



*FROM COGEN TO MULGREW
UNITING THE LABOR FORCE
PROTECTING PUBLIC EDUCATION*

NURSES AND THERAPISTS:

FIGHTING FOR FAIRNESS WITH UNITY/UFT

Most UFT members are not aware that prior to 1980 there were only a handful of nurses and therapists working in the multiply handicapped centers around the city. In 1980, the Board of Education hired 25 additional nurses and therapists, employing them under terms and conditions more like those of a city hospital than a public school. Compared to our teacher colleagues, nurses and therapists had a longer work day and a longer work year that did not include all of the school holidays and recesses. It was **UNITY/UFT** President Albert Shanker's recognition of the vital role that nurses and therapists play in the schools that laid the foundation for our own UFT functional chapter and our quest for contract equity.

In 2001 nurses and therapists became separate chapters in order for each discipline to best address its unique professional issues. However, under the umbrella of President Michael Mulgrew and his **UNITY/UFT** team, we remain one powerful bargaining force. Below are some highlights:

FIGHTING FOR FAIR WORKING CONDITIONS

- In the 1980s, nurses and therapists had a 35 hour work week and were required to use "vacation days" for time off during the school recesses. Today, thanks to the bargaining strength of **UNITY/UFT** over the years, nurses and therapists have virtually the same work day and work calendar as other UFT-represented school-based employees.
- UNITY/UFT** also scored a big win for school nurses in the current contract by securing a hard fought for 30 minute uninterrupted lunch period (including pro rata payment in the event that any portion of the lunch period is interrupted).

COMPENSATION THAT REWARDS THE EFFORTS OF OUR MEMBERS

- In January 2013, **UNITY/UFT** won a huge victory on the Special Education Student Information System (SE SIS) when an arbitrator ruled that UFT members must be paid for time spent logged into SE SIS outside of the regular workday from September 2011 through December 31, 2012. This decision resulted in more than \$2.6 million in compensation to roughly 1,800 OTs and PTs. Right now, **UNITY/UFT** is pursuing a second SE SIS arbitration with the goal of securing an additional monetary award covering a subsequent period of time.
- Our first contract in 1982 included one longevity increase of \$250 upon completion of seven years of service. **UNITY/UFT** has enabled salaries to climb steadily over the years by negotiating strong contracts with longevity increases that value the experience of our members. The current contract bargained by **UNITY/UFT** guarantees raises of 19% over seven years with five lump sum retroactive payments, and longevity increases upon completion of 5, 10, 13, 15, 18, 20, and 22 years of service.
- Nurses and therapists were the only UFT members to receive an additional \$1,000 added to our base pay in the current contract.

Persistence, courage, and vision—as always, you can count on **UNITY/UFT** to get the job done.

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UNITY = PERSISTENCE + COURAGE + VISION