

# UCATS Momentum

Union of Clerical, Administrative & Technical Staff at NYU, Local 3882, NYSUT, AFT, AFL-CIO

Volume 37 2016 Issue 3

## AFT at 100



**3%** Your **LAST** raise  
coming to pay checks **9/30**.

BLACK Lives Matter

PAGE 3

WITHOUT THE UNION

PAGE 4

COLLEGE  
AFFORDABILITY

PAGE 5

EYEGLOSS SAVINGS

PAGE 10

# Your last raise



AFT Executive Vice President Mary Catherine Ricker (c) stopped to chat with Steve Rechner and Barbara Bova during a break at the convention in Minneapolis July 18-21.

■ *Stephen Rechner, Law School*  
On Twitter, @ucatspres

**E**ffective August 29, 2016, all UCATS members will receive a 3% raise, which is about \$1,450-\$1,565 per year depending on your grade. This will be our last raise under the terms of the current Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) because it expires October 31, 2017. Any raise that we negotiate in our next contract cannot be implemented until we know what it is, and we won't know that until sometime after October 31, 2017, when the contract has been negotiated with NYU and ratified by you, our members.

### Member responsibility

An expiring contract means we have work to do; not just me the

President, or even we the Executive Council, but we, as in all of us as members of UCATS.

What is our work as a union? Our most important task in the coming months will be preparing our membership for contract negotiations which will begin in September 2017.

Throughout the bargaining period it will be each UCATS member's responsibility to stay informed and to attend the events we will have to support our bargaining team. Getting to the bargaining table requires research and preparation. It requires training the council, educating our members about the history of our contract language, deciding strategically what our members need and how we can achieve that.

Early next year our work begins with the election of a new UCATS Executive Council (EC). The terms of all officers and stewards expire on April 30, 2017. While we hope that most members currently serving on the EC will be inspired to serve again, the fact is that those members have done their fair share and some will decide it's time to move on.

The UCATS constitution stipulates that we hold an election every two years. It assumes that some of those who have served may wish to step down, and it assumes that members who have yet to serve will step up to replace them and continue our work as a union.

*(Continued on page 11)*

## UCATS Momentum

636 Broadway, Room 1219  
New York, NY 10012

*Momentum* is published quarterly by and for the members of the Union of Clerical, Administrative, & Technical Staff (UCATS), at NYU, Local 3882, New York State United Teachers, AFT, AFL-CIO.

Local 3882 Office: (646)602-1485  
E-mail address: info@ucats3882.org  
www.ucats3882.org

<b>President</b>	Stephen Rechner
<b>Vice Presidents</b>	Diana Corzen Christopher Crowe Shermaine Griffin
<b>Treasurer</b>	Rob Lesko
<b>Secretary</b>	
<b>Organizers</b>	Leo Sanchez, Linda Wambaugh
<b>Newsletter</b>	Denise Shavers





# Black Lives Matter - All lives matter



American Federation of Teachers members attending the Minneapolis convention July 18-21 participated in a march through downtown to protest the July 6th shooting of AFT member Philando Castile in St. Paul. Castile had been pulled over for a broken tail light.

■ *Diana Corzen,*  
*Student Health Center*

I have watched the Black Lives Movement (BLM) from its inception in response to the senseless police shootings of people of color. It is amazing to me that some people think BLM is just bully tactics or a thug group. We must all learn to understand the underlying frustrations people of color experience day to day. When you have to watch how you express yourself, how your body language is interpreted, how the tone in a conversation is perceived, then you begin to understand.

White people do not wake up in the morning and discuss with their children how they may appear to other persons on the street, how their attitude might be perceived as “Angry” or that their skin color might frighten others. These are the

conversations I and others wake up to. It is disturbing that we have to have these conversations with our children at all.

## Exercise your power

What are some solutions to the shootings that have given rise to BLM?

