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# Magnifier

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## I'VE BEEN LAID OFF, NOW WHAT DO I DO?

Teacher and support staff layoffs seem to be more prevalent each year that we continue under the insufficient school funding formula. Layoff can be traumatizing when you are the victim. It is also a time to seek assistance from UNE to insure that your rights have been protected during the process, and that you have adequate information with which to proceed. Remember, a layoff is based on economics, not job performance. Being laid off is nothing to be ashamed of.

Only your school board can make the decision to reduce or lay off employees. Such decisions are not negotiable, but unwarranted or unnecessary layoffs can sometimes be combated through organizing members and the community to convince the Board to find other ways to reduce expenses. Once an employee has been officially notified of a layoff, each UNE member has varying degrees of layoff rights outlined in the Collective Bargaining Agreement between UNE and your Board of Education. You should read your Agreement and consult with your UNE representative to determine if your contractual rights to seniority-based layoff and bumping have been followed.

If the Board has not followed the Agreement, UNE will assist you in filing a grievance to preserve your contractual rights, and your job. You also need to understand your recall rights under the Agreement and you need to keep the school district informed as to your address and telephone number in case a position for which you are qualified becomes available.

You should also be aware of your unemployment compensation benefits if you are laid off or reduced by 20% of your contract or more. Again, UNE can assist you in contacting the Department of Workforce Development to apply for and receive unemployment benefits.

WEAC has an on-line resource for members only, regarding layoff. To access WEAC's on-line resource on layoffs, follow these easy steps:

1. Go to [www.weac.org](http://www.weac.org) and go to the "Username" and "Password" boxes at the top of the page. You will need to have a Username and Password. If you do not, "Create an Account."
2. Once you are in the "Members Only" site, click on "Collective Bargaining" on the *left*, then click on "What to Do if You've Been Laid Off," on the *right* and you will have access to an entire, easy-to-use guide.

UNE and Bayland Educators will be holding a **[Layoff Workshop at the UniServ office on Thursday, May 27 at 6:00 p.m.](#)** Topics to be discussed include — Unemployment Insurance, Health Insurance and Recall Rights. Please bring a copy of your union's contract with the District in order to get specific questions answered. To reserve a space at this meeting call the UNE office (1-800-472-5582 or 920-496-2440) or send and to email [baylandune@weac.org](mailto:baylandune@weac.org).

## De Pere school support worker Susan Smits named Education Support Professional of the Year

Susan Smits of De Pere, who strives to make the school day fun for all students at De Pere High School, is always thinking of creative ways to lighten the mood of students and staff. Even if it means bringing in her gigantic bubble wand or wearing a special pair of shoes.

For that dedication to her school's atmosphere, Smits has been named Education Support Professional (ESP) of the year by the Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC).

Each year WEAC honors an Education Support Professional who shows outstanding accomplishments in enhancing the image of ESP in the community by being a participating citizen of a democratic society, by being an active member at all levels of the association, and exhibiting professional achievements.

Smits, a food service worker at De Pere High School, is an advocate for her colleagues, and if there is anything that needs to be done, she will volunteer her time and talents, said Cinnamon Theder, chair for the WEAC Awards & Board Elections Subcommittee.

"Sue once wondered what she could do to make a child's day great, so she wore her clown shoes to recess. They were a big hit and the students ask when she's going to wear them again. Even though the shoes gave her blisters I'm sure she'll wear them again to make the kids happy and laugh," said Theder, who presented the Education Support Professional Award to Smits at WEAC's annual Awards and Recognition Banquet held this past weekend in Green Bay.



WEAC President Mary Bell, left, presents the 2010 Outstanding Education Support Professional award to Susan Smits at the Awards and Recognition Banquet.

"Sue also shares her love of music with the students. It's not uncommon to hear the Hamster Dance playing – the kids' favorite song. She even does African drumming," Theder continued.

