

AAP

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AAP Advocate

Association of Academic Professionals
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
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Spring Meeting Kicks Off Initiatives, Opens Eyes to Benefits of Unions

By Chris Beuoy

More than fifty people attended the March 26 Spring Meeting of the Association of Academic Professionals. It provided a chance to network with APs from diverse settings on campus and learn more about organizing activities at our campus and union accomplishments at another campus.

Jenny Barrett, AAP chair, welcomed the group. She noted that AAP seeks to ensure the positive aspects of employment on the Urbana campus through a formal contract with the administration.

Next Peter Miller, the staff person from the Illinois Education Association who facilitates AAP organizing efforts, introduced AAP members Maeve Reilly and Lydia Khuri, who are leading AAP initiatives on child care and domestic partner benefits (see story page 2), respectively.



Casandra Fitzherbert

The headline speaker was Casandra Fitzherbert, a University of Maine librarian and a leader in the Professional Staff Association there.

Before the Professional Staff Association gained collective bargaining rights at the University of Maine System in the late 1970s, Fitzherbert said, the situation in Maine was the same as at Illinois now: "Raises and job security were based on which way the wind was blowing."

"We need an organization to help us identify the issues and to represent us to administration," she said.

"Organizing does not mean an adversarial relationship" with the administration, she said. "Negotiation helps clarify priorities, which in turn creates better morale and leads to higher productivity and an improved work environment for everyone."

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The Association of Academic Professionals is a group of academic professional employees at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign that is attempting to organize 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

STEERING COMMITTEE:

Jenny Barrett (chair), *Psychology*
 Cheryl Berger, *Psychology*
 Guy Davis, *Career Services Center*
 Mel Farrell, *Ill. Lib. Computer Systems*
 Neal Horner, *McKinley Health Center*
 Jamie Hutchinson, *ECE*
 Diana Johnson, *Spurlock Museum*
 Dan Lewart, *Veterinary Medicine*
 Jamie McGowan, *Ctr. for African Studies*
 Jane Mohraz, *UI Press*
 César Augusto Romero, *ACES/ITCS*
 Ron Szoke, *CCSO*

IEA STAFF: Peter Miller

AAP Announces Push for Domestic Partner Benefits

By Lydia Khuri

As an academic professional, I wear two hats. I am the permanent Assistant Coordinator for the Program on Intergroup Relations, a social justice and diversity education program here at the University, and a visiting clinical counselor on staff at the counseling center. I love my jobs. I bring the same dedication and enthusiasm to my work as my legally married colleagues. I



At the March 26 Spring Meeting, Lydia Khuri kicked off AAP's petition drive in support of domestic partner benefits. You can sign online at www.shout.net/aap/

worry about my health and my partner's health the same way as my legally married colleagues.

Yet, I and other folks lesbian, gay, bisexual, straight, partnered but not legally married have one extra worry: the lack of benefits for our domestic partners. This lack no longer exists at numerous corporations and universities, including five Big Ten universities and the Ivy League schools.

The University has not simply been slow on its feet; it has dragged its feet and dug in its heels. It is time for the University to get itself unstuck and start walking in the right direction.

In 1996, the Faculty/Student Senate recommended that the University of Illinois extend the benefits currently provided to married partners to same- and opposite-sex domestic partners. The Chicago and Springfield campuses made the same recommendation shortly thereafter.

In 1998, President Stukel responded with a lengthy letter prepared by legal counsel as to why the University could not provide such benefits. Two law faculty supplied a cogent rebuttal. So, the debate goes on. Let us carry that debate into action.

The Senate has again taken up the matter and President Stukel stated that he will not take the matter to the Board of Trustees. The Senate has not given up, and the AAP has joined in the effort. Even though we do not have a voice in the Senate, we believe in working with the Senate on this very important issue. Priscilla Yu, Chair of the Senate Equal Opportunity Committee, was quoted in a recent *Daily Illini* story (3/27/01) that "universities want to remain competitive to get and retain top faculty" and that "all families deserve access to health care and other benefits, regardless of individual differences." I add that the University also has an investment in getting and retaining top academic professionals. Providing domestic partner benefits is one way.

Please contact me at mkhuri@uiuc.edu to join AAP in working for domestic partner benefits. You can sign an online petition supporting the senate's action at: <http://www.shout.net/aap/domestic>. ■

Senate Changes Affect APs

By Peter Miller

At the Faculty/Student Senate meeting on March 19, senators approved two changes important to academic professionals: one improved the terminal contract, and the other created a research committee.

In the current language on terminal contracts, only non-visiting APs who hold 100-percent appointments are entitled to the full terminal contract, which can last for up to a year. The senate voted to extend the terminal contract to APs working half-time or more. Jenny Barrett, chair of the Association of Academic Professionals, was the only person to speak for the resolution, and no one spoke against it.

