

UPTE-Los Alamos is an advocate for LANL workers. The UPTE web site (<http://www.upte.org/LosAlamos/>) is a useful resource for those interested in learning more about issues impacting the workplace.

The following provides a glimpse of some of the things UPTE has done for LANL workers:

- UPTE provided formal input with respect to the RFP, plus met with Tyler Przybylek in Washington DC regarding specific concerns related to the RFP.
- UPTE provided formal input to the National Academy of Science Committee regarding the RFP, plus the Blue Ribbon Commission established by the DOE to provide guidance on competing the Management and Operations Contracts for DOE's National Laboratories.
- UPTE testified before the joint New Mexico and California Legislative Oversight Committees on UC.
- UPTE lobbied elected officials in Sacramento CA, Santa Fe NM, and Washington DC regarding Lab worker protections and benefits.
- UPTE helped spearhead a class action lawsuit to eliminate gender and ethnicity pay disparity at LANL.
- UPTE helped create awareness regarding significant shortfalls associated with the Lab's own salary parity analysis (the Welch Report).
- UPTE provided support and guidance in establishing a LANL retiree's group to address issues under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act.
- UPTE provided input at the UC Regents Meeting in Sacramento regarding the so-called pension spin-off, which would effectively separate from UCRP all past and present LANL employees opting to retire under UCRP.
- UPTE-Los Alamos is a member of UPTE-UC, which has approximately 10,000 UC employees as members. Through its system-wide affiliation, UPTE-Los Alamos is affiliated as well with the Communication Workers of America (CWA), which itself has a membership exceeding 100,000.
- UPTE has established itself as a strong and credible voice for Lab workers. UPTE will never isolate or pit one segment of the work force against another, recognizing instead that when one worker benefits, all stand to benefit.

The overriding UPTE mission is to protect and enhance employee rights guaranteed by law and principle, including the rights of past, current and future LANL employees and retirees.

With respect to current efforts by UC President Robert Dynes to transfer all LANL retirees from the UCRP Pension Plan to a stand alone "Clone Pension Plan", UPTE strongly objects. This objection was made forcefully and without ambiguity at a recent UC Board of Regents meeting, and fortunately, it did not fall entirely on deaf ears. While the Regents did not reject President Dyne's proposal outright, the Regent body did require that legal and regulatory implications be fully understood before any further action could be taken by President Dynes in advancing his proposal.

On this UC retirement issue, LANL workers and retirees should be aware that:

- UPTE is currently engaged in discussions with law firms about the prospects of filing a class action lawsuit if necessary.
- UPTE's constitution allows retirees to join UPTE so that they too can participate in UPTE efforts to protect and preserve the pension and benefits of Lab workers.

Many individuals have sent letters and made phone calls alerting UC Regents and elected officials of President Dyne's efforts to segregate LANL workers from the UCRP retirement pool. While these individual efforts have been very important, they can be made significantly more effective by utilizing the combined resources of an organization like UPTE. With united action, commitment rooted in a common interest to improve the workplace, and the dedication of the many individuals who comprise the union, we can preserve the legitimate interests of all LANL workers. Together we can control our own destiny.

This message is not simply an informational sound bite. In order to be effective, UPTE needs a strong membership, reflected both in numbers and in the willingness of individual members to become involved. The purpose of this message is to inform people that they are neither helpless nor alone. We need your commitment for UPTE to continue to confront the challenges facing LANL workers. A united front can make all the difference in the world.

To learn more about how you can get involved in making the Lab a better place, visit the UPTE web site at <http://www.upte.org/LosAlamos/>

-Manuel Trujillo, President of UPTE-LANL