

THE KFT VOICE

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MAKE OUR VOICES COUNT

Special Edition

Several Kean Faculty and Union members spoke eloquently at the Board of Trustees meeting on September 13, 2010. Their comments have been thoughtfully composed and, taken together, provide a potent picture, not only of the proposed layoffs of professional staff, but of the tenuous position we and our colleagues have all been placed in as a result of the scurrilous leadership that permeates the Kean Administration. We are printing these statements to honor the efforts of our colleagues who spoke and our colleagues who face layoffs. Speaking on behalf of our colleagues is an important opportunity to support the academic integrity of this institution.

In addition to the statements printed here, several students spoke on behalf of Myriam Quinones, an academic advisor in the Spanish Speaking Program who has been notified of her layoff, has served Kean diligently for over twenty years.

Since the terms and conditions of our Agreement specify that Professional Staff be given 180-day advance notice, there is considerable time for the Administration to rescind its layoff notices. Each voice in support of our colleagues brings that result closer. *Add your voice to theirs!*

¹The statements are presented with minor editorial change; the titles of the comments are at the discretion of the editor.

Failed Kean Leadership : Sacrificing Critical Student Services for New Managers *by James A. Castiglione, President, KFT Local 2187*

President Farahi's recently announced layoff plan must be seen for what it is: the ultimate admission of failure.

The President's inability to manage Kean's University's finances without compromising student services stands in stark contrast to the leadership at our sister institutions. Despite the same cuts in state appropriations as those suffered by Kean University, our sister institutions are laying off no one. This is despite the fact that our sister institutions already devote a much higher percentage of their budgets to academics. For example, Montclair has over 200 more full-time faculty than Kean. Our faculty size continues to drop, now to around 325, despite our strategic plan's goal of 450 faculty by 2010.

VOICES WITHIN THIS ISSUE

James A. Castiglione	1
Nicholas C. Yovnello	2
Barbara Wheeler	3
Richard Katz	4
Steven Pinto	5
Emily Filardo	6
Bert Wailoo	8

	State Colleges & Universities	Layoffs	Student to full-time faculty ratio
•	New Jersey City	0	35:1
•	Montclair	0	33:1
•	Ramapo	0	30:1
•	William Paterson	0	30:1
•	Richard Stockton	0	28.1
•	Rowan	0	28:1
•	College of New Jersey	0	20:1
•	Thomas Edison	0	N/A
•	Kean	26	44:1

All data self-reported by the institutions.

Continued on page 7

Save Your Professional Staff and Kean's Reputation

By Nicholas C. Yovnello, President, Council of NJ State College Locals, AFT/AFL-CIO

I sincerely hope you [the Kean University Board of Trustees] will carefully consider my comments today regarding your institution's decision to lay off 12 valued professional staff employees.

The facts show that the ratio of students to professional staff at Kean is already the highest among the state college/university sector, by a significant margin. The same holds true for the ratio of students to full time faculty. Yet Kean is laying off almost 6% of its professional staff. Under these circumstances, eliminating these 12 professional staff positions will only make a bad situation worse.

How is it possible that Kean University alone among the nine state colleges/universities has resorted to layoffs---and selected for layoff so many experienced employees? Although seniority typically protects long-term employees from layoff, five out of these 12 have been employed at Kean from 19 to 31 years.

Let's take a closer look at your fiscal situation. Kean's tuition and fees for AY 2009-2010 were \$9,446, higher than one nearby institutions, New Jersey City University at \$8,988 and slightly lower than another, Montclair State University at \$9,674. NJCU, however, only had an enrollment of 8,399 in Fall 2009 whereas Kean enrolled 15,081 students, which should put Kean in a more advantageous financial position. Yet there are no layoffs at NJCU.

It is true that Montclair has a substantially higher enrollment than Kean with 18,171 students. However Rowan with 11,000 students and William Paterson with 10,870, campuses that have profiles similar to Kean, have also avoided layoffs entirely. I urge you to find out from your counterparts at Montclair, Rowan and William Paterson how they avoided layoffs.

