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## UNITED ACADEMICS NEWS RELEASE

For more information, contact:

Nancy Welch

Professor of English and co-chair of the United Academics Delegates Assembly

802-318-6719; [nwelch@uvm.edu](mailto:nwelch@uvm.edu)

### **Faculty to invite parents, alums to play UVM's wheel of misfortune**

*Event to educate campus about the cost of golden parachutes and the price paid by faculty, staff, and students*

Burlington, VT--Faculty at the University of Vermont on Friday will invite visitors arriving for the weekend's homecoming festivities to spin a giant Wheel of Misfortune and get an education in the high cost of lavish perks for university executives.

Faculty will set up the prize wheel and talk with visitors about alternatives to the university's misplaced priorities on Friday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. outside the Davis Center. (In case of rain, the event will move to the covered area in front of Bailey Howe Library.)

While UVM's Wheel of Misfortune features such "golden parachutes" bestowed upon UVM administrators as \$20,000 bonuses and \$37,000 a month paid leave, it also features loss of retirement health care for campus workers and the threat of layoff for long-time lecturers.

In contract negotiations with faculty, the administration has sought the elimination of retiree health care for future hires and to place all lecturers, regardless of how long and well they've served, on short-term contracts, subjecting them to the annual threat of layoff.

The administration's parachutes come at a cost, including students' access to experienced, long-term faculty, say the event's organizers. No matter what you spin in UVM's Wheel of Misfortune, they point out, the university and its students lose.

But faculty also have another message with this event: that another set of priorities and values are possible. Since last winter, they say, United Academics has been at the bargaining table with proposals that would safeguard UVM's future without jeopardizing the health benefits employees need and the access to faculty that students depend on.

Friday's Wheel of Misfortune event comes as all three campus unions--representing faculty, service and maintenance workers, and police services--and the administration continue to meet with a federal mediator around the future of retiree health care and the cost employees will pay for health care at UVM. While the administration claims that rising healthcare costs are driving their proposed cuts, faculty point out that healthcare rates for UVM have actually decreased in recent years.

"What has increased in recent years is the cost of administration," said Nancy Welch, Professor of English and one of the event organizers. "That cost includes not only bonuses, golden parachutes, and other perks but out-sized salaries."

Last year, she noted, 44 current and former executives, including three on long-term paid administrative leave, drew salaries totaling more than \$8 million.

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