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AAP Advocate

Association of Academic Professionals
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
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AAP Meets with Provost, Plans October 9 Forum

By Lydia Khuri

On July 31 AAP chairperson Jenny Barrett, IEA organizer Peter Miller, and I met with Provost Richard Herman to open a dialogue about issues affecting academic professionals. One outcome of the meeting was that Provost Herman agreed to participate in a public forum on AP concerns on Tuesday, October 9, 2002, and we hope to see many of you there. (See Events box on page 3 for details.)

In addition, the provost promised to meet once a semester with AAP representatives and to provide us with several pieces of information, including salary data comparing Illinois APs with their peers at other institutions and data on the number of APs terminated because of the budget crisis. The provost also agreed to post memoranda directed to the "deans, directors, and department heads" list on his Web site to improve open communication on campus.

During the meeting we presented several immediate concerns related to the budget crisis. We want to thank all those who replied to our recent call for input on the budget-related issues most important to APs. (See story page 2.)

Among the budget issues discussed were:

- **Recall list.** The provost said he would not initiate an official recall list of APs who have been laid off due to budgetary cuts, but might provide search committees with names to pre-identify some individuals.
- **Upper-administration raises.** While saying there would be no raises for upper administration in this academic year, the provost explained that mid-year raises were granted in the past academic year because of pre-existing agreements, promotions, or equity issues. He agreed to look into the discrepancy in raises between those earning an average of \$110,000, who got 10 percent (or \$11,000 raises), and those earning an average of \$31,000, who got 5 percent (or \$1500).
- **Cost of living raises.** The provost said there will be no cost-of-living raises this year. Unfortunately, with parking fees having gone up, the result for many is actually a pay cut. In addition, salaries tied to student fees were frozen even though the fees went up. The provost noted that the University has asked for 5 percent raises across the board for the following year for all employees.
- **Health care costs.** The provost said that these costs cannot be legally passed onto unionized employees in AFSMCE under the current

Thanks go out to all of those who replied to our recent call for input on the budget-related issues most important to APs.

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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

AAP Officers:

Chairperson, Jenny Barrett, Psychology
 Vice Chairperson, Philip Garnier, Social Work
 Secretary, Cheryl Berger, Psychology
 Treasurer/Finance Committee Chair, Veronica M. Kann, La Casa Cultural Latina
 Spokesperson, Lydia Khuri, Prog. on Intergroup Relat.
 IEA Regional Delegate, Eric Keeley, Ofc. of Instructional Res.
 IEA Regional Delegate Alternate, Rose Morefield, Krannert Center
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 Guy Davis, Career Services Center
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 Jane Mohraz, UI Press
 Maeve Reilly, WILL
 Cèsar Augusto Romero, ACES/ITCS

IEA STAFF: Peter Miller

Blagojevich Gets IEA Nod

By Dan Chambers

On July 10, Democratic candidate for governor Rod Blagojevich arrived at Willard Airport to a crowd of teachers and other supporters of his candidacy. Earlier that week, Blagojevich beat out Republican Jim Ryan to win the endorsement of the Illinois Education Association (IEA), the 115,000-member teacher's union.

Flanked by IEA president Anne Davis and vice-president Ken Swanson, Blagojevich thanked the IEA, noting that in five of the past six elections, the candidate with the IEA endorsement won. Blagojevich talked about issues surrounding education and discussed initiating a program to provide free college tuition for students interested in teaching in Illinois schools.

AAP chairperson Jenny Barrett mentioned that APs, who provide important services for students, have suffered a pay freeze and firings because of budget cuts. She asked Blagojevich what he would do differently about the budget crisis at the University of Illinois. He indicated that he thought the money was available to prevent layoffs and pay freezes, and that finding it was a matter of priorities.

Lydia Khuri, spokesperson for the AAP, asked for Blagojevich's position on domestic partner benefits for gay and lesbian state employees. Blagojevich stated that he supported domestic partner benefits, but not state-sanctioned marriages of gay and lesbian couples. ■

What APs Think Budget Priorities Should Be

AAP thanks all the academic professionals who responded to our survey (despite our confusing instructions!). AAP will use the results of the survey as a guideline in our October 30 meeting with the Provost.

Following are the mean ratings of importance about how the budget crisis should be handled, in order of importance. All items were rated between somewhat (=2) and very (=3) important; 1 = not important. The number in parentheses represents the number of respondents.