First and foremost voting! You have to get out and vote for candidates that speak to this issue. If a candidate is voicing inclusion, working class ethics, and more initiatives towards real affordable housing, you have to get out and vote for them.

And once they are elected, we, the electorate, must hold them accountable. All elected officials today have websites and email addresses for constituents. As a politician’s term of office progresses,

we must check their websites for their positions on issues that matter. We should email them when we disagree and when we agree with their position on an issue.

You may think that one email doesn’t matter, but the important thing to remember is that every email is one email among many, and you should assume that people with an opposing view will be taking the time to communicate with your elected official; don’t let them be the only constituents they hear from. If you do, the elected official may believe that the position you disagree with is the one that represents the perspective of a majority of his/her constituents.

Second, NYC and our Governor Cuomo are looking for alternative ideas for Rikers Island.

*(Continued on page 9)*

# Take that lunch break!

■ *Stephen Rechner, Law School*

It's official: New York University WANTS all employees to take a lunch break. They said so in a wellness email to all employees on June 1st. Their email states: *"Many higher education professionals today envision lunch as another seemingly impossible task to fit into the middle of the hectic work day. Although skipping lunch may seem like an efficient use of time, a mid-day break can be mentally and physically rejuvenating and, in some ways, more productive than staying in your chair."*

But let's not forget that it is NYU that makes a lunch hour a "seemingly impossible task to fit into the hectic work day" through their budgeting and staffing decisions. If they don't provide their administrative units the budget to hire enough staff to get the work done, then taking a lunch hour becomes an impossible task.

## Your contract at work

While not specifically mentioned in the UCATS Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), the right to a lunch hour is covered by Article 7-Hours. Here's how: Article 7, paragraph C articulates the full-time work week to be 35 hours. Time worked in excess of 35 hours is defined as overtime. So, when you work through a lunch hour, you are working in excess of 35 hours and you are entitled to overtime pay or compensatory time off (provided the comp time can be taken during the same week it is worked).



Agreeing to, or deciding to, or being made to feel compelled to, work through your lunch hour without compensation is working for free. Compulsory free labor, a.k.a. slavery, was supposed to have been eliminated on January 1, 1863, with the Emancipation Proclamation.

In recent years, globalization, free trade agreements, and one recession after another have knocked American workers off any firm footing they ever felt in the work force.

Employers, including universities, did a fantastic job of exploiting workplace insecurity by reinventing slavery over the last 20 years, rebranding it as 'flexibility', and selling it to workers as success, or at least the road to success; in other words, 'show us your dedication to the organization by working night and day, and through your lunch hours, and we'll reward you with advancement' (or more likely by just letting you keep your job).

And when you burn out, they'll put you out with the trash and bring in the next sucker.

If you are finding it difficult to take a lunch hour in your workplace you should speak to your area UCATS representative or call UCATS and speak with one of our organizers. As a UCATS member you have contract language that guarantees your right to take a lunch hour and we can show you how to exercise that right if your manager or work load seems to make doing so impossible. NYU wants you to take that lunch break and UCATS can make it happen!

Here are some of NYU's suggestions for supercharging your lunch hour:

- Take a walk
- Get out into the daylight
- Talk to friends
- Take a quick nap
- Eat a healthy lunch or snack
- Do some stretching exercises
- Play a quick, mentally-challenging game

# Without the union... there is no justice

**W**ithout the union an employee is defined by law as 'at-will' — NYU administrators and many faculty members at NYU are at-will. At-will employees can be disciplined or fired at a moment's notice for virtually any reason. There are a few exceptions, such as race, creed, gender, etc., but we are all human, and an employer doesn't have to look hard to find some shortcoming to use as an excuse to justify a termination.

Union members are not at-will because we have contract language that guarantees us due process in the event of discipline or termination. Due process doesn't mean an employee cannot be disciplined or terminated. What it means is that the contract sets forth procedures which management must follow in order to successfully implement their decision to discipline or terminate a union employee.

