



## Wisconsin, New York, and the Imperiled American Middle Class:

A UUP/OTA Panel/Teach-In — Thursday, April 28, 7 PM,  
Craven Lounge, Morris Hall

*By Bill Simons, Chapter President*

UUP and the Oneonta Teachers' Association (OTA) will sponsor a panel discussion, "Wisconsin, New York, and the Imperiled American Middle Class," on Thursday, April 28th at 7 PM in Craven Lounge, Morris. The program is free



and open to all. Dr.

Renee Walker, Presiding Officer of the College Senate, UUP Grievance Officer, and Associate Professor, Anthropology, will serve as moderator. The panel includes Michael Lynch, City of Oneonta Alderman, local labor activist, with 21 years experience helping workers organize, and IWW member; Cary Brunswick, former managing editor of *The Daily Star*, a freelance writer, and editor

of [oneontatoday.com](http://oneontatoday.com); and Edward Quinn, State UUP Membership Development Director and longtime union leader. Quinn and Lynch both participated in the recent Wisconsin rallies. Following formal remarks by the panelist, a discussion forum, featuring audience questions and comments, will follow.

The panel will examine attempts in Wisconsin and other states to strip public unions of collective bargaining rights as well as the significance of anti-unionism for the American middle class and for workers in New York. Panelists will also provide contextualization concerning the relationship between union animus and taxation, income distribution, education, health benefits, and political agendas.

The purpose of the panel is to transcend contemporary attacks on unions by promoting thoughtful, civil, and open dialogue. As Brunswick observes (*The Daily Star*, 3/12/11),

*It is unfortunate that with the changing times and sour economy so many people are struggling to afford health insurance, most big businesses have scrapped pension plans and governments are facing budget crises.*

*It is also unfortunate that we have to point our fingers with disdain at our public employees because they have what everyone should have.*



## **Living in the Moment and Thinking about the Future: Adjusting to New Realities**

*By Rob Compton, Vice President for Academics*

It's time to take a deep breath, a step back, and recalibrate and rebalance. This article is written for those who feel overwhelmed and increasingly confused in the current moment in history. The most intrinsic of all questions remains, through thick and thin, "why do we do what we do?" Centering on this specific question makes us realize that most other things remain just commentary, when we strip everything away.

### **Sign of the Times**

I begin by asking a basic question. "What do you envision for the future of higher education, and more specifically the College at Oneonta?" I don't have the answer for you, but too often we get caught up in our daily lives and forget to reflect on these things. During these tough economic times coupled with a relentless attack on public employees and education, it's easy to become depressed and overly defensive. Sabbaticals at institutions are being cut and pay decreases are not uncommon. Many SUNY campuses have reduced department budgets while other systems have instituted a quota system on the number of faculty who will receive tenure or promotions. No doubt about it, even the discussions about a "government shutdown" permeate the air, creating a sense of fatality.

If you are a full-time faculty member, you probably work 60-70 hours a week. If you work less than 40, well.... we won't even go there because you are a thief. Given the number of hours that many of us work, we are akin to a guinea pig on a wheel. Sometimes, it's important to stop and recalibrate.

Recalibration requires a re-assessment of our goals and objectives and a reflection on the intrinsic question about higher education. Isn't it ironic that it's difficult to remain focused on working with our students (our primary responsibility) because there are too many distractions? You know what I mean: this or that meeting, assessment, service, publications, and conferences. We do these things increasingly to survive. In the past, some of these actually brought us joy and a sense of satisfaction. We need to return to our core foundations of intrinsic value in educating, scholarship, and service. These three components are for narcissistic self-adulation.

### **Why I Remain Hopeful**

I remain at this College only because of the community, the friends, and a sense of purpose I derive from teaching. Despite the workload creep, technical and administrative difficulties, my community is firmly rooted in ALS. They are part of my circle of friends and we depend on each other for survival in an increasingly callous and neoliberal higher education climate that de-professionalizes and denigrates the role of the liberal arts. UUP provides the

breadth for me. It gives me an opportunity to reach out to people in other departments, both professional and faculty.



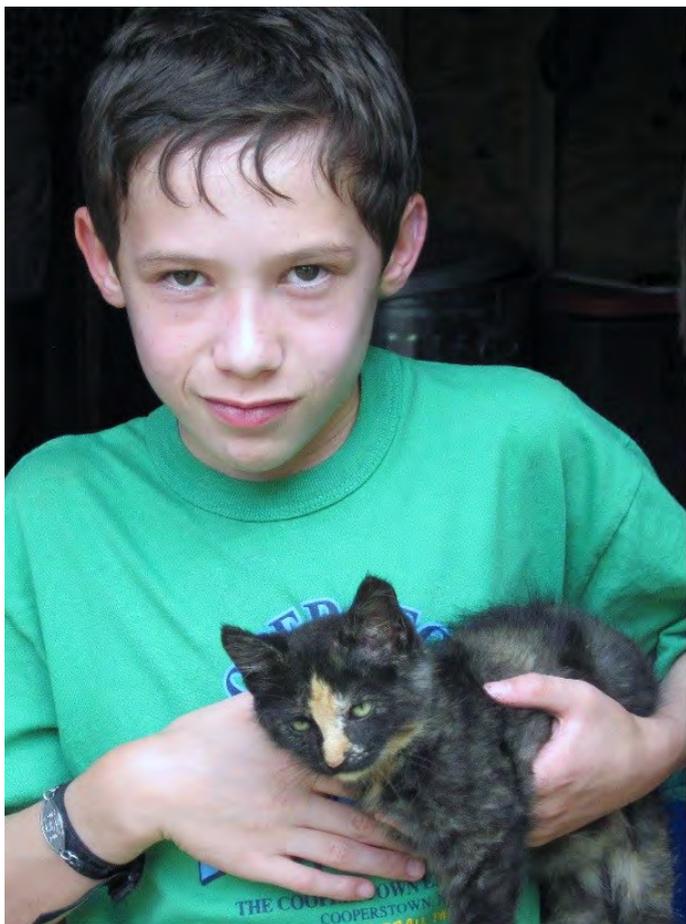
**SADC SIM from the 36th Annual New York African Studies Association meeting, March 25-26**

Despite the onslaught of neoliberalism, the commodification of education and even personal relations, I remain hopeful. There is another way. Cherish your friendships, look to the intrinsic value of education, and the meaning of a scholarly life and you will be blessed richly. Work an honest day for honest pay. And a message to those who are only self-interested: "In the end we are all dead, so do the right thing."

# Autism and Jonathon

By Matthew and Michelle Hendley

[Editor's Note: UUPers Matthew Hendley, Associate Professor, History, and Michelle Hendley, Associate Librarian, served on UUP's initial panel on the Autism Spectrum.]



## Part One: Autism and Jonathon

We are the parents of, and advocates for Jonathon, age 10, who was diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) at age 3. He is currently enrolled in the 4th grade in a special education class at Center Street Elementary School. Jonathon has a wide range of interests. He enjoys playing the saxophone, horse-back riding and teaching us how to play Wii Super Mario.

We recently asked him what he wanted to tell people about being autistic and he replied: "Having a good memory." Jonathon is considered to be a high functioning child on the autism spectrum: He is able to communicate verbally and does not have the symptoms of classic autism (for example, engagement in repetitive movements such as rocking and twirling, or in self-abusive behavior such as biting or head-banging). Physically he looks "normal" and he does not have any impairment of gross motor skills. In fact, he is quite athletic

and physical education is one of his best subjects in school. Nevertheless, he still faces considerable challenges that are not obvious to people who are unaware that he has an autism spectrum disorder. His disability is invisible and there are consequences to having an invisible disability.

Initially, when we had concerns about his development, it was difficult to articulate to others the types of challenges he was facing. For example, his language was not where it should be. When he was 2 and 3 he parroted things back to us, his language was random and not functional. The response we usually received from family and friends was that boys are late talkers. There was also some perception that this disorder is not a serious condition that requires a great deal of intervention. People can be very judgmental with respect to behaviors that individuals on the spectrum display such as temper tantrums, self-stimulating behavior such as hand-flapping, or blurting out non-sequiturs. For example, John Elder Robinson, author of the book, *Look me in the eye: my life with Asperger's*, was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome (AS) at age 40. Prior to being diagnosed with AS, he was labeled

“social deviant”, “sociopath” and “psycho”. Additionally, he was told that he “looked like a criminal” because he did not make eye contact with other people (a typical symptom of ASD) because he found this to be very distracting.

Jonathon’s disorder means that he experiences the world in a considerably different manner than many people. He has sensory integration dysfunction which means he has difficulty processing and integrating sensory information. Once we discovered this, we found that it was critical to understand in order to reduce tantrums, aggressiveness and a tendency to bolt. Many children with autism experience unusual responses to sensory stimuli. Vision, hearing, touch, smell, taste, the sense of movement and the sense of position can all be affected. Sometimes stimuli that seem “normal” to others can be experienced as painful and/or confusing by the child with sensory integration dysfunction. With Jonathon, his hearing, sense of smell and sight, touch and taste were hyper-sensitive.

His hyper-sensitivity led to some peculiar phenomena. Jonathon hears certain noises several seconds before we do. Whenever he heard a train, he would run to go and look at it. Fire drills at school cause great anxiety. A fire alarm is loud for us but the sound is even more intense for him: it is like a drill in his head. When he was younger, he would get very angry at the telephone when it rang. To him, it was a very sudden loud noise which was piercing. Jonathon was also orally defensive. His mouth was very sensitive and he was an extremely picky eater. He had difficulty in brushing teeth because he would not open his mouth and he would clamp the brush between his teeth so it could not move and this led to numerous cavities. For a time, he would not wear certain types of clothing like long sleeve shirts or jeans because they hurt his skin. The gymnasium at his daycare was also a problem; not only was it loud but there were echoes which disoriented him. Temple Grandin, a professor of animal science at the University of Colorado, Fort Collins, and who is on the autism spectrum, has written several books about living with autism. She stated that for an autistic person “Wal-Mart is like being inside the speaker at a rock and roll concert.” Fortunately, occupational therapy can address many of these sensory issues.

