



## UNAC Connection - February 2024



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## **UNAC Successes**

On a day to day basis, most of you probably don't think about your union, or you assume you'll never need our help. While we hope this is true, we regularly talk to and help individual members when something unexpected happens in their work life. Following are a few examples of ways in which UNAC has helped individual members this academic year when the unexpected happened to them.

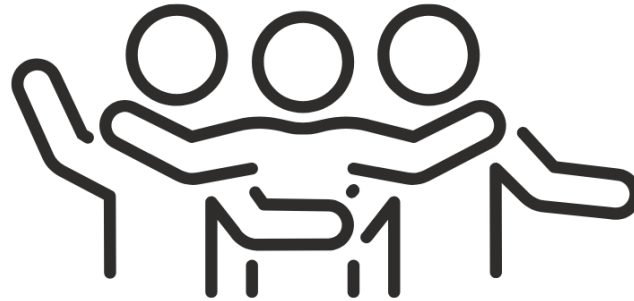
Through our official grievance, complaint, and disciplinary processes, we have assisted members in:

- Two step 1 grievances
- One step 2 grievance
- One step 3 grievance
- One step 4 grievance
  - all members who retired or resigned before May 2023 received FY22 back pay as a result of this grievance
- Seven members assisted during official investigatory processes

Through our channels of communication with Labor Relations and Human Resources, we have effectively resolved a variety of issues and assisted individual members in the following ways:

- An HR mix-up with health insurance coverage
- An HR mix-up with retirement vesting

- Retention pay increases for individual members
- Moving expense pay-back forgiven when a member's new job did not work out for them
- Countless FML Unum applications
- Summer backpay corrections for 167 members (a separate miscalculation from the Step 4 grievance related to backpay described above)
- Assisting members with workload issues



## RA and E-Board Actions

### **Finance, Budget, and Audit Committee's Motion to Increase Dues: Approved**

At the February 17, 2024, Representative Assembly meeting, members of the assembly voted to *increase dues from 1.05% back to our original dues amount of 1.25%, effective on July 1, 2024.*

Depending on your rate of pay, this equates to approximately \$10 or less per pay period, or one coffee drink per week, and coincides with the 2.5% pay raise in our current contract. It also coincides with the start of negotiations for our next Collective Bargaining Agreement, where we will fight for higher wage increases. With your support, we are already preparing to come to the bargaining table in a strong position.

Your dues also help us continue to enforce our contract through individual grievances, advocacy, and assistance. We are here for each of you, and all of you collectively, but we can only do what we do because of our dues-payers. Thank you to all of our dues-payers for your continued support!

### **E-Board Signs AAUP Resolution on the Israel/Gaza War**

At its January 17, 2024, meeting, UNAC's E-Board voted unanimously to sign onto a resolution started by other AAUP chapters, encouraging our national affiliate, American Federation of Teachers (AFT), to join the call for a ceasefire, return of Israeli hostages, and a long-term solution to conflict in the Gaza Strip.

Subsequently, on January 30, 2024, AFT's Executive Council unanimously approved a [resolution calling for an end to the Israel-Hamas War](#).

### **UNAC's President at the Legislature**

President Jill Dumesnil has been active at the state capitol this legislative season.

- She attended the UAF R1 hearing in the Senate State Affairs Committee on

February 20, 2024.

- She was prepared for invited testimony on House Bill 9: Adding a Faculty Regent to the Board of Regents, at the House Judiciary Committee, but the hearing of that bill was postponed.
- She sent Representative Stapp an official UNAC letter of support for House Bill 236: University of Alaska Major Maintenance and Modernization Fund.

### **Ad-Hoc Morale Survey Committee Request:**

On Thursday, February 22, 2024, UNAC's Morale Survey ad-hoc Committee sent an email to all bargaining unit members with a link to a new Morale Survey. Please take time to complete that survey so our committee can compare results this year to those we gathered a few years ago, before Covid.

If you can't locate the survey, contact our staff at [membership@unac4996ak.com](mailto:membership@unac4996ak.com).

### **Membership, Organizing, & Communications Committee Request:**

#### **Help us Highlight Your Publications, Presentations, Creations, etc.**

We want to start a new corner in our newsletter and on our website to highlight our bargaining unit members' recent publications, presentations, performances, and other professional achievements.

We are only asking for your name and a link, file, or description of your recent work. Take five minutes to fill out [this form](#) and help us highlight your great work.



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## **Workloads**

### **Next year: AY25 Workloads**

The March 1, 2024, deadline for most members to submit workloads to Department Chairs or Program Coordinators is fast approaching. Members of each department and program should meet to discuss needs and priorities for the next academic year.

Don't forget -- we have a [YouTube channel](#) with two workload-related trainings available:

- [Workload 101](#)
- [Workload Training for Department Chairs and Program Coordinators](#)

### **This year: AY24 Workload Revisions (signed)**

To ensure a successful and satisfactory annual evaluation, workloads must match

the work performed each academic year. If workload duties have changed, the workload must be changed, and the appropriate supervisor must sign the revised workload. Failure to get a signed, revised workload that accurately reflects the work performed can lead to an unsatisfactory evaluation.

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## Joint Health Care Committee (JHCC) Update

### **Health Insurance Overpayment Correction**

In November 2023, HR sent an email to most of our membership requesting that each person fill out and return a PDF related to start dates and original health plans, in order to make corrections to past 'overpayments.'

