



### UUP Labor Day Luncheon and Meeting: Monday, September 5, 2011

*By Bill Simons, Chapter President*

United University Professions (UUP) cordially invites all members of the UUP bargaining unit to a Labor Day luncheon and meeting on Monday, September 5th, in the Butternut Room, Hunt Union, between 12 noon and 12:50 PM. The Butternut Room is located on the first floor of the Hunt Union, to the rear of the main dining area. Given the information and discussion accompanying the luncheon, the event is for members of the UUP bargaining unit.



**State UUP Vice President for Academics Fred Floss, second from right**



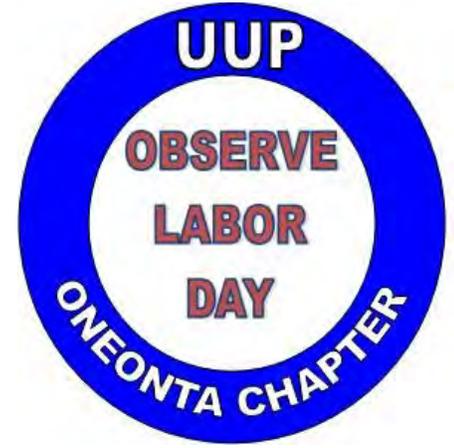
**Philippe Abraham, State UUP Acting Vice President for Professionals**

The luncheon meeting will feature a joint presentation by Dr. Frederick G. Floss, State UUP Vice President for Academics and Chief Negotiator for the last contract, and J. Philippe Abraham, State UUP Acting Vice President for Professionals and Team Member for the last contract.

UUP and SUNY face unprecedented challenges in the year ahead — the continuing budget crisis, the possibility of retrenchment, and a new contract. Following formal remarks by Fred Floss and Philippe Abraham, the forum will be open for questions and discussion from all attendees.

Why does UUP advocate for appropriate observance of Labor Day? Preparation and implementation makes the Labor Day program a vehicle for recruiting new UUP members, energizing current UUP members, sharing information, and increasing UUP visibility on campus and in the community. Against the backdrop of budget cutbacks, the possibility of retrenchment, and a new contract, Labor Day 2011 takes on special significance for SUNY and UUP.

When UUP supports your rights on Labor Day observance, it has transferability to other issues. Much still needs to be done, and your Labor Day advocacy can make a difference. UUP's strength comes from professionals and academics, from the ranks of full-timers and part-timers, advocating for each other. The working women and men of America find themselves assaulted by rising prices, the polarization of wealth, and the arrogance of power. The American Dream is imperiled. It is important on this Labor Day that your voice is heard. Our choice is stark: either allow anxious inertia to defeat us or fulfill our destiny as the emancipators. Solidarity is essential.



A recent survey indicated that the following SUNY/UUP campuses did not have classes on Labor Day:

- |                   |                  |                            |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Albany         | 8. Cortland      | 15. Potsdam                |
| 2. Alfred         | 9. ESF           | 16. Purchase               |
| 3. Binghamton     | 10. Geneseo      | 17. Stony Brook HSC        |
| 4. Brockport      | 11. New Paltz    | 18. Stony Brook University |
| 5. Buffalo Center | 12. Old Westbury | 19. Upstate Medical        |
| 6. Buffalo HSC    | 13. Optometry    | 20. Utica/Rome             |
| 7. Buffalo State  | 14. Oswego       |                            |

Through the years, numerous UUPers have articulated the need for Labor Day observance. These representative comments were selected from many received by your union. The authors of these statements are articulate and courageous proponents of social justice. Let us consider a few of them---and find our own inspiration.

1. John Relethford, Distinguished Teaching Professor, Anthropology: *“Labor Day is an important federal holiday that highlights the history and achievements of labor unions. It sends a message to our entire society about past inequities and working conditions and our hopes for tomorrow. These are particularly important lessons for the next generation of workers, our students. To have classes on this holiday while offices are closed sends the wrong message to our students and strips the day of its meaning of celebrating the efforts of all working people (and unions). I find that after looking at the ...academic calendar at the other colleges in our sector, most are closed on Labor Day.”*



2. Dan Payne, Associate Professor, English: *“It is important to keep in mind that the faculty who are in favor of commemorating Labor Day are not doing so to receive a day off—the instructional day will be made up elsewhere in the college calendar. The purpose of observing this national holiday is to recall the sacrifices and contributions of the working men and women of this country. For me, those sacrifices were not simply something read about in a history text, but were part of growing up in a union family. When I was fourteen years old, my family and I spent Christmas at my father’s union hall (Communications Workers of America) since the CWA was in a bitter,*