## Your contract at work

The union-negotiated due process language in the UCATS Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) is spelled out in Probationary Period (Article 3), Discipline, Suspension, Discharge (Article 31) and Grievance and Arbitration Procedure (Article 34). These three articles work together to provide every UCATS member meaningful job security. The Probationary Period means that you are an at-will employee for only three months, after which, you can only be Disciplined/Suspended/Discharged for just cause, and if you are disciplined or fired, the Grievance Procedure gives you the opportunity

to challenge NYU's assertion(s) that the Discipline/Suspension/Discharge was justified.

## Just Cause, not Just Because

While it is easy for an employer to say a discipline/suspension/discharge is justified by a claimed performance issue, it is something else to prove it, and the evidence doesn't always tell the whole story. That is why due process is so important.

Without a union an at-will employee rarely has the time, skill set, or resources to challenge an unjust discipline/suspension/discharge. Union members, on the other hand, have contract language and skilled representatives who know how to exercise their right to due process.

The definition of just cause can be squishy, but it generally means that the employer must prove that there has been wrong-doing by the employee or that there have been ongoing performance issues. Even

when just cause can be proven, there can be mitigating circumstances.

For example, an employee was recently threatened with termination for chronic lateness, and her myTime record definitely showed chronic lateness of 5-15 minutes a day. Her UCATS representative requested the myTime records of all of her coworkers, however, and those records revealed that the manager was actually allowing considerable flexibility with arrival times for the UCATS members he oversees. The myTime records of coworkers proved that the threatened member was in fact being unfairly singled out for discipline and the charges were dropped. A non-union, at-will employee would most likely not have thought to request the myTime records of coworkers, and if they did, they would not have had any authority to compel NYU to provide them. A union representative can do that.

Of course, if the myTime records of her coworkers had showed overwhelming punctuality the outcome could have been different. We should all endeavor to play by the rules and do our jobs well, but, in the rare event that you are subjected to discipline by your manager you should always discuss the circumstances with a UCATS representative.

Even if you think that there is some justification for the charge(s) there may be more there than meets the eye. Your UCATS representative will work with you to gather and examine the evidence and guide you through your due process rights.

*Union members are not at-will because we have contract language that guarantees us due process in the event of discipline or termination.*



# AFT Celebration

■ *Christopher Crowe, Bobst Library*

The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) celebrated its centennial this year at the biennial convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota July 18-21st. UCATS was represented by Vice-President Christopher Crowe and shop steward Barbara Bova. President Stephen Rechner also attended in his capacity as a member of the Board of Directors of New York State United Teachers.

The convention is the highest governing authority of the 1.6 million member AFT. It establishes goals for the union to pursue during the next two years and elects officers to run it on a day to day basis. Any of the thousands of locals that make up the federation can submit resolutions directing the union to take a particular action. These are then discussed and voted upon by various committees which meet on the first day of the convention. Those that meet with committee approval are then presented to the whole convention, where they are debated and voted upon. If passed they become AFT policy.

## UCATS resolutions

For the very first time UCATS brought UCATS resolutions to the AFT — one directing the union to work towards the elimination of taxation on graduate tuition remission benefits, the other demanding that NYU bargain in good faith with UCATS over the effects of the major



AFT President Randi Weingarten addressed NYSUT delegates at a breakfast on Tuesday, July 19.

job changes it imposed on members at Bobst Library. Both passed through their respective committees with overwhelming support. Unfortunately, because there were so many resolutions to consider, the convention adjourned before they could be brought to the floor for a vote. They did not die, however; rather they were referred to the AFT executive committee for their consideration. There is every reason to believe that the committee will take positive action on them.

Dozens of New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) locals collectively sent several hundred delegates to the AFT convention. On Tuesday

NYSUT hosted a breakfast for their delegates, which we attended. AFT President Randi Weingarten and VP Mary Catherine Ricker both took time out of their busy schedules to speak to the NYSUT group.

