



# The Sentinel

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*Whatever the mind can conceive and believe,  
the mind can achieve.*

*-Dr. Napoleon Hill*

## ***Ralph Watkins: A Life of Courage, Compassion, and Dignity***

*By Bill Simons, Chapter President*

One of my favorite photographs is of Ralph Watkins and I, along with Don Hill and Bo Whaley, standing in front of the UUP tent on Labor Day, 2004. In that photo, it is evident that Ralph was strong, proud, and knowing. Then, I ask the eternal questions: Why Ralph? Why now?

Ralph Watkins died the way he lived – with courage, compassion, and dignity. Ralph fought the cancer hard until he was ready. The end came on Tuesday, September 18, 2007. For over a third of a century, he graced the College at Oneonta with a distinctive intelligence and commitment to social justice. Ralph served as a Professor – and Chair – of two departments, History and African & Latino Studies, and was instrumental in the creation of the latter. UUP, of which he was a stalwart, joins Ralph's family, colleagues, friends, and students in remembering his life with great affection and respect.



Ralph was a superb teacher. His courses on African-American history, slavery, postwar America, and the 1970s informed and inspired students. Primary sources, including music, art, and novels, added nuance and texture to Ralph's pedagogy. Assigned readings for his courses drew from monographs freshly off the press and classics of the canon, such as Horatio Alger's *Ragged Dick* and W.E. B. DuBois's *The Souls of Black Folks*.

As they examined the past, Ralph's students learned to think critically, to challenge shibboleths in discussion, and to write with care. Ralph encouraged students to scrutinize the hidden ideology implicit in nearly every phrase and deed. While noted for his command of subject matter, incisive analysis, and probing questions, Ralph also shared his dry wit and sense of irony with two generations of undergraduates. He always treated students with a respect that was reciprocated. His answering machine greeted them with mellow jazz. This past summer I had a reunion, over coffee and donuts, with SUCO graduate David Lonborg, himself now a teacher, and David, with much

enthusiasm, deftly recreated, from fond memory, a portion of one of Ralph's lectures, capturing language, interpretation, and inflection. As David and so many others could attest, Ralph possessed a distinctive authenticity inside – and outside – the classroom.

Scholarship provides content to pedagogy. Beyond his extensive reading of secondary sources, Ralph conducted seminal research on the African-American experience. He wrote important articles for the preeminent journals in his field, and was the recipient of several National Endowment for the Humanities awards.

Like so many others, I learned lessons of history and life from Ralph. In recent years — until his retirement at the end of the spring 2007 semester, we two former chairs of the History Department shared an office in Netzer 232 and some brunches at the Neptune, and after thirty years as colleagues and friends, we still found much to discuss. We talked passionately about history, students, education, race, economics, national and campus politics, unions, gender, family, sports, and life. We tried to understand how one could endure the abuse that Frederick Douglass suffered in a childhood marred by slavery and still emerge as a whole human being. It was with some satisfaction that we finally identified, with help from the Baseball Hall of Fame, every player in Ralph's 1939 photograph of the fabled Pittsburgh Crawfords of the Negro National League. Ralph posted the long and memorable *New York Times* obituaries, the ones that were amalgams of biographical essay and social history, on our office door; bandleader Woody Herman's final curtain call observed, "Any more would have been less."

Only occasionally did Ralph talk of his illness, and then in a matter of fact manner. Never did he indulge in self-pity. Treatment and illness induced fatigue, discomfort, and weight loss, but Ralph's spirit and keen intelligence never dimmed. Despite substantial physical duress, he remained an exceptional classroom teacher and the moral center of the History Department. As always, Ralph spoke truth to power and championed the vulnerable.

Ralph taught me and others that life is best lived day by day. Chess is a game for the grounded, and for years, Ralph ended the teaching week with a late Friday afternoon match at the Autumn. As he had throughout the years, Ralph, even at the end, maintained an exceptional inner balance, clarity, and deliberateness. Thanks to Caridad, I had the opportunity to visit with Ralph again on Thursday, September 13th. When I recalled a memorable stand of conscience that he had taken, Ralph said that we — and others — had done it together. Ralph Watkins was as brave and good as any person that I have ever known.

Ralph was the best of us. Every community has a heart and soul, and Ralph was ours. As the historian Richard Hofstadter wrote of another, so might it be said of Ralph Watkins:

One prefers to think of him in this way — as a productive scholar who was also an intrepid public spirit, as the patron and guide of younger colleagues, the distinguished and embattled defender of civil and academic liberties...the spokesman of the native decencies — and one remembers that the life of a man does not end as a series of propositions that can simply be assessed and found true or false, but as a set of lingering resonances that for our own sake, we must be attuned to hear.

Donations may be made to the "*Dr. Ralph R. Watkins Scholarship for the Study of African American Life and History*" at the SUNY College at Oneonta, College Foundation, 308 Netzer Administration Building, Oneonta, NY 13820-4015.

His dear friend and colleague, Dr. Kathleen K. O'Mara, was instrumental in establishing this fund in Ralph's honor.

## ***Labor Day Is About Respecting the Rights of Workers***

*By Bill Simons, Chapter President*



Labor Day, Monday, September 3, 2007, announced a significant milestone in union history at the College at Oneonta. Eighty-five people squeezed into the Butternut Room, Hunt Union, at noontime to listen to straight talk by a stellar panel on the significance of Labor Day observance. Panel speakers included **Dr. Renee B. Walker**, Assistant Professor and Acting Chair, Anthropology and UUP Grievance Officer; **Dr. Daniel G. Payne**, Associate Professor, English and UUP Flood Relief Volunteer; **Dr. Gina L. Keel**, Assistant Professor, Political Science and UUP Academic Delegate/Disabilities Officer; and **Dr. Robert W. Compton**, Associate Professor, Political Science and UUP Vice President for Academics. In addition, **Dr. Alex Thomas**, Chair/Associate Professor, Sociology, and UUP Representative, Labor-Management Grants Committee, served as program moderator.