In addition to the sensory problems, Jonathon had other challenges. Jonathon had difficulty communicating, particularly prior to the age of 6. Consequently, he could not say “Those lights are hurting my eyes or the noise in the next room is distracting me or the fire alarm hurts my ears.” He also had sleep dysfunction and was chronically fatigued. There is evidence that children on the spectrum do not produce enough melatonin, a naturally occurring chemical which regulates sleep. Overall his environment was hostile and he was exhausted. He had difficulty interacting with peers. His response to many of many of these challenges was to fight or flee. Life is not easy for a child with autism and it took our family much time to work out a plan which would best suit him.

## Part Two: Services and Social Stories

In dealing with Jonathon’s developmental disability, we have been greatly assisted by a wide range of services available in Oneonta. We have also had to be creative in coming up with our own alternative strategies such as social stories.

### *Autism and Jonathon (continued)*

The Hendley family has been fortunate in being able to access a wide range of services in New York State. Between the ages of birth to age two, Jonathon had access to evaluation services through the New York State Department of Health's Early Intervention Program. When he began day care at the Bugbee Children's Center, he received speech therapy and the services of a special education teacher, and later occupational therapy. From age three to five, Jonathon accessed services through the Oneonta City School District's Committee on preschool special education. When he was 3 years old, it was recommended that Jonathon change his preschool program to the Kids Unlimited Program located on the campus of Springbrook. This day program was an integrated program which provided preschool educational services to children with and without developmental disabilities. Jonathon greatly benefitted from this program which helped him prepare for kindergarten.

Jonathon is currently in grade four at Center Street Elementary School. As a school age child, he is now eligible for services delivered at the school and accessed through the Oneonta City School District's Committee on Special Education (CSE). As part of this process, we meet every year with the CSE Chair, Jonathon's teachers and therapists in order to develop an Individual Education Plan which maps out the services he will receive. At Center Street School, Jonathon is in a classroom with a special education teacher and has the services of a licensed teaching assistant to help him keep on task. He has the right to testing accommodations for state and other tests. He receives speech therapy and counseling (to deal with anxiety). Best of all, he is able to mainstream with non-special needs children for science, art, music and special education. This allows him to feel part of a larger group and gives him opportunities to model appropriate behavior. Jonathon has also been eligible to participate in a summer school program to maintain his academic skills.

We also pay for some additional activities and therapies out of our own pockets. Outside of the school day, he takes swimming lessons on weekends at the YMCA. To help him improve his swimming skills, he has been in both regular classes and adaptive lessons. He has begun a new additional therapy called hippo therapy through an organization called Athelas located in Otego. This new therapy involves education through horseback riding and horse grooming. This therapy has helped Jonathon with balance, self-confidence and calmness. Finally we have been able to use a respite care program during the summer through Springbrook to provide care after Jonathon's summer school is over. Naturally keeping track of all of these programs takes a considerable amount of work. We have a service coordinator, Mr. Hank Lobb, who works through Springbrook and meets with us at our home every few months to help coordinate services and work our way through a maze of paperwork.

Although we have received excellent services through Springbrook, the Oneonta City School District and the county, sometimes we are forced to help ourselves. This is where social stories come in. Autistic children have major problems dealing with the abstract. They have trouble understanding rules of behavior without concrete examples. Similarly, they have trouble anticipating future events which can cause anxiety. Finally, they cannot properly filter sensory stimuli and often become so overwhelmed they have meltdowns and tantrums. These explosions are much less frequent in our home now. However, when Jonathon was younger, he threw furniture and telephones, screamed, bit, scratched and displayed other kinds of disruptive behavior. We have the mental scars to prove it!

One of our do-it-yourself solutions has been the use of social stories. Social stories are self drawn cartoon like sce-

## Autism and Jonathon (continued)

narios. They can show a sequence of good behavior and indicate why one type of behavior is not acceptable. Social stories can also calm down an autistic child by breaking down a seemingly overwhelming set of sensory stimuli or situations into smaller digestible chunks. Social stories also can help map out a future activity or event, reduce “surprises” and help planning and self-scheduling. Finally social stories can be a sort of picture schedule which indicate regular routines and break them down.

We had great success with social stories when Jonathon was younger. They first really began when Jonathon had the ultimate shock to his system – the arrival of a baby sister when he was five. To help him digest this rather major turn of events, Matthew began drawing social stories about mommy going to the “baby hospital.” Matthew used a big easel with a clip and drew the social stories on large pieces of sketch paper using different colored magic markers. Being rather literal, Jonathon christened all future social stories as “baby hospitals.” For the next few years, whenever he acted out or was nervous (thunderstorms, trips to Hannaford, doctor’s visits and long car trips seemed to provide the major material here), Jonathon would call for a “baby hospital.” Since Matthew is not an art professor, his drawings were rather unsophisticated. For example, Matthew’s version of an upset Jonathon was liberally borrowed from Edvard Munch’s striking image “The Scream.” The cartoons were numbered and all the scenarios contained both praise for good behavior and later examples of behavior gone astray. Now that he is almost eleven, Jonathon seems to have outgrown the social stories for the most part. However, while they lasted, they played an important part in our lives and coping repertoire.



### The Sentinel Websites and Disclaimer

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

To go to the UUP Oneonta chapter website, go to the following link [www.1ontauup.org](http://www.1ontauup.org). John Chiang and Alex Jean-Charles are UUP Oneonta Web Masters. The chapter website contains a number of innovative features and links.

The statewide UUP website is located at [www.uupinfo.org](http://www.uupinfo.org) It contains information about members benefits and many other important topics.

# Sometimes It's the Little Things That Can Get Your Goat



**Dr. Mike Green**

*By Michael Green, Philosophy Department and UUP*

In life, it often turns out that nothing is as big as the little things. One of these significant little events occurred in 1981 when President Ronald Reagan, himself an AFL-CIO member, fired ten thousand air traffic controllers, who had, ironically, supported his election bid. Replacements were found, and there was no rain of steel from the sky.

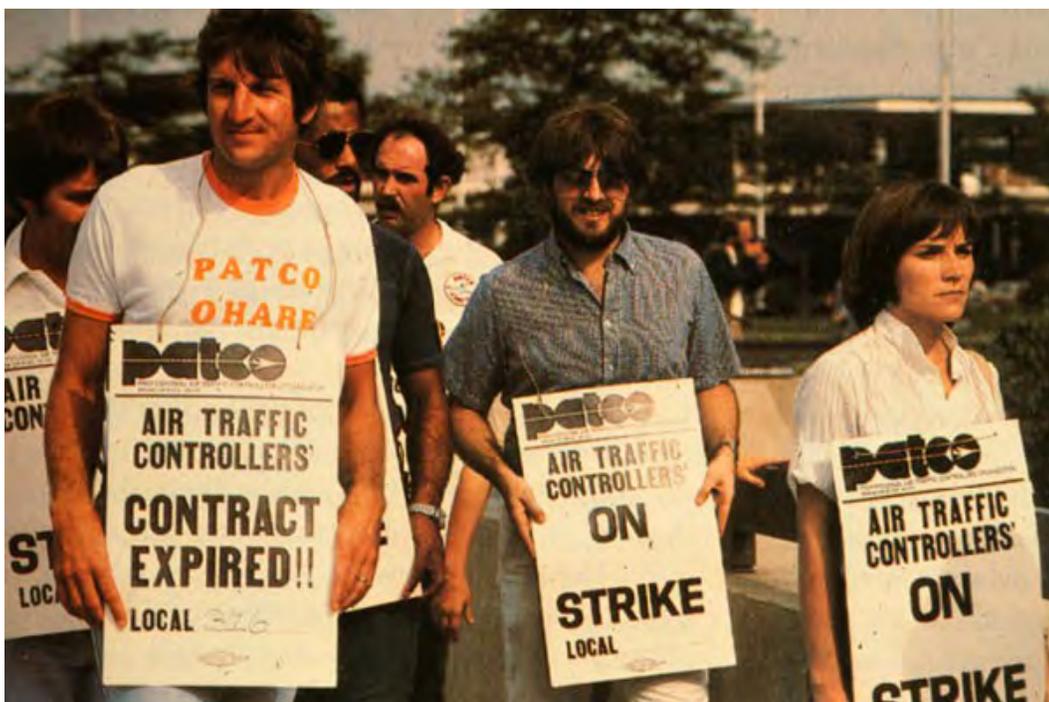
Why was this a strange turn of events? Because of all the turmoil they had been through, the Post-Depression Generation valued safety and security. Unions were thought to provide such safety by providing secure employment with benefits that buffered the insecurities of life. They became a significant uncertainty management strategy. During the uncertainties of the recession of the 1970s and 80s, though, no rush to unionization developed to manage these uncertainties. The public overwhelmingly supported Reagan's actions. Instead, unions, along with Cadillac-driving welfare mothers, became the scapegoat for the economic crisis.