## Political action

Hillary Clinton spoke to the convention on its first evening. She, of course, is running for President. The AFT had endorsed her during the Democratic primaries and she was seeking a similar endorsement for the general election. She received that endorsement by an overwhelming vote of a majority of the convention delegates.

AFT President Randi Weingarten, together with Executive Vice President Mary Catherine Riker, and Secretary-Treasurer Loretta Johnson were all re-elected to their positions, as was the full slate of vice presidents elected to serve with them.

Outside of the convention hall, Rechner and Crowe participated in an “AFT Gives Back,” event, helping to weed and maintain a beautiful urban orchard. Perhaps more importantly, Rechner, Crowe, and Bova joined hundreds of other con-

vention delegates and thousands of local citizens to march through the heart of Minneapolis in support of Black Lives Matter and to demand better policing for all. Just a week before the convention AFT member Philando Castile was shot by a police officer in neighboring St. Paul during what should have been a routine traffic stop (he had been pulled over for a broken tail light).

It was an important and successful convention. Political issues were addressed, a candidate for

POTUS was endorsed, delegates set the agenda for the AFT leadership team, and that leadership team was re-elected by a resounding majority. The next AFT convention will be in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in July, 2018. UCATS will elect our delegates to that convention at our spring membership meeting preceding the convention. All UCATS members are eligible to run in the election for the available delegate slots. Perhaps we’ll see you in Pittsburgh.



Convention goers joined a local Black Lives Matter march in memory of AFT member Philando Castile.



Christopher Crowe and Steve Rechner weeded an orchard as part of the AFT Gives Back community service event that occurred the day before the convention.



# Hillary's plan for college affordability

■ Virginia Meyers, American Federation of Teachers

Reprinted with permission

**H**illary Clinton has proposed to make college free for millions of students, underscoring her commitment to affordable higher education. The plan — which waives tuition for all families earning less than \$125,000 — is part of a new iteration of her New College Compact, and is the result of sustained conversation about accessibility.



“With the New College Compact, Hillary has incorporated the best policy ideas she’s heard from millennials on the trail, as well as ideas from leaders like Sens. Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders, to further strengthen her bold and progressive college affordability plan,” says AFT President Randi Weingarten. With her position as the Democratic presidential nominee, the collective dream of free college is now within reach.

The proposal would be implemented gradually, reaching families below the \$85,000 threshold first, and reaching families who earn up to \$125,000 within five years.

Clinton continues to emphasize her initial attack on the high cost of higher education: debt-free college. “American families are drowning in debt caused by ever-rising college costs, and it is imperative that the next president put forward a bold plan to make debt-free college available to all,” she said in a statement. She is also committed to addressing the existing debt.

To that end, she has proposed a three-month moratorium on all student loan payments to give borrowers time to refinance if they need to. Public service loan forgiveness and income-based repayment plans are available to many borrowers, but they are not always utilized; if a moratorium were imposed, the publicity around it could draw enough attention and give people enough time to get on board. Clinton’s plan estimates that refinancing would help 25 million borrowers, with the typical borrower saving \$2,000 over the life of the loan. Here are some of the details of her New College Compact:

## For future students:

- Make college debt-free.
- Eliminate tuition at in-state public colleges and universities for families with income under \$125,000, by 2021.
- Restore year-round Pell Grant funding — a priority that will be particularly useful for community colleges, where enrollment has dipped when Pell grants were no longer available over the summer.
- Invest in historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), minority-serving institutions, and low-cost, modest-endowment private schools.
- Expand support for students who are parents, and help fund on-campus childcare.

## For those with existing student debt:

- Establish a three-month moratorium on student debt, and target borrowers with information about how to save money on their loans during that time.
- Forgive college debt after 20 years of payments for undergraduate debt, and 25 years for graduate school debt.
- Forgive college debt after 10 years of payments for borrowers who work in public service.
- Promote income-based repayment, which limits payments to no more than 10 percent of a person’s monthly income.
- Simplify debt repayment plans.
- Support entrepreneurs by deferring loans for those who start a business or social enterprise, and offer up to \$17,500 in loan forgiveness.