Professors Walker, Payne, Keel, and Compton were individually and collectively eloquent and resolute. Alex Thomas did a brilliant job of introducing and moderating the discussion. Audience questions and comments were direct and spirited. In a show of solidarity, Statewide UUP Vice President for Academics and Chief Negotiator for the current contract **Dr. Frederick G. Floss** traveled long miles sat with the panelists and applauded their remarks.

Neither sophistry nor indifference can still the issues raised on Labor Day 2007. To quote a formidable woman, **Helen Kane**, the ninety-two year old grandmother of Renee Walker, Labor Day “is about respecting the rights of workers.” UUP will soon provide details of an on-line petition urging proper observance of Labor Day. Moreover, thanks to the technical skills of UUP Oneonta Vice President for Professionals **Norm Payne**, the chapter has a professional quality videotape of our Labor Day 2007 gathering, and this tape will shown in a number of highly visible venues, including as the centerpiece of a UUP Oneonta Labor Film Festival, which will also include *Trolley Strike*, *Vendetta*, *Mattewan*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, and *Norma Rae*. And chapter photographer **Nancy Cannon** captured powerful images of a union coming of age.

A series of indelible images come to mind when recalling the visceral authenticity of **Renee Walker’s** commentary on Labor Day 2007:

*When I was thinking about what to say as part of the UUP Labor Day panel, I was somewhat at a loss. As an archaeologist, I don’t have the training that my esteemed colleagues have in the history and politics of the Labor movement. However, I turned to someone that I respect very much-my grandmother, Helen Kane. She started working at a shirt factory in 1933 in the town where she grew up-Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania. She felt very lucky to get a job during the Great Depression because she could help her family out with her wages. The factory had very strict working regulations. All the women working in the factory had to schedule morning and afternoon bathroom breaks. These were in addition to the lunch break and had to be ‘scheduled’ because they worked on the line and had to have replacements fill in. So, if you had your break scheduled for 10:30, then you took it at 10:30 or you lost it. The boss would also stand outside the bathroom door to make sure you didn’t take more than 5 minutes. This was a difficult job-8 hours a day, standing all day, folding shirts and pushing the pins in to hold them for packaging. But, they ALWAYS had Labor Day off. This was a day that was important for the workers and their families.*



*When I mentioned to my grandmother (who is 92 and still lives on her own and goes to Bingo twice a week) that the college I work for does not support labor day she was surprised. As she said, it is not about having a day off, it is about respecting the rights of workers. She should know-she worked in the factory for 42 years!*

The words of **Gina L. Keel** are assertive, proud, and intellectually compelling:

*All wealth comes from labor. As that father of capitalism, Adam Smith, wrote in Wealth of Nations: “Labor was the first price, the original purchase-money that was paid for all things. It was not by gold or by silver, but by labor, that all wealth of the world was originally purchased.”*

*All capitalist countries, and particularly those that call themselves democratic owe workers a day of honor. And our country and our state do recognize this duty. This is an official national and state holiday. But it is not a holiday on this campus, which dishonors itself by dishonoring labor.*

*Most importantly, Labor Day is about showing respect for the creators of wealth and value.*

*As that great labor leader and founder of the farm workers union, Cesar Chavez, said: “The fight is never about grapes or lettuce. It is always about people.”*

*In this state where seamstress turned activist Emma Goldman sweated as a textile worker in Rochester,*

*In this state where the first labor day, or workingmen’s holiday, was celebrated in New York City,*

*In this state where future US Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis designed a protocol of peace with grievance procedures and joint union-management committees to resolve labor disputes,*

*In this state of New York, it is shameful that unionized workers are forced to work on Labor Day.*

Synthesizing familial experience and a commitment to social justice, **Dan Payne** made an articulate and moving case for the proper observance of Labor Day:

*For over a century, Labor Day has been commemorated as a national holiday created to pay tribute to the contributions and sacrifices of the working men and women of the United States. As Samuel Gompers, the founder and first president of the American federation of Labor wrote, “Labor Day differs in every essential way from the other holidays of the year in any country. All other holidays are in a more or less degree connected with conflicts and battles of man’s prowess over man, of strife and discord for greed and power, of glories achieved by one nation over another. Labor Day...is devoted to no man, living or dead, to no sect, race, or nation.”*

*Anyone with a basic sense of the history of the labor movement in this country knows that many of the things that we now take for granted in the modern workplace were bitterly contested by management when they were initially proposed by labor. From the children who worked in the mills of Patterson, New Jersey who went on strike in 1835 for a reduction of their work week to six days a week, eleven hours a day to the air traffic controllers of PATCO summarily fired in 1991, many have risked their jobs and livelihood in an effort to gain fair treatment. There have also been hundreds of workers*

*who lost their lives as a result of unsafe working conditions or labor disputes— including the 35 unarmed black sugar workers striking to gain a dollar-a-day wage who were murdered by the Louisiana militia and “prominent citizens” in 1887, to the 147 young women who died in the sweatshop fire at the triangle Shirtwaist Factory in 1911.*

*For myself, there is also a personal aspect to Labor Day. When my father got a job as a telephone company lineman in 1970, he also became a member of a union, the Communications Workers of America (CWA). In 1971, the CWA went on strike against the Bell System, and while the national strike was settled in one week, my father and the other unionized employees of New York Telephone endured a bitter strike that lasted 218 days. As the oldest of five children, I vividly remember the strike—the picket lines, nearing losing our home when the money ran out, Christmas at the union hall, and “strike food”—peanut butter sandwiches and tuna casserole. Years later, when I was in graduate school at the University at Buffalo, the grad students organized and became members of CWA, and I was as proud of receiving that union card as I had been of becoming the first in my family to receive a college degree.*