"Sue is one of the most selfless and unassuming individuals I know," said Kay Hansen, a friend and colleague. "She doesn't demand accolades for herself. Sue goes above and beyond to make things better at work and for her students. Her thirst for knowledge is insatiable."

Educators, reporters and various public and high school publications from across the state are honored annually at the banquet for their efforts to showcase Wisconsin's great schools.

*WEAC Press Release 4/28/10*

### **Herb Kohl Educational Foundation**

Several UNE area students and a few teacher members have been named recipients of the Herb Kohl Foundation awards for 2010. The \$1,000 awards are being made to 100 teachers and their schools and 200 graduating student in the state. UNE area recipients are:

#### **Excellence Scholars**

Ella Williquette, Green Bay, Bay Port High, Green Bay

Patricia Blythin, Shawano, Shawano High, Shawano

Haylee Lucht, Oconto Falls, Oconto Falls High, Oconto Falls

Bethany Rieth, Oconto Falls, Oconto Falls High, Oconto Falls

#### **Teacher Fellows**

Lisa Andreini, Pulaski, Glenbrook Elementary, Pulaski

Sandra Hagenbach, Green Bay, Heritage Elementary, De Pere

Sheila Kohl, Green Bay, West De Pere Middle School, De Pere

Linda Gilson, Little Suamico, Oconto Elementary, Oconto

Tami McQuillan, Gillett, Gillett Middle, Gillett

#### **Initiative Scholars**

Noami Moua, De Pere, De Pere High, De Pere

Michael Crozier, Lena, Lena High, Lena

Emelia Strnad, Oconto, Oconto Falls High, Oconto Falls

## **WANT TO GET MORE INVOLVED WITH YOUR FUTURE? START WITH SUMMER ACADEMY**

During the past three years UNE has taken the lead in helping teachers with their PI34 licensing issues. Dozens of first- and second-year teachers have come to the UNE office for evening sessions sponsored by UNE to help them with their Professional Development plans (PDPs) and other licensing issues. These teachers are the future of the profession, and of UNE.

There is another issue where UNE has not been as successful – bargaining salary schedules that reflect PI34 licensing requirements. Teachers who use PDPs for relicensing will soon find themselves left out on salary schedules that provide pay increases based on earning college credits. UNE's lack of success in this area is not due to lack of effort. UNE has consistently proposed PI34 salary schedules at bargaining tables. School boards, school administrators, and their paid negotiators continue to refuse such proposals. They will continue to do so until our newer members get involved in their union.

**SUMMER ACADEMY IS ALSO FOR ESP WHO WANT TO GET INVOLVED** Don't think that Summer Academy is only for teachers. Many of these sessions also pertain to ESP, including bargaining and contract enforcement sessions.

One way you can get involved in UNE, and your future, is to gain the skills needed to do so. Current UNE leaders and negotiators did not gain these skills naturally. They did so through hard work, experience, and TRAINING! Each summer WEAC presents training opportunities for union members by offering the Summer Academy.

Members attending Summer Academy can take workshops that focus on bargaining, legal rights and grievance training, professional development, political involvement, and leadership skills. The training is presented by UNE and WEAC staff and leaders. We have seen the value of Summer Academy in training new union leaders.

Online registration is now open for the **2010 WEAC Summer Academy, scheduled for July 25-28 at the Holiday Inn Convention Center in Stevens Point.** Join your colleagues from throughout the state for this exciting training that combines professional development and professional union issues. You can register by going to the WEAC website ([www.weac.org](http://www.weac.org)) and clicking on "2010 Summer Academy."

*Adapted from NUE Memo 5/7/10*

## **RACE TO THE TOP, PHASE II**

*By Mary Bell*

Now that the Race to the Top Phase Two memorandums of understanding (MOUs) are circulating, I've received a couple calls from local leaders asking for information and guidance, or to ask what's different in this application compared to Phase One. WEAC supports the state's Race to the Top application. We're encouraging local unions to sign in support; however, we will respect and support local decisions.