Could it be that Kean's fiscal policies are misguided? That it has spent too much on new campus expansion before paying off past debt? According to a Moody's Investor Service report dated July 5, 2010, the median ratio of debt to revenue for New Jersey public universities is 1.4x, nearly three times the national median of .5x. Kean University's is 1.7x the national median. The same report shows that Kean's percentage of revenue from students is 59%, which is close to William Paterson's and Montclair's and more than Rowan's and NJCU's. Are employees at Kean now paying the price of increased debt service payments even though the other campuses I cited have similar levels of debt service?

You need to learn more about the professional staff Kean has targeted for lay off. Ten out of

twelve are women. Seven out of twelve are minorities. Among the positions to be eliminated are four that serve disadvantaged students: The director of the Passport to Academic Success Program, a financial service coordinator and an academic counselor in the EEO department and one of two academic advisors in the Spanish Speaking Program. How does this help Kean's mission to uphold equal employment and educational opportunity?

All professional staff employees to be laid off have been given 6 months notice pursuant to the collective negotiations agreement. Therefore, there is ample time for you to reverse course and avoid layoffs and, thereby, preserve essential student services. As President of the Council of New Jersey State Colleges Locals, I appeal to you to do as all of Kean's fellow institutions have done: **avoid layoffs.**

***The good name of Kean University
is at stake.***

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Forensic Audit is Needed Before Layoffs

By Barbara A. Wheeler, Professor of Anthropology and Sociology, Kean University

I came today to register my disbelief, disgust and disappointment regarding the blatant racial, gender and age discrimination inherent in the list of the 12 professional staff members of the Kean Federation of Teachers who were laid off. I haven't seen the list of all 26 layoffs which I'm told includes some low level managers and 5 secretarial members of CWA. However, of the 12 KFT members, 10 were women, 6 were African American (4 women and the only 2 men), 2 Hispanic women and the remaining 4 were white women.

I am a lifelong member of the NAACP, the National Council of Negro Women, the American Association of University Women and the National Organization of Women. I am appalled by the fact that this long after the successful struggles by the Civil Rights and Women's movements – people of color and women at Kean are still vulnerable to these reprehensible discriminatory practices. Before I'm accused of "playing the race card," the list of KFT layoffs bears witness to the fact that racism, sexism, ageism, and yes, even classism, cannot be denied, nor ignored.

Even more reprehensible was the fact that the number of the 26 layoffs was made public a week before the individuals were told that they were the ones laid off. Equally cruel was the way in which they were told. The KFT personnel were summoned by phone and herded into Human Resources in groups of four, which appears to violate their rights to privacy. **None were told how or why they were chosen for dismissal.**

Moreover, there appears to be no evidence to sub-

stantiate the stated need for any of the 26 layoffs. If it were because of a reduction in state funding, why is Kean the only one of the nine public state colleges and universities to lay off critically needed employees?

Most of the 12 professional staff members provided key services to our students as counselors and advisors at a time when many 'K through 12' teachers are being forced out, mandating the need for more, not less, educational assistance at the university level. That fact explains why our faculty (trained and hired to teach their disciplines) are now being required to also serve as counselors and advisors.

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Additionally, we've learned that 42 faculty and professional staff have left Kean between January 1st and September 1st, 2010; the largest number of academic personnel separated from our once beloved university in any previous 8 month period. The number of full-time faculty has fallen from 400 to 324 while the number of adjunct faculty has skyrocketed from 463 to 1,012. This loss of full-time faculty and professional staff has severely undermined student support services. Consequently Kean students are paying more in tuition and fees (almost \$10,000 a year), but are getting less in academic support.