*protracted strike against AT&T. The members of my father's union, like those in many other unions over the last century, sacrificed a great deal to stand up for what they thought was right. Observing Labor Day is a way of remembering and thanking them for their sacrifices."*

3. Bill Ashbaugh, Chair, History: *"Before joining the SUNY system here at Oneonta State, I had been a student or taught in all three California higher education systems, the Penn State system, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania system, and a private university (Drexel). None of these colleges, universities, or higher education systems required courses to meet on Labor Day. To make matters worse, here at SUNY Oneonta administrators and many people in support services DO have the holiday and get the day off. Why shouldn't professors, instructors, and students also have the right to celebrate this significant federal holiday that simply honors workers one day a year?"*



4. Steve Walsh, Associate Professor (Economics and Business): *Grouping Labor Day in with a few other unacknowledged holidays is a matter of administrative convenience. Unfortunately, doing so diminishes us all. We all – administrators, too – are toilers in our particular field who are making huge efforts to elevate our college and our students. In a recent article in The Sentinel, Tom Horvath noted quite correctly that many of us engage in close to 80-hour work weeks. White-collar or not, make no doubt of it, we are laborers. We are also part of a nation that was built by laborers. Both of my grandmothers suffered the loss of their husbands in tragic ways when each of my parents was quite young. The stories that I heard about the difficulties they endured and the enormous labors they engaged in were both frightening and awe-inspiring. My father was a cop whose labor resulted in his becoming the head of the homicide bureau in a Sheriff's Department in one of the most populous counties in this country. My mother was a secretary in a large school district who became the top ranked classified employee, as secretary to the Superintendent of Schools, in the last few of the thirty-one and one-half years in which she labored there. This just speaks rather superficially of two generations of my family history. Going backward to time immemorial my ancestors were all laborers as were the ancestors of almost everyone who will read this. It is time that we honored them and ourselves with just a single, thoughtfully dedicated day."*

5. Brian Haley, Chair and Associate Professor, Anthropology: *"After joining the College community in 2000, I was surprised to learn that Labor Day was not a holiday for faculty and students. All other public institutions I've been a part of in my life gave students and faculty the day off. That is the way it should be here at Oneonta. Otherwise we diminish respect among our students for the contributions of workers to the quality of life in this country, and we inadvertently create the impression that those who teach and those who study aren't really working. For an institution that prides itself in the quality of its teaching and the quality of the new teachers it produces, this is remarkably short-sighted."*



Orlando Legname

6. Orlando Legname, Chair and Associate Professor, Music Industry: *"The military took power in Brazil when I was one year old. Later, I supported Luiz Inacio "Lula" da Silva, a Metal Workers' Union leader in the process of developing the*

**UUP Labor Day Luncheon and Meeting (continued)**

*Labor's Party. In the '80s, the country needed to become a democracy again and I participated in the fight for direct elections for president...This is living history. It illustrates the real power of workers and unions. The observance of Labor Day is crucial to remind us of that and to make sure that we are each doing our responsibility."*



7. Renee Walker, Associate Professor, Anthropology, Presiding Officer, College Senate, and UUP Oneonta Grievance Officer: *"When I started teaching at SUCO..., I was excited to come to a place that was so supportive and welcoming. I was very surprised to learn that classes are held on Labor Day. Having come from a private college that does observe Labor Day, I was astonished that a state institution did not have this same tradition. I come from a family of hard working people and feel very strongly that Labor Day is not about 'having a day off' but about celebrating the American work force. I very much support a change in the schedule that would provide for all ... employees having the day off to celebrate properly."*

8. Ben Dixon, Associate Professor, Geography and UUP Oneonta Representative, Joint Labor-Management Grants Committee: *"It is fitting that the SUNY College at Oneonta recognize Labor Day since this is the state where it first began in 1882 with a parade and celebration in New York City. New York State officially decreed it a state-wide holiday five years later, and in the following ten years, it was celebrated from coast to coast. A look back in old newspapers from the early 1900s to the 1930s show that Labor Day rivaled Memorial Day and Christmas as the most popular holiday of the year because that generation recognized the importance and sacrifices of our country's labor movement in making the nation great. Our nation has continued to prosper because of the hard work ethic instilled in successive generations of Americans, and therefore, we must always remember our nation's labor force by setting aside just this day for commemoration."*