The greatest period of decline in union membership since its peak occurred during the recession of 1979-1984, which took a heavy toll on unionized manufacturing. Something had indeed changed. Other laborers did not rush to manage uncertainty through unionization. As we see more clearly now, various forms of financial management, i.e., debt and speculation, replaced wage and benefit growth as a means for achieving security in an insecure world. Real wages have hardly increased since the 1970s, and houses became for many a magical ATM that allowed them to continue a middle-class lifestyle and, along with their 401Ks, would allow them to retire in style. This whole strategy is self-destructing before our eyes, and, again, unions are becoming the scapegoat.

Human beings are constantly jousting for social position. This reciprocal interplay of status competition and conspicuous consumption has led to an record-breaking consumption binge and to inflated stock and real estate prices. Eventually, the obstacles to achieving the social objects of desire become insurmountable (as a result of debt saturation in our case), and the rivals then turn on one another in a mad scramble for power and position. Violence is often the outcome. However, as Girard (whose work I am using) argued, if a third party can be found who can be blamed for the inability of the rivals to achieve what they desire, then a new identity, complete with justifying facts and norms of action, can be formed and social violence among these rivals can be avoided. This third party provides the rivals with a common desire that can be achieved, i.e., the destruction of the scapegoat.

Walker's war against workers in Wisconsin should be a wake up call for labor. Scapegoats are rarely the true causes of the disorder for which they are blamed. Somehow I thought that the excess leverage and imprudent loans made by financial institutions was the result of the unsound risk management strategies used by overconfident and in-

competent financial managers who relied upon flawed market models? I thought it was unsound political and monetary policies that were responsible for the spikes in inflation after the Korean and Vietnam wars as well as the constant creeping inflation that have, to a significant extent, made the U.S. a high-wage country and, thus, globally uncompetitive? Finally, I thought it was the failed post-Bretton Woods international currency system that allowed one country to conduct hidden neo-mercantilist raids on the countries run by Panglossian free-traders? Yet, the conversation is being shaped that greedy labor has caused our current crisis.



**Air Traffic Controllers and PATCO Unionists Fired by Reagan**

There is a long history of using labor as a scapegoat in times of crisis. The University of Chicago Boys in Chile under Pinochet abolished the minimum wage and unions. As a result, real wages declined by 20%, and unemployment more than doubled. Income inequality and poverty also increased substantially, while GDP dropped 19%. Earlier, to bring discipline to Italian workers, Mussolini abolished the eight-hour-day and reduced real wages by almost half between 1928 and 1932. Hitler's New Order similarly disciplined workers by abolishing unions, collective bargaining, and all strikes and lockouts. The latter two countries were prevented from collapse by their huge military buildup and their subsequent appropriation and cannibalization of the productive capacity of other countries.

Our current crisis is not inflation (at least not yet), but debt-driven deflation. As the next phase of deflation hits home hard, salaries and benefits are going to decline. Neither the bunglings of Bush and Obama, bent on bailing out their cronies in failed financial institutions, nor the fanatical free trade of the Tea Partiers with their fantastical Panglossian philosophical phantasms are good for American labor. The question for the next decade is whether labor can develop its own agenda instead of relying on the kindness of strangers. Labor needs an agenda that will allow it to survive this deflationary collapse and place the U.S. on the road to recovery through a policy that discourages speculation, eliminates incompetent financial institutions with failed risk-management histories, relieves debt and encourages saving, fights the neo-mercantilists raids on the U.S. industrial base, reverses the decline in manufacturing, and encourages investment in productivity-enhancing innovations in the real economy. If it is not successful, then the Reagan Revolution in 1981 will continue to be a small action with huge consequences, and labor will be a small thing of small consequence.



**Brian Madden**

# Unions Be Damned

*By Brian Madden, Communication Arts and UUP, SUNY Oneonta*

[Editor's Note: Prior to joining the Communications Department at SUNY Oneonta, UUPer Brian Madden enjoyed a long stint "in the Big Apple, reporting and anchoring at CNN or FOX TV, or WCBS, WINS, or NBC and ABC Network Radio Sports,..(and) covering RFK, Nixon, and Giuliani. Broadcasting from the Olympic games in Sarajevo, and Los Angeles; covering the World Series; braving threats, and being thrown at, during unrest in the streets so many decades ago...(which) was all part of the gig."]

What's this: politicians don't care for the people who vote them into office? Impossible, but... based on current revelations, the GOP has evolved from Grand Old Party, into Goons, Ogres, Parasites. People who voted for Republicans, Teabaggers, and conservatives, are now finding it out. Under the guise of "budget deficits," dictatorial laws are proposed, in Wisconsin, New Jersey, Indiana, Ohio, and others elsewhere.

Googling around, finds:

Cheese Stater, Scott Walker, came into office with a potential 137-million dollar surplus. Within days it was gone, as he buttered up his wealthy cronies who got tax-break gifts from their churning new puppet ([veracitystew.com](http://veracitystew.com)).

Huh?

What he and his backers, Karl Rove and the Koch (pron. coke) brothers really want is to end unions and collective bargaining rights; to privatize state offices. Like Bush/Cheney, Walker wants to be the sole determinant of who gets what, including no-bid contracts.

Walker seems a perfect ogre, as do 13 other governors who are trying the same. As Rove explained on Fox News, the GOP wants to stop unions because they are a traditionally strong voting base for Democrats.

Are we paying attention, here, UUP-ers?

In addition, there are radio talk shows. Ninety percent of them lean all the way to the right, issuing talking points from conservative think tanks, and the sociopathic parsings of Rush Limbaugh, who told his dumbed-down parishioners he hopes Obama "fails." This, of course, just after the right-leaning administration from 2001 - 2008, was a monstrous failure.

Wall Street, health care insurers, and the very wealthy, received all kinds of exemptions and deregulation, leading to massive foreclosures, unemployment, and a near-depression. It was the same administration that inherited a huge surplus, then put the country into massive debt, with lies leading to unwarranted war, death, destruction, and exponential profiteering for the vice president and his no-bids former company. It was the same administration that outed a CIA agent, and took no heed of the threat of 9/11.

## *Unions Be Damned (continued)*

A student asked me why is talk radio 90-percent operated by right-wingers.

It's simple, the conservative corporate titans want to influence public opinion. These vampires, many who don't pay corporate taxes, want to suck out even more (blood?) money, and they don't like being governed by such things as green laws, despite obscene profits. Koch Industries, with major oil and gas operations, and the makers of Dixie Cups, has been fined millions for Clean Air Act violations and massive oil spills ([thinkprogress.org](http://thinkprogress.org)).

When I mention these topics in the classroom, I tell students I am not proselytizing, for they must think for themselves, but the realities of what these politicians, mainly Republicans have caused, are just too egregious to ignore. Let's remember the record number of filibusters and how spineless Democrats allowed them without challenge.

The Republicans want to privatize Social Security, Medicare, Education, Food, Infrastructure; you name it. I'm not inventing this. We should follow it just as we would earthquakes, weather, or sport scores. A special section on every newscast? Why not!

History shows where there's no government oversight, there's rampant graft and corruption, no matter the politics.

Is it possible, too, these people don't like a person of color in the White House?

The Fox News Channel (a/k/a GOP Central) doesn't hide its biased hatred for all things Obama. Fox "journalists," Beck (Obama is a "racist who hates white people"); Palin ("Let's re-load"; cross-hairs aimed at Democrats); Rove, et al.

Fair and balanced? Schizoid?

Through the many news sources on the Internet (Huffington Post, the Daily Beast, MediaMatters, liberal, yes, but citing facts), it is obvious these politicians, en masse (no mavericks allowed!), are a greedy, evil lot. I call them greevils. They kneel to corporations and ignore the people who vote for them. Special-interest lobbyists with bulging briefcases swarm the Capitol Building like locusts.

It must be a strain to live on a base salary of 174-thousand a year, plus expenses.

When I ask students if they believe Congress is "on the take," receiving other than campaign funding, most answer, 'yes.'

Millions of U.S. jobs have been outsourced to China (everything is made there, now) and countries where labor is dirt cheap, with no unions.

All that matters to political hacks is money and power. Obama (on the take, too?) bowed to them, and the rich became richer by extended tax breaks depriving the nation of hundreds of billions in revenue dollars.

If such breaks create jobs, where are they? Where have they been for the last decade? Where is that trickle down effect, Reaganites? It doth trickle into their pockets, and elsewhere, but not here.

On the thug front:

*Mother Jones* reported a conservative deputy Attorney General, in Indiana, suggesting "live ammunition" against protestors in Wisconsin, tweeting, "You're damned right I advocate deadly force." Gaddafi/Mubarak, anyone?

This guy, since fired, would be at home in Libya. So would Governor Walker, who admitted to a caller pretending to be one of the Koch brothers, that: “We thought about...” bringing in thugs to disrupt peaceful protestors.

Conspiracy to incite violence?

I tell my students I would love to be wrong, but one of them, a punkie Limbaugh wannabe, wrote of me (SPI report): “Too much liberal bullshit.” As John Boehner would say, “So be it;” but I have not, and I tell them, not ever to let it out during a newscast, which some students, too busy texting, just don’t understand.

When I served in the U.S. Army, my commander in chief was Dwight Eisenhower, a pro-unions Republican president. I admired him. He would not recognize his current party. He’d most likely have them all thrown into the brig.

These pay-for-votes Democrats and Republicans prostitute themselves for their “johns” who are plagued by ED: Electoral Dysfunction, and there’s another election coming up next year!

More of the same?

Not if all union members and citizens, interrupt this tumid assault, making it flaccid and impotent by speaking out and voting against these greevils.



## Why Wisconsin Matters

*By Craig Little, Sociology/Anthropology, SUNY Cortland*

[Editor’s Note: This article originally appeared in the March 2011 issue of *The Cortland Cause*, the newsletter of UUP Cortland and is republished with the permission of author Craig Little.]