From a global perspective, **Rob Compton** adds gravitas and profundity to the Labor-Day discussion:

*Increasingly, Labor throughout the world is experiencing retrenchment. Capitalism espouses the values of individualism and market forces and eschews the idea of solidarity. The idea of the rugged individualism is not something akin only to the US at the national scene but also to the Oneonta campus and two countries I visited this summer: South Africa and Zimbabwe. In the US, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, quite a few people have tied their future security and dreams to individual attainment, where by hook or crook. Unfortunately, the study of Labor Unions and the 40 hour work week, the benefits that unionists throughout the world have won have come through solidarity and collective action. Therefore, the individual centered dreams are false ones as progress comes best when the community works together.*

*In South Africa, I saw the largest public sector strike this summer and until the very end, the workers stuck together. They were awarded an increase of over 7% on base pay and other significant cost of living enhancements. In Zimbabwe, the workers and the masses have continued to fight for a more open and democratic country. I expect progress will occur in unfolding months. UUP has made major progress at the state and campus levels, including the recent signing of ORP parity bill, which will put millions of dollars into our members' pockets. On this campus, progress at times is difficult, but through solidarity, significant victory has occurred in the areas of workload and the reduction of the climate of fear. The observance of Labor Day on this campus forms the basis for solidarity and collective action. We are only one of three campuses that fail to observe Labor Day. Let us work together to honor workers by observing Labor Day here on the SUCO campus.*

Thanks to all of those mentioned above as well as to **Loraine Tyler** and **Janie Forrest-Glotzer**, two redoubtable UUP stalwarts, for greeting members upon their arrival and superbly coordinating on-site logistics. Above all appreciation is due to a wonderful audience, notable for its size and engagement.

Let Us Resolve That the Spirit of Labor Day 2007 shall live. Rob Compton and Norm Payne have created an on-line Labor Day petition for all friends of workers' rights to sign. Go to the following link.

**<http://its.oneonta.edu/survey/entry.jsp?id=1190214163673>** to sign the petition calling for the observance of Labor Day on the College at Oneonta campus.

## ***Honor Workers: Sign the Labor Day Petition!***



In August 1845 Delaware County was declared in a state of insurrection and troops were sent from Albany to restore order. What was the cause?

The first person to email **Nancy Cannon** (cannonns@oneonta.edu) with the correct answer will receive a UUP hat.

## *Fourth UUP Evaluation of the Campus Administration*

By Bill Simons, Chapter President

At its August 27, 2007, meeting, the Executive Board of UUP Oneonta voted to conduct, during the fall 2007 semester, the fourth evaluation of the College at Oneonta's senior administration. The rationale for this decision rested on several factors, amongst them:

1. All employees, including administration should be accountable
2. Subordinate personnel are continuously evaluated,
3. UUP Oneonta has an on-going practice of periodic evaluation of senior administration, and
4. Such evaluations of senior administrators provide important feedback.

You will soon receive forms for you to complete to evaluate the senior administration.

The evaluative instrument, with minor modification, is the same as the ones employed in the past; this will allow for comparison with previous evaluations of the senior administration. As before, those evaluated include the president, vice presidents, and deans, as indicated below:

- **President** Alan B. Donovan,
- **Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs** F. Daniel Larkin,
- **Vice President for Finance & Administration** Leif S. Hartmark,
- **Vice President for Student Development** Steven R. Perry,
- **Vice President for Community Relations** Carol A. Blazina,
- **Vice President for College Advancement** Paul J. Adamo,
- **Dean of Science and Social Science** Michael P. Merilan, and
- **Dean of Behavioral and Applied Science** Walter F. Wagor.

### PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

- All members of the UUP bargaining unit will be sent this evaluative instrument to complete.
- To facilitate analysis of results, a random sampling process will be incorporated into this survey to enhance its validity.
- The confidentiality and anonymity of participants in the survey will be protected.
- Do not lose the survey forms as each individual will receive only one copy, thus ensuring the anonymity and confidentiality of participants and their responses.
- The survey evaluation of the senior administration includes 6 demographic items, 15 general items about college work life, and 8 items for each administrator. The survey is not lengthy but consists of several pages to allow for electronic reading.
- Completion of the survey will take only a few minutes.
- If you can not fairly answer an item, mark the "Don't Know" choice.
- Use a # 2 pencil to complete the statistically-based portion of the survey as this will facilitate electronic tabulation of results.
- Do not remove the staples or otherwise damage the top edges of the sheet so as not to compromise machine reading of the completed survey.

In addition to the statistically-based questions, UUP encourages you to submit free response comments for those senior administrators that you evaluate. Please type these free response comments on separate sheets of paper. Do not include any remarks that might identify you in your free response comments. Keep in mind that UUP will tabulate and disseminate the statistical and free response results of this evaluation of the senior administration.

After completing your evaluations of senior administrators, you will be asked to return the forms by intercampus mail to the UUP office at **Human Ecology 206** within two weeks of having receiving the survey.

Your participation in this evaluation of senior administration is important as it will allow us to better understand ourselves and our priorities as an academic community, and it will enable UUP to better represent you. UUP will provide you with a substantive and meaningful report. Thank you for your participation.