9. Linda Drake, Executive Director, Center for Social Responsibility, and UUP Director, Community Service: *"Labor Day is dedicated to the achievement of the American work force. All SUNY employees should be entitled to a day off for Labor Day. Everyone on our SUNY campus works hard, each employee is vital and each job is important. I feel that teaching is the most important job one can have. It is through teaching that professors are responsible for shaping the future of our society. It is because of the professor's dedication to the students that we see SUNY's strengths and leadership. Most office employees get to observe Labor Day, professors should get that privilege as well. They've earned it!"*



**Linda Drake, first row (right)**

10. Don Hill, Professor, Anthropology: *"I've been a teacher at SUNY Oneonta since 1978. I have enjoyed my tenure; I like our school and the people who work here and I find it a wonderful working and living environment. Before*

*UUP Labor Day Luncheon and Meeting (continued)*

coming to Oneonta I worked at the American Museum of Natural History, Hunter College, Indiana University, San Francisco University, Goodman Heating and Air-Conditioning Factory, and about four of five other places. This is the only place where I have worked where WORK was required on LABOR DAY. I find this very, very difficult to understand. Why do we work on a nationally approved holiday, glorified by Republicans, Democrats, Greens and other political parties? It is considered by our state and national leaders as a legitimate day of rest, a day to reflect on labor organizations and the work ethic, but not apparently by our local administration. What gives? Why do they insist on returning us to the days of yore, before the Triangle Factory Fire, before the organization of the AFL, the CIO, UUP, and my favorite workers group, the IWW?"



For further information concerning the Monday, September 5th Labor Day luncheon meeting, please contact any of the following UUP Oneonta leaders:

UUP Vice President for Academics Rob Compton at [COMPTORW@Oneonta.EDU](mailto:COMPTORW@Oneonta.EDU),

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UUP Secretary Tom Horvath at [HORVATTG@ONEONTA.EDU](mailto:HORVATTG@ONEONTA.EDU)

Part-Time Concerns Officer Caridad Souza at [SouzaWC@ONEONTA.EDU](mailto:SouzaWC@ONEONTA.EDU)

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Professional Facilitator Janie Forrest-Glotzer at [FORRESJL@ONEONTA.EDU](mailto:FORRESJL@ONEONTA.EDU)

Academic Delegate Nancy Cannon at [CANNONNS@ONEONTA.EDU](mailto:CANNONNS@ONEONTA.EDU).



## Same Old Twist—Oliver at SUNY: A Cartoon Commentary

*By Fred Miller, Academic Delegate and Oneonta Representative, Outreach*

# UUP Thanks *Rally for the Worker* Participants

By Bill Simons, Chapter President

UUP Oneonta Chapter wants to thank all those who made the Rally for the Worker a historic event. The gathering was co-sponsored by UUP's Oneonta Chapter and OTA, NYSUT's Oneonta K-12 local. At 5 PM on Thursday, May 26th, nearly 300 supporters jammed Muller Plaza on Oneonta's Main Street to make the voice of the worker heard. It was the largest rally of any kind in the area in memory. Special thanks to OTA President Tim Nobiling and NYSUT LRS Mike Lynch for their tremendous work organizational and networking initiatives. Mike also did a superb job as Rally "MC." Tim and Mike are the real deal as so too are each and every person who participated in the rally.



**In Solidarity:** form left to right Jeff O'Shea, Rob Compton, Bill Simons, Dave Peckham, Fred Floss, Fred Miller, Norm Payne, and a future NYSUT leader

With the sound of bagpipes summoning us, teachers, firemen, police, Teamsters, and CSEA joined with UUP and OTA. Public and private sector workers as well as unionized and non-unionized workers joined in solidarity at the Rally. The Rally stressed the need to unite to protect job security, worker safety on the job, and living wages. The Rally affirmed the rights and dignity of all workers and built bridges between local workers.



**State UUP President Phil Smith Stands with Oneonta**

The Rally also demanded that the wealthiest pay their fair share of taxes. The Rally emphasized the need to adequately fund public higher education, both K-12 and SUNY. Special thanks to UUPers from other chapters and the State Executive Board as well as the UUP Professional staff for attending and supporting the Rally.