I thought it would be a good time to flag a couple of key points and resources for you to use in your decision making process: The deadline to submit local MOUs is May 21. Wisconsin's application will be submitted by June 1, with announcement of recipients expected in September. All of our

guidance information, analysis and talking points around the latest RTTT developments are located on the [www.weac.org](http://www.weac.org) Elected Leaders and Staff [Race to the Top Resource Page](#). Remember, you must sign into the website to get access to the page.

On the page, you'll find my just-posted video overview of Race to the Top Phase Two, where I discuss what's different and get into some of the important developments in teacher evaluation and collective bargaining protections.



### **Don't Forget to Enroll in NEA Complimentary Life Insurance**

NEA Complimentary Life Insurance (formerly known as DUES-TAB) is a free benefit for all UNE members who are also members of NEA. There is one catch: you have to name a beneficiary. You can do so and qualify for this \$1,000 automatic benefit by going to [http://www.neamb.com/home/1199\\_881.htm](http://www.neamb.com/home/1199_881.htm).

## United Northeast Educators—Mission Statement

UNE is an organization of public education employees who provide training and services to protect, improve, and enhance members rights and the professional and economic capabilities of its members, hence improving the quality of life of all its members.

### UNE Activity Calendar

- May 17**  
Bayland/UNE IPD Committee  
5:30 p.m., location TBA
- May 19**  
UNE-RA  
5:30 p.m., Comfort Suites
- May 27**  
Bayland/UNE Layoff Workshop  
6:00 p.m. UniServ Office
- May 31**  
Holiday—office closed
- June 9**  
UNE Board Meeting  
5:00 p.m., UniServ Office
- July 1-6**  
NEA Convention, New Orleans

### **IMPORTANT** **Local Dues Information**

*By Betsy Kippers, reprinted from May 2010 WEAC Treasurer and Membership Newsletter*

As you are developing your local budgets I would like to make you aware of a WEAC policy. Per policy, WEAC may provide grievance arbitration assistance to a local. **One of the requirements for assistance is that the local affiliate assesses each member of the local a minimum of \$10 to fund grievance arbitrations.** The best way to make sure you meet this requirement is to have a reserve account that equals or exceeds the amount of \$10 per member. You could designate an amount and call it grievance assistance fund. Complete information on this policy can be found on page 82 of the WEAC 2009-2010 Policy Handbook.

We know this policy may be a financial hardship for many of our small locals and ESP locals. Many do not currently have a \$10 per member reserve. We are currently looking into a possible revision to this policy. Any recommendation for change would need to be submitted to the Policy & Procedures committee and then presented to the WEAC Board of Directors for action. I'll keep you posted if any changes are made next year to the policy.

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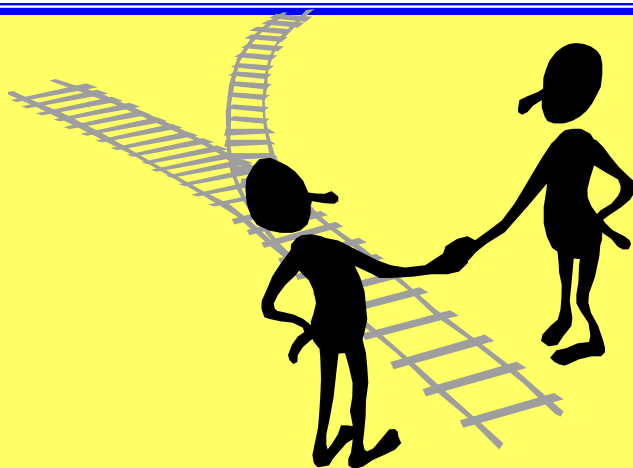
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## Merger on the Ballot

For almost a year, the Bayland Educators' and UNE's Boards of Directors have been discussing the pros and cons of merging the two UniServs. Regional information meetings held in March were well attended and local Association members had lots of good questions answered by Board members attending the meetings. The Boards have determined that a vote to merge the two UniServs will come to the membership in their respective Representative Assemblies on May 19, 2010.