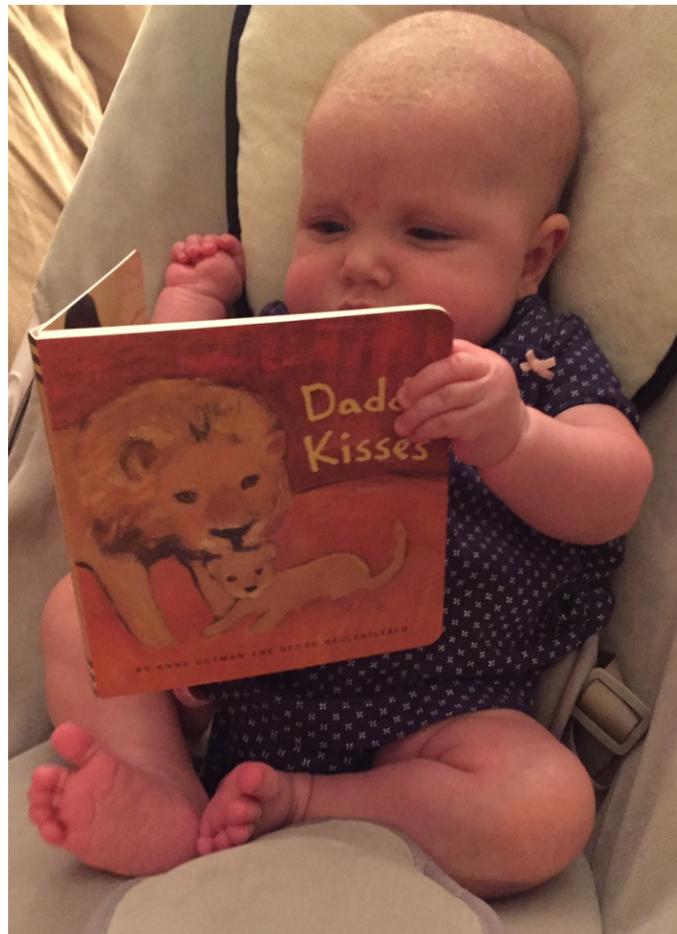




The UCU welcomes:
 Angel Navarro's son Raymond (top left)
 Grace Lee's daughter Noel (top right)
 Zach Poff's son Indigo (left center)
 Christine Romero's daughter Lucia (bottom left)
 Victoria Heinz's daughter Lorelei (bottom right)



WHAT WE'VE BEEN DOING

NEGOTIATIONS: It seems like we have been on a whirl wind since we began contract negotiations last year. At the end of the 2015 spring semester, in a rather swift agreement with The Cooper Union our new contract was ratified. The new Bargaining Agreement (contract) covers years beginning September 1, 2013 through August 31, 2017.

The speedy resolution of the contract was not without some regret, since The UCU officers and the Bargaining Committee (Liz Leon, Mark Rossi, Cara Diedwardo, Matt Hamilton and Marilyn Whitesides) had worked months surveying members and identifying policies / practices that we felt could be improved. In the end, the committee agreed that in the interest of time, we would delay some proposals until the next contract negotiations. We achieved some significant and important benefits such as an increase in minimum salaries, significant annual raises, personal time, paid leave for jury duty and bereavement leave for part time staff.

CALCULATION VOODOO : After completing negotiations, we all waited anxiously for our retro increases and new salaries based on adjustments for longevity, stipends, night differential and overtime rates. We waited and waited. Some began receiving checks but the reasons were unclear and the amounts confusing.

As you know by now, there were many errors in the original calculations from HR. Marget Long and Lawrence Mesich worked tirelessly to provide correct formulas for our members who may have wanted to do their own calculations. The current UCU officers, along with Cara Diedwardo and Lawrence Mesich and our LRS, John Schlechty, met twice with Bill Mea to discuss the inaccuracies in the calculations coming from HR and the narrow window of HR accessibility. Our LRS John Schlechty offered to spend the day with Adele to help her with the calculations, but the offer went unanswered.