Featured speakers Phil Smith, State UUP President, and Andy Pallotta, State NYSUT

**UUP Thanks Rally for the Worker Participants (continued)**



**State NYSUT Executive Vice President Andy Pallotta at the microphone**

Executive Vice President, mobilized the large and enthusiastic assemblage with language that derived power from its authenticity. Phil told how as a young father and Marine veteran he became the first member of his family to go to college, enabling him to become a molecular biologist.

State NYSUT Executive Vice President Andy Pallotta led the crowd in call-and-response chants that even Governor Cuomo could hear in Albany.

Several additional speakers, representing sisters and brothers in other unions, also provided eloquent testament. Academic Delegate Gina Keel memorably represented her Oneonta Chapter at the microphone. Gina denounced cutting educational funding and thus diminishing the future of our young while providing “corporate welfare” for plutocrats.

Gina’s former student Matt Annis, now a UUP intern, also delivered telling remarks. NYSUT LRS Mike Lynch acted as MC. The drumming of Upstate’s Brian Tappan punctuated infectious audience chants. Kevin Clark, president of the Unatego Teachers Association, asserted the right “to earn a living wage.”

George Lawson, president of CSEA local 813, exhorted the large group to continue to “stand together” in the long fight ahead. The indomitable Teamster President Bobbi Dunker provided the strength and resolve of many a labor struggle.



**UUP Academic Delegate Gina Keel speaking for the worker**



Assisting Oneonta’s Rob Compton and Fred Miller, UUP Stony Brook president Arty Shertzer facilitated logistics from the set-up to the clean- up. UUP Delhi president John Taylor served as flag bearer, along with Oneonta’s Jeff O’Shea, and John concluded the program with an injunction not to ever forget that we, the workers, are America. The historic 26th of May was not an end but a beginning it: count on it. (See more photos next page.)

**From left to right, UUP Stony Brook President Arty Shertzer, State UUP President Phil Smith, UUP Oneonta Leader Nancy Cannon, and Teamster President Bobbie Dunker**



**More May Rally for the Worker Photos**

(clockwise from far left): The shirt says it all: "Protect kids not millionaires;" The people jam Muller Plaza: cops, firemen, Teamsters, CSEA, teachers; This is what American democracy looks like; Building bridges; It's our flag too: Rob Compton and Jeff O'Shea proudly hold "Old Glory."

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## The Status of Otsego Lake

*By Thomas Horvath, UUP Health Safety Officer & Secretary, and Director of Environmental Sciences*

[Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in the *Legislative Gazette* and is republished with the permission of the author, Dr. Thomas Horvath. Director of Environmental Sciences and Associate Professor, Biology. Tom is a noted limnologist, recognized for his outstanding research, publication, teaching, and service contributions. A former resident of the Thayer Farm, Tom has conducted seminal research at Otsego Lake. As hunter, canoeist, fishermen, and hiker, he has a strong personal identification with Otsego Lake and its environs.]

Otsego Lake, a valuable local natural resource for recreation, supplies water for homes along its shores and for the Village of Cooperstown. It is also the headwaters of the Susquehanna River. Today, the lake is facing very real challenges—threats from invasive species; nutrient and sediments loading from the watershed; and general degradation of water quality. Although the local municipalities and non-profit organizations support a comprehensive lake management plan, its success requires support from all levels of government.

Excessive nutrients cause eutrophication, which results in algal blooms. (**Editor's note:** "Eutrophication is a process whereby water bodies, such as lakes, estuaries, or slow-moving streams receive excess nutrients that stimulate excessive plant growth." <http://toxics.usgs.gov/definitions/eutrophication.html>.) In Otsego Lake, phosphorus from agricultural runoff, leaky septic systems and over-fertilization of lawns cause eutrophication. The lake management

### *The Status of Otsego Lake (continued)*

plan calls for reduced nutrient inputs, and many local farmers employ expensive Best Management Practices. Grants and aid in this direction would help correct much of the problem.

Sediments from erosion of lake shorelines and streams contribute to eutrophication and create shallow zones and weed growth. Correcting sedimentation problems, often via dredging, is expensive and invasive. Most cost-effective measures, such as planting and maintaining buffer-strips along streams and lakefronts, could be a positive alternative.