The most prescient words I’ve ever heard, “The private sector has declared war on the public sector,” were spoken by then-UUP Local President Frank Burdick around 1980. The exact time and place eludes me; the brilliance of the observation never has. The context was the retrenchments visited on SUNY Cortland way back when—when the “R” word meant real people, real families, real jobs, REAL RETRENCHMENTS. About 30 (or was it 40) of our colleagues disappeared, along with the Campus School. (I’ve now forgotten the exact number of people, though the stunned incredulity on individual faces remains fixed).

On the national scene, the early-1980s saw the election of Ronald Reagan—an event that many Americans welcomed as “Morning in America,” a stark contrast to Frank Burdick’s dire assessment. Part of Reagan’s morning wake-up call was busting of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO). This drama, played out on the national stage, was one of the early battles in the thirty-year war foretold by Burdick. During his election campaign, Reagan wrote to PATCO’s president, “I have been briefed by members of my staff as to the deplorable state of our nation’s air traffic control system. They have told me that too few people working unreasonable hours

### ***Why Wisconsin Matters (continued)***

with obsolete equipment has placed the nation's air travelers in unwarranted danger... You can rest assured that if I am elected President, I will take whatever steps are necessary to provide our air traffic controllers with the most modern equipment available and to adjust staff levels and work days so that they are commensurate with achieving a maximum degree of public safety....”



**Wisconsin 2011**

The controllers were desperately understaffed; hours were, in their opinion, dangerously long for work that demanded razor-sharp alertness and split-second, life and death decision-making. Many of the core issues revolved around working conditions and public safety. One can easily second guess the wisdom of PATCO's decision in 1981 to call an illegal strike to press its demands. In the end, Reagan brilliantly played off the tenor of the times to break the controllers' union and fire them all. Many never again worked as air traffic controllers. Allan Greenspan, speaking in 2003 on the Reagan legacy said, "Perhaps the most important, and then highly controversial, domestic initiative was the firing of the air traffic controllers in August 1981....(because) importantly his action gave weight to the legal right of private employers, previously not fully exercised, to use their own discretion to both hire and discharge workers." The PATCO debacle became a signal incident in the decades-long erosion of workers' capacities to collectively bargain in both the public and private sectors.

Today's Wisconsin governor, with an impeccable Reagan pedigree, leads the charge embodied in his spiritual mentor thirty years before. The state's public employees unions have long-since announced their willingness to cut wages and health care as their contribution to balancing the state's budget. The issues in Wisconsin are NOT salaries and benefits. The issue is far more fundamental: the right to collectively bargain about matters such as working conditions. The governor is trying to write the first paragraph of the final chapter in the long, depressing book begun by Reagan. Make no mistake, the state du jour may be Wisconsin but the goal is national—a collective-bargaining-free country that is, in that specific respect at least, a lot like the ones we see blowing up on the evening news these days.

The challenges of fighting union busting in the present climate are daunting. Very few Americans now belong to unions. Left to their unorganized, individual devices, many citizens understandably feel isolated, vulnerable and fearful. Tony Ben, the venerable British labor leader, observes that fear is THE key to oppression. The fearful keep their heads down ever terrified they might lose what little they have. In an atmosphere ripe for scapegoats, many Americans eagerly embrace a narrative condemning those who have collectively bargained contracts in the absence of a vigorous counter-narrative explaining how collectively bargained protections could benefit them too. Most parents can understand how raising their child's third-grade classroom size from 25 to 50 is NOT in their interest. They need to be reminded.

Wisconsin matters because history may mark it as the 21st century's "air traffic controllers" event. The affluent Americans so ably represented by Reagan have, since 1980, enjoyed phenomenal success: Over those three decades, the gap between the richest 10% of Americans and the rest has become a yawning divide. Quite possibly the decisive battle in the war Frank Burdick's phrase so brilliantly captured is happening right now. We'd best join the fight.

# Public Employees Are NOT Over-Compensated

(& the Corollary is) Public Employees Cost Less to Employ Than Private Sector Employees With the Same Educational Background

By David Ritchie, Vice President for Academics, UUP Cortland, and Reference Librarian



[Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in the March 2011 issue of *The Cortland Cause*, the newsletter of UUP Cortland and is republished with the permission of author David Ritchie, right.]

Jeffrey Keefe's paper, "Debunking the Myth of the Overcompensated Public Employee: the Evidence," *EPI Briefing Paper 276* (September 15, 2010), confirms that when private-sector employees are compared by education level with public-sector state and local government employees, public employees are paid LESS than private employee counterparts. And even when including benefits, this Economic Policy Institute study (and two others) have found that total compensation is still LESS for employees with bachelor's degrees and higher levels of education! See the charts below, reproduced from the March 2009 Current Population Survey of the U.S. Census Bureau as part of the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. The study is based on a sample of 44,280 employees. In making comparisons, the author controls for education, experience, hours of work, gender, race, ethnicity, disability, the size of the organization in which the employees work, and includes only those who are employed full-time. Benefits information is taken from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics' Employer Costs for Employee Compensation, December 2009 survey.

Some facts we already "knew" were confirmed in the paper, along with some interesting other points, which can be found at [http://epi.3cdn.net/8808ae41b085032c0b\\_8um6bh5ty.pdf](http://epi.3cdn.net/8808ae41b085032c0b_8um6bh5ty.pdf).

- the level of educational attainment is the greatest determinant of earnings, and higher levels of education result in higher pay;
- in general, public sector occupations require higher levels of education;
- of the total compensation received, benefits comprise a greater percentage (34%) of that total for state and local public employees than for private-sector employees (26%-33%);
- on average, public sector employees work slightly fewer hours per week (42.6 hrs) than private sector employees (43.3 hrs);
- for employees whose highest level of education is high school to associate-degree level: only for these employees do public employees receive more in total compensation (5%-9% more) than private employees; the author theorizes that the pay gap is smaller because the public employees who are unionized in jobs at these levels have negotiated minimum pay scales which are higher than the minimum pay scales for the largely non-unionized jobs in the private sector at these educational levels; then, when benefits are factored in, the benefits difference pushes total compensation higher for these public employees than for the private employee cohort with the same educational backgrounds;

**Public Employees are NOT Over-Compensated (continued)**

· benefits mixes are different: for example, there is more vacation pay and supplemental pay (e.g., bonuses) for private-sector employees than public-sector employees; more sick leave compensation for public employees; higher health insurance costs and higher retirement costs for public employees, partly because participation rates are lower (because they are often optional) in the private sector.

The staggering results are those summarized in the table on p. 7, where, even including benefits:

- public employees with bachelor's degrees are compensated 25% less in total per hour than private sector employees with bachelor's degrees;
- public employees with master's degrees get 31% less total compensation per hour;
- public employees with doctorates get 21% less total compensation per hour; and
- public employees with professional degrees (law or medicine) get 37% less total compensation per hour than comparable employees in the private sector.

In related articles by the same author, using the same data but looking at individual states:

- Wisconsin public employees earn 4.8% LESS in total compensation per hour than comparable private employees ([http://epi.3cdn.net/9e237c56096a8e4904\\_rkm6b9hn1.pdf](http://epi.3cdn.net/9e237c56096a8e4904_rkm6b9hn1.pdf) )
- Indiana public employees earn 5.9% LESS in total compensation per hour than comparable private employees ([http://epi.3cdn.net/d73f286d5b870dc830\\_klm6bn69g.pdf](http://epi.3cdn.net/d73f286d5b870dc830_klm6bn69g.pdf) )
- Ohio public employees earn 3.5% LESS in total compensation per hour than comparable private employees ([http://epi.3cdn.net/6ddeb152266bf6714f\\_6xm6b955l.pdf](http://epi.3cdn.net/6ddeb152266bf6714f_6xm6b955l.pdf) )

It's a myth that public employees earn more or get more in total compensation per hour than their private-sector counterparts, when compared on highest educational level attained.

**Average wage earnings and total compensation (on next page) by education level in the United States:  
Private sector compared to state and local government employees**

**Annual Wage earnings**

Education	Private	Public	Compared	Public Penalty
All workers	\$55,132	\$49,072	-\$6,061	-11%
Less than high school	29,135	24,378	-4,757	-16
High School	38,269	36,640	-1,630	-4
Some college	43,152	42,108	-1,044	-2
Associate's	47,894	45,247	-2,647	-6
Bachelor's	71,781	48,874	-22,906	-32
Professional degree	152,733	88,629	-64,105	-42
Master's	93,918	60,263	-33,655	-36
Doctorate	119,878	88,625	-31,253	-26

**Total compensation by education level in the United States:  
Private sector compared to state and local government employees**

**Total Compensation**

Education	Private	Public	Compared	Public Penalty
All workers	\$71,109	\$69,108	-\$2,001	-3%
Less than high school	38,918	36,407	-2,511	-6
High School	50,596	53,880	3,284	6
Some college	56,279	61,210	4,930	9
Associate's	62,162	65,165	3,003	5
Bachelor's	91,256	68,290	-22,966	-25
Professional degree	192,977	121,192	-71,785	-37
Master's	118,918	82,297	-36,621	-31
Doctorate	151,875	120,642	-31,233	-21



## Abolitionism and Anti-Fracking

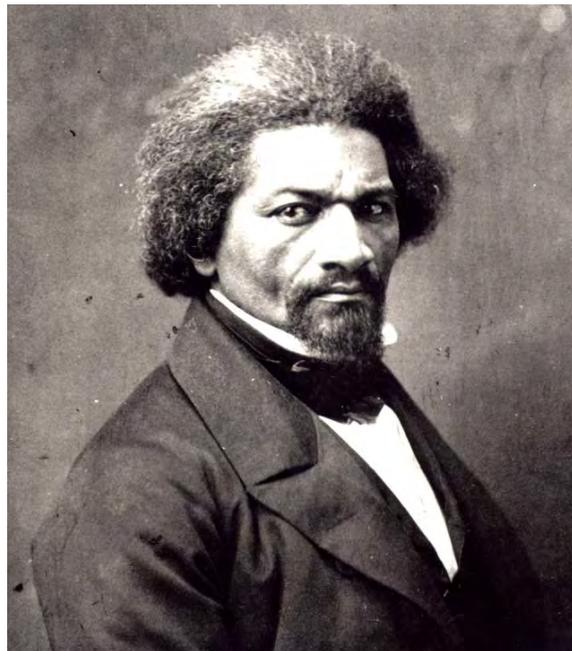
*By George Hovis, Associate Professor, English, and Member, UUP*

[Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in both *The Daily Star* and *Hometown Oneonta*. It is republished with the permission of the author.]