## ***Course Load Reductions – Reminder of College Policy***

By Tom Horvath, UUP Secretary and Health & Safety Officer



At the College at Oneonta, most full-time faculty are expected to teach 12 sh of courses each semester. UUP has spent much effort reminding you, its members, that you have the right to apply for a course load reduction under the provisions in the faculty handbook. UUP is also involved with assessing this program as an effective way of dealing with some work load issues. To many of the newer faculty on campus, UUP conducted a survey of its members a few years ago that showed great dissatisfaction with the current workload. One avenue we took to address your concerns was to resurrect this program, or at least continue to remind you of it.

There is still time to apply for a course load reduction for the spring 2008 semester. Consider if you are eligible and can benefit from a course load reduction. A course load reduction can allow you to have time to prepare publications, organize new courses or reorganize old courses, or spend time behind the microscope or in the archives researching (ie, scholarly activity). Often a special project requires larger blocks of time. Rather than allowing this to conflict with teaching, a course load reduction can make your time in the classrooms more effective for the students, and still allow that chapter to be written or that mass of data to be collected. But as always, you must apply for the reductions.

Here are the provisions in the Faculty Handbook (still on page 25).

From Faculty Handbook:

Appropriate justifications for reductions may include but are not limited to the following:

- a. exceptional involvement in specific instructional activities, such as preparation of a new course, the revision of existing course materials, involvement in the development or instruction of new academic programs, or the instruction of graduate level courses;
- b. exceptional involvement in a specific program of research and scholarly activity;
- c. exceptional involvement in specific service activities, such as assignment to special college projects or committees;
- d. involvement in professional development activities, such as retraining for another specialty area or to address departmental needs;
- e. administrative assignments, such as service as department chair or designation as program or area director;
- f. an exceptionally heavy workload in teaching assignment, due to reasons such as participation in courses with large class sizes resulting in unusual time commitments, such as assignments that generate a total of 375 credit hours or more.
- g. supervision of internship activities for program or department;
- h. an unusually high teaching load or other assigned professional responsibilities in a previous semester or planned for a subsequent semester;
- i. other assigned professional responsibilities or scholarly activities as deemed appropriate.

### ***UUP Supports Participation in AEC/CPR Training***

Cardiac arrest claims thousands of lives each year. Time is of the essence in responding effectively to victims of cardiac arrest, which may strike without warning. If defibrillation is provided within 3 minutes, the prospects of survival increase dramatically. Training in the use of automated external defibrillator (AED) and CPR is available on campus. UUP encourages its members to join with other members of the college community in receiving such training. To do so, contact University Police at 436-2491.

*Be prepared to save a life.*

## *Achieving Scholarly Excellence Through UUP Involvement: Reflections on the Fulbright*

By Rob Compton, Vice President for Professionals

The transformation of the Oneonta Chapter UUP over the past four years, has received significant kudos in Albany. Known as the “Oneonta Model” it involves working with the most talented academics and professions and aligning their research and careers interests in the furtherance of UUP activism. As the State University of New York system continues to experience a generational change, it is critical that new members become active in their union. The recent gains that we have made in Albany, including lobbying for additional funds for the campus continues to bear fruit as more professionals and faculty join the SUNY system. I met many of you during orientation over the years and it’s encouraging when so many new members come into the fold of UUP.

Over the past year, I have been on the statewide UUP Task Force for Recruiting New Academic Members. What are some of the “reasons” why on many campuses, new members have not become active? Our session identified many, but the principle ones include: too much research and teaching; failure to see UUP’s relevance to one’s career; tenure and continuing appointment vulnerabilities; and a lack of union activism during graduate student days. The primary point I make is that UUP activism and academic excellence is mutually inclusive, not exclusive. In this article, I want to give a personal example that illustrates this notion.

Since that fateful meeting between Bill Simons and me in the “quad” about four years ago, when we vowed to make UUP relevant together, much has been transformed at the College and for me personally. Perhaps the most important aspect of my involvement in UUP has been the development of leadership skills and a knack for understanding the interconnectedness of issues and the levels of analysis from global to local. The NYSUT/Cornell Leadership Institute from which I graduated in 2005 has a long tradition of producing leaders for the K-12 and college/university settings.

The SUNY Center for International Development (CID) was one the connections that I developed due in part to my UUP activities. Located in Albany, CID is part of the Research Foundation and receives grant monies for governance and democracy projects throughout the world. One project that was initiated four years ago was the International Legislative Fellows Program which involves bringing rising leaders from Parliamentary staff abroad for the specific purpose of providing them with an experience in the New York state legislature and academic enrichment. Thus far, I have mentored four fellows, including two from Zimbabwe. My UUP experiences allowed me to share the organizational approaches of UUP at the chapter and statewide levels with the fellows and the statewide leadership invited the fellows to partake in observing the Delegate Assembly. The Fellows saw first-hand how a powerful interest group—UUP— functioned in American politics.

Armed with two visits to Zimbabwe and South Africa and a forthcoming Visiting Scholar affiliation with the University of KwaZulu-Natal’s Center for Civil Society (CCS), my UUP and College Senate experiences, and a recently published article on land reform in South Africa and Zimbabwe, I decided to apply for the Fulbright. In the application, I highlighted my UUP and Senate involvement and noted the Zimbabwe network I assembled that could

assist me with research. In addition, I stated my integral involvement with consultancy work in Harare through CID’s Parliamentary strengthening project. These details are particularly important because Zimbabwe is a country in siege. With the world’s fastest decline peacetime economy where inflation is expected to exceed 100,000% by the end of the year, unemployment exceeds 80%, and the GNP has declined 60% since 1999, this is no Club Med vacation. Zimbabwe experiences routine shortages of basic commodities including bread and water. At the University of Zimbabwe (UZ), students have burned down their dorms and cafeteria, water pressure is so low that the restrooms are locked shut, and professors can earn monies greater than their monthly salaries by driving their personal vehicles as taxis for three nights.



