



March 2013 Issue 6
Academic Year 2012-2013

Retirees Newsletter

Professional Staff Congress
Jack Judd, Editor

I. APRIL CHAPTER MEETING.

The April 1 chapter meeting will be held at 61 Broadway, 16th floor, in the PSC union hall from 1-3 PM. The featured speaker is Professor **Frank Deale, CUNY Law School**, on the “**Supreme Court of the United States and Social Justice Issues.**”

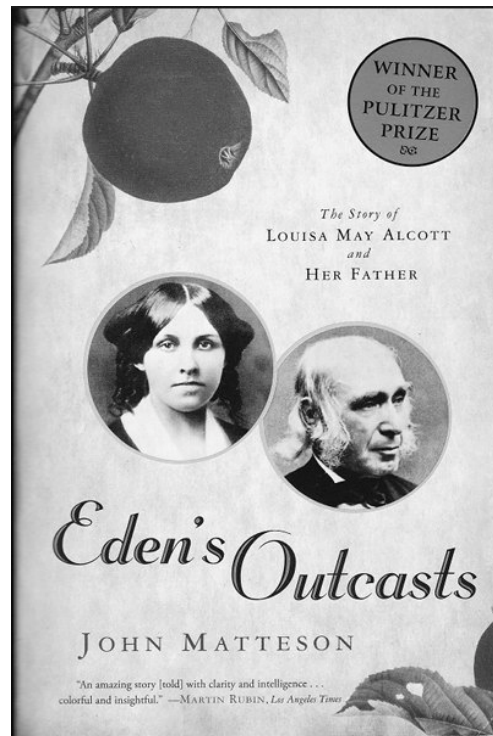
The Executive Committee will meet at 61 Broadway from 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM in the Justice Room on the 15th floor. Anyone interested is invited to attend.

II. THE JUNE LUNCHEON: You're Invited to our 20th Annual Spring Luncheon and Annual Business Meeting.

The meeting and luncheon will take place on June 3 in the Faculty Dining Hall at John Jay College of Criminal Justice (2nd floor, 524 West 59th St.). The day will start with a continental breakfast at 10:30 AM followed immediately by the annual business meeting. Lunch will be served at 12:30 PM.

The invitation and reservation form is attached at the end of this newsletter. Please fill out the reservation form and mail it to the

PSC office along with a check payable to the Professional Staff Congress (\$25 per attendee) by May 15. The return address is on the form.



Pulitzer prize winner John Matteson will be the featured speaker at the June luncheon.

III. REPORT ON THE MARCH CHAPTER MEETING. We again thank Joel Berger, chapter vice-chairman, for this excellent summary

of remarks delivered by Larry Morgan.

Outlook Brightens For The Welfare Fund

Larry Morgan, executive director of the PSC-CUNY Welfare Fund, outlined how the fund was able to take several "corrective actions" to reverse conditions which were eroding the Fund's reserves.

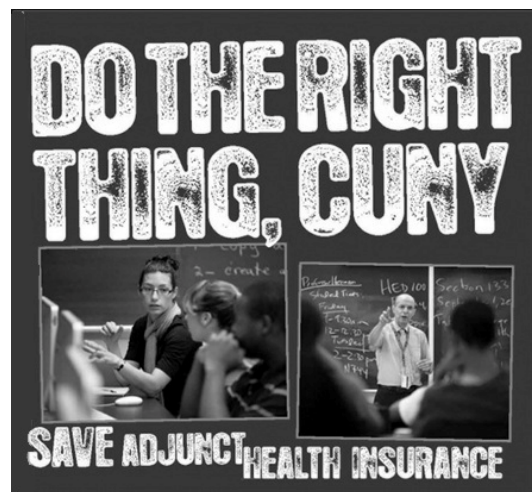
The union has nearly completed negotiations with CUNY for the continuation of adjunct health insurance, but external to the Fund. Before this agreement, the adjunct health insurance benefit had unsustainable funding: CUNY provided a flat amount to pay for adjunct health insurance through the PSC-CUNY Welfare Fund, but the funding didn't rise along with the cost of health insurance or with the number of adjuncts that qualified for the benefit. The benefit was a major drain on the Fund's resources.