Recently my students in American Literature and I have been reading the nineteenth-century debates about slavery, including the positions taken by abolitionists and by those who called abolitionists bigots and extremists. We've also read examples of what were then considered moderate positions, such as John Pendleton Kennedy's *Swallow Barn*, a novel that attempted to reconcile differences between these polarized camps and to reach some compromise. Unlike the more rabid pro-slavery apologists, Kennedy felt that, in theory, slavery was wrong but that for a number of complicated practical reasons it was impossible to proceed in 1832 with a universal emancipation. He believed that, in due time, of course slavery would be abolished, but he demurred to speculate about when precisely that eventuality would arrive. For a gradualist like Kennedy, the position of fugitive slaves such as Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs, who called for immediate universal emancipation, was rash and likely to end with devastating results.

From our twenty-first century perspective, most readers praise the heroism of the abolitionists and see gradualists like Kennedy as at best blind to the sufferings of millions of human beings held in bondage. My students are often less frustrated with the southern planters directly responsible for their "peculiar institution" than they are with the

northern businessmen who were reluctant to speak out against slavery for fear of raising the price of cotton. What perhaps gets my students most upset is the Compromise of 1850, including the infamous Fugitive Slave Law, which made punishable by up to six months in prison and a \$1000 fine anyone in the free north aiding or harboring a fugitive slave. As Harriet Jacobs laments in her *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, this law facilitated the efforts of southern slave owners to come north and recapture their stolen “property,” including any children born in the north to a mother who had escaped from bondage in the South. How, my students want to know, could the population of the free states stand idly by and allow such a compromise? It is very difficult for them to appreciate the nuances of the historical context—how, for example, when Ms. Jacobs’ owners traveled to New York to reclaim their property, they were on hard times, and their slave property constituted a majority of their total property. Or, reflecting on the perhaps regrettable fact that the southern agricultural system was thoroughly built upon the system of slavery, a universal emancipation would likely cause chaos throughout the national economy. Today, of course, such nuances disappear in light of the commonly held belief that human bondage is morally reprehensible and unacceptable.



**Abolitionist Frederick Douglass**

There are those who will no doubt take offense at my comparison of the nineteenth-century effort to abolish slavery in the U.S. and a current debate that is seemingly without any possible connection: hydrofracking and the dangers it poses to the environment and particularly to our watershed. I by no means wish to equate these two issues but merely to focus on a few striking similarities in the ways the debates manifest themselves within the general public. I believe there is in most people a healthy mistrust of taking absolute positions and a belief that seeking compromise between competing ideas promotes the general good—and in most cases this may be true. I also believe most of us wish not to give offense to our neighbors or to be perceived as rigid extremists. There are times, however, when, despite seemingly rational arguments to the contrary, the correct position is an absolute position.

There are some causes where neutrality and compromise merely enable exploitation. In the early and mid 1800s, when gradualists were arguing that slavery would, of course, eventually become obsolete, pro-slavery forces were expanding westward, working diligently to open vast new territories to human bondage. Today, many believe that gradually our dependence on fossil fuels will be replaced by renewable forms of energy and serious efforts at conservation, while meanwhile our consumption continues to increase, and the gas and oil industry makes use of dangerous technologies to drill in ever deeper offshore water and increasingly ecologically vulnerable places like Upstate New York. Someone has to draw the line and say “not here.” We have to set limits on production before we will ever seriously invest in already available technologies for renewable energy. And we cannot wait for our elected officials someday to act on our behalf. We citizens must appreciate what Martin Luther King, Jr., understood in the 1960s to be the “fierce urgency of now.”

When students today look back to the often complex and nuanced debates about slavery from 150 years ago, all of the nuance disappears in light of the one fundamental truth that slavery is an abomination. 150 years from now, I believe students will be equally horrified by the way this generation treated our common environment, that we would show such reluctance to pursue aggressive development of renewable energy because it would mean shifting priorities. Today we see the economic challenges and all of the competing legitimate perspectives. 150 years from now, most of these complexities will disappear, and all that our descendants will see is whether or not we collectively allowed the gas industry to exploit and pollute our natural environment and possibly irrevocably damage our region's aquifer. It may not require 150 years for this radical change of consciousness. When a son or daughter comes to you as an adult unable to drink the water for a very rational fear of carcinogens, and she asks you, "Dad/Mom, when you had a chance to stop them, what did you do?" And you try to explain about the complex issues and how many of your neighbors were afraid of polarizing the community and how you tried to find some compromise because you didn't want to offend anyone, and how certainly the landowner coalitions had their valid arguments, and your child repeats, "But, what did you *do*?" I don't want to have to tell my children that what I *did* was *nothing*, because how would I live with myself?

For anyone wanting to take action, one place to start is to contact your local, state, and federal elected officials. Make a phone call. Start with Governor Cuomo at 518-474-8390. Write a letter or email. Attend a meeting or rally. Talk to a neighbor.



## The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire 100 Years Ago: Its Legacy and Meaning

*By Bill Simons, Chapter President*



**Triangle Shirtwaist Fire**

On March 25, 1911, 146 young women perished under grisly circumstances. They suffocated, burned, or jumped from the upper floors of their factory workplace into eternity. Primarily in their late teens and early twenties, these women, the daughters of Jewish and Italian immigrants, died because of the selfishness and apathy of their employers at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in New York's Greenwich Village. The lack of safety provisions turned fire into inferno.

From the street below, social worker Frances Perkins personally witnessed the carnage of the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire. She wrote, "I shall never forget the frozen horror that came across as we stood with our hands on our throats watching that horrible sight, knowing that there was no help."

A generation later in 1933, during the travail of the Great Depression, President Franklin Roosevelt appointed

***The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire 100 Years Ago: Its Legacy and Meaning (continued)***

Perkins Secretary of Labor. Spurred by the legacy of young women martyred by exploitive practices, Perkins participated in the coming of age of the American worker during the New Deal. Perkins played a pivotal role in the implementation of programs promoting unionization, collective bargaining, safety standards, minimum wages, limits to the work week, old age pensions, unemployment insurance, prohibitions against child labor, and other protections.



**Tragedy's aftermath**

Now, as we observe the 100th anniversary of the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire, selfish interests once again imperil the American worker. New York Senator Chuck Schumer, at a ceremony commemorating the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire, noted that Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker and other hirelings of the privileged “want to drag our nation back to 1911”:

*Today some of the far right want to rob workers of their hard-earned collective bargaining rights. They want to fray the social safety net under the false pretense of fiscal austerity.*



**Frances Perkins and the American worker**

The current, Secretary of Labor Hilda Sokis, a worthy successor to Frances Perkins, reminds us of our relationship to the victims of the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire:

*Collective bargaining still means a seat at the table to discuss issues such as working conditions, safety and innovation, empowering individuals to do the best job they can. And it means dignity and a chance for Americans to earn a better life, whether they work in sewing factories or mines, build tall buildings, care for our neighbors, teach our children, or run into burning buildings when other run out of them.*

# Why Does UUP March and Advocate? Because New York Is Not Immune

Why do UUP and NYSUT march and advocate? NYSUT President Dick Iannuzzi tells it like it is:



*New York is not immune. Attacks on seniority, tenure, Triborough protection, public pensions and benefits are very real attacks on our collective bargaining rights. Everything we believe in and have fought so hard to achieve is being demonized.*

\*\*\*\*\*

*We will not be intimidated.*

*We will not be manipulated.*

*We will not be divided.*

**UUP with SUNY Oneonta students at Legislative Office Building**

Syndicated columnist Cynthia Tucker recognizes, "The key to rejuvenating broad-based economic opportunity lies in retooling our public schools, encouraging academic accomplishment and broadening access to college." Thus we advocate for and with our students.

Do not succumb to apathy or denial. The crisis is real, and the opposition is formidable. David Rossie, retired associate editor of the Binghamton Press & Sun-Bulletin, cautions that "unionized educators...may be the last line of defense against pandering politicians who want to balance their budgets at the expense of one of our most precious natural resources. Children." When the imperious order "cut back," we must show them what democracy looks like. Regardless of the weather or our fatigue, we will continue to "fight back" with dedication and principle. Much is at stake. Stay informed — and stay active. The responsibility for protecting the promise of American education belongs to all of us. We dare not lose. In solidarity, we find our strength.