Otsego Lake supports cold-and-warm-water fisheries. The cold-water fish regularly angled include native and stocked lake trout, Atlantic salmon and Brown trout. Warm-water fish include bass and newly re-introduced walleye. The cold-water fishery is threatened from the invasive species, such as the alewife and zebra mussel. Alewives, through a series of complex food interactions, increase algal abundance which ultimately results in low dissolved oxygen in deep, cold water. This cold-water layer acts as a refuge for salmonids, and reduced oxygen here is deadly. The re-introduction of the walleye, which began as a private endeavor and is now state-supported, is an attempt to reduce alewife populations. Although the DEC and local scientists from SUNY Cobleskill and Oneonta have ongoing projects along these lines, their continuity is threatened by reductions in state resources.

In 2007, zebra mussels were discovered in the lake. This invasive species will dramatically change the ecology of the lake. Zebra mussels attach to any hard substrate, the free-floating larvae enter and clog water lines. Cooperstown must retrofit its water-intake infrastructures. By filter feeding, zebra mussels increase water clarity, which may be considered a positive effect. However, increased sunlight reaching the lake's bottom will increase weed growth. This feeding activity also truncates the normal food web, essentially out-competing all the animals that rely on algae for food. Additionally, zebra mussels increase harmful algal blooms (HABS) in summer which may produce harmful chemicals, foul water filter systems and reduce the aesthetic value of the water. Cooperstown's boat inspection program should continue to be supported to reduce the threat of damaging invasive species.

Water quality has been monitored consistently since the late 1960s with variable results. Because it is affected by many chemical, biological and physical variables, no single solution exists. Concerted efforts to monitor these variables and effectively reverse negative trends require both public and private resources. This lake is fortunate to have private organizations concerned about water quality and to have been the beneficiary of public support. Continued and increased support will be needed to keep Otsego Lake a valuable local and regional natural resource for this and future generations of New Yorkers.

# Rescuing Jessie: Union Solidarity in These Troubled Times

By Rob Compton, Vice President for Academics



*“It was around 6pm I when I got an anonymous tip that a group of thugs had been to my home looking for me.” Dr. Jessie Kabwila-Kapasula, April 9, 2011, quoted from “Jessie Kabwila evade ‘DPP thugs’ attack, [Nyasa Times](#).*

**Rob Compton in West Africa**

## The Gathering Global Storm

Welcome back for a busy year at SUNY Oneonta. During the past four to five months, a number of unprecedented events took place at SUNY, New York state, the US and abroad. As the persistent Great Recession continued to wreck economic and social havoc throughout the world, we as Americans have an opportunity to translate “information” into “action.” The Arab uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, and throughout the Middle East bring home the importance of freedom. The debt crisis in Europe, which has now spread to the United States with the debate over extending the federal debt limit and the rancor over potential layoffs of public employees in New York, comes on the heels of massive changes to collective bargaining rights that will bring devastation to the working and middle class of America. Meanwhile on the African continent, authoritarian leaders and their cruel policies fueled by the Great Recession have resulted in a breakout of spontaneous and organized dissent. As is often said, “rights not asserted wither away.”



**Workers in Greece protest against austerity**

In 1948, the UN General Assembly passed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, with a pivotal role played by Eleanor Roosevelt in its drafting and promulgation. The UDHR celebrated its sixtieth anniversary a few years ago, and has become an integral part of international norms and laws which countries, including the US are subject to. Article 23, para. 4 states, “Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.” Thus, actions that have taken place in Wisconsin, Ohio, and other states constitute a violation of

fundamental human rights. In New York state, Governor Andrew Cuomo has been strong-arming unions (i.e., Council 82, CSEA, and PEF) to ratify unacceptable contracts that hold wages down below rates of inflation, calls for unpaid furlough days, and increased contribution to health care. To summarize, the cumulative cost to each employee (including inflation) translates into a 22% pay cut during the contracts' five-year duration. Based on past UUP-GOER contract negotiations, it is likely that we will have a very similar contract to them. Indeed, tough times will require us to tighten our belts and work to strengthen the union movement here in the US and abroad. As brothers and sisters, there is no alternative to solidarity.

In response to these threats, UUP Oneonta has been proactive. Our members have met over a hundred legislators during the spring semester and the summer. We have written letters to the editor and many have sent in numerous faxes and made phone calls to the Governor and legislative members. Others participated in addressing basic academic freedom and collective bargaining rights abroad. All of these events, linked together, provide a mosaic of issues confronting the working class.