Over the years, a number of measures were taken to continue the benefit and stabilize the Fund, but CUNY did not provide a long-term, sustainable fix. Ultimately, a crisis point was reached where the only way to keep the Welfare Fund healthy and continue offering adjunct health insurance was to stabilize the benefit. The choice was: end the benefit or make it sustainable.

In July 2011 the Fund trustees, who have a fiduciary duty to maintain the solvency of the Welfare Fund, passed a resolution, which said adjunct health insurance would be

terminated as of 8/31/12 if stable funding was not secured.

The union launched an all-out campaign. PSC members rallied and testified before the CUNY Board of Trustees; thousands of members signed a petition and sent letters to the Chancellor and the Trustees. On the campuses, PSC members organized poster drives, button and t-shirt days, passed dozens of resolutions and met with administrators. CUNY finally did the right thing and agreed to request funding for adjunct health insurance in the university budget request, but only after feeling the pressure of a concerted campaign. After that, PSC and CUNY both lobbied successfully to win \$10 million in new state funding to support the benefit.



A poster from Fall 2011 that was part of the union's campaign to save adjunct healthcare insurance.

The PSC and CUNY have negotiated almost all of the terms of an agreement to provide comparable health insurance for qualifying adjuncts. Meanwhile, the Fund is continuing coverage for qualifying adjuncts on a month-to-month basis,

with significantly increased funding from CUNY, through April of this year. It is anticipated that a new program, with the same conditions of eligibility will be in place on May 1 to cover approximately 1,800 qualifying adjuncts.

The reserves of the Welfare Fund had diminished to \$19 million as a result of a large operating deficit in the last fiscal year. "Relieved of the burden," Larry said "the operating deficit in the 3rd fiscal quarter is projected to be almost non-existent."

Many costs incurred by the Fund were going up, but "one cost, that we are very proud of, that didn't go up was our retiree drugs." The Fund was able to take advantage of a special provision of Medicare Part D, which permits group enrollment. The result is federal money available to subsidize the cost of providing drugs to retiree members. This was begun in 2012.

In 2011, the gross cost of drugs to the Fund for retirees was \$14.5 million, with a net cost of \$11 million after a special Medicare subsidy the Fund has been able to apply since 2006. Under the new group retiree program within Part D, the gross cost of drugs for retirees in 2012 was \$15 million, but after a variety of enhanced subsidies are applied, the net cost will be under \$8 million.

The Health Reform Act has required that the Welfare Fund remove the \$10,000 annual cap on the drug benefit for actives and retirees starting in 2014. This is a very large cost item. Larry pointed out that

because the new Retiree drug program coordinates with Medicare, not only has the former \$10,000 cap already been removed for our Medicare retirees, but when expenses get high enough, the member co-payment rate drops from 20% to 5%. And the bothersome \$50 annual deductible that Medco imposed each year has disappeared (also for non-Medicare retirees).

Responding to several questions from members, Larry pointed out that the yearly budget of the fund is \$35 million, with 5,500 retirees and 13,000 active members. The dental program costs \$7 million providing its current level of reimbursement. If dental costs were reimbursed at 100%, the expense would exceed the entire Fund budget, so the dental benefit will remain essentially the same in the near future. Funding from CUNY is dependent on collective bargaining, and there has been no new contract for three years, so any possible improvement to dental benefits would await an increase to per capita payments from CUNY to the Welfare Fund. All important information can be accessed on the Welfare Fund web site, <http://psccunywf.org>.

IV. MEDICARE RIGHTS CENTER AND MEDICARE INTERACTIVE



The Medicare Rights Center is a national, nonprofit consumer service organization that works to ensure access to affordable health care for older adults and people with disabilities through counseling and advocacy, educational programs and public policy initiatives. Their offices are located in New York City and Washington, D.C. Visit the site at www.medicarerights.org. Or call their helpline at 1-800-333-4114.



