



The Third Biennial SUNY Retirees Conference Report

As members of the SUNY Retirees Service Corps Advisory Committee, Treasurer Joan Prymas and President Peter Herron attended The Third Biennial SUNY Retirees Conference in Albany on November 20, 2013. For the brief report of all the presentations made at this conference please go to: <http://www.suny.edu/retirees/conferences/2013RetConfPPTpresentations.cfm>. Of particular interest to RC39 members are the two following presentations.

The SUNY Retirees Network: Linking Retirees through the World Wide Web

Presenters: Julie Petti, Director of University-wide Human Resources, SUNY System Administration and Pierre Radimak, Coordinator, SUNY Retirees Service Corps.

RSC Mission

The mission of the Retirees Service Corps is to:

- Promote a strong “retiree-campus-community” connection within and among SUNY campuses;
- Create awareness about the potential value of SUNY retirees;
- Encourage campuses to institute programs to promote social interaction among retirees; and
- Provide opportunities for engagement in university and community service.

RSC Services

Some of the services the RSC offers include:

- Resources for retirement preparation and adjustment to retirement via the RSC website (www.suny.edu/retirees);
- A guide to starting a campus-based retiree organization;
- A system-wide SUNY retirees newsletter (online);
- Connections to campus-based retiree organizations; and
- Biennial retiree conferences.

What is the SUNY Retiree Network?

The SUNY Retirees Network (SRN) is an exciting new component of the SUNY Retirees Service Corps website designed to:

- Connect SUNY retirees via a secure online directory;
- Promote online interaction among retirees; and
- Connect interested retirees with volunteer opportunities.

SUNY Network Overview

The SUNY Retirees Network (SRN) will be composed of three main elements designed to:

- Connect Retirees with Retirees: By using the SUNY Retirees Online Directory, SRN members may securely look up and connect with other retirees who have registered for the Network and opted to be listed in the directory;
- Promote Online Interaction: The SUNY Retirees Interaction Service allows retirees to securely interact and exchange information with one another through a chat feature as well as explore a variety of online resources; and
- Connect Retirees with Volunteer Opportunities: The Retirees Service Corps plans to launch a volunteer matching service after a sufficient number of retirees expressing an interest in volunteerism have registered for the SUNY Retirees Network. Information retirees provide will be used to match their interests and expertise with campus and community needs.

Who is eligible to join?

Verified new and long-time retirees of SUNY’s:

- State-operated campuses;
- Community College campuses;
- Research Foundation;
- Construction Fund;
- System Administration; and
- Affiliated Organizations.

How to become a member of the SUNY Network.

The best way to register for the SRN is online at www.suny.edu/retirees.

Health Promotion Initiatives

Presenter: Elaine Escobales of the Center for Excellence in Aging & Community Wellness, New York State Evidence-Based Health Programs Quality and Technical Assistance Program. Programs supported by the Center include Chronic Disease Self-Management Program, Diabetes Self-Management Program, Positive Self-Management Program, Chronic Pain Self-Management Program, Walk with Ease (self-directed), Active Living Everyday, Active Choices, A Matter of Balance and National Diabetes Prevention Program.

Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP), facilitated by two trained “peer leaders” teaches skills useful for managing a variety of chronic diseases at workshops - 2 ½ hours once a week for 6 weeks, in a community setting. These workshops cover: Exercise, Medication Management, Communicating effectively with family, friends, and health professionals, and Nutrition and Cognitive symptom management techniques. 1000 people with chronic health problems participated in a randomized control trial and were followed for up to 3 years. The results were significant improvements in self-rated health symptom management, reductions in ER and physician visits, and increased self-efficacy.

How to becoming a Volunteer Leader.

Volunteers should have a chronic condition or be the caregiver of someone who does, willing to lead two 6 week workshops per year, undergo 4.5 days of training, know the scripted delivery of the intervention and receive (Continued on page 2)



Save on travel & vacation planning with NYSUT Member Benefits!

Are you looking to book that incredible vacation you've always dreamed about, map out that important business trip you need to take or rent a vehicle for an upcoming excursion?

NYSUT Member Benefits offers a variety of endorsed discount travel programs that allow you to do each of these while saving money at the same time!

Travelzoo

Save up to 65% at top restaurants, luxury spas, museums, and other locations with one of the newest NYSUT Member Benefits Corporation-endorsed programs -- Travelzoo.

Travelzoo also offers getaways that include stays at the finest inns, hotels and resorts across the U.S. combined with exclusive hotel perks and amenities to give guests an added bonus to complete their stay. Please note that many of these deals are offered for a limited period of time.

Grand Circle Corporation

One of our newest Member Benefits Corporation-endorsed programs is provided by Grand Circle Corporation, which offers a variety of group tour vacations designed specifically for American travelers over 50 years old.

Grand Circle Corporation -- which includes Grand Circle Travel, the award-winning Grand Circle Cruise Line, Overseas Adventure Travel, and Grand Circle Small Ship Cruises -- is committed to providing international travel, adventure and discovery opportunities that offer impactful and intercultural experiences.

NYSUT members & their family members can either save \$100 per person on their trip or travel for free if they gather at least 10 paying travelers for a group tour.

Wyndham Hotels & Endless Vacation Rentals

If you're on the hunt for savings, look no further than the NYSUT Member Benefits Corporation-endorsed travel program offered by Wyndham Hotels & Endless Vacation Rentals.

NYSUT members enjoy savings of up to 20% at nearly 7,000 participating hotels among 17 hotel brands with Wyndham Worldwide and savings of 25% at more than 200,000 vacation rentals in 100 countries with Endless Vacation Rentals.

