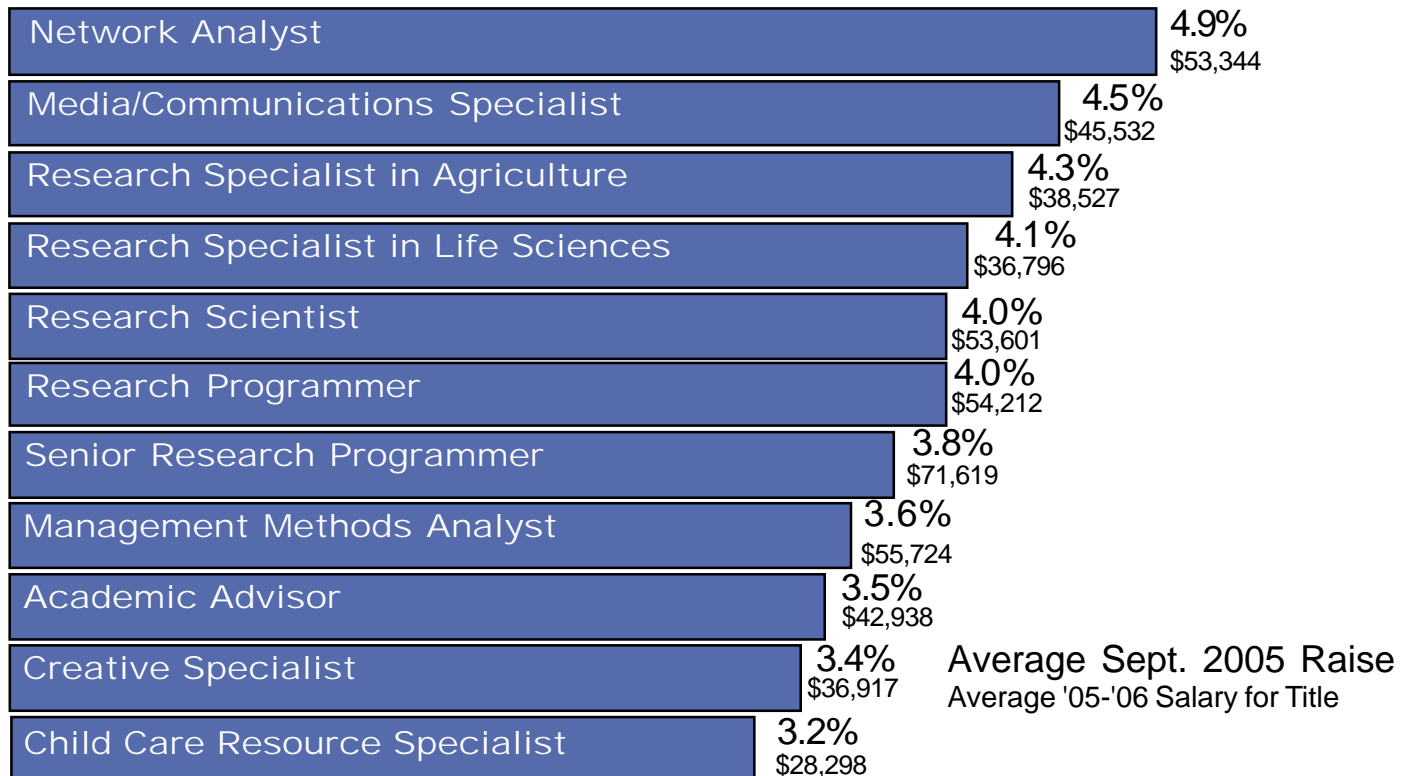
Weatherall pointed out that the coming election year will be a good time to do more lobbying to change the bill, which caught IEA by surprise.

Vogel listed some things that need to be corrected: loss of the money purchase option for employees hired after June 30, 2005; having the state comptroller set the money purchase option rate; shifting pension costs to the employer for end-of-career raises over 6%; and the five-year sunset provision on any new benefits.

Since the state's contribution is only \$166 million instead of more than \$360 million, there will be a huge shortfall this year and a slightly smaller shortfall next year. As a result the state will have to borrow to cover pensions, creating a statewide problem. ▫

This spring, join the Illinois Education Association Higher Education's lobbying effort to let our legislators know that SB27 is unacceptable. If you are interested in working on this issue, contact the AAP at aap@shout.net.

Average September 2005 Raises for Selected UIUC Job Titles



Get a Fix on This: Employee Unions Advance the University's Civic Role

In his November 8 "Know Your University" talk, Chancellor Richard Herman outlined his vision of the role of the University in the years ahead and asked: "Why does a great institution strive to be better?"

The words he offered in response capture the essence of his speech: Drive, ambition, yearning, and an obsession with always being better. These are human traits that we breathe into our institution. He also touted the University's role in promoting civic engagement and democracy.

During the question period, a visiting AP asked him whether he believes employees have a right to unionize as a way to improve their lives. The Chancellor replied, "What's broken?" He expressed doubt that previous unionization efforts have made any difference for employees.

Herman's response demonstrates a lack of awareness of the serious issues that VAPs face as well as of the significant role that unions play in improving the quality of life of hundreds of University of Illinois employees. By law employees have the right to form unions to collectively negotiate contracts and safeguard their rights.

What's more, unions are a realization of Herman's vision for the University. Things don't need to be "broken" to justify working for democratic representation. Even if employees are happy with their working conditions, as valued members of the University community they should have a voice in how to make the University an even better place to work.

What better way for the University to promote democracy than to encourage employees to form democratic unions in order to pursue their ambitions and yearnings to be better? ▫

When asked about employees' right to unionize, Herman replied "What's broken?"



Association of Academic Professionals
Illinois Education Association
304 N Maple Ave, Suite 202
Urbana, IL 61801-2749

Address service requested

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
URBANA, IL
PERMIT NO. 10

**How did last year's
raises stack up for
different job titles?
See page 3.**

Did you know...?
Illinois ranks 49th
among states for the
percentage change in
higher ed appropri-
ations between FY05
and FY06. With a 2.6%
cut, it was one of only
four states that did not
increase the higher ed
budget this year.

IEA and UIUC Presidents Meet, Agree to Partner

On December 14, B. Joseph White, president of the University of Illinois, met with Ken Swanson, president of the Illinois Education Association and with representatives of IEA's local at the University, the Association of Academic Professionals and the AAP-Visiting AP local, to discuss forming a partnership between education and labor to lobby in Springfield.

White emphasized that education and research were valuable state assets, and the two presidents agreed to work together to ensure that legislators get this message so that higher education and the University will get adequate funding.

President White plans to speak at the IEA Higher Education Lobbying Day in Springfield this spring.

Please let AAP know if you are interested in participating. You can reach us at aap@shout.net.

Let's come out in force and show the legislators that higher education is important to voters! ▣