Despite these difficulties, I look forward to teaching two courses at the UZ (an undergraduate course on Politics of Developing Nations and a graduate course on International Political Economy) during the spring 2008 semester. Where there is education, there is hope. The research component of the Fulbright Scholarship consists of examining the effectiveness of civil society in Parliament by focusing on organizations and interest groups input and influence on legislation and the budget. I hope to add new knowledge, insights and skills to my professional life, meet new colleagues, and renew friendships during my stay in Zimbabwe. Most of all, I look forward to watching Presidential and Parliamentary elections results at the local pub in March with my friends Henry and Kennedy. As I drink an ice cold Zambezi beer, many thoughts will cross my mind, not the least UUP its progress on the Oneonta campus.

## ***Labor-Management Meeting Notes: 17 September 2007***

By Tom Horvath, Secretary, UUP Oneonta

For Management: Alan Donovan, Dan Larkin, Carol Blazina, Leif Hartmark, Steve Perry, and Lisa Wenck

For UUP: Bill Simons, Nancy Cannon, Rob Compton, Tom Horvath, Janie Forrest-Glotzer, and Norm Payne

Guest: Bart Ingersoll

Meeting opened at 3:04 P.M.



**Labor-Management collaborations.** UUP reflected on some of the many areas of Labor-Management collaboration, such as the orientations for Full and Part-Time Faculty, which were highly successful. UUP also reported that a number of its members have found AED/CPR training programs valuable. UUPers have the training sessions to be taught well, but UUP suggested that refresher courses would be useful. Management commented that refresher courses are planned, but that anyone can sign up for the ongoing training at any time, regardless of whether they attended a previous training session. In the spirit of joint efforts, UUP again extended an invitation to Management to forge a Labor-Management partnership for joint advocacy in Albany. UUP stated that the College would be best represented in legislative advocacy by a united group of Management, UUP, employees from other unions, and students. Management took this under consideration. UUP complimented the Administration for its role in attracting a strong applicant incoming pool of first-year students, both in terms of its size and quality. UUP also complimented the many college employees, in UUP and in the other campus unions, who contributed to the strong applicant pool. UUP then invited Management to participate with UUP in Saturday's Bread, a community kitchen staffed by volunteers. Both UUP and Management acknowledged the role of Carol Blazina in founding Saturday's Bread, a fine program that provides meals and fellowship.

**Report on the "Video Surveillance Policy" recently distributed.** Steve Perry and Bart Ingersoll went over the rationale, process and the plan for the program, which is available in draft form online. They wanted to open the information to the College community before any policy was enacted so they can receive feedback. The implementation will be the primary responsibility of campus security (UPD). They hope the program will serve as a deterrent to crimes and aid in investigations. No private areas will be part of the surveillance. This includes office spaces, lockers, etc. The cameras will be conspicuous and archives will be wiped clean after 120 days. Personal privacy will be respected throughout the program. The only exception is when legally acquired warrants permit such activity. UUP followed up with questions regarding the mode of data transmittal (via secure Ethernet lines), number of cameras (about 60) and comparisons with other SUNY campuses (Oneonta is one of the last to implement such a program). UUP thanked Management for their detailed report and the opportunity for on-going dialogue on the topic with an eye to keeping security and privacy in balance.

**Other Forms of Surveillance.** UUP mentioned that its members are concerned about other forms of surveillance on campus, and asked management for its policy on email and phone monitoring as well as of unannounced audio recording of meetings. Management indicated that it does not monitor any such communications and has no plans to do so. Phone use is monitored only in terms of billings. No content is ever monitored.

**Following up on:** the 6/18/07 discussion of **Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy and Grievance Procedures for SUNY Employees and Students and Discrimination Policy and Grievance Procedures for SUNY Employees and Students**, UUP asked the following questions of Management (to be answered at October 15, 2007, Labor-Management Meeting). .

A. What specifically has been clarified/revised/changed in terms of procedures and applications as a result of the process that began in December 2006? (Mgt. contends that the process of making clarifications commenced Dec. 2006)

B. Are these campus-based clarifications/revisions/changes of procedures and applications consistent with SUNY wide policies? (Why were changes made to the application form including crossing out of phrases?)

- C. Would or has the Director attempted to persuade or dissuade anyone from filing charges?
- D. What are the criteria used for assessing the validity or invalidity of the complaint? (What is the basis for determining whether the complaint goes forward?)
- E. What protections exist to prevent the stifling of the freedom of expression and dissent? (Are any safeguards in place?)
- F. Were some individuals given prior information/advance knowledge regarding the new clarifications/revisions/changes for filing charges?

Summer School. UUP asked questions concerning Summer School 2007. For 2007, what was the number of courses offered/number of courses cancelled? Management answered 159 courses were offered and 49 classes were canceled. How did the average class size change in 2007 compared to 2006? In 2007 average class size was 14.38, whereas in 2006 it was 12.10. How was the following handled: In the event that graduate courses were cancelled but were required by some students for graduation was the instructor "encouraged" to offer the course as an individual enrollment, thus impacting remuneration? It is the policy to inform the Chair of the department with the under-enrolled course, and to encourage the course to be taught as an independent enrollment. UUP noted that in summer, such cases come with compensation for the instructor, but that no compensation is offered during semesters when independent enrollments are taught. Would Management consider compensation during semesters? Management would have to discuss this in the future.

DSI Procedures for Fall 2007 were discussed again because it remains unclear as to whether professionals can apply for merit or do they request that through their performance program. Management commented that merit does not apply for professionals in regards to DSI. They will be looking into that in the future. The letters announcing the application procedures will be out this week (21 September). UUP thanked Management on Management's intention to get the word out to part-timers that they are eligible for DSI and for disseminating information necessary to make an equity application.