Medicare Interactive, a project of the Medicare Rights Center, is an independent online resource of free information that helps older adults and people with disabilities navigate the complex world of health insurance. It offers easy-to-understand information and advice on a full range of Medicare topics, and explains Medicare choices, how best to get coverage, how to get help with costs, and how to appeal for care if it is denied. Visit the site at www.medicareinteractive.org/.

The Medicare Rights Center is funded with a mix of foundation support and public contracts with the New York State Office for the Aging, New York State Department of State and the New York City Council. They also receive support from a number

New York State Legislators and City Council Members.

V. TRS DOWNTOWN OFFICE IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS AGAIN

Teachers Retirement System has announced the resumption of full operations at their 55 Water St. location, which was damaged during Hurricane Sandy. The Member Services Center is open during regular business hours (8:30 AM - 5:00 PM, Mon. - Fri., except during official New York City holidays). TRS staff are no longer stationed at the temporary walk-in facility on Court St. in Brooklyn. TRS has also resumed their schedule of free onsite "Getting Ready for Retirement" educational programs at the 55 Water St. location. To learn more, go to tinyurl.com/trsnyc.

Address any comments and items for future newsletters to Jacob Judd at jjudd18@optonline.net.

RETIREE CHAPTER WEBSITE:
For more information about the chapter and its activities as well as an archive of newsletters, go to <http://www.psc-cuny.org/retirees>.

OFFICERS OF RETIREES CHAPTER

March 2013

Chairman:	James Perlstein
Vice Chairperson:	Joel Berger
Secretary:	
PSC Executive Council:	William Friedheim Eileen Moran
Officers-at-Large:	Francine Brewer Judith Bronfman Martin L. Kaplan Eileen Moran
Delegate Assembly:	John Hyland David Kotelchuck Steve Leberstein Cecelia McCall Ezra Seltzer
Alternate Delegates:	Miriam Balmuth Joel Berger Peter Jonas Robert Wurman
Chairmen Emeriti:	Jacob Judd Lawrence J. Kaplan Irwin Yellowitz
Coordinator, Pension & Health Benefits:	Jared Herst

LUNCHEON COORDINATORS

Judith Bronfman
Robert Wurman

DIRECTIONS

John Jay's New Building

Best entrance for the Luncheon:
11th Ave. between 58th & 59th

Also accessible from:
899 Tenth Ave.

Bus: M57 to 11th Avenue
Transfer from any subway line
with a 57th or 59th St. stop.

RETIREES CHAPTER

of the

PROFESSIONAL STAFF CONGRESS

Cordially invites you

to attend its

Twentieth Annual
Spring Luncheon
and
Annual Business Meeting

Monday, June 3, 2013

10:30 AM
Continental Breakfast
Annual Business Meeting

Faculty Dining Room, 2nd floor

12:30 PM
Luncheon

Dining Hall, 2nd Level
John Jay College of Criminal Justice
New Building
524 West 59th St.
New York, NY

PROGRAM

Award to
Peter Jonas

Speaker

John Matteson
Distinguished Professor of English
John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Author of the Pulitzer Prize winning work
*Eden's Outcasts: The Story of Louisa
May Alcott and Her Father (2008)* and
The Lives of Margaret Fuller (2012)

Giving a talk entitled:

"The Fullers and the Alcotts:
Two Visions of Nineteenth-Century
Education"

MENU

Tossed Salad
Hot Rolls

Choice of:
Chicken Francese
Tropical Salad
Tuna Salad
Vegetable Lasagna
Poached Salmon
Pepper Steak

Vegetables
Dessert
Beverages

RESERVATION FORM

I/We plan to attend. Enclosed is my
reservation for _____ luncheon(s)
at \$25.00 each.

My choice of main course is
(check one for each person who will attend):

_____ Chicken Francese
_____ Tropical Salad
_____ Tuna Salad
_____ Vegetable Lasagna
_____ Poached Salmon
_____ Pepper Steak

Name(s) _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

Please send your reservation form with a
check payable to:

Professional Staff Congress

by

May 15, 2013

Retirees Chapter
Professional Staff Congress
61 Broadway, 15th floor
New York, NY 10006