UNAC was not consulted about this project; to date, we have no update on progress with this project.

### **Compromise on Upcoming Increases to Deductibles and Out-of-Pocket Maximums**

Working together with our union siblings in Crafts & Trades 6070, as well as staff and administrative representatives, members of the JHCC voted 9-2 to successfully limit the size of increases to deductibles and out-of-pocket maximums. UA appears ready to approve the modest increases rather than their originally proposed significant increases. The more limited increases closely match updated federal requirements. This compromise was made possible through collaborative thinking and the impending elimination of the Wellness Program's rebate.

### **The Wellness Program Rebate**

Two years ago, UNAC's Representative Assembly voted on a resolution in favor of dissolving the UA health plan's Wellness Program. Research shows that wellness programs are not effective at saving institutions money or at making people healthier. In the JHCC, the Wellness Program has long been a topic of dispute. Currently, only 40% of plan participants make use of the Wellness Program and receive the rebate.

Members of the JHCC have learned that the Wellness Program's rebates are funded entirely by employees' inflated premium contributions, undermining the 82/18% split between UA and employees for healthcare costs.

As part of the FY25 planning this month, the JHCC voted to eliminate the Wellness Program rebate, which will result in *lower increases to premiums in FY25*; in some cases, premiums will decrease slightly. It appears that UA will accept this recommendation, effectively ending the wellness plan, which had devolved into a point tracking exercise in order to earn a "rebate." The wellness components of the UA Health Plan will continue, as they are offered via Premera.



## **Representative Assembly & Organizational Vice President Election Results**

### **Organizational Vice Presidents**

<b>UAA (Anchorage)</b>	<b>Ryan Harrod</b>
<b>UAF (Troth Yeddha')</b>	<b>Douglas Cost</b>
<b>UAS (Juneau)</b>	<b>Andrea Dewees</b>
<b>Extended Sites (all)</b>	<b>Cindy Trussell</b>

### **Representative Assembly Members**

<b>UAA (Anchorage)</b>	<b>Maria Williams, Deb Mole, Kristen Ogilvie, Matthew Cuellar, Tim Hinterberger, Ingrid Johnson</b>
<b>UAA (extended sites)</b>	<b>Pete Praetorius (Mat-Su Campus)</b>
<b>UAF (Troth Yeddha')</b>	<b>Leah Berman, Haiwei Chen, Terry Reilly, Tony Rickard, pending write-in responses</b>
<b>UAF (extended sites)</b>	<b>Tie! Pending coin toss or run-off</b>
<b>UAS (Juneau)</b>	<b>Kathy Dilorenzo, Kaia Henrickson</b>
<b>UAS (extended sites)</b>	<b>Pending write-in responses</b>

**Faculty Alliance's 1st Annual**

# Thought Leaders Forum

Faculty Alliance is the leadership of our three universities' Faculty Senates. They work together to ensure the faculty perspective is present in the shaping of UA's governance policies, among other things.

This year, the Faculty Alliance has decided to invest time and energy in our community of thought leaders by hosting a UA-wide forum on the topic of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in academia. This could mean anything from classroom use or mis-use, research best-practices, academic freedom, freedom of speech, equity of access, and beyond.

The forum will include keynote speakers as well as individual and panel presentations by members of the UA community: students, faculty, post-docs, students, and stakeholders.

Mark your calendars to make sure you can attend as much of this event as possible. The Zoom link for this forum will be made available through your Faculty Senate.

## **Dates and Times:**

- March 28, 2024, 11:00 am to 3:00 pm AKDT
- March 29, 2024, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm AKDT

Details are available on the [Faculty Alliance website](#).

Talk with your Faculty Senators and/or your Senate President for more information.

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## **Reminders**

### **FTO Cash-In**

After UNAC members have taken five days of FTO, you may cash-in up to five days of FTO in lieu of taking time off. To cash-in FTO, follow the directions on this [UA webpage](#) and complete the form linked at the bottom of the page.

### **UNAC Sick Leave Bank**

The Sick Leave Bank application can be found under 'forms and guidelines' on this [UA Labor and Employee Relations](#) webpage.

The UNAC sick leave bank was formerly the UAFT sick leave bank; when the two unions merged into UNAC in 2018, the sick leave bank became the UNAC sick leave bank. It was incorporated into our most recent CBA (article 16.8).

### **Current Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)**

Our CBA is available on our United Academics website:  
<http://unitedacademics.net/collective-bargaining-agreement-cba/>

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## **Meeting Notices**

### **UNAC General Membership Meetings**

- Regularly scheduled meetings: every second Tuesday of the month from 5:30-7:00 p.m.



**Contract Manager - Melanie Arthur, Ph.D.**

[melanie.arthur@unac4996ak.com](mailto:melanie.arthur@unac4996ak.com)

**Organizing Manager - Kate Quick**

[kate.quick@unac4996ak.com](mailto:kate.quick@unac4996ak.com)

**United Academics Local #4996** (UNAC) is the bargaining unit that represents post doctoral fellows, non-tenure track (term), tenure track, and tenured faculty at the University of Alaska. UNAC is an affiliate of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

[unitedacademicsak.org](http://unitedacademicsak.org)

United Academics AAUP/AFT | P.O. Box 755895, Fairbanks, AK 99775-5895

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