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## GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

(Mondays, Hepburn Hall, Rm 202, 2:00-4:00 pm)

### SPRING 2016

January 25  
February 29  
March 28  
April 18  
May 9

## Professional Staff Advisory Committee/Editorial Board

- *Queen Gibson*
- *Sachie Tsumura-Tmart*
- *Dean Brianik*
- *Graphic Designer: Allison Thornton*

## QUEEN GIBSON REPORT

Dear Colleagues,  
Welcome back to a new semester and a New Year! My hope is that you have had a time to ponder over the Professional Staff workshops sponsored by the Peer Review Committee.

I hope that you have prepared your portfolios for submission on January 31st. I am wishing the best for you and I look forward to meeting with you in the very near future. I urge you to remain faithful that we will one day be proud to be working with a c-o-n-t-r-a-c-t. I encourage you to keep hope alive.

Please continue to support this worthy cause:  
Wearing your Union Shirt on the first Thursday of this month along with a \$5.00 donation will help us do the following:

January –We are supporting the Anti Violence Project in Jersey City.  
Wear your Union Shirt the first Thursday in February and the first Thursday in March with a \$5.00 donation a support a worthy cause. Please give your donation to Sam in the Union Office located in Grossnickel Hall - 4th floor. We will keep you posted.

In Solidarity,  
Queen

## GOOD TO KNOW:

### THE END OF PERFORMANCE REVIEWS?

*SECURITY MANAGEMENT* (August, 2015)

Whether they happen yearly, every other year, or even every few years, performance evaluations are a source of aggravation. In most cases, employees spend time trying to capture the essence of what they accomplished since the last evaluation, while supervisors have to evaluate 12 or more months of work, in many cases, for multiple employees. So it becomes a matter of “who did what, where, and when?”

According to an article written for the *American Society for Industrial Security (ASIS)*, it gets worse. The formal structure of the reviews, it says, makes it hard for workers and bosses to have an open dialog. “...most of the time, performance evaluations feel like a sit-down grilling of employees based on what mistakes they’ve been making throughout the year.”

Finally, the playing field is not level. You might get superior ratings from your current boss. But if a new manager comes in and what had been superior is only average, or worse. Or the boss may spend time down-playing what you consider to be your accomplishments In other words, a type of management by “gotcha.”

The *ASIS* article says though, these types of evaluations may be on the way out in favor of a coaching model that and works with employees to build up their strengths. At ADP, the payroll processor, for instance, they’ve turned the 80-20 evaluation ratio of weaknesses to strengths upside down. Managers are urged to spend 80% of their time working with employees to strengthen what they already do well and working on fixing weaknesses the remaining 20%.

# AFT COPE

Naomi Wright

Dear AFT Members,

I am reaching out to each one of you once again to solicit your involvement and participation in our COPE Drive for 2016. More so than ever, we are looking at our USA Leadership through a social media lens. It is vitally important that we begin to listen carefully and count on our presidential candidates and local political leaders who favor and support union representations like ours. We want to help endorse our local candidates who are going to fight for our rights.

One up front way to do this is by contributing to our COPE campaign. All we ask is that you sign up and donate \$0.50 or more each paycheck. Our union Local 1839 will do the rest by keeping you informed on those Politicians running for office that will lobby for us and are pro union supporters.

Thanks to COPE, we get results. We need your support to continue this vital political work. Reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns.

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“It is vitally important that we begin to listen carefully and count on our presidential candidates and local political leaders who favor and support union representations like ours.”

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## C.O.P.E. stands for the Committee on Political Education. WHY COPE?

Public education relies on public money to exist. Public money, usually in the form of taxes, is controlled by elected and appointed politicians. To influence decisions and the spending of public money for public education, public education faculty and professional staff participate in politics through their unions.

Legislative battles now going on in Trenton and Washington will determine key aspects of our work environment. Many of the improvements in our environment are not negotiated at the bargaining table, but instead, require legislation. In 2001-2002 we must convince legislators to support legislation that would give us an increase in the amount the State contributes to our pensions, provide health benefits for adjunct and part-time faculty and secure representation for public employees on the State Health Benefits Commission.

We must be able to lobby effectively if we are to succeed in getting the laws we need enacted. Having a friend in the Governor’s chair is helpful when it comes to negotiating our terms and conditions of employment. It’s impossible to succeed in lobbying without political action. The brilliance of rightness of our arguments rarely persuades politicians. They want to know what we can do for them (or perhaps for their opponents). Those are the hard facts of political life. COPE funds give us political clout.

## HOW ARE COPE FUNDS COLLECTED?

COPE funds are collected through payroll deduction. While the Union contributes to fundraisers for specific candidates, payroll deduction is the only way to establish an adequate COPE fund. State law and our contract establish our right to a check-off for COPE.