### **Solidarity with Malawi and Dr. Jessie Kabwila-Kapasula**

Dr. Jessie Kabwila-Kapasula, a graduate of SUNY-Binghamton taught for Oneonta, Binghamton, and Cortland as a Roads Scholar. In January 2011, she returned to her native Malawi and took a lecturing position at Chancellor's College (CHANCO), University of Malawi. I got to know Jessie well during her time with the ALS department. Well respected by her colleagues and students, she possessed a dynamite personality. Not only did she complete the Comparative Literature Ph.D. program at Binghamton in three years (a program known for completion times over a decade!), she was also an active member of the New York State African Studies Association (NYASA). In that capacity, she was critical for getting increased student participation in the association's conferences. Before she arrived at Binghamton, she was already a lecturer and president of the union at the University of Malawi, CHANCO. As President of the Chancellor College Academic Staff Union (CCASAU), she built up a strong organization that won unprecedented increases in salary. Despite this, Malawi's professors are amongst the lowest paid in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region.



Jessie was never the type of person to shy away from conflict, if circumstances necessitated it. There is a lot that we could learn from her profile in courage. After returning to Malawi, she not only took on the presidency of the College Academic Staff Union, she also supported many of her extended family members with her meager salary. A strong supporter of unionism, feminism, and the LGBTQ community, she often had to battle some of her own members who did not support gender or sexual equality. Nevertheless, Jessie's courage built a strong union movement on the CHANCO campus. Her outspoken support for

women's rights and LGBTQ concerns drew criticism from the government and conservative circles within the university. In Malawi, homosexuality is a crime punishable by lengthy prison terms.

Since 2004, Bingu wa Mutharika, president of Malawi, like so many of his counterparts in neighboring countries, including Zimbabwe (Robert Muabe), South Africa (then Thabo Mbeki), and Uganda (Yoweri Museveni), consolidated power on the backs of the poor, unionists, and students. These leaders -- all possessing an elitist mentality -- operated without seeking broad consultation on social and economic issues. Initially a darling of the West for implementing "economic reform", Mutharika quickly fell into donors' crosshairs by refusing to devalue the kwacha and purchasing a \$20 million personal jet. Meanwhile, Malawians faced a persistent fuel shortage that beleaguered the country's economy. Recently, the country has faced high inflation, corruption, and increased calls for the president's resignation.

### **Jessie Stands Up for Justice: Academic Freedom**

CHANCO (University of Malawi), also known as UNIMA, has always been a hotbed for academic activism. Jessie's experience at CHANCO produced an even-keeled leader committed to fairness. In my conversations with her during the fall 2010 semester at Oneonta, she consistently demonstrated the extent of her commitment to the academic enterprise and concern for the well-being of Africans and Malawians specifically. She saw the union as a vehicle to transform politics and the work environment. Highly dynamic, a strong feminist, and a scholar who thinks outside the conventional theories, she spoke repeatedly of her determined commitment to return to Malawi. Possessing both gravitas and an uncanny ability to open people's minds to new approaches, Jessie believed in democracy and solidarity.



**Dr. Kabwila-Kapasula and the Police**

Less than three months after returning to Malawi, academic freedom and the union came head-to-head with President Bingu wa Mutharika's increasing authoritarianism. On March 14, 2011, police interrogated Dr. Blessings Chinsinga, Associate Professor of Political Science, for his classroom statements drawing parallels between Tunisia and Egypt's uprising with Malawi and comparing the parallel precipitating socioeconomic condition that exist in all three. Police Inspector Mukhito, backed publicly by President Mutharika, declared that "academic freedom had to be balanced with issues of national security." Furthermore, the president urged the police not to apologize to Dr. Chinsinga despite demands from CCASU Executive Board members. The CCASU worked with students and organized daily vigils on campus. The students, through an education campaign came to believe that diminished academic freedom would lead to compromised education. CCASU began a lengthy strike. At the same time, CCASU

began to picket and march on the Zomba campus and sympathy strikes took place throughout the country. On April 6, the government ordered the campus closed. Subsequently, Dr. Chinsinga and the leaders of CCASU had their employment terminated.

Despite a court ruling that demanded the reopening of the university and a restoration of positions for the CCASU leaders, the government has thus far refused to comply. Instead, the government and the university sought to pressurize Jessie and her colleagues into capitulating and making CCASU into a company union. The government, using high-powered tactics, has appealed the decision of the lower courts. The university also forced the union activists to sign an affidavit acknowledging their status as “suspended” with pay until legal decisions occur. The “signing ceremony” took place as the officers were escorted on and off campus by security police.