**SUNY students and UUPers meet legislators**

# Why Defend Triborough?

By Richard E. Casagrande, Esq., General Counsel, NYSUT and Deborah A. Milham, Esq., Senior Counsel, NYSUT



[Editor's Note: The *Triborough* Amendment, important to the rights of public employees in New York State, is currently under attack. The following is excerpted from: Richard E. Casagrande, Esq., General Counsel, NYSUT and Deborah A. Milham, Esq., Senior Counsel, NYSUT, "Why We Defend Triborough," *NYSUT United*, March 2011. UUP part of NYSUT (New York State United Teachers).]

The legislature in 1982 enacted the *Triborough* Amendment... making it an improper practice for an employer "to refuse to continue all the terms of an expired agreement until a new agreement is negotiated," unless the union violated the no-strike provision. This meant that all provisions of the contract, except those specifically intended by the parties to sunset on a certain date would continue until a successor agreement was negotiated—unless, of course, the union engaged in a strike... Repeal of the *Triborough* Amendment would have a chilling effect on public sector labor relations. Public employers would regain the power to eliminate or diminish important contract provisions when negotiating a new contract. They would have an incentive to delay negotiations past the contract's expiration date so they could alter your contract unilaterally.



## UUP and the New Solidarity: Proposals for Our Future

By Bill Simons, Chapter President

UUP has a long and proud history. One hallmark of our UUP culture is a receptivity toward dialogue and new ideas. Here a few proposals to consider, discuss, and debate.

1) Get the message out to the public. We are at a historic crossroads. Through demagoguery, fear tactics, and big lies, our opponents have done an effective—and unfair -- job of making public sector unions, particularly those in education, the scapegoats of all ills. Let's wage an informed, articulate, and accessible dialogue that points out that the rants of the economic elite against public sector unions and collective bargaining are part of a larger agenda to destroy the American middle class. Make it evident in word and action that unions fight for health care benefits and pensions for all Americans—and that the super-rich must pay their fair share of taxes. UUP needs to be in the forefront of a new solidarity that extends far beyond our membership;



Solidarity Forever: Bill and UUP Supporter, Granddaughter Lily, Mining for SUNY

*UUP and the New Solidarity: Proposals for Our Future (continued)*

- 2) Revive and transform a former entity into a new SUNY Mayors/Community Advocates Coalition comprised of elected and other leaders, ready to work with individual chapters and State UUP, to advocate for public higher education
- 3) Reform Election of State Officers and State Executive Board protocols so that:
  - All UUP members, rather than the DA, comprise the electorate: democratic elections require this
  - All elections take place in the same year
  - The president and two vice presidents run as a team in the same manner as the U.S. president-vice president and the New York governor-lieutenant governor
  - Clear definition and reconsideration of duties of officers in a new UUP constitution
  - Regional forums, electronic candidate debates, and other means of greatly enlarging candidates' direct contact with the voters: elections are only contested on a level playing ground with accessible dialogue between candidates and the electorate
  - Term limits are instituted;
- 4) A State UUP Service Corps to facilitate volunteerism, underlying that our mission of promoting a just society extends beyond the direct needs of our membership;
- 5) Establishment by State UUP of a series of professional quality, template survey instruments, ready for chapters to use-as-is or adapt, including separate and distinct instruments dealing with the concerns of professionals, fulltime faculty, part-timers, and specific issues as well as evaluation of campus management;
- 6) Creation of an organization of chapter presidents who set their own agenda and elect as their own convener/presiding officer a fellow chapter president;
- 7) To encourage campus administrations to adopt best prevailing practices, the availability of current data, campus by campus, of data on such matters as adjunct compensation, summer school compensation, extra service pay, and course load;
- 8) Development of a UUP-sponsored journal featuring articles **written by our members**, highlighting the centrality of our work to SUNY, integrating the union more fully into the scholarship of members, and rendering the work of specialists accessible to an intelligent lay audience;
- 9) Creation of a UUP Speakers Bureau linked to the UUP website, encompassing all UUP/SUNY campuses, providing abstract length descriptions of lectures, concise but specific information about presenters, and contact information as a means of heightening public awareness of the contributions of UUPers and of SUNY. Negotiations concerning invitations to present would then be left between potential sponsoring groups and the presenter;
- 10) Conducting a greater range of programs and forums on the chapter and state levels on topics that speak to our members' and neighbors' needs and interests on such topics as diversity, disabilities/exceptionalities, college-community relations, and the development/protection of human and natural resources. Beyond traditional panels, these programs may entail use of UUPers' gifts of music, theater, poetry, and film.

# UUP Labor- Management Meeting Notes: March 21, 2011

By Tom Horvath, Secretary

For UUP: Rob Compton, Janet Frankl, Tom Horvath, Hanfu Mi, Norm Payne, Bill Simons, Darryl Wood

For Management: Todd Forman, Nancy Klenewski, Dan Larkin, Steve Perry, Lisa Wenck

Guest: Jim Dix, UUP Chapter President, Binghamton University

Meeting started at 3:00

I. Budget Update: Management is still waiting for state budget details. They continue to look for savings via the vacancy review procedures.

II. Information concerning establishment of planning groups for retrenchment or deactivation of Programs. Management repeated that they have no plans for retrenchment or deactivation of Programs at this time. It is the President's Cabinet that is responsible for exploring avenues for revenue savings. UUP noted that it is requested by Statewide to ask this question regularly.

III. Report on SUNY advocacy activities. There were plans to offer 2 seats in a van that was to head up to Albany to do advocacy for SUNY and SUNY Oneonta during SUNY Day, but the Chancellor cancelled the event due to the expedited budget process. Management and UUP agree that joint advocacy is critical to being effective in Albany, especially during these austere times. Jim Dix (UUP Chapter President, Binghamton) reported on the successes that BU has had in this direction, with UUP, CSEA, and MC all on the same bus with a coordinated message. Cortland also has a version of joint advocacy that could serve as a model.

IV. Draft statement concerning observances of religious holidays distributed at the last meeting. Based on UUP's requests to include staff, faculty and students in a religious holiday observance policy, Management will likely be sending out 3 notices to each group (professionals, academics, students). Management wants to establish a policy that is germane to all groups on campus.

V. Information concerning opportunities for local high school students to receive course credit from College at Oneonta. UUP opened a discussion around the previous Community Conversations that focused on interactions between SUNY Oneonta and local school districts. Management has not been approached specifically by any district. It was mutually noted that students in high school can take College courses at Oneonta by registering. Both UUP and Management agreed to continue looking into the issue of more cooperation in the future.

VI. Cabinet approved \$15,000 allotment to build some new faculty carrels to offset the loss of the carrels that were in the area where the Technology Center was constructed. Management reported that the Library Committee is involved with this issue and how to better use the space resources in the future. The \$15,000 is still allocated to that effort. Part of the concern remains the extent to which the carrels are utilized.

VII. Report on the new directions for the Honors Program. Management reported that the Honors Advisory Committee is dealing with handling input from the College Community. Management noted that the Honors Program had atrophied and that its success is important for the College as the best students seek these types of challenges. No proposals have been forwarded yet.

VIII. Are there ongoing discussion concerning revision of the promotion criteria? Management was unaware of official discussions going on about revising any promotion procedures. Management noted that there have been no changes in promotion polices as noted in the Faculty Handbook and the SUNY Board of Trustees Policies.

IX. Content and status of new procedures and evaluation mechanisms concerning sabbaticals. Management reported that at present, no new procedures have been developed to administer the change in how sabbaticals will be granted. The Provost reported at a different venue that half-year sabbaticals will be granted more conservatively, but that full-year sabbaticals will remain as before. UUP asked about the reported \$158,000 savings this will create. Management reported that on average 2 courses are filled with adjuncts per half-year sabbatical. Rarely is there a \$0 cost to such sabbaticals. They mentioned that the College has been too liberal in the past with half-year sabbatical requests. However, for the coming semester, Management noted that there is no official change in sabbatical policy at this time.

X. Status of the College Handbook. This topic was delayed.

XI. Other terms and conditions.

a. UUP raised the concern of how the data being collected by the seemingly increasing number of online surveys are being used.

b. UUP raised a question as to the College's plan to change enrollment numbers of transfer students. Management reported that they plan for no changes in the targeted numbers. Increasing transfer student enrollment is not used as a strategy for increasing revenue.



## **UUP Diversity Panel Discussion IV, March 9th, 2011**

On March 9th, 2011, the Fourth UUP Diversity Panel discussion was held at the Otsego Grill, Morris Hall. This was again a well attended and successful event. The panelist included 1) Dr. Leah Bridgers, Assistant Professor, Department of Mathematics, Computer Science, and Statistics; 2) Ms. Maria Montoya, Lecturer, Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures; 3) Dr. Yuriy Malikov, Assistant Professor, Department of History. The panel was moderated by Dr. Nithya Iyer, Assistant Professor, Educational Psychology, Counseling and Special Education.



**Left to Right: Yuriy Malikov, Leah Bridgers, Maria Montoya, and Nithya Iyer**

In this panel discussion, we continued our discussions to raise awareness among our diverse faculty members. The panelist discussed their experiences related to accents, gender, sexual orientation, minorities, and national origin. You may access a videotape of the program on the UUP website.