## WHO CAN SPEND COPE FUNDS?

Delegates from the Council’s governing body make the decisions about COPE spending. The Council’s Political Action Committee, which is composed of delegates from each local, recommends political endorsements and contributions to the Council’s governing body.

## HOW DO MEMBERS CONTRIBUTE TO COPE?

Members must fill out a COPE deduction card to authorize the amount to be deducted from paychecks per pay period. The minimum deduction is \$0.50 per pay period. To sign-up for COPE, visit or call your local Union office or the Council office.

# TIPS FOR APPLYING FOR A PEER-BASED PROMOTION

Larry Ladutke

With 30 slots available this year, candidates have a very good chance of receiving a promotion—provided, of course, that they submit an application that demonstrates that they meet all of the criteria. Here is some advice to make sure your application fulfills all of the requirements and stands out from the others.

First and foremost, make sure your application is complete! The committee will not consider any incomplete submission. Have you included both of your most recent performance appraisals, for example? What about the application form/cover sheet? Please be sure to review the checklist before handing in your application. If you do not have any of the required documents or information, do not wait until the last minute to find them—it may take longer than you think.

Your candidate statement and the supporting documentation are both very important. Do not assume, for example, that providing documentation of “cooperative effort to achieve the goals and objectives of the University” is enough. You must also explain how you have met this criterion in the statement and show the committee how the documentation supports your claim. Draw the connections for us. For example, perhaps you worked on a series of events in collaboration with other departments. Your statement should talk about this series and then direct the committee’s attention to flyers for these events that you have included in your portfolio. On the other side, of course, do not simply tell the committee about your accomplishments in the candidate statement without supplying documentation.

Do not assume that any member of the committee is familiar with your work. The committee needs to judge each case on the merits of the application itself. Make sure you demonstrate that you deserve a promotion.

You must show that you have met all four of the criteria for promotion. Some applications have stressed how much the writer has accomplished for the University (part of the first criterion,) but failed to explain how any of these achievements were the result of cooperative effort (part of the second criterion.) Organize your candidate statement so that it contains a section on each of the four criteria. If something applies to more than one criterion, do not be afraid of being redundant by discussing it more than one section.

As you can imagine, the committee receives a large number of applications, many of which are quite lengthy. There is a limited amount to review them all and make recommendations. Therefore it is important that you do your best to make it easy for the committee to understand the importance of the documentation in your portfolio. Let’s say, for example, you have included an e-mail message about an event. Highlight the important information that the committee will need to see. Who sent the message? Where is your name in the message? Where is the information that is relevant to your contribution—not just the overall event? Sometimes the President or your supervisor will send out a message thanking a whole laundry list of people for their work on a project. Be sure that your name stands out. Perhaps you have included a program from a professional development program at which you presented. Highlight the name of the organization and the title of your presentation.

One important part of our work at the University is to maintain the appropriate level of confidentiality. Failing to do so in your application demonstrates a significant lack of professionalism. If a piece of documentation in your portfolio contains the names and ID numbers of students, you should remove or obscure this information. Perhaps you want to include an e-mail message or a handwritten note you received from a grateful student. The committee does not need—or want—to know the student’s identity. Naturally, the names of colleagues and superiors who praise your work are both appropriate and helpful. Nonetheless, you should not provide confidential information about University employees.

The committee wants to recommend as many candidates for promotion as it can. It cannot, however, recommend anyone who has not submitted a complete application demonstrating that he or she has earned the promotion. Please make it easy for the committee to recommend you!

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## **GOOD TO KNOW:**

### **ARE 529'S A MONEY TRAP?**

*AARP, THE MAGAZINE-MONEY SAVER, August/September, 2015*

Are you planning to save for your childrens'/grandchildrens' educations? If you are, 529 College Saving Accounts can be of help. But, you have to watch out for the booby traps.

The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) offers a list of areas to consider before taking the plunge.

Where do I start? Check with your home state first, before venturing out to other states. Most, but not all, states allow you to take a tax deduction for your contributions.

Find out how much the fees are. These, too, vary by the plan.

Combining parent and grandparent donations is an option. However, if you do that, you run the risk of tax penalties if you don't coordinate your efforts. In addition, the money you give to your grandchildren might actually reduce the amount of need-based financial aid they could otherwise get.

Finally, 529 Plan funds are considered assets in your name. You might be putting away the money for your grandchild's education, but the Feds will still say the money is yours. That, in turn, could delay your eligibility for Medicaid, particularly nursing home care when you get older.

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## **SAVE-THE-DATE**

The AFT Local 1839 is pleased to invite you to the Donald J. Silberman Scholarship Award Luncheon on Tuesday, March 22, 2016 from 12:00 – 2:00 p.m. New Jersey City University, Gillian Student Union Multipurpose Room. For more information, please contact Naomi Wright (201)200-2177.