The senate also voted to increase the minimum notice of non-reappointment for APs from 2 to 3 months. Currently, APs in the athletic department receive a minimum notice of 3 months, and all others 2 months. The senate found it proper to correct the inequity.

A terminal contract is extended when an AP is fired, and APs are fortunate to receive up to a year-long notice. Drawbacks are that it takes some time to reach the full year-long notice, it's not extended to people with "visiting" appointments, and it doesn't apply to those with part-time appointments. If a full-time AP accepts a part-time appointment, his or her notice may be reduced to zero; those who regain a full-time appointment may need to re-accumulate their years of service to receive the full notice. For soft-money employees, it takes 10 years to accumulate the full year notice.

The senate's action was good for APs and will fix one of the holes in the terminal contract. Since the change requires an amendment of the statutes, the Trustees need to approve the change. The change was originally proposed by Chancellor Peltason in 1975, and the proposal was renewed by the Professional Advisory Committee 9 years ago.

The (unamended) resolution is available at http://www.uiuc.edu/providers/senate/sp0105_2.pdf.

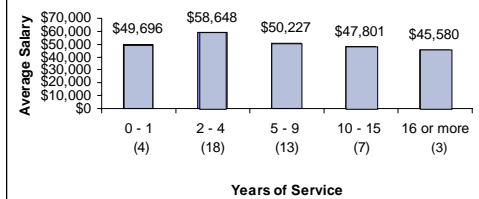
The second change involved the creation of a Research Policy Committee. Senators agreed that since they have a committee for teaching, it made sense to form such a committee for research. A pool of nominees will be chosen by the senate, and the Vice Chancellor for Research (VCR) will select the final committee.

This new committee will "advise the Chancellor, the VCR, and the Senate on matters of research policy" and will complement the existing Research Policy Committee appointed by the VCR.

Non-faculty constituencies will be represented on the committee. One graduate student and—thanks to last-minute amendments put forward by an undergraduate student trustee—one undergraduate will be on the 16-member body. No APs will be on the committee, although they probably should be. A quick check shows that of the position titles held by the approximately 2,300 APs, 800 include the word "research."

The (unamended) resolution is available at <http://www.uiuc.edu/providers/senate/sp9603.pdf>. The senate approved the substitute resolution (found on page 3), which was amended to include undergraduates. ■

UIUC Salary Snapshot: Research Scientists



The sample includes all FY2001 APs who had at least one appointment with the title Research Scientist. Less than full-time, 12-month appointments were pro-rated. The number in parentheses is the sample size for the corresponding category. The total sample size was 45.

Legislature Considers Expanding Tuition Waiver

ACT NOW!

On March 7, the Illinois House of Representatives passed a bill to expand tuition waivers for children of state university employees. If approved by the senate and signed by the governor, the bill will grant full tuition waivers to children of any employee who has worked at a state university for at least seven years. The bill would also give tuition waivers to children of retired employees and to campus units operated by the Department of Natural Resources. State Representatives Rick Winkel and Tom Berns voted for the bill.

In the campus senate, Ron Peters, professor of Labor and Industrial Relations, pointed out that the University lobbied against a similar bill proposed in 1991. He noted that Illinois lags far behind other states in total compensation for university employees and asked where the university currently stands on the tuition waiver issue; Chancellor Aiken responded that he thinks the bill is a good idea. However, the university remains neutral on the bill.

The Illinois Education Association is working for the tuition waiver expansion; you can help by asking your state senator and the governor to vote for House Bill 901.

Sen. Stanley Weaver	Gov. George Ryan
1717 Philo Rd, Ste 17B	207 Statehouse
Urbana, IL 61802	Springfield, IL 62706
217/367-0009	217/782-0244



Family friendly: *left*, Maeve Reilly reports on the Child Care Initiative Task Force; *middle*, speaker Casandra Fitzherbert chats with an Illinois AP family; *right*, AAP chair Jenny Barrett inspires a young admirer.

Spring Meeting, continued from page 1

Among the issues negotiated by the Maine association are: health benefits, parking fees, mileage reimbursement, tuition waivers, domestic partner benefits, sabbaticals, severance pay, and a two-year limit on nonrenewable (visiting) positions—after two years the position becomes full-time.

After Fitzherbert's talk, attendees had a chance to chat while listening to JT3, a jazzy trio with John Tubbs, Neal Robinson and Jeff Magby.

Thanks to all for making the evening informative and memorable. ■

AAP

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Free Parking, Paid Sabbaticals, and Domestic Partner Benefits: How Organizing Helped APs at SIU Edwardsville

Find out at the AAP Brown Bag Lunch
12 noon on Thursday, May 3,
at the University YMCA!