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John L. Schlechty Retires

John signed all his email correspondence with this quote:

There is no greater calling than to serve your fellow man. There is no greater contribution than to help the weak. There is no greater satisfaction than to have done it well.
 -Walter Reuther, President UAW 1946-1970

We thank John Schlechty, our LRS from NYSUT, for his many years of work, dedication and commitment to our union, its welfare and that of our members. Representing the UCU since it began in 2006 and the full-time faculty since 1996, John been a steadfast friend and supporter. Born in Detroit, John grew up in the suburbs of Washington, D.C. where his dad was a District Rep. for the Ironworkers. John worked as rod-man (Ironworker, Local 201) building D.C.'s subway before attending college. While in college



he helped organize the factory he worked in for the Teamsters. He graduated from the University of Tennessee College of Law and practiced law in Nashville for 16 years before coming to New York to work for NYSUT.

We congratulate him on his retirement and wish him many happy days doing just as he pleases!

continued from page 1, "What We've Been Doing"

When the November deadline to receive our compensations came and went, we learned that Cooper had outsourced the calculations to the financial firm, Kiwi Partners. The UCU worked over the winter break, communicating with Kiwi, clarifying numerous conflicting start dates and salaries.

While most members have received their compensations, problems continue. Cooper believes it has overpaid some employees and must be reimbursed. Yes, they can legally do that. However, as of March 23rd, questions remain and meetings continue. The union has requested that each member receive a letter clearly explaining how each amount (retro, longevity, salary increases, etc.) were calculated. Cooper has yet to provide those letters, instead telling the staff that it is the union's fault for the delays. Don't believe them. If you receive a letter with no explanations of how they arrived at the amount you receive, go straight to HR and demand they explain how they arrived at your figures. If you are unsuccessful, contact the union. Rest assured we will be there for you.

GRIEVANCES: The union has filed several successful grievances for unfair disciplinary hearings, misleading

HOW TO KNOW WHAT'S UP

Read the contract. We strongly urge you to read the new contract, including the Side Letters of Agreement that are attached at the end of the contract. The Side

working in disciplinary write-ups, incorrect salaries and various contract violations. Management's denial of one of our grievances will be resolved or addressed in arbitration.

BoT STAFF REPRESENTATIVE ELECTION: Amy Westphal (Art and Cooper alumna) was elected to represent the staff in Board of Trustee Meetings and there are many, many meetings. As the eyes and ears of the staff, Amy may not vote or participate in discussions but may be called on for clarification or input. Currently, Amy is pushing for more input and discussion with staff. We look forward to her update. Special thanks to Kevin Leonard, Ian Hochstead, Dan Porvin, Dale Perreault, Karma Johnson and Marget Long for manning the ballot boxes.

BOOKKEEPER: No doubt one of the smartest things we have done is hire bookkeeper Penelope Boehm of Boehm Business Services. Bringing us up to speed was no easy task. She filed our taxes and prepared our LM3 (both required federal documents). Since we will continue to employ her services, the union treasurer's responsibilities will be greatly reduced.

Letters of Agreement are linked to the 2005 Cooper Union Staff Handbook. Both the contract and the 2005 Staff Handbook are posted on the union website. DO NOT attempt to refer to the Staff Union Handbook on the Cooper website. It is a work of fiction.

attended and helped monitor the election of the union and participated in all contract negotiations since 2006. It has been a challenging, yet highly rewarding experience, and while I must step aside, I am committed to ongoing support of our union. I cannot stress the importance of keeping our union strong.

—Marilyn Whitesides

Now it is time for someone else to step up.

As you know, our union leadership is made up of volunteers who dedicate their personal time to operate the union. Our strength lies in our members and their participation. We need volunteers for all officer positions and area reps.