### **ALS, UUP, SUNY and CCASU: Linked Together for Social Justice**

Events such as these test our moral courage. We can look the other way and pretend that nothing is wrong or we can choose to act in solidarity. As many of you know, the history of black studies and the formation of the Department of Africana-Latino Studies (ALS) at SUNY Oneonta is a proud part of our identity. Based on its history, the ALS *weltanschauung* requires us to merge theory and practice to defend those unfairly persecuted. We believe in the importance of action and self-sacrifice to transform our society and to do our best to help people. Working with Drs. Betty Wambui, Caridad Souza, and Kathleen (KO) O’Mara, I decided to approach UUP statewide for assistance. With sage advice from Fred Floss (Statewide Academic VP) and Ed Quinn (Membership Development Officer), KO and I worked on a resolution for the upcoming Delegate Assembly in Albany. We circulated the drafts to several committees (e.g., Corporatization and Globalization, Women’s Rights and Concerns, and Solidarity) and the UUP Statewide Executive Board. After significant deliberation in Executive Board, committees and on the floor of the Delegate Assembly, the following resolution (as recorded on the UUP webpage) passed on May 7, 2011:

**Adopted a Resolution in Support of Academic Freedom in Malawi and the Chancellor College Academic Staff Union submitted by the Academic Delegates, the Executive Board, the Solidarity Committee, the Women’s Rights and Concerns Committee and the Globalization and Corporatization Committee.**

**Whereas**, United University Professions (UUP) recognizes the need for action to support our colleagues in the Chancellor College Academic Staff Union and academic freedom; and

**Whereas**, UUP believes in the importance of the rule of law and the right to due process and a commitment to democracy and that there is a need for common sacrifice by all, including the business and corporate community; and

**Whereas**, the Government of Malawi exercised its power irresponsibly and in violation of academic freedom and due process and without regard to the education of students and the physical well-being of its lecturers; and

***Rescuing Jessie: Union Solidarity in These Troubled Times (continued)***

**Whereas**, the Government of Malawi unjustly terminated the employment of Chancellor College Academic Staff Union acting president Jessie Kabwila-Kapasula, union secretary Franz Amin and Garton Kamchedzera, and Blessings Chinsinga (whose lecture provoked the dispute) and death threats and other forms of intimidation has resulted in the need for the leaders of the College Academic Staff Union to go into hiding; and

**Whereas**, the Malawi Courts have ruled in favor of re-instatement; herefore be it

**Resolved**, that UUP stands in solidarity with Chancellor College Academic Staff Union leaders and its members; and be it further

**Resolved**, that the UUP President send a letter communicating its support of academic freedom and the rights of the Chancellor College Academic Staff Union to the following organizations entities, and persons: NYSUT; AFT; NEA; PSC; Solidarity Committee; Amnesty International; Education International; SUNY Chancellor Nancy Zimpher; Governor Andrew Cuomo; Secretary of State Hillary Clinton; United States House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, and Human Rights, Chairman Hon. Christopher Smith (NJ); United States Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on African Affairs, Chairman Hon. Chris Coons (DE); US Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Malawi, Alan Eastham; and be it further

**Resolved**, that UUP ask the SUNY System to invite Dr. Jessie Kabwila Kapasula to serve in the capacity of Visiting Professor for a specified time until her safety can be reasonably assured, noting that no other person's position will be in jeopardy.

With the passage of the UUP Resolution on Academic Freedom in Malawi under our belts, we wanted to increase awareness of the issue on a statewide basis. Many ALS and UUP members are on the Executive Board of the New York State African Studies Association (NYASA). Utilizing the political capital built up from the NYASA conference held in March 2011, (in case you missed it, details are [www.oneonta.edu/academics/NYASA](http://www.oneonta.edu/academics/NYASA)) the Oneonta contingent built a coalition to pass a NYASA resolution supporting the UUP resolution with Dr. Kwame Akonor (NYASA President) to write a letter to President Phil Smith.