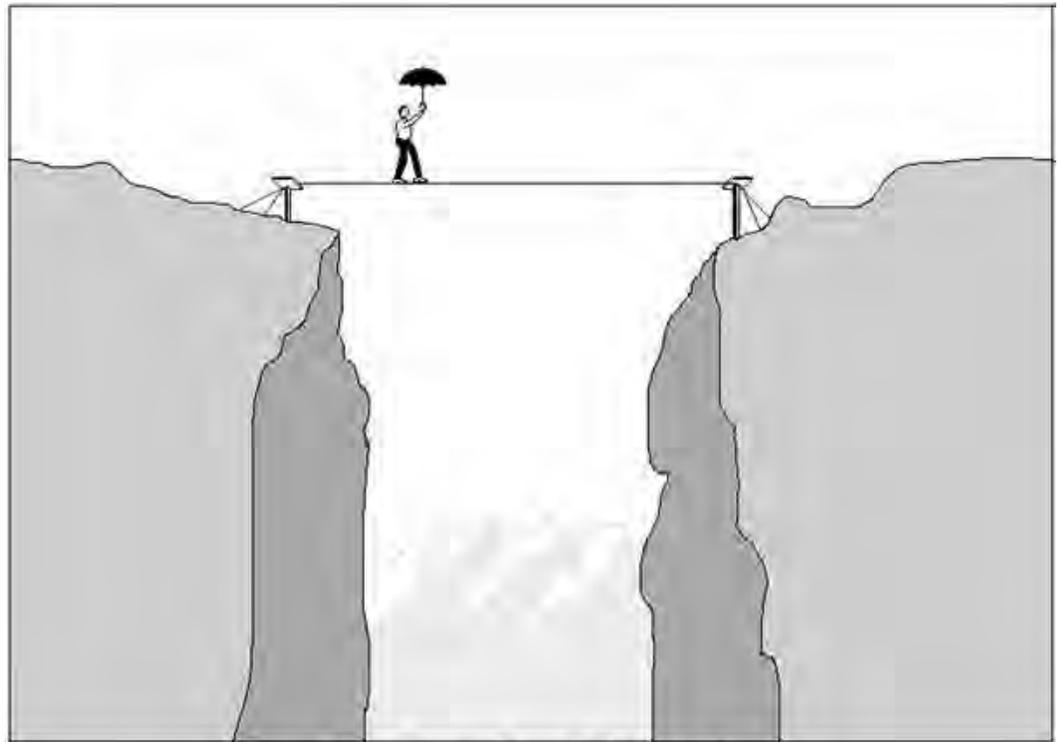
# Endangering Retirees: The Art of Political Commentary

By Fred Miller, Retiree Representative and Outreach Representative

Social ---Security?

Writing news about Retiree's interests at this time is virtually impossible. The "news" item of one day is frequently contradicted, on one hand or overwhelmed on the other hand by the reports of the next day.

With that caveat in mind and being aware of the time between when this is being written and the time it will be published and of the time between its publication and the time you may read it. It may or may not still be a "hot-button" item. It has to do with the fact that Members of the House of Representatives voted to reduce the funding of the Social Security Administration.



If the retiree is up there, all alone, without a pension or Social Security or healthcare insurance how can they call it, Death "**DEFYING**"?

It was reported that late on Saturday, Feb.19, the U.S. House of Representatives voted 235-189 in favor of (H.R. 1), a spending bill for the remainder of this fiscal year. That bill would cut the funding of the Social Security Administration (SSA) by a total of an estimated \$1.7 billion below what is needed to maintain promised service levels and current projects. This would shut down Social Security offices for one month of the seven remaining this year; eliminate 3,500 jobs; delay payment of earned benefits for hundreds of thousands of retirees, survivors, and disabled workers; and force SSA to ignore billions of dollars in over-payments that could be returned to the trust fund. The action came despite a veto threat from President Obama. A tally of how each House member voted on the spending bill is available at <http://bit.ly/eu7iSq>.

Earlier, in that same week the House had voted 239-187 in favor of an amendment offered by Rep. Denny Rehberg (R-MT) to block Congressional funding for implementation of the health care reform law. A tally of that vote is now available at <http://bit.ly/ibYH8s>.

It is, clearly, a time in the history of the United States for retirees (and "pre-retirees") to be nervous.

# Sausage & White Bean Cassoulet

By Janet Frankl, Professional Delegate, and Jim Frankl

[Editor's Note: Professional Delegate Janet Frankl and her husband Jim are excellent chefs. They serve as cooks at *Saturday's Bread*.]

The lima beans are a surprising and tasty addition to this cassoulet.

- 1 T olive oil
- 1/2 lb sweet Italian sausage
- 1 lb kielbasa, cut into slices
- 3 leeks, white & pale green parts only, sliced.  
Rinse well after slicing.
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 ½ c sliced carrot
- 1 T fresh rosemary or 1/2 t dried
- 1 t dried sage
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 c (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes with juice
- 2 or 3 drops Tabasco sauce
- 1 can (14.5 oz) great northern beans, drained & rinsed
- 10 oz frozen baby lima beans, rinsed
- 1 1/2 c chicken stock or broth
- 2 T tomato paste
- pepper
- 1/4 c chopped parsley



Preheat oven to 350. In a Dutch oven over medium heat, warm oil. Add whole Italian sausages and brown for 15 minutes, turning occasionally. Add kielbasa and brown both sausages about 10 minutes longer. Transfer to a plate and slice Italian sausage into rounds. Add leeks & garlic to the same pan & sauté until soft, about 5 minutes. Add carrots, rosemary, sage and bay leaf. Stir in diced tomatoes, Tabasco sauce, beans, stock, and tomato paste. Season with pepper. Bake covered, about 1 hour. Remove lid and stir in parsley. Bake, uncovered, 15 minutes longer. Remove bay leaf and discard. Serves 6 to 8. We prepared a variation of this recipe for *Saturday's Bread* on April 9th.

## Green Dragon Week Events - "Gasland," and Expo

The Academy award-nominated documentary on hydro-fracking, *Gasland*, will be shown in the Hunt Union Ballroom on April 26th at 7pm. Immediately following the film, director Josh Fox will lead a discussion about his film and this explosive issue. The event is free and open to the public. "Green Dragon Week" continues the next day, April 27th with an Earth Day Expo from 11am to 2pm in front of Mills Dining Hall. Also free and open to the public, the expo will feature exhibits by "green" businesses, organizations and clubs.

# The Second Computer Revolution?

By Harry E. Pence ([pencehe@oneonta.edu](mailto:pencehe@oneonta.edu)), SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor Emeritus



Several years ago I was a member of the stage party for the Divisional Commencement. During the rehearsal, when each student's name was read, he or she would walk across the stage, shake hands with the Dean, receive an imaginary diploma, and finally continue across the stage. This was all according to tradition, but I was surprised to see that as each student went across the stage almost every one of them pulled out a cell phone to make a call. As I watched this behavior, I think I understood a little of how Henry Adams must have felt when confronted with the Hall of Dynamos at the Great Exposition of 1900. I was observing a powerful new force changing society.

Part of my surprise was probably nomenclature; we sometimes give new technologies names that make us feel comfortable, even if the names are deceptive. For example, early automobiles were called horseless carriages. In truth, the auto was so totally different in its impact from the horse and buggy that the name created a false impression. Similarly, the title cell phone is deceptive. The modern cell phone isn't just about communications; it is ushering in a second computer revolution. Many people already own the more powerful phones, commonly called smartphones, which have a complete operating system that can be used for applications. In addition, these phones include a Global Positioning System (GPS), compass, camera, an Internet browser, and many other useful capabilities.

There is no doubt that these devices are changing communications. Many users justify purchasing a cell phone for emergency communications, but many use it for real-time activity coordination. Among the young, texting is preferred to email, and it is not unusual to encounter young people who text thousands of messages a month. A cell phone is much more convenient to carry than even a netbook computer, and so it creates the possibility of (and the illusion of a need for) perpetual contact. A recent article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (January 29, 2011, page A1) points out that 40 percent of all college students use mobile devices to get on the Internet every day, and students increasingly expect that all their college services, from registration to Learning Management System, will be available from their phone.

The cell phone is changing the way people coordinate their activities, since a quick message using an always-available mobile phone can adjust meeting plans on the fly rather than depending on clock time. Young people are developing a new understanding of social networking, which is more dynamic but also more fluid than was the case when arrangements were made only by the clock. Richard Ling (*The Mobile Connection*) suggests that telephony has long been a key activity for teens and preteens, and now a phone is becoming critical in the way teens appraise status and fashion sense. Having the right model of phone or the most prestigious text friends determines social status. Ling argues that the cell phone is becoming so important to teen life that it is redefining the nature of adolescence. The results of this new social structure range from flash mobs to social revolutions,

such as the demonstrations in Tunisia and Egypt.

Smartphones are a powerful tool for education. They include a web browser which connects the user to all the information on the World Wide Web. Beyond that, all the major smartphones offer a variety of inexpensive or free applications (commonly called apps) to do specialized jobs, often tasks that are useful for particular academic disciplines. Smartphones can use either markered or markerless augmented reality (AR) to add digital information to the image from the camera. Markerless AR uses the GPS and the compass in the phone to determine the location and add information to what is seen through the camera. Thus, information about a picture of a painting or famous building can be juxtaposed directly on the camera image. Markered Augmented reality uses a two-dimensional bar code to direct the phone's browser to a web site, where more information is available. This latter approach is probably easiest to implement for the classroom. This approach allows any physical object to become clickable, like a hyperlink on a web page.