Officer and Area Rep Duties

President:

- 1) Represent the UCU in all public matters and meetings;
- 2) Organize regular meetings with and set agendas for union executive board, officers (area reps), and management;
- 3) Hold and preside over all membership meetings, board meetings, rep meetings;
- 4) Ensure that all proper and legal documents and reports are submitted in a timely manner;
- 5) Request special information for grievances, negotiations and other investigatory matters;
- 6) Confer with the Labor Relations Specialist and keep him/her informed of grievances, negotiations and training requests;
- 7) Request training for officers and membership from NYSUT as needed;
- 8) Manage e-mail correspondence and coordinate communication with VP and Secretary;
- 9) Maintain rapport with other Cooper Union unions (CUFCT and CUOP) and meet regularly;
- 10) Verify and sign all documents and correspondence with membership, management, area unions and parent unions.

Vice President:

- 1) Serve as Chair of the Grievance committee:
 - work with President to prepare grievances for submission
 - organize regular and special grievance committee meetings
 - observe and maintain grievance calendar
 - work with president on preparing for step 1, step 2 meetings with management and arbitration hearings
- 2) Organize and maintain an office hour each week to meet with members, organize calendar, and write/file grievances;
- 3) Approve and sign checks;
- 4) Assist in Newsletter preparation and publication twice a year (assist President in writing, assigning, and compiling articles; layout and archiving);
- 5) Attend training seminars, conferences and workshops when available;
- 6) Assume the duties of President when they are unavailable.

Treasurer:

- The work load and responsibilities of the treasurer have been greatly reduced since we hired Penelope Boehm, our bookkeeper, who now prepares the IRS, OLMS and LM3 reports. We also have a new spreadsheet provided by NYSUT which, when complete, provides virtually every report needed. Organizational skills are essential in a treasurer who will continue to provide the following assistance:
- 1) Work with the president in reporting membership and dues check-off to NYSUT
 - 2) Balance, manage receipts, debits and credits for the bank accounts, reporting monthly to the president and other union officers;
 - 3) Approve and sign checks and balance the checkbook;
 - 4) Help the union president prepare and submit annual reports to AFT;
 - 5) Prepare and submit two financial reports annually to the

- membership of the union;
- 6) Attend officer meetings.
 - 7) If applicable, attend an afternoon of treasurer training at NYSUT (all transportation, paid by the union);

Secretary:

- 1) Keep minutes of each board meeting, management meeting and membership meeting. If absent from meeting, assign and ensure minutes are taken, edited and filed properly;
- 2) Assist president in organizing and maintaining office files, computer and office equipment;
- 3) Set up at least one regular office hour each week to maintain office work;
- 4) Help compile and edit articles for the newsletters;
- 5) Manage printing and mailing for newsletters and other membership correspondence;
- 6) Maintain e-mail account and alert officers to special questions and concerns;
- 7) Observe the calendar and notify officers of meeting times. Help organize refreshments and food for meetings & parties.

Area Rep (5 positions):

- 1) Maintain a good rapport with your fellow employees (yes, even with those you may find "challenging") and with the supervisors within your area;
- 2) Report problems in your area promptly to the union officers;
- 3) Participate in disciplinary meetings and uphold Weingarten Rights (easy to maintain)
- 4) Attend regular meetings with the other officers of the union;
- 5) Participate in the Grievance committee (usually meets once a month).

Area reps play an important role!

They know the members in their area and understand the issues those members face. Their information is invaluable and they can help by attending disciplinary meetings for members in their area, signing up new hires and being available to discuss issues with other members and alert officers to problems. Area reps are elected by the members in their areas. Members may not vote on area reps for other departments.

The following areas need reps:

- Area 100:** AVRAC, Curf, Engineering, Saturday Program, Humanities, The Writing Center
- Area 200:** Architecture, Art
- Area 300:** Buildings and Grounds
- Area 400:** Alumni, Development, Continuing Ed, External Affairs, Student Services, Admissions
- Area 500:** Business Office, Computer Ctr, Lubalin Ctr, Design Ctr, President's Office, Office Services, Library

CURRENT UCU OFFICERS

- President: Marilyn Whitesides
Vice President: Marget Long
Treasurer: Elizabeth Leon
Secretary: Mark Rossi