The plan also requires that states step up to fund public higher education, and that colleges rein in costs. And it cracks down on for-profit colleges that exploit students and drain education funding at the federal level.

“Clinton’s New College Compact eliminates financial obstacles for future students, helps those already dealing with debt get their feet under them by allowing them to refinance their loans, and ensures that states invest in higher education,” says Weingarten. “This plan shows Hillary’s commitment to working together to break down barriers and level the playing field so all students have a fair shot at getting a higher education.”



# Member Questions

**Q:** Our college just formed a Strategic Planning Committee; how come there are no UCATS members on the Committee.

**A:** Article 1, the Recognition clause of the UCATS Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) states that UCATS is the “*sole and exclusive bargaining agent for all full-time and regular part-time office clerical employees ...*”

NYU committees may only be advisory, but they can also be a decision making body, and if a committee took action that was contrary to the Collective Bargaining Agreement, and a UCATS member were on that committee, and we wanted to request bargaining over that committee’s action, NYU could raise the defense that they had effectively bargained with UCATS on that issue by virtue of us sanctioning having a member on the committee.

Furthermore, if members of the clerical staff were to be on NYU committees here are just some of the issues that would arise as a consequence:

Who would choose the UCATS members to serve on the committees? NYU? The Dean? The UCATS president? Any volunteer who raised their hand?

What if the UCATS member selected is someone who has never read the Collective Bargaining Agreement or attended a union meeting? Do you want *that* person representing you on an NYU committee?

On which committees, and how many committees, would UCATS members serve? (NYU is just teeming with committees)

Whose responsibility is it to serve on a committee? It’s not in my job description, is it in yours? (A rhetorical question, it’s not in anyone’s job description.)

The bottom line is that unlike faculty and administrators, UCATS members have a CBA that guarantees us the right to bargain over our terms and conditions of employment, and it designates UCATS as the legal entity to do that bargaining. So, while it may, in the immediate, seem desirable to have input on a Strategic Planning Committee, our ability to impact any negative outcomes of the committee’s work is better achieved by protecting the bargaining rights in our CBA. It is, therefore, our position that UCATS members cannot serve on NYU committees.

**Q:** Why won’t my boss get me a merit raise?

**A:** The most likely reason is that your boss got a raise smaller than your union negotiated annual raise, and if s/he doesn’t have the power get her/himself as big a raise as you did, they don’t have the power, or inclination, to get you a merit raise on top of your union negotiated raise. A merit raise also implies that you are deserving of more than your coworkers; but if your manager asked your coworkers, don’t be surprised if your coworkers each feel they are more deserving of that merit raise than you. Probably if UCATS surveyed our entire membership, every single person would say they deserve a merit raise; and so we have obliged — by negotiating an annual raise for every single UCATS member every year for the last 37 years.

## Black Lives Matter – All lives matter

*(Continued from page 3)*

How about instead of putting youth offenders in jail, why not turn the island into a trade school to give our justice system an option for youth offenders other than incarceration? Let’s create the conditions that allow youth offenders to reenter society with a skill set that will qualify them to be hired into good paying jobs. Better yet, let’s end the school to incarceration pipeline by investing in public education so that all of

our young people have the skills they need to either succeed in college or in a trade.

Finally, supporting strong gun control legislation is essential to solving the crisis that has given birth to BLM. This means electing politicians who will stand up to the National Rifle Association lobby. It’s not too late to register to vote. You can register to vote online, or you can call UCATS and we will provide you with a voter registration application.

# Save on eyeglasses – buy online

■ *Stephen Rechner,*  
*Law School*

**Y**ou've probably seen the tantalizing offers for eyeglasses online for as little as \$9.99. Well, I've bought glasses online and here's what I have learned.