Other terms and conditions of employment:

Labor Day discussion was deferred until 10/15/07 Labor-Management Meeting.

UUP thanked Management for providing data on course load reductions. UUP would like to have a follow-up meeting on this topic soon if possible.

There is a possible coordination between UUP and Human resources for the upcoming HR Benefits fair.

Meeting was adjourned by 4:00 P.M.

### ***ORP Bill Becomes Law: Unionism Is Not a Spectator Sport***

Governor Spitzer just signed the ORP bill into law. On the Oneonta campus and other SUNY institutions throughout the state, many UUPers contacted Governor Eliot Spitzer to articulate their concerns. The voice of the people has been heard on this issue. The new ORP law will facilitate the retention of talented individuals at Oneonta and other SUNY units.

As a result of this measure, New York State will pay the 3% share of the pensions that UUP members in tiers 3,4 and 4(a) with 10 years of service now pay. The program will be phased in over three years. When fully implemented, the new law will mean a 3% increase in your take home pay:

\*All individuals with ten years of service who are currently paying 3% of their salary to their optional retirement pension program (e.g. TIAA-CREF) will benefit starting next year. The state will phase in the program. Beginning April 1, 2008, the state will pay 1%; the second year the state will pay 2%; and the third and subsequent years the state will pay the entire 3%.

\*If you have less than ten years of service and are paying the 3% into the optional retirement pension, the state will pay the entire 3% upon the completion of your ten years of service.

At a time when public pensions are under attack, this is a major victory for the State of New York, SUNY, the family of UUP, and social justice.

***COLLECTIVE ACTION AND SOLIDARITY DO MATTER! THANK YOU!***

**Food for Thought / UUP Chapter Meeting:*****Tuesday, October 23rd at Noon, Le Café, Morris***

By Bill Simons, Chapter President

The next Food for Thought / UUP Chapter meeting will be held in Le Café, Morris, on October 23rd at noon, and will feature a presentation by the UUP leadership at SUNY Cortland. Cortland, the other Red Dragon to the west, has a special relationship to Oneonta. UUP Cortland President Larry Ashley, Vice President for Professionals Hailey Ruoff, and Delegate Dianne Galutz will discuss the following phenomena on the Cortland campus: 3-3 as the normative teaching load for fulltime faculty, the effectiveness of professional appeals committees, and the conversion of adjuncts into lecturers. Similarities and differences between the two campuses will be considered. Questions and candid discussion will follow the Cortland presentation. The October 23rd Food for Thought will be a feature of Campus Equity Week.

Although Food for Thought has important content, it is also an occasion for respite from the workweek, relaxed collegiality, and fine food. Renew old ties and forge new ones by joining your colleagues in a convivial gathering and expression of solidarity. Your union looks forward to greeting you. For additional information or if you have questions, please contact UUP Oneonta President Bill Simons (x3498, SimonsWM@Oneonta.Edu); VP for Academics Rob Compton (x3048, ComptoRW@Oneonta.Edu); VP for Professionals Norm Payne (x2021, PayneNE@Oneonta.Edu); Secretary and Health & Safety Officer Tom Horvath (x3899, Horvattg@Oneonta.Edu); or Professional Delegate Janie Forrest-Glotzer (x2005, ForresJL@Oneonta.Edu).

***UUP Congratulates: Promotions and Tenure***

Promotion and tenure are significant milestones in an academic career. UUP congratulates members of our bargaining unit who were recently so recognized.

**Paul Bischoff** (Secondary Education) and **Nancy Callahan** (Art) were promoted to the rank of Professor.

**John Bagby** (Theater), **Richard Barberio** (Political Science), **Kathleen Alison Black** (Elementary Education and Reading), **Jennifer Bueche** (Human Ecology), **Benjamin Dixon** (Geography), **Matthew Hendley** (History), **Thomas Horvath** (Biology), **Orlando Legname** (Music), **Ho Hun Leung** (Sociology), **Daniel Payne** (English), and **Charles Ragozzine** (Mathematics) were promoted to Associate Professor.

**William Ashbaugh** (History), **John Bagby** (Theater), **Jennifer Beuche** (Human Ecology), **Benjamin Dixon** (Geography), **Matthew Hendley** (History), **Thomas Horvath** (Biology), **Vicky Lentz** (Biology), **Ho Hun Leung** (Sociology), and **Daniel Payne** (English) were tenured.

UUP salutes the achievements of these talented and hard working individuals.

***The Sentinel and Websites***

Editor's Note: Statements Made in *The Sentinel* do not necessarily reflect the opinion of UUP or any of its statewide representatives.

To read past issues — as well as the current edition — of *The Sentinel* on-line, go to **www.uuphost.org/oneonta** This site also includes other material concerning UUP Oneonta.

The statewide **UUP website** is located at **www.uupinfo.org** It contains information about members benefits and many other important topics.

## *Managing Information Overload with RSS*

By Harry E. Pence, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry

(Editor's Note: Dr. Harry E. Pence, SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor, can be contacted at [PENCEHE@Oneonta.Edu](mailto:PENCEHE@Oneonta.Edu))