No wonder 83% of Kean faculty and staff voted **NO CONFIDENCE** in President Farahi's leadership and are now calling for **an external independent forensic auditor to investigate where the money is going and why layoffs are necessary.**

Debt Service Threatens Student Tuition and Educational Services

By Richard Katz, Associate Professor of English, Kean University

Over the past five years, the number of full-time faculty in the English department [at Kean University] has dropped from 27 to 22. We now have 105 adjuncts. Ninety five percent of our freshman and sophomore classes are taught by adjuncts; 75% of all our courses are taught by adjuncts. At the same time the number of English majors increased 54% since 2005, from 281 to 435 according to Kean's Research webpage.

We've hired one full-time faculty member in the past five years, at Ocean County. We've had 4 retirements, one excellent tenure track colleague fired and another colleague transitioning to retirement this year. This leaves the remaining, shrinking full-time faculty teaching larger and larger classes, advising more and more students with less class time thanks to the reduced class time imposed by the schedule change [imposed in Fall 2009].

At Kean we now have fewer full-time faculty, about 330, than at any time in the past 20 years. While the 2007 strategic plan called for 450 faculty by 2010 to keep up with increasing enrollments, we have gone backwards. As a result of this neglect Kean now ranks 6th of 8 institutions in its sector for 4 year retention rates, 7th in 5-6 year retention rates (Middle States Report [prepared for 2011 review], p. 70). So, Kean

students are paying 62% more tuition in fees over the past five years for fewer full-time faculty members and professional staff support but for more trees and shrubs, more signage and public relations, more buildings and privatized maintenance, more Deans and Vice Presidents.

In fact the Middle States draft report states that maintenance costs were up \$4.8 million in 2009, whereas salary costs were up \$3.3 million. This is the priority at Kean. Physical plant over education. Publicity and administrators over professors. This situation will become an unmitigated disaster in 2015 when, according to the Middle States report (page 43) debt service balloons from \$18 million a year to \$24 million a year for 20 years. As Middle States report flatly states, the only way to sustain our debt is to enroll more and more students for their dollars. But there will be fewer educators to serve them. This year the administration's solution is to fire academic staff to maintain its debt and physical plant. Provost Lender told the Senate that Academic Reorganization was supposed to stave off lay offs. It didn't. It's time some body other than KFT faces the facts the administration has created on the ground.

What's the plan?

The University's debt service nonetheless presents long-term concerns as the following table suggests. Annual payments will exceed \$20 million for the foreseeable future.

Fig. 3.12 Payments Due on Long Term Debt

Year Ending June 30	Principal	Interest
2010	\$ 4,094.00	\$ 14,606.00
2011	\$ 5,033.00	\$ 17,433.00
2012	\$ 7,020.00	\$ 17,234.00
2013	\$ 7,549.00	\$ 16,936.00
2014	\$ 8,211.00	\$ 16,587.00
2015-2019	\$ 47,066.00	\$ 76,721.00
2020-2024	\$ 56,129.00	\$ 64,368.00
2025-2029	\$ 69,185.00	\$ 49,222.00
2030-2034	\$ 84,045.00	\$ 29,092.00
2035-2039	\$ 60,318.00	\$ 7,870.00

Vital Services At Risk

By Steven Pinto, President, IFPTE Local 195

The economic climate in the state of New Jersey is presently and perhaps permanently weakened. Unfortunately, as such, the state cannot honor its funding obligation to higher education. Therefore, Kean University did not receive their full funding. For this reason, we have been told Kean must take severe measures to weather this storm. It has come to my attention that the severe measures Kean has chosen to take are layoffs and the outsourcing of work.

Within the last few weeks Kean has released 9 managers. Currently 12 professional staff members have been notified that they will be unemployed come February. And as for those in the bargaining unit of Local 195 IFPTE, well, I have been told their situation is currently being assessed.