Wyndham Hotels has the right hotel for you at the right price -- whether it's an upscale hotel, all-inclusive resort or something more cost-effective.

With Endless Vacation Rentals, NYSUT members can save on beautiful resort condos, villas, homes, and cottages that provide space and flexibility ideal for families and groups of friends traveling together.

Car & Truck Rentals

Do you need to rent a vehicle as part of your next trip? NYSUT members can get discounted rates on passenger car rentals with the following companies: Alamo, Avis, Budget, Enterprise, Hertz, and National. You can also receive 20% off local or one-way truck rentals from Budget Truck Rental.

Learn more about these endorsed programs -- including how to access discounts, unique website codes and website links -- by contacting Member Benefits at **800-626-8101** or visiting memberbenefits.nysut.org.



For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.

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Conference Report, Health Promotion Initiatives

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support from NYS Quality & Technical Assistance Center (QTAC). If you are interested in becoming a volunteer go to <https://ceacw.org/qtac/q-training> for more information and an application. You can find a workshop at <https://www.ceacw.org/find-a-workshop>.

HOW TO TAKE YOUR MEDICATIONS PROPERLY AND SAFELY

By Frances S. Hilliard, RN, MS

Currently two-thirds of patient visits end with the health care provider writing a prescription. More than ten percent of Americans today take five or more different drugs. According to the FDA, medication errors (including drug interactions – taking drugs that don't mix) cause at least one fatality per day, and account for about 1.3 million adverse reactions or patient injuries per year. Patients and their families need to be active participants in their health care, and this includes the medications they take. The goal of drug therapy is to provide the greatest benefit with the least risk, and in order to achieve this goal, patients must be well-informed about their medication regimens. Patient non-adherence to drug therapy – skipping doses or discontinuance of medications – can result in serious medical issues, hospital stays, or even death.

Communication between patients and health care providers is at the heart of proper and safe taking of medications. When a drug is prescribed for you, be sure to ask questions:

- Why do I need this drug?
- How does this drug work? How long will it take to work?
- What change(s) should I expect when the drug is working?
- What are the common side effects of this drug? How can they be avoided or minimized? Which side effects are the most serious?
- What should I do if I experience any side effects?
- What should I do if the drug doesn't seem to be working?

Remember that physicians are not your only source of information. Pharmacists and nurses are usually able to answer your questions about medications, and often have more time to spend with you. However, the health care practitioner who prescribed the medication for you should be the final decision maker about the drug.

Because there are numerous factors that can influence how a drug acts in your body, it is important to know the correct ways to store and take medications. Be sure to keep all drugs in their original containers, which helps protect against the effects of light and moisture. Avoid extremes of temperature or humidity, which can cause drugs to deteriorate and lose effectiveness. Some drugs require special storage, such as refrigeration. Do NOT store medications in the bathroom. Always read the labels on medication containers, and be sure to check expiration dates. When you take a drug can also be important. What time(s) of day are best? Do I take this drug with food or on an empty stomach, or doesn't it matter? It is also essential to know about potential interactions between two drugs or between drugs and certain foods. Remember that drug interactions can involve not only prescription medications, but also herbal remedies and over-the-counter drugs. Again – read the label and ask questions.

Some additional hints to keep you safe and well:

- Take all medications exactly as prescribed.
- Do not stop taking a drug without consulting your health care practitioner. Abrupt discontinuance of certain medications, especially those for cardiovascular conditions, can prove very dangerous. They must be tapered off.
- Have all prescriptions filled at the same pharmacy, so that they have a complete “drug profile” of you. This is especially important for avoiding drug interactions.
- Keep a wallet card that lists all your medications – prescription, herbal, and over-the-counter – including dose, route, frequency, and indication.
- Be sure to provide your complete medication profile to all your health care providers.
- Use assistive devices if necessary to remind you about taking medications.
- Find out how to safely discard of any drugs that are outdated or no longer needed.

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Send your comments, suggestions, and inquiries to NYSUT RC39Officers, 98 Rocky Point Landing Rd., Rocky Point, NY 11778 or rc39pete@optonline.net.

RC39 Newsletter is looking for comments, suggestions and articles from its members.

Send your comments, suggestions or article to Peter Herron at rc39pete@optonline.net or mail to 98 Rocky Point Landing Road, Rocky Point, NY 11778. Your article will be published when space is available. RC39, NYSUT, and AFT news will be given priority.



Address Change

Do not let a new address keep you from receiving NYSUT RC39 newsletters. There are three ways to update your address. Contact NYSUT Member Records at 1-800-342-9810 ext. 6224. Send written changes to: NYSUT Member Records, 800 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, NY12110 or e-mail changes to memberrec@nysutmail.org. If you are a snowbird, give Member Records a few weeks notice to change its address records each way.

Have you paid your voluntary RC39 contribution for 2014?

If you have not sent in your voluntary NYSUT RC39 annual contribution, now is as good a time as ever. Just send your check along with the form below to the RC39 treasurer. It is your contributions that enable RC39 officers and delegates to represent you at NYSUT conferences and meetings.

Retiree Council 39 Voluntary 2014 Participation Fee form

Name _____ e-mail _____
Address _____ Phone (____) _____
City _____ State _____ Zip code _____
College retired from _____ Year of Retirement _____

Please check amount of your voluntary participation fee: \$25 _____ Other \$ _____

Send your check, made out to NYSUT RC39, along with this completed form to:

Ms. Joan Prymas, RC39 Treasurer, 141 Montgomery Street, Ilion, NY 13357