How does a professor keep track of new developments in his or her discipline? Before the advent of the Internet, it was typical to subscribe to a few key journals and perhaps dedicate an afternoon a week to reading journals in the library. The WWW offers access to an abundance of new material and makes the task even more unmanageable. Lists of "web favorites" rapidly become overly long, and few individuals are organized enough to do regular web searches on important topics. Online journals, blogs, and discussion lists are too valuable to ignore but only add to the problem. RSS (a mnemonic for Real Simple Syndication) can help educators organize this flood of information. Two basic steps are required to create and use an RSS desktop environment: choosing an aggregator and then connecting to selected RSS feeds. The RSS aggregator (sometimes called a news aggregator, newsfeed aggregator, or feed reader) is a piece of software that allows an individual to subscribe to feeds from various web sites, such as journals, blogs, newspapers, or magazines. Aggregators automatically monitor the flow of information on a web site and periodically bring updated information back to the user, creating a personal information space. There are a number of RSS readers available that work on Windows, Macintosh OS X, UNIX, or Linux operating systems, and many of them are inexpensive (less than \$50) or free. There are several lists of aggregators available on the web, for example, at (<http://www.newsonfeeds.com/faq/aggregators>). The aggregator discussed in this article is NetVibes. ([www.netvibes.com](http://www.netvibes.com)) NetVibes works with both Mac and PC computers, is free, and creates an attractive personal page with not only RSS feeds but also a web search window accessing three main search engines, and other potentially useful information. The resulting presentation is, in essence, a personalized web newspaper.

There are millions of sites, ranging from blogs to scientific journals that offer an RSS feed, and once an aggregator has been selected and installed, it is relatively easy to connect to these feeds. Web sites that include a web feed are usually indicated by an orange rectangle that contains the letters XML or RSS or an orange rectangle with a dot and two white arcs. In many cases, clicking on this button will automatically lead to a choice of possible aggregators, and it is only necessary to select NetVibes.

In some cases, setting an RSS feed is somewhat more complicated, requiring a cut-and-paste operation. To demonstrate this procedure, suppose that you wished to add an RSS feed for the French newspaper, *Le Monde*. First, do a Google search for the pair of terms "Le Monde" + RSS, then click on the first suggested link, namely "Le Monde.fr:Fils RSS." This leads to a page containing a number of orange buttons, each of which connects to a different selection of topics from "Le Monde." Clicking on the orange buttons next to a topic leads to a page of complicated computer code instead of the list of aggregators mentioned above. This entire page of code is the feed. Don't worry about this code, simply highlight the URL for the entire page (in the browser address box) and copy it. Now open your NetVibes page and click on the text "add a feed" in the upper left hand corner. Paste this URL into the box labeled "add a URL" that appears in the resulting window. Click on the ADD button, and the selected feed will be added to NetVibes. It is also possible to set up standing RSS searches on Google News or Yahoo News, but that is beyond the scope of this brief introduction.

Thus far, RSS does not seem to have been broadly adopted by educators, but it does present some interesting educational possibilities. An instructor can require students to set up RSS feeds so that students will be more likely to read popular magazines and newspapers or even professional journals related to the material in the course. Some instructors have even suggested that it might be possible to eliminate the textbook in a course and instead use RSS feeds from the current literature to make the readings more up-to-date. It is hoped that this brief introduction will encourage some colleagues to give RSS a try and see what can be accomplished.

## Part-Time Faculty Orientation – One-Stop Shopping



By Teri Weigl, Membership Director

[Editor's Note: Appreciation is due to J McDermott, UUP Oneonta Part-Time Concerns Officer, for facilitating the union presence and to UUP Membership Director Teri Weigl for signing up new UUPers at the Part-Time Faculty Orientation. Kudos to Associate Vice President for Administration Lisa Wenck and Acting Director of Human Resources Gail Feuer, and their staff for doing a great job organizing the Third Annual Part-Time Faculty Orientation. Thanks also to all those College employees who staffed various tables.]

Tuesday, August 28th from 5-7 pm Lee Hall was hopping! This was a one-stop shopping evening event for part-time faculty. Approximately 30 faculty came through the door on the bottom level of Lee Hall. Among the tables at the orientation were the Registrar's Office, Milne Library, Academic Computing, Telecommunications, TLTC, Human Resources, and UUP, to name a few. Part-time faculty moved from table to table (instead of having to walk all across campus), collecting information, and in some cases, setting up their user account, getting a parking sticker, and signing up or gathering information for various services the campus offers. The atmosphere was very relaxed and social. Among the constant din of voices, there was pizza, coffee, cheese, crackers, and fruit to munch on. It was a lot of fun talking with new faculty, finding out what they are teaching and where they come from, and seeing the excitement in their faces to be starting a semester as an instructor at the college.

The UUP table was staffed by Tom Horvath, Janie Forrest-Glotzer, Bill Simons, J. McDermott, and me. We welcomed the new part-time faculty, talked a bit about what they are teaching, and then discussed the benefits of being a UUP member. We even signed up 10 new members! I think this valuable opportunity also gave the new faculty a chance to meet each other, take time to gab a little bit with staff already on campus, and helped them feel somewhat more a part of the big picture.

For any new part-time or full-time faculty who may not have been able to attend any of the orientations, please keep in mind that you can become a member of UUP at any time. If you're not sure if you are a member, you can check your pay stub. If your pay stub has dues taken out under UUP membership, then you are a member. If you have dues taken out under Agency Fee, then you are not a member of UUP. Becoming a member is easy – there is a simple form to fill out, usually attached to this newsletter. However, if you need a form or want more information about membership, please feel free to get in touch with me at [weiglta@oneonta.edu](mailto:weiglta@oneonta.edu) or give me a call at x3079. I'd be happy to talk with you. As the old saying goes, there's power in numbers!

### PLEASE RETAIN FOR YOUR RECORDS

You are not a member of the union until the UUP Administrative Office receives your signed membership application.

All Professional Services Negotiating Unit members pay an agency fee equal to union dues, even if they do not join the union.

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Annual membership dues in United University Professions are: 1 percent of employee's basic annual salary for employees at or above the minimum salary negotiated for the bargaining unit; nine-tenths of 1 percent of employee's annual salary for employees earning less than the minimum salary negotiated for the bargaining unit.

