Dear Friend,

I hope 2020 is off to a fantastic start! As we move into this new decade, remember that your union is here to help you understand your rights and benefits — and fight for better rights and benefits.

Remember that our chapter is only as strong as its members’ involvement. I encourage you to make your voice heard by joining us at UFT events, calling our member hotline for functional chapters at 212-331-6312 and staying in touch.

Please read through this newsletter for important information regarding upcoming meetings, UFT campaigns and more.

Sincerely,

Crystal Ogir
Supervisors of Nurses and Therapists Chapter Leader
cogir@uft.org

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Census 2020: Everyone counts!

The U.S. Census is scheduled to begin this March, and the UFT is working to encourage every New Yorker to fill out their Census forms. The count affects everything from government funding to democratic representation, with profound effects on New York City and its residents.

It's crucial for the count to be as accurate as possible to ensure that New Yorkers receive their fair share of federal dollars for schools, roads, subways, hospitals and more. The UFT wants everyone counted because everyone counts.

To learn more about the Census and how you can get involved, read a Q&A on the UFT website.

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Black History Month film series

To celebrate Black History Month, the UFT is holding a film series on Thursday, Feb. 13, and Thursday, Feb. 27, from 4:30 to 7 p.m., at UFT headquarters, 52 Broadway in Manhattan. On Feb. 13, we'll watch “Back to Natural,” a documentary about hair, politics and racial identity. On Feb. 27, we'll watch “College Behind Bars,” which tells the story of a group of incarcerated men and women earning college degrees. We'll serve popcorn and hold a discussion about each film's themes after the screening. Register online.

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Student Debt Relief: An exclusive benefit for UFT members

Are you concerned about paying your student loans? The Student Debt Relief Program, an exclusive member benefit brought to you by the UFT, is here to help.

If you are a full-time employee of the Department of Education, you may be eligible for the Federal Public Service Loan Forgiveness program. This program may be able to help you reduce your student debt burden.

Navigating your options and filling out the application correctly can be complicated. The Student Debt Relief Program is a brand-new service exclusively for UFT members to help guide you every step of the way.

The first step is attending a student debt webinar.
Health and Cancer Hotline

The UFT Welfare Fund’s Health and Cancer Helpline is available in your time of need. This confidential service is for UFT Welfare Fund members and their dependents who may be diagnosed with a medical illness such as cancer, diabetes or heart disease. Staffed with full-time social workers and peer counselors, our team is dedicated to providing the assistance and resources needed and is only a phone call away.

Phone number: 212-539-0500

Hours:

- 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday during the school year;
- 9 a.m. to 5:15 p.m., Monday through Thursday during the summer

Services include:

- Immediate tele-health support
- Guidance for a leave of absence
- Professional support
- Health benefits information
- Referrals
- MSK Direct (Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center)
- Talking with Children about Cancer Program
- Caregiver support
- Medical Learning Series

Learn more on the UFT website.

Upcoming UFT Functional Chapter Weekend

We’ll be holding our annual Functional Chapter Weekend from Saturday, Feb. 29, to Sunday, March 1, at the Hilton Westchester in Rye Brook, NY. It’s a great way for members of our chapter to learn more about how the union supports your work, the union benefits available to you and how to get involved. If you haven't attended a Functional Chapter Weekend and want to come this year, please contact me at cogir@uft.org.