Unless you have only the mildest of prescriptions, and are willing to settle for the flimsiest of unattractive frames, good luck finding glasses online for \$9.99. That doesn't mean you should rule out buying glasses online altogether. There are still significant savings to be had, but before you place an order here are some things you should know:

Always buy at least one pair of glasses where you have your eye exam. Sometimes mistakes are made, and you want to be absolutely sure your prescription is perfect before you buy glasses someplace else.

There are many places in the city that offer a package of exam/frames/lenses for just \$99.

When you ask for your prescription in writing, the optometry shop knows full well you intend to purchase glasses elsewhere, and their trick of the trade to discourage that is to omit your pupil distance (PD). Make sure you ask for that and write it down on your prescription.

Furthermore, if you're like me and want dedicated distance, reading and computer glasses, as opposed to trifocals, your pupil distance will be slightly less for the reading glasses. The optometry shop may tell you that they will only measure your PD for the glasses you are buying. Again, a trick of trade to make you buy another pair of glasses from them, which of course, negates the savings of purchasing online. To get around that, purchase your distance glasses from the optometry shop and get your PD for that, then purchase a pair of distance glasses online but before purchasing your reading glasses online ask the online vendor by email to recommend a standard reduction in the pupil

distance for the reading glasses.

It is possible to have a dual PD (I do), and some online eyeglass vendors don't offer that option; but some do, so just check out other websites until you find one that does.

Once you find an online eyeglass vendor that has attractive frames at an affordable price, and, if necessary, the option of a dual PD, expect add-ons that quickly increase the teaser price advertised on their homepage. For example, a strong prescription, bi/tri-focals, and anti-glare coating are all extras.

So, here's how my experience purchasing glasses online priced out: Using a buy 2 get 1 free online offer from zenni-optical.com, I got 3 pair of glasses for \$158-about \$53

per pair. That included \$15 per frame, an additional \$14 per pair lens charge because I have a strong prescription, \$34.95 per pair charge for requiring thinner lenses, and \$4.95 per pair anti-glare coating. Included free were anti-scratch coating, UV protection and shipping on the 2nd and 3rd pair.

At those prices, I can afford to have fun with my glasses. My distance glasses are my 'seen in public' glasses and I like to have a blue pair, a green pair and a copper pair, depending on what I'm wearing. I also bought a pair of sunglasses.

Having read this, you are now an educated online eyeglass consumer. Now go forth, shop online and have fun with your eyeglasses!

## IS THE OPTIONAL VSP VISION BENEFIT OFFERED DURING OPEN ENROLLMENT A GOOD VALUE?

**IT CAN BE,** if you use all of the benefits for which you are paying. The main benefit is that it gives you more options for where you get your eye exam and glasses. There are still retail optical shops in the city, Manhattan included, that will sell you a package that includes an exam, single vision lenses and frames for \$99, and if you can get by with that, VSP is not a good value. But you are going to have to shop around for those \$99 bargains, and the frame selection will be limited.

For just a few more dollars, the VSP plan gives you the opportunity to go to many different shops and as long as they accept VSP. You'll know going in what the exam will cost as well as what your first pair of glasses will cost. Keep in mind that with VSP you can only get one pair of glasses at the fixed priced stated in the plan. If you want additional glasses you will only get a discount which may not be better than promotional prices the shop is offering to everyone.



# UCATS IN ACTION

**MAY 12**– NYCOSH Awards Dinner. Joan Randolph, Kate Conroy, Marty Correia, Johanna Tyson, Christopher Crowe, Stephen Rechner attended.

**JUNE 14**– Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation annual meeting/Community Awards event. Rob Lesko and Sharmaine Griffin attended.

**JULY 18-21**– AFT Convention. Christopher Crowe, Barbara Bova and Stephen Rechner attended.

**AUGUST 8-9**– NYSUT Local Presidents Endorsements Conference. Stephen Rechner attended.

**AUGUST 28**– Student Move In Day, members of the UCATS Executive Council provided new students with voter registration cards.

