

The Administrator

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Message from the AA President

First of all, I would like to thank Sue Beaudrow for mentoring me while she was President of the Assembly. She has kept the Assembly together under changing times. We are lucky to have her on the Executive Board for future assistance and continued support.

What will 2001-2002 bring to the Administrative Assembly?

The Assembly's goal for (con't on page 4)

The Administrative Assembly Needs Delegates and a New Outlook

The Administrative Assembly (AA) is going through growing pains. The reasons are as follows:

1) Presently there are only 20 delegates representing approximately 2000 Administrative, Professional and Supervisory constituents.

2) The purpose of the AA was originally to serve at the pleasure of the President of the University as a voice for A/P/S staff. Since the Pay for Performance (P4P) Program was estab-

lished, no other issues have been brought to us for input.

3) The AA is currently involved with the grievance or problem solving procedure, however, the present AA has decided that since delegates are not trained to assist in this capacity,

they cannot be effective and should no longer partake in this service. We are trying to find an alternative way to assist those going through this process.

In the past, the AA has served as a voice by contributing information and resources to facilitate the following services:

- ◆ Recommending that Long Term Care Insurance be offered to PERS staff.
- ◆ Providing a forum for A/P/S staff to have input into the P4P Program
- ◆ Introducing the idea for the new Mass Transit Commutation Pre-tax Program

If you have suggestions or comments as to the future of the AA, please call Rosemarie Kulp at 445-2550 or e-mail at rkulp@rehs.rutgers.edu. If you are innovative and want input about your future at Rutgers, please consider representing the A/P/S staff as a delegate.

Officers for 2001-2002

President

Rosemarie Kulp

Vice Pres./President-Elect

Charles Olszewski

Recording Secretary

Sue Beaudrow

Corresponding Secretary

Tina Sohn

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Innovative Ideas Suggestion Box

“Innovative Ideas” suggestion box is a forum developed by Human Resources that allows administrative/professional/supervisory (A/P/S) staff to submit ideas and suggestions on how to improve this Institution.

Generally, your suggestions should provide a solution that will:

- ◆ Make Rutgers a better place to work
- ◆ Make processes at the University function more effectively
- ◆ Save the University money
- ◆ Improve services

A committee has been formed to review suggestions quarterly. After a suggestion is selected, a form of recognition (still to be established) will be awarded to the employee, along with an invitation to a luncheon at the end of the year.

If you would like to submit an idea, or want to find out more about this program, you can log on to <http://uhr.rutgers.edu/announce.htm> or call Human Resources at 5-3020.



Get Well Soon, Gloria!

The members of the Administrative Assembly would like to wish Gloria Meyers, our Chairperson for the Election and Membership Committee a speedy recovery after her operation.

The Mass Transit Commutation Reimbursement Program

Initiated by the Salary, Benefits and Compensation committee of the Administrative Assembly, University Human Resources (UHR) has established a plan to pay pre-tax money through payroll deduction for mass transit (which includes bus, train, ferry and subway).

In 1998, Congress passes the Transportation Equity Act, amending Section 132 (f) of the Internal Revenue Code. This amendment allows employees who pay for mass transit and parking expenses associated with their commute to work to receive tax savings.

If you would like to find out more about this program, you can log on to <http://uhr.rutgers.edu/announce.htm> or call Human Resources at 5-3020.

New Legislation Passed to Increase the Retirement

There has been a revision in the compensation calculation for all participants in the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), effective October 1, 2001. In a nutshell, the old formula to calculate the retirement benefit used to be:

$$\frac{\text{Years in the System}}{60} \times \text{Average of three highest year's base salary}$$

the new calculation is as follows;

$$\frac{\text{Years in the System}}{55} \times \text{Average of three highest year's base salary}$$

The denominator in the equation has changed from 60 to 55. This change will create an approximate 8% increase in the pension compensation benefit. For more detailed information you can log on to:

<http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/>
Remember, retirement prior to age 55 with 25 years of membership service will reduce the compensation by 1/4 of 1% per month or 3% per year for each year under age 55. A guaranteed retirement income is available at age 60, regardless of years of membership service, based on the new calculation stated above.

University Homebuyer's Program

A Personal Experience

By

Charles R. Olszewski

In January 2000, I received a mailing from the Office of State and Federal Relations of the University. These mailings are sent periodically to each Administrative Assembly delegate. The piece in question made mention of a new program offered by the Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency of the State of New Jersey, for which Rutgers employees were eligible. The program offered \$10,000 assistance for homebuyers to use in making a down payment and/or covering closing costs.

In February or March, the University held a seminar on this and other such programs from the State at College Hall in the Livingston Student Center. My wife, Nancy, and I attended. The presentation made it clear that, for faculty and staff on the New Brunswick campuses, the program applied only to home purchases within the city limits of New Brunswick. Nancy, who had been after me for thirty years to move us out of Newark (well, thirty years as of our thirtieth anniversary in May 2000), seemed disappointed. She had her heart set on a more suburban environment than we thought we could find in New Brunswick.

In April 2000, I was reading the *Daily Targum*, and found an ad for a two-bedroom, 1½ bath town house in New Brunswick. The price looked manageable, so after asking Nancy, I called and made an appointment to see the place. I was told it was in the Renaissance Station community, off Sandford Street. On a wet Saturday, we took the M14 bus out Livingston Avenue, got off near Sandford Street, and walked over three blocks, past Lee and Remsen Avenues to Renaissance Lane. I was unimpressed at first. The homes were gray shingle frame structures. They were on sort of narrow streets with no sidewalks; and several of the places had garage doors that had badly peeling paint (so I thought.)

