

(1973)

## In City University union elections:

# Zeller, Polishhook win top PSC posts

NEW YORK CITY — Belle Zeller has been re-elected president of the Professional Staff Congress, the union representing the 16,000 members of the City University instructional staff.

Dr. Zeller, professor of political science at Brooklyn College, won a three-year term with 1,519 votes to 1,395 for Israel Kugler, professor of social science at New York City Community College and currently deputy president of the PSC.

Edgar Pauk, assistant professor of romance languages at Queens College, received 321 of the 3,235 votes cast for the presidency.

The 20 other top union offices were won by both former Legislative Conference and former United Federation of College Teachers members.

Heading a coalition that swept 15 of these posts was Irwin Polishhook, professor of history at Lehman College, elected first vice president.

The winning candidates take office Sept. 1.

Dr. Zeller, 70, has headed the union since its formation in April 1972 by a merger of the Legislative Conference and the United Federation of College Teachers.

She had been chairman of the LC since 1944.

In September, Dr. Zeller will enter her 30th year as a CUNY faculty leader, now head of the largest university local in the country.

Her first priority, she said, is to settle the contract dispute that has wracked the university since June 1972.



Belle Zeller, re-elected president of the Professional Staff Congress/CUNY.

The union's members voted by a four-to-one margin earlier this month to authorize a strike if no settlement is reached with the Board of Higher Education by Oct. 1.

"A strike," Dr. Zeller said, "will be our very last resort. We will exhaust every possible legal recourse to achieve a decent contract."

"Our members are responsible professional people. They do not want to close down the university, and they have been very patient. But they have been working without a contract for almost a year now. They will not see their union broken and their right to bargain collectively destroyed."



Irwin Polishhook, elected first vice president of the Professional Staff Congress/CUNY.

The next negotiating session was scheduled at presstime.

Other officers elected are:

Claude Campbell, assistant professor of English at Staten Island Community College, secretary;

Ada Agronin, lecturer in chemistry at Queens College, treasurer;

Irwin Yellowitz, associate professor of history at City College, vice president for senior colleges;

Martin Berman, assistant professor of mathematics at Bronx Community College, vice president for community colleges;

Harold Wilson, college laboratory technician at Baruch College, vice

president for cross-campus units, representing nonclassroom staffs at all CUNY campuses; and

William Leicht, lecturer in art at Hunter College, vice president for part-time personnel.

Elected as officers-at-large to the union's 21-member Executive Council are: Norman Bindler, associate professor of history at Bronx Community College; Pearl Gasarch, assistant professor of communication arts and skills at New York City Community College; Mary Landers, professor of mathematics at Hunter College; and Thomas J. McNulty, assistant professor-counselor in the Student Personnel Department at Queensborough Community College.

Also, Lilia Melani, lecturer in English at Brooklyn College; Alvin Bachman, associate professor of physics at City College; Percy Krich, assistant professor of education at Queens College; Gerd Muehsam, associate professor in the library at Queens College; and Carol Brandon, assistant professor and chairperson of the Data Processing Department at Manhattan Community College.

Also, Walter Gross, assistant professor in the Division of Natural Environment at LaGuardia Community College; Evelyn Lerner, lecturer in economics at New York City Community College; Peter Jonas, associate registrar at City College; and Samuel Vernoff, associate higher education officer at Bronx Community College.

## City University crisis continues

# PSC members authorize strike Oct. 1

NEW YORK CITY — The City University faculty union has voted overwhelmingly to go out on strike October 1 unless a contract settlement is reached by then.

The strike, affecting approximately 250,000 students at 19 CUNY campuses, would be the first major university strike in the nation.

The vote tally announced July 7 by the NYSUT's Professional Staff Congress, the union representing the teaching and nonclassroom staffs of the university, was 3,904 to 1,023 in favor of the strike, a margin of practically four to one.

The strike vote was recommended by the PSC leadership after a year of negotiations and after the Board of Higher Education refused to accept the unanimous recommendations of a three-member state fact-finding panel.

Negotiations began June 19, 1972,

and existing contracts expired August 31. The talks reached an impasse Sept. 8 and went into fact-finding Nov. 24.

When the factfinders issued their recommendations in May, the union expressed reservations about some of them but agreed to accept them all in order to break the deadlock. The board refused to reciprocate.

Instead, the board designated itself the "legislative body" authorized by the Taylor Law to be the final arbiter of a dispute after holding hearings.

At hearings held June 18, the PSC asked the board to abandon its "charade" as an impartial body and to accept the factfinders' recommendations as a reasonable compromise.

The board has not responded.

PSC President Belle Zeller and Deputy President Israel Kugler said:

"The major obstacle to a settlement is the Board of Higher Education's determination to break the union."

They cited the board's refusal to recognize the union after it was formed by a merger April 14, 1972; the board's cancellation of salary increments 10 days later; its rejection of key recommendations of the state fact-finding panel; its insistence on retrogressive contract provisions; its recent offer of a one-year retroactive contract that would expire in August, 1973; and its stated intention to dictate its own terms as the "legislative body."

"If the board resigns itself to the right of the instructional staff to bargain collectively and accepts the fact-finding report as the basis for a settlement," they said, "we will have a decent contract and no strike in October."