2.68 All administrators, including upper-level administrators, should demonstrate leadership and freeze or reduce their pay by at least as much as any other Academic Professional, if pay freezes or reductions are needed. (100)

2.59 All Academic Professionals should receive a cost of living increase this year in order to avoid taking a cut in real pay. (100)

2.59 The University should not transfer any health care costs onto Academic Professionals without increasing salary by an equal amount. (100)

2.31 Current Academic Professionals should be considered for other university positions before non-university applicants are considered. (101)

2.11 Communications from the Provost regarding budget cuts should be shared with everyone affected, not just managers. (98)

2.10 If staffing in a unit is reduced, it should be formally understood that the amount of work completed by that unit should decrease too. (100)

2.10 A callback list should be established so that Academic Professionals can be rehired when the budget increases. (99) ■

APs Work for Domestic Partner Benefits

By Jane Reid

The campaign for domestic partner benefits (DPBs) is moving forward. At the July Board of Trustees meeting, President James Stukel proposed that the Board approve same-sex-only DPBs. Karen Alston, professor from the Urbana campus, presented arguments in favor of the proposal. During the public comment portion of the meeting, four people spoke in favor of DPBs, including AAP members Lydia Khuri and Jane Reid, while no one spoke in opposition. Lydia Khuri also formally submitted the AAP petition in support of DPBs.

APs must continue to advocate for a fair and just benefits policy for all employees with domestic partners.

The proposal prompted surprisingly little discussion from the Board; most trustees stated that they were interested in receiving more information about cost and what other universities were doing. While it originally seemed that the Board would vote on the matter in its September meeting, it is now unclear when the vote will occur.

At the September meeting of the Council of Academic Professionals (CAP), AAP and CAP member Gregg Perry introduced a resolution in support of both same-sex and opposite-sex DPBs.

The Council unanimously approved the resolution. It will be submitted to Chancellor Nancy Cantor for transmission to the Board of Trustees.

APs have taken numerous leadership roles in recent, concentrated efforts to enact DPBs. And the work isn't finished: obviously, the proposal has not yet been approved; moreover, the proposal submitted to the Board did not include benefits for opposite sex domestic partners. APs must continue to advocate for a fair and just benefits policy for all employees with domestic partners.

For more information about how to contact the Board of Trustees, see the Web site: <http://www.uillinois.edu/trustees/>. ■

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contracts and the University will not treat non-union employees differently. Grants will absorb health care costs for the current year. If costs must be passed on, it will not happen without discussion with APs.

• **Staff reductions and workload.** The provost conceded that workloads will increase in units or departments where APs have been fired, but agreed to remind department and unit heads to be mindful of this problem.

The rest of our meeting focused on long-term concerns related to AP employment. Among these were salary discrepancies between employees on soft money and those with the rest of the university; the need for a clear path for career development and advancement for APs; and the desire for domestic partner benefits for both same-sex and opposite-sex partners.

We encourage all APs to attend the October 9 forum with Provost Herman and hope that AAP members will continue to let us know which issues AAP should press in future meetings with him. ■

AAP Events

Public Forum
with the Provost
160 English Bldg.
Wednesday October 9
7pm
(Free parking is available in the lot next to the library or the parking garages on Daniel and Fifth or Sixth and John.)

Happy Hour at the
Bread Company
(located at Nevada and
Goodwin, Campus),
Thursday October 17
Thursday November 21
5-7pm



Join the AAP Today!
Association of Academic Professionals-EEA/NEA

- **Build a unified voice for AP interests**
- **Improve your pay and benefits**
- **Ensure an advocate is there for YOU**

Contact us at (217) 337-5174
or aap@shout.net

Ask AAP Pay Freeze Not Affecting All

Q: It was announced that there would be no raises this year, but I heard that AFSCME (American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees) workers will get a raise. Why is that?

A: At Illinois many Civil Service employees are represented by unions. This year, even though there are no pay increases for APs or “open-range” (non-unionized) Civil Service employees, some union employees will be receiving a pay increase.

The AFSCME 3700 negotiated a 3 percent increase and additional step (anniversary) increases of from 2 percent to 4 percent for the next two years that the University will have to honor.

Some contracts, like that of the GCIU 219M (Graphic Communication International Union), call for wage increases equivalent to the state appropriation. This year the state appropriation did not increase, so the University was not required to give wage increases to these groups. Other groups, such as the Operating Engineers 399 and the Teamsters, are still negotiating and may receive a wage increase or other benefits this year.

You can view these contracts on the University Human Resources Web site at <http://hrnet.uihr.uillinois.edu/labor/urbagree.html>. Wage schedules are often at the end of the contract and are sometimes listed as an appendix.

In hard economic times when the state appropriates no funds for salary increases, only unionized employees are receiving or negotiating for salary increases. Non-unionized Civil Service employees and APs are not even consulted. They don't have to be. ■

— *This month's answer provided by the AAP Research Team. If you want to join other people who are working to address issues like this, please contact the AAP at aap@shout.net.*

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UI BUDGET: WHAT APs SAY THEY WANT MOST

The results of the AAP Survey are in! What are the top budget priorities APs listed for our October meeting with the Provost? *See page 2.*