

## Health Issues Committee March 23, 2007

### Minutes: DRAFT

Meeting came to order at 5:04PM; meeting adjourned at 5:56 PM

**Present:** Denise Torres (Chair); Ericka Calton, Lynda Kennedy, Ian Jones, Chong Wojtkowski

**Absent:** Alissa Ackerman, Patrina Huff, Rex Wong, Danielle Wu

- I. Current issues:
  - a. Annual Health Fair, entitled "Make health your mission:"
    - i. DT is working on a free subscription to the NYSC
    - ii. DT is working on free NYC condoms from the DOH
    - iii. HIC members to explore freebies (e.g., the vitamin shoppe)
    - iv. EC stated we could ask the SC to purchase items
    - v. DT to table at the health fair; LK may assist with set-up
- II. Comparative analysis of GHI insurance offered to other schools' insurance offerings asked for by the Advocate
  - a. A rich discussion ensued regarding how best to identify and meet students' need for information, improve access and create change. These three clear themes were separated as follows:
    - i. connecting the issue of health insurance as a larger shared need with political and economic implications
    - ii. identifying and educating the student body on current resources and how to gain access to them
    - iii. understanding ourselves the current limits, obstacles, constraints to a CUNY-wide health insurance and communicating this understanding to the student body
  - b. DT, LK and IJ agreed to research and write on these issues for the advocate with the following action steps/outcomes:
    - i. DT: health insurance as a national issue but speaking to access for non-standard workers and the erosion of employee benefits. Incorporate into the article the experiences of the student body for the April issue. →DT to send email with request for vignettes.
    - ii. LK: identify what resources are currently available through the Wellness Center and what is actually covered via the GHI insurance. →LK Write article for the first FALL issue of the Advocate (this will be timely as new students will benefit from having this information as the semester begins).

- iii. IJ: identify the obstacles and barriers to a CUNY wide insurance benefit (e.g., pooling of students, risk factors, number of potentially eligible insureds; larger picture we are not privy to). →DT e-mail (with HIC cc'ed) EP/student affairs and ask for clarity to begin understanding. →IJ begin writing and researching article for second FALL issue of the Advocate including how other university systems (e.g., SUNY, UC, Rutgers) address the issue.

### III. Future directions:

- a. What issues do we want to focus on?
  - i. education of student body regarding resources
  - ii. creating a space for social action
  - iii. working more collaboratively with administration
- b. What types of events/activities do we want to plan or engage in?
  - i. While all members agreed on the HIC focus, the balancing of action, education and collaboration reflected personal styles and approaches. In working through a plan for the future directions (beyond articles) the HIC identified mechanisms through which our goals could be achieved in a manner that engages the approaches appropriately. To wit:
    - 1. education of student body: articles, e-mails, website
    - 2. creating a space for social action: articles, e-mails, google-groups and using the coffee hour →DT speak to Patrina Huff (Community Building/SC) regarding what LK called a "Coffee & Kvetch" hour to provide an arena for students to discuss insurance/health issues
    - 3. working more collaboratively with administration:
      - a. IJ will follow-up on Item II.b.iii and act as point person on understanding the organizational barriers to CUNY-wide insurance
      - b. EC encouraged collaborative work w/the HC: in particular around awareness and, for Fall 2007, the underprojection of FLU shot demand.
      - c. LK addressed need to have an event/forum for discussion of research into issues regarding insurance, health. Identify research, papers, etc. conducted by students. CUNY as standard setter for how we treat NYers and a repository for knowledge. ½ day conference?