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Dues paid to United University Professions may qualify as business expenses and may be deductible in limited circumstances subject to various restrictions imposed by the Internal Revenue Code.

## *Peruvian Stew: Labor Recipe*

By Gina L. Keel, Academic Delegate and Disabilities Officer

(Editor's Note: This culinary offering is part of an on-going series featuring the favorite recipes of UUPers. Chapter members are invited to submit their own expressions of gastronomical solidarity for publication in The Sentinel. To submit a recipe, e-mail Bill Simons at SimonsWM@Oneonta.Edu)

Enjoy this healthy and tasty meal in any season!

2 C Onions, chopped	2 cloves Garlic, chopped
2 T Vegetable oil	1 stalk Celery, chopped
1 Medium Carrot, sliced into disks	1 Large Green bell pepper, chopped in 1" pieces
1 C Zucchini, cubed	1 C Vegetable or chicken broth
1 can (14.5 oz.) stewed tomatoes, chopped	2 t Ground cumin
1 t Ground coriander	½ t Chili powder
2 t dried oregano	Cayenne pepper to taste (optional)
1 t Salt, or to taste	
2 C cooked Quinoa (high-protein grain), couscous or rice	

### GARNISHES

2 T fresh cilantro, chopped  
1 C Cheddar cheese, grated

Cook grains and set aside.

Warm a stock pot; add oil; saute onions and garlic until translucent; stir to prevent sticking. Add celery and carrots; sauté and stir for 5 minutes. Add pepper, zucchini, tomatoes and broth. Stir in the cumin, coriander, chili powder, cayenne and oregano. Cover and simmer for approximately 10 minutes, until vegetables are tender. Add salt to taste. Stir cooked grains into stockpot, or serve stew on top of grains in warm bowls. Garnish each bowl with ½ T cilantro and ¼ C grated cheese.

Serve hot or warm.

Yield: 4 servings

### ***Raising the Bar at SUNY: More Fulltime Faculty Needed***

For New York to regain its lost stature, it needs a state university system competitive with the very best in the nation. As the Albany **Times-Union** notes, the key is hiring more fulltimefaculty, and UUP has been pointing the way. The following is from the Sunday, June 3, 2007, edition of the Albany **Times-Union**:

Why can't the State University of New York be more like the University of California, or any of the other prestigious state university systems throughout the nation?...For openers, SUNY needs to hire more full-time faculty. No university system can attain academic stature, much less compete with the systems in California, Michigan, Virginia and elsewhere, by continuing to rely, as SUNY does, on large numbers of adjunct faculty and graduate assistants to share an ever growing teaching load. A low ratio of full-time faculty sends a message that SUNY isn't serious about scholarship, and discourages top scholars from considering a SUNY career.

The union that represents SUNY faculty, United University Professions, has been making this case for a long time.

# Notes from the Part Time Concerns Desk

By J McDermott, Part-Time Concerns Officer

Just a couple of quick thoughts this month: one international, and one local.

First, it's an odd number year again (2007), so that means there'll be another biennial international observation of ...“Campus Equity Week”. It comes late in October, right around Halloween. Campus Equity Week (CEW) is a week of action to call attention to the working conditions of part-time/adjunct faculty and other contingent faculty all around the world. CEW is a varied collection of events locally conceived and loosely coordinated by a national steering committee made up of campus labor activists and organizations.



For information, visit the CEW homepage at [www.campusequityweek.org/2007/](http://www.campusequityweek.org/2007/). I've heard from some members words to the effect that “we're doing okay here, why should we pay attention?”, and I guess my response is “Yeah, but...” as in “Yeah, but don't forget it took a lot of our hard work to get where we are...” and “Yeah, but we're still in a pretty precarious position...” and “Yeah, but it's all about solidarity, isn't it?” So I'm looking forward to a chance for some more consciousness and conscience raising. And you want some candy corn , too?

The local point is about that hard work: would you participate in the Part-Time Concerns work here on this campus? It can be any member, Full-Time or Part-Time. It can be as little or as much time as you can give. I would love to have a Part-Time Concerns link in every department and office that has part timers or adjuncts : someone who can hear a question or a concern, and point it toward me or the union office. Or would you like to participate in a Part-Time/Adjunct forum once or twice a year? Can you help build a Part-Time Concerns committee here? It's much easier for me to find you if you step forward, because after all, I'm an adjunct here myself, and therefore I'm not on campus every day!

## A Little is A Lot: VOTE-COPE

By Kyle Britton, Director, VOTE-COPE



Ever use a coal stove to heat a home and/or cook dinner? As a child, I remember traveling south to Harlan County, KY, deep in the mining hollers of the Appalachians to visit my Grandmother Annie and my Uncle Charlie. All they had was kenneling of wood and coal to cook and heat their home. My uncle and I, would go to the coal shed with a small pick, a sledge hammer, and a five gallon water pail; and would go break bricks coal into smaller chunks, toss it in our yellow bucket, and turn to the kitchen to fill up the stove.

Why do we break the coal?” I remember asking my uncle like a broken record. His response was, “The coal is too big to fit in the stove and besides a little is a lot. You will see.” And he was right! A little was a lot! We filled up the stove at eight in the morning, and the house stayed heated till about seven at night in time for the Kentucky rain to fall.

So, it might be crazy that I'm comparing black chunks of coal to the members of the UUP. But, my point is simple! A little contribution helps a lot to keep the UUP wheels turning and your voice being heard!

*Fill out the form and send to the address listed.*

### PLEASE RETAIN FOR YOUR RECORDS

VOTE/COPE is the non-partisan political action fund of UUP and its affiliate, New York State United Teachers. It coordinates the voluntary contributions of members and makes contributions to UUP/NYSUT-endorsed candidates and to UUP/NYSUT-supported general campaign committees

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