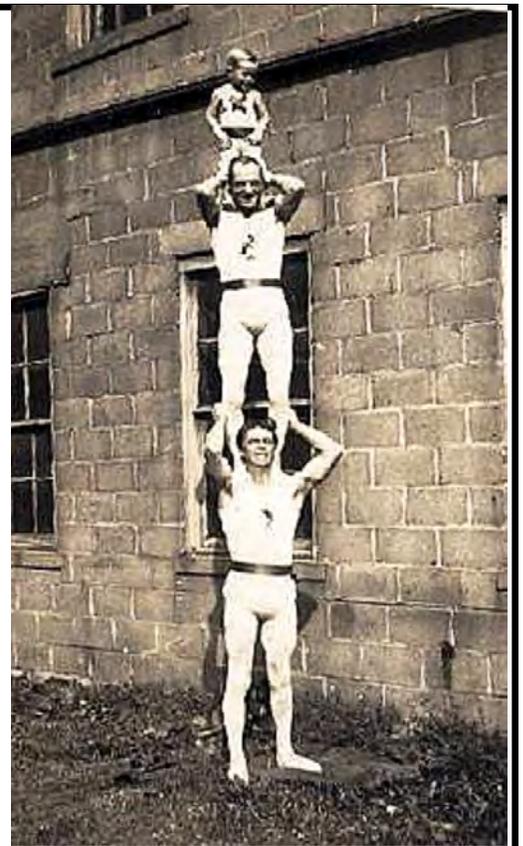
The smartphone is not just the information tool of choice for many students; it is also a connection to the wealth of online information and personal links that represent the virtual information commons. Using mobile devices for learning makes the process more personal and relevant to the way today's students live. It offers a combination of portability and utility that should make it a major academic resource in the coming decade. Like any powerful tool, it can be abused, but this is not a reason to avoid or ban it. Instead, students need to be taught how to use it most effectively.

## SENTINEL QUIZ

This photo of a professional circus act includes someone on the current UUP Oneonta Executive Board. Who is he?

The first person to email Nancy Cannon ([cannonns@oneonta.edu](mailto:cannonns@oneonta.edu)) with the correct answer will receive a UUP cap.

The answer to the March *Sentinel* quiz, "What is the only non-profit sports franchise in the American major leagues?" is the Green Bay Packers, participants in the 1967 NFL Championship Game popularly known as the Ice Bowl. The first correct answers were provided by Jill Attanasio, Paul Conway, and UUP Vice President for Professionals, John Marino.



# Oneonta Sister City Celebrates 10th Anniversary in India: Global Service of UUPers

Marking the 10th year anniversary of the Oneonta-Dundlod sister cities project, Ashok Malhotra, Distinguished Teaching Professor of Philosophy and former UUP Oneonta Vice President for Academics, and Linda Drake, Director of the Center for Social Responsibility and Community at SUNY Oneonta and UUP Oneonta, Director, Community Service, just returned from directing the 18th SUNY Oneonta Study Abroad program to India. Malhotra has been the founder-director of the program since 1979 and Drake as a co-director since 1998. It is one of longest running SUNY study abroad programs to an Asian country.



Oneonta program in India

This year's group consisted of six Oneontans and two faculty members from Belmont University, Nashville. They visited the Ninash Foundation's six Indo-International Schools in India: an elementary and a high school in each of the three remote villages of Dundlod (Rajasthan), Mahapura (Rajasthan) and Kuran (Gujarat), which were built with the help of the participants of the SUNY Oneonta "Learn and Serve" program.

The Ninash Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charity that has been promoting literacy among the underprivileged children by opening schools in India since 1996. In 2000, Oneonta Mayor Kim Muller in cooperation with the Ninash Foundation signed a declaration proclaiming Oneonta (USA) and Dundlod (India) as sister cities.

The group visited the first Indo-International School in Dundlod, which started in 1996 with 50 underprivileged children, has now grown to 550 students. Combining the celebrations of the 15th Anniversary of the school and the 10th Anniversary of the sister cities project, the children performed music, dances and plays to entertain the guests from India and the USA. The celebration was further augmented by the news that 10 students from the Dundlod Indo-International School had completed their studies and were going to the college of their choice.

The Ninash Foundation, through the generous donations of individuals and organizations globally and locally, provided funds to the Dundlod High School to construct two new class rooms and an office. To provide the children

the richness of the Indian and Western cultural heritage, one of the classrooms will be named as the Jack Finestone Music Room and the other as Hari Chand Chopra Culture Room. These rooms will be used for classes to provide music, stories and other cultural enrichment programs.



**Linda Drake, left, and Ashok Malhotra, right**

One of the side highlights of the trip was the giving away of 50 dairy goats to the poorest of poor people of Dundlod by Linda. This “joy of giving” was made possible by the kind-heartedness of the children and teachers of the Riverside Elementary School, Oneonta, New York, who participated in the “Kiss the Goat Project” during December, 2010 to raise money for 27 goats. The remaining funds for 23 goats were generously donated by the members of the Oneonta colleges and local community. During the past 5 years, as part of the sister cities project, children and teachers from the Oneonta City Schools District and the members of the Oneonta community have donated 153 goats to provide dairy products to at least 600 members of the Dundlod community. An un-matched feat of compassion and generosity that is a part of the Oneonta-Dundlod sister cities project since 2000!

The group started the New Year’s Eve by celebrating the 10th Anniversary of building the second Indo-International School in Kuran, Gujarat, an area which was completely devastated by an earthquake in 2001. The group was greeted by the members of the village government, local community, teachers and 280 students, who entertained by performing dances, music and short skits in four different languages. The entertainment provided by the Indian and Western musicians was followed by a delightful fire display.

On the New Year’s Day, the group inaugurated a mobile library funded by the Ninash Foundation. They also dedicated a garden with flowering bushes and a tree in memory of Dr. Douglas Shrader, SUNY Oneonta Distinguished Teaching Professor, who had selflessly given time to be a voice over for the Ninash’s video, which helped raise funds in half a dozen countries. Similar memorial gardens are planned in the other Indo-International schools during this year.

The group also visited the third Indo-International Culture School in Mahapura where they were greeted with leis and flowers by more than 270 enthusiastic children and teachers. Since the school is moving towards becoming a high school, it highlighted its accomplishments by showing its four newly built rooms to accommodate classes up to the 9th grade, new toilets and an eco-friendly garden. In addition, it displayed stained glass art done by the two newly hired art teachers in the John Koller and Mimi Forman Artisan Wing. As part of preserving the culture of In-

dia, children entertained the group by presenting poems, plays, dances and music on topics ranging from India's linguistic diversity and global warming to education as a human right. The inside and outside of every classroom was decorated with paintings and art work, which was a joy to behold. Along with the group, a number of Indian and foreign guests were invited to enjoy the entertainment presented by the children.



**Children at Ninash school**

Ninash's six Indo-International schools are dedicated to educating more than 1100 underprivileged (female and minority) children of India. The schools have been making a genuine economic and cultural impact in the three villages where they are located. They have become the hubs of educational and social change; a model for the rest of rural India. All this exciting progress has been made possible by the generous donations of individuals and organizations from all over the world. To continue this access to education and a future to these forgotten children of humanity, the Ninash Foundation needs to raise \$60,000 each year to provide the salaries and other recurring expenses of the six schools. The Ninash Foundation has laid down its goal for the year 2011 to raise \$250,000 to set up a trust fund. Please join the Ninash team and be a partner in promoting literacy among the underprivileged. Your gift to education is like the giving tree, which will keep giving for the generations to come. Send your donations to the Ninash Foundation, 17 Center Street, Oneonta, New York, 13820, USA or visit our website: [www.ninash.org](http://www.ninash.org) and donate through PayPal.

## **End of Semester UUP Party: Sunday, May 1st**

UUP will hold its traditional end of semester party on Sunday, May 1, 2011, from 1:00—4:00 PM at the College Camp, one of the area's treasures. The College Camp provides a spacious, inviting, and picturesque setting for our union party. The lodge at the Camp will allow us to have the party rain or shine.

Complimentary Brooks' House of Bar-B-Q lunch -- with delicious food and beverages — will be served. Although the lodge has inside tables and chairs, outdoor enthusiasts may wish to bring chairs, blankets, folding tables, games, musical instruments, and sports equipment.

All members of the UUP bargaining unit and their families/significant others are most cordially welcome. To facilitate food planning, a RSVP is required. To RSVP, please leave a message on the UUP Oneonta voice mail at 436-2135 and provide your name, telephone number, and the number of family members/significant others, including yourself, who will attend.

Thanks to Special Events Director Loraine Tyler for doing a terrific job organizing this special gathering. For further information, contact Loraine at [TYLERLL@Oneonta.Edu](mailto:TYLERLL@Oneonta.Edu).

## Executive Board Contact Info

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VP for Professionals (d)	Norm Payne	PAYNENE	436-2021 (o)
Secretary (d)	Tom Horvath	HORVATTG	436-3899 (o)
Treasurer (d)	Mike McAvoy	MCAVOYM	436-3533 (o)
Health/Safety Officer	Ron Bishop	BISHOPRE	436-3109
Part-Time Concerns Officer (d)	Caridad Souza	SOUZAWC	436-3452
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Grievance Officer (d)	Renee Walker	WALKERR	436-3346 (o)
Mediator	Paul Conway	CONWAYG	432-6988 (h)
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Benefits Officer	Mona Hughes	HUGHESML	436-2490 (o)
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Disabilities Officer	Dawn Hamlin	HAMLINDW	436-3526
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Co-Web Master	Alex Jean-Charles	JEANCHA	436-3384 (o)
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Director, Community Service	Linda Drake	DRAKELM	436-2633 (o)
Facilitator, Professionals (d)	Janie Forrest-Glotzer	FORRESJL	436-2005 (o)
Grants Officer	Kathy Meeker	MEEKERKL	436-2479 (o)
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<b>Other Delegates &amp; Alternates:</b>			
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Chris Bulson	BULSONCE	397-9345 (h)	
John Carney	CARNEYJJ	432-5360 (h)	
Jeri Anne Jerminario	JERMINJA	436-2377 (o)	

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