When the owner invited us into the town house, my estimate rose immediately. There was a tile foyer with a carpeted stairway leading off up to the second floor. The nominal dining room was being used as a TV/family room. The kitchen was large and airy, with a sliding glass door leading onto a concrete patio. The living room, while smaller than the one in our apartment, came with a cathedral ceiling, a second-floor balcony, and a working fireplace. There was a powder room under the stairs, and wall-to-wall carpeting everywhere downstairs except the foyer, the powder room, the kitchen, and the utility room. There was a large single-car garage. Upstairs, again, we found nearly universal wall-to-wall carpeting. Two nice bedrooms, a large walk-in closet, a full bathroom, and a laundry room completed the picture. This was a place I could live in.

Nancy wasn't so sure; but, after checking out similar communities in Edison, she was convinced that the house was one she, too, could live in. In May, we made our offer and it the house was one she, too, could live in. In May, we made our offer,

and it was accepted. The home was being sold by the owner, without a broker. We were buying without a broker. Thanks to good advice from many of my co-workers, this was not a problem, and saved some money. Housing sites on the World-Wide Web helped, too.

I consulted the NJ HMFA web site at <http://www.state.nj.us/dca/hmfa/index.html> for more information. I verified that I needed to get my mortgage from a company listed with the agency. My bank, First Union, was listed. They turned me down. The attorney to whom my boss referred me suggested an agency that matched prospective home buyers with finance firms. They linked me up with K. Hovnanian Mortgage Co., a sibling company to the real estate developer of the same name. Setting up the mortgage took a couple of months, during which we found a number of other necessary steps such as an inspection of the property along with the mortgage company's appraisal. Finally, on October 12, 2000, we closed on the house. Moving was another adventure, and could by itself occupy an article longer than this one.

The neighborhood into which we moved is great. Sandford Street, Remsen Avenue and Commercial Avenue are all rather well-used thoroughfares. But once a block or so in on Renaissance Lane, the feeling is more like suburban Morris County than the Northeast corridor megacity. Our church is just around the corner, and there are plentiful local grocery stores and nearby supermarkets. The M11 South River bus runs four blocks away from our home; the M14 Livingston Avenue bus is three blocks farther away, and the campus busses to and from Cook/Douglass campus are all within walking distance. Yes, even when it snows. Even Sears and the New Brunswick Cinema are within (long-ish) walking distance, as is the train station in downtown New Brunswick.

The College and University Homebuyer's Program made it all possible. It isn't a free gift, actually. It is technically an interest-free second mortgage. However, if the buyers use the property as their principle residence, the HMFA forgives 20% of the loan each year. At the end of five years, it is all gone. Move out and/or sell the property before the five years are up, and the remainder of the loan comes due at once. If I were to move out now, I'd have to pay back the full \$10,000. That said, it is a great deal. It benefits me, by making me a property owner after a lifetime as a renter. It benefits the University and it benefits the City of New Brunswick by adding another taxpayer to the rolls and a well-paid (well, comparatively) worker to the community.

For more information about how to access this program call Debra Norman at 2-8404.

Message from the President (con't)

this year is to work on providing information to A/P/S employees and to find more effective ways to facilitate communication.

In an attempt to provide information to you, the Administrative Assembly is anticipating the formulation of a lunchtime presentation to be given on each campus. This presentation will inform University employees about services and/or resources offered to the University Community to make their lives easier, healthier and more enjoyable. Anticipated presenters will be representing Human Resources, Recreation, Health Services and the RU Credit Union. Look for the date and times of these presentations on the AA web page at: <http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~assembly/>.

It will also be advertised in coming issues of the Administrator Newsletter, the UHR News for A/P/S Staff newsletter and the Focus.

That's all for now. Please let us know if you have comments, ideas or suggestions.

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!!



RETIRING SOON? JOIN THE SILVER KNIGHTS

If you are retiring soon, be sure to fill out your application to the Silver Knights, that will be included in your retirement package/paperwork. The Silver Knights is an organization whose membership includes retired staff who have worked at the University. As a dues paying member of the Silver Knights, you can partake in the trips, luncheons, and other activities provided by this organization.

If you have questions, or would like to know more about the Silver Knights call Eugene Young at 732-828-4802.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSEMBLY CALENDAR FOR 2001-2002

All A/P/S staff are invited to attend Administrative Assembly Meetings. The meetings start at 12:00 noon and are located in Rm. 133 in the Labor Education Building. In Camden and Newark, the meetings will be teleconferenced. In Camden, the location will be in the Provost Conference Room in Armitage Hall. In Newark, the location will most likely be in the Center for Law and Justice. The exact location will be announced as soon as it is confirmed.

The meeting dates are as follows:

- 1st meeting-Friday, September 21, 2001
- 2nd meeting-Friday, December 14, 2001
- 3rd meeting-Friday, March 22, 2002
- 4th meeting-Friday, June 14, 2002

Hope to see you there!

Recognition of A/P/S Staff

If you would like to recognize accomplishments of A/P/S staff in the Administrator, please e-mail Charles Olszewski at olszewski@acs.rutgers.edu with your information. It is anticipated that the newsletter will go out more frequently during the 2001-2002 term.

A/P/S Staff Awarded for Their Contributions to Safety at Rutgers

At a recent University Safety Management Meeting, the following individuals were recognized for their leadership and initiative in promoting safety at the University.

Frank Ziarkoski - CAC Facilities Maintenance Services

John Nason - University Dining Services

Ghislaine Darden-B/L Facilities Maintenance Services

Dan McGraw-B/L Facilities Maintenance Services

Congratulations for your efforts in making the University a safer place to work.