But apparently while my bargaining unit's situation is being "assessed," the university has already outsourced the entire East Campus and STEM Building, along with some residence halls for fiscal reasons, I've been told. But I ask how would one even know if this is true, considering the university never conducted a cost analysis to determine if this outsourcing resulted in a true cost savings? Apparently there is no answer to this question. I know this because I have asked for documentation and copies through OPRA and have been told no such government records exist.

But let's do the simple math. The cost of a contracted electrician is \$89.86 per/hr vs. \$25.81

per/hr for an in house electrician with the minimum of 10 years service. The cost of a contracted carpenter is \$74.77 per/hr versus \$25.81 per/hr for an in house carpenter with the minimum of 10 years service. Both contracted individuals are paid more than double the hourly wage of an in-house employee who is at their maximum rate after 10 years of service. This is just a sample, and even in adding the cost of benefits to the in-house employee's hourly wage, the figures do not represent a cost savings.

Our sister institutions are experiencing the same fiscal crisis, yet none are taking or even talking about the same action as Kean. As a matter of fact, one of our sister institutions, Rowan University, to be precise, does not contract outside UNLESS the work can't, for some reason, be completed by in-house personnel. At Rowan, THIS is a cost savings, rather than the reverse. It is beyond comprehension why the same principle is not applied at Kean – where, unfortunately, outsourcing comes first, without regard to cost.

With all due respect, is it not the Board of Trustee's responsibility to ensure the fiscal soundness of Kean's operational policy? Didn't the President, in his address to the University, say that enrollment is strong and finances sound? If this is indeed the case, then I ask why the university is rushing headlong into fiscally choppy waters by outsourcing work competently and, most importantly, economically performed by a dedicated workforce already in place.

Let Scholarly Research Guide Service Policy

By Emily Filardo, Associate Professor of Psychology, Kean University

The eminent social psychologist, Dr. Claude Steele, formerly of Stanford and now Provost of Columbia University, has recently published a book summarizing nearly 15 years of research on the phenomenon of “stereotype threat,” including hundreds of peer-reviewed journal articles confirming the significance of “stereotype threat.”²

This major body of research supports your reconsidering and rescinding of the layoffs of twelve professional staff members [at Kean], nearly all women and nearly all representing racial and ethnic minorities. They include four staff in the Spanish Speaking, EEO, and Passport programs—programs which deliver exactly the kinds of interventions this [Dr. Steele’s] cutting edge research shows powerfully impact academic outcomes for students of color and for female students.

Research and our own lived experience shows we all know the negative stereotypes “out there” about our groups. African Americans and Hispanics are well aware they are stereotyped as less intelligent and as better suited to certain job categories and not others. Women know the stereotype that they are less competent at math, especially higher math.

At Stanford, Dr. Steele compared high-achieving African American and equally high-achieving white students as they performed on

challenging “GRE-type” tests. He found that for the African Americans, when their race was emphasized and the negative stereotype about their intelligence was made more salient and relevant, these high achieving students performed more poorly than they did under conditions that made the negative stereotype less salient and relevant. The white students’ performance was not negatively impacted when their race was made more salient. But, white males performed worse on athletic tasks when told the tasks measured “natural athletic ability” and better when told they measured “strategic sports intelligence.” Asian women math students performed better when their race was emphasized — and worse when their gender was emphasized!

Dr. Steele defines “stereotype threat” as being at risk of confirming, as self-characteristic, a negative stereotype about one’s group.

Not only can stereotype threat lead students to under perform on tests, but it can lead to self-handicapping strategies, such as reduced: study time, engagement, and value placed on academic domains, and [stereotype threat] can lead students not to pursue certain domains of study, limiting the range of professions they can pursue.

Current research shows that among the things that can significantly diminish the effects of

Continued page 7

Let Scholarly Research Guide Service Policy

Continued from page 6

stereotype threat are: (1) the presence of same-race/ethnicity and female role models in professional positions; (2) relationships with ethnic minority and women mentors and counselors; (3) specific kinds of feedback that such mentors and counselors tend to provide; and (4) affirmation of the cultural values of the ethnic minority group.