**SEPTEMBER 10**– **NEW YORK CITY LABOR DAY PARADE.** UCATS members will meet at 11 a.m. on 45th St. between 5th & Vanderbilt Aves.



## Your last raise

*(Continued from page 2)*

While serving on the EC seems daunting to those who have never done it, remember that everyone currently serving on the EC had also never done it the first time they were elected. For the record, most current members of the EC have served two terms or more, so we must be having a good experience. Rather than focusing on the challenges of EC service, you should consider the benefits of having an effective union and what it takes to achieve that.

### We not He

In the current national election, much has been said about income inequality and raising the minimum wage. Much has also been said about access to health care, affordable prescription drugs, paid sick time, and retirement security. UCATS members are fortunate to have a measure of all of these things in our CBA. Our benefits didn't just fall from the sky however, they have

It's the U and I in  
**UNION**  
that makes us  
**STRONG**

been negotiated in eleven CBAs by a succession of UCATS members serving on the EC over a period of 37 years.

In 2017 it is up to you to continue the work of protecting the gains of the current CBA and negotiating the improvements that will ensure the well-being of current and future UCATS members. Prior to the nominations meeting we will hold a number of information sessions about the roles and responsibilities of Executive Council members.

To paraphrase President Obama, the union isn't about "yes he will." It's about "yes we can." To learn more about becoming a union shop steward in next year's election contact UCATS at 646-602-1485.

# Bulletin Board

## NEW HEALTH INSURANCE CHOICE FOR LOW INCOME NEW YORKERS

**NEW YORK STATE** now offers an Essential Plan for \$20 per month. The Essential Plan is a new ACA plan available to eligible, lower income New Yorkers who do not qualify for Medicaid, Child Health Plus or affordable employer sponsored health insurance. It has no deductible and offers the same services as other health insurance plans, including free preventative care. Consumers pay just \$20 a month per adult or nothing at all depending on their income. **Full-time UCATS members do not qualify for the Essential Plan, however, you may have family or friends who do.** Enrollment is open all year long. For more information call (855) 355-5777 or go online: <http://info.nystateofhealth.ny.gov/EssentialPlanMap>.

## OPEN ENROLLMENT

**MAKE SURE YOU** review all of your benefit selections based on your anticipated use for the coming year. For example, if you currently have the VSP vision discount plan, you can drop the benefit for the 2017 calendar year if you get your eyes checked and your new glasses before December 31, 2016. If you have your eyes checked and get new glasses annually, you can reenroll next year and get your eyes checked and new glasses in January 2018. By stretching out the time between your check-ups by just a couple of months, you can drop the VSP plan every other year and save about \$120 in annual premiums.

## HEALTH SPENDING ACCOUNTS

**IF YOU ARE** contributing to a Health Spending Account (HSA), now is a good time to review your eligible expenses to make sure you are going to spend it all before December 31. Money in an HSA that is unspent by December 31 is forfeited to the employer to offset the costs of administering the plan. If it appears that you aren't going to spend all you are contributing this year, you definitely want to contribute less next year.

## YOUR LAST RAISE – 3%

**UCATS MEMBERS WILL** receive a 3% pay increase effective the first pay period of September. Due to the two week time lag between the end of the pay period and receipt of the pay check you will not see the raise until the September 30 pay check. This is the last pay raise UCATS members will receive under the current Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) which expires October 31, 2017. There will be no raise next year unless and until a new CBA is negotiated with NYU which must then be ratified by a majority of UCATS members who participate in the ratification vote.

## HELP WANTED

**WRITERS:** The UCATS newsletter committee is seeking contributors to write news stories, editorials and features. If you can write as little as 3-5 paragraphs on a topic you can be an important voice in our publication. Interested members should contact Stephen Rechner at [ucatspres3882@hotmail.com](mailto:ucatspres3882@hotmail.com).