The outcomes of experimental research on stereotype-threat reduction have been quite stunning. [They include] statistically significant and surprisingly long-lasting effects on test performance, GPA and persistence.

I have provided a link where you can learn more about this research, and I urge you to rescind the layoffs of these twelve professional staff members.

² Citations provided upon request. For further information see <http://www.reducingstereotypethreat.org/definition.html>

Kean Leadership Fails: Sacrificing Critical Student Services for New Managers

Continued from front page

Kean's ratio of students to full-time faculty of 44:1 is by far the worst in our sector. This is the real reason for poor student retention rates at Kean, not the organizational structure of academic affairs.

But student retention is about to get much worse. Many of the professional staff being laid off are in fact the ones on the front lines in our struggle to improve student retention, the ones directly engaged in providing support and advisement to students. What's worse, the students served by these staff are the most disadvantaged at Kean. The administration is cutting support to the very students who are most in need of it.

But at the same time, the university is hiring twenty high-priced Executive Directors. How can the university justify laying off critical support personnel while it is hiring new managerial employees?

Clearly, there is no fiscal "crisis" at Kean Univer-

sity. There are, however, mounting signs of fiscal mismanagement. The Asbury Park Press recently reported that the "complex funding arrangement" financing Kean's new building at OCC has collapsed. Kean's debt burden has become a ticking time bomb undermining new initiatives.

Is it any wonder that full-time faculty gave the leadership of President Dawood Farahi an embarrassing 83% vote of no confidence [in an independent vote, May 2010]? The real question is why the Board doesn't hold this administration accountable for its multiple failures.

The Board has the power to stop this outrageous and unjustifiable layoff plan before it harms both employees and the students whom they serve. The Board should hold this administration to the same standards achieved at our sister institutions. Kean's students and employees are deserving of nothing less.

Special Edition

— MAKE OUR VOICES COUNT —

Where Does the Buck Stop?

By Bert Wailoo, Professor of Accounting, Kean University

You [the Kean Board of Trustees] are building gazebos, hiring friends and relatives of influential politicians for administrative and irrelevant jobs—not to mention their lack of qualifications, and continuing to build edifices such as this one [CSTM building] without any evidence of a capital investment plan but with huge financing costs and a long-term debt of close to \$400 million dollars. As fat cats in Union, Elizabeth and its environs splurge on Kean money, and you are adding high paid Deans, Executive Directors and Coordinators to the payroll while you are laying off minorities who are working class people—those productive people who have dedicated their lives to this institution and its students

“The system we have in place has been in place 30 years and hasn’t worked,” are the words of Dawood Farahi, Kean University President, at a Board of Trustees meeting, May 24, 2010 and in the headlines of the Star Ledger, May 26, 2010. He has been President

for 7 years, a faculty member for decades, a Chairman and member of the Faculty Senate for years, and a special assistant to the President. **If the system has failed, so has he.** By his own admission, Farahi acknowledges his failures. He is the major contributor to the failed system and the major cause. He is not the one to fix it.

**Does anybody on this Board
know what time it is?**

**Does anybody on this Board
really care?**



Kean Federation of Teachers

An Association of Professors, Professional Staff and Librarians
Local 2187, AFT, AFL-CIO

Hutchinson Hall 201G - Kean University - Union, NJ 07083-0411

Telephone: (908) 737-3925 Email: kft2187@rcn.com

Website: www.kft2187.org

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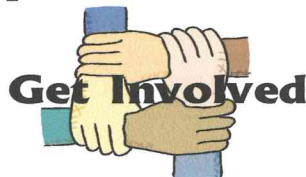
Betsy Rodriguez-Bachiller, *English*; Barbara Wheeler, *Sociology*

KFT VOICE STAFF

EDITOR: A. Bryan Lees, *Chemistry & Physics*

DESIGN & LAYOUT: Norma W. Hall McFadden, *KFT Office Manager*

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