Subsequent to the Delegate Assembly, Dr. Benita Roth, Professor of Sociology at Binghamton contacted us and informed us that she too was working on behalf of Jessie Kabwila. Ms. Maria Starzmann, a graduate student at Binghamton, contacted Scholars-at-Risk for assistance regarding extricating Dr. Kabwila-Kapasula from a rapidly deteriorating economic and political environment in Malawi. After a three-way phone conference involving Drs. Roth, O'Mara, and Compton, we decided to approach each of our administrations for assistance in creating a jointly funded position. KO and I envisioned a three-way inter-campus cooperation consisting of Binghamton, Oneonta, and SUNY central. KO and I approached our administration at the same time Provost David Lavallee spoke with Chancellor Nancy Zimpher regarding President Smith's letter. Lavallee reached out to "a SUNY campus" and we reached out to Dr. Nancy Kleniewski. Given these difficult financial times, KO, Betty and I reasoned that a cost-sharing approach was the only viable strategy. KO reached out to other chairs, including Susan Bernardin and Brian Haley, who wrote to or contacted the administration. Dr. Julie Freeman became a strong advocate for Jessie in Netzer. Nonetheless, the College at Oneonta made that decision under the circumstances that it would, at best,

be able to contribute a couple of adjunct courses. A few days later, we found out that Binghamton had decided to invite Jessie to Binghamton as a visiting professor.

### **Conclusion: Lost Opportunity, Jessie's Future and Food-for-Thought on Labor Day 2011**



**Jessie, a Voice for Justice**

For the ALS department and its members, the experience of rescuing Jessie was both exhilarating and tedious. Confusion and doubt would follow euphoria as we plotted and plodded along. Despite any positive public relations value that would occur to SUNY and the campuses involved in this venture, we were irrevocably committed to “doing what was best for Jessie.” Academic freedom is not something that we can take for granted. During these perilous times, right-wing activists such as Andrew Breitbart and Virginia Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli believe that academic freedom imperils their agenda (see *Academe*, July-August 2011, especially pp. 4, and 7-8).

Although Binghamton University came forward to rescue Jessie, she remains committed to resolving the matters in Malawi before departing Malawi. The work of Benita Roth, Michael West, Maria Starzmann exemplify solidarity. Jessie stated recently in an email exchange (July 25th): “as president of the union, I am their main target and have become the face of the struggle and its embodiment in many ways.” Dr. Jessie Kabwila-Kapasula’s loyalty to her country and colleagues is remarkable. Many people at Oneonta, system Administration, UUP, NYASA, and Binghamton worked together to assist Jessie in a time of great need. The US Embassy in Lilongwe also reached out to her. KO, the ALS department, and I thank you. This brings us to the symbol of solidarity on this campus- Labor Day. As we celebrate Labor Day 2011, once again in the classroom, I leave you with the words of Dr. Kabwila-Kapasula.

“As the acting president, I am the one who signed all the affidavits and if you see the attachment, it is clear that if I was not going to be there tomorrow, the union's case would collapse flat out and that is what the system is counting on. The legal team underlines that the same goes for the other cases. In other words, my absence will jeopardize the cause and I cannot leave with myself if, out of personal safety, I helped kill such a valuable cause, one that the nation has not only embraced but is starting to vindicate us on and use to voice and fight a repressive regime. Last week, 18 people died asking the government to change its ways, including guaranteeing academic freedom.

I know that all of you are working hard to help me and I am very grateful. My life and career, and family are really in jeopardy. I know that I can be arrested today, tomorrow or the next day but, one thing that should not become a casualty is the principle of academic freedom and the podium that this battle is being fought on is the legal front. I really want to take up this visiting proffership [professorship] but doing it now will kill the very cause that I and many others are standing for. I therefore would like to request that the visiting professorship be postponed to next semester. I know that it came from a petition that was

moved at a union meeting and I do not know how the logistics go and that might make it difficult to postpone it but if it is possible, I humbly request that it be moved to next semester, I really would like to take up this visiting professorship, I know it would give me a chance to advance my scholarship and teaching career."

--Jessie Kabwila-Kapasula, July 25, 2011

The time to become involved with your union is now, not when you face retrenchment. We still have a handful of agency fee payers, please fill out your union card and support Labor Day. You can follow Jessie on Facebook at Support Jessie Kabwila Kapasula and Academic Freedom in Malawi: <http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/pages/Support-Jessie-Kabwila-Kapasula-and-Academic-Freedom-in-Malawi/139615526110781>

Author's Note: In November 2011, I will be presenting at a conference in Rustenburg, South Africa. I plan to go to Malawi during the Thanksgiving break to meet with the leaders of the CCASU.



## **More Anecdotal Evidence: Taxing the Wealthy Doesn't Stop Growth!**

(Bring on the Millionaire's Tax extension)

*By Dave Ritchie, Vice President for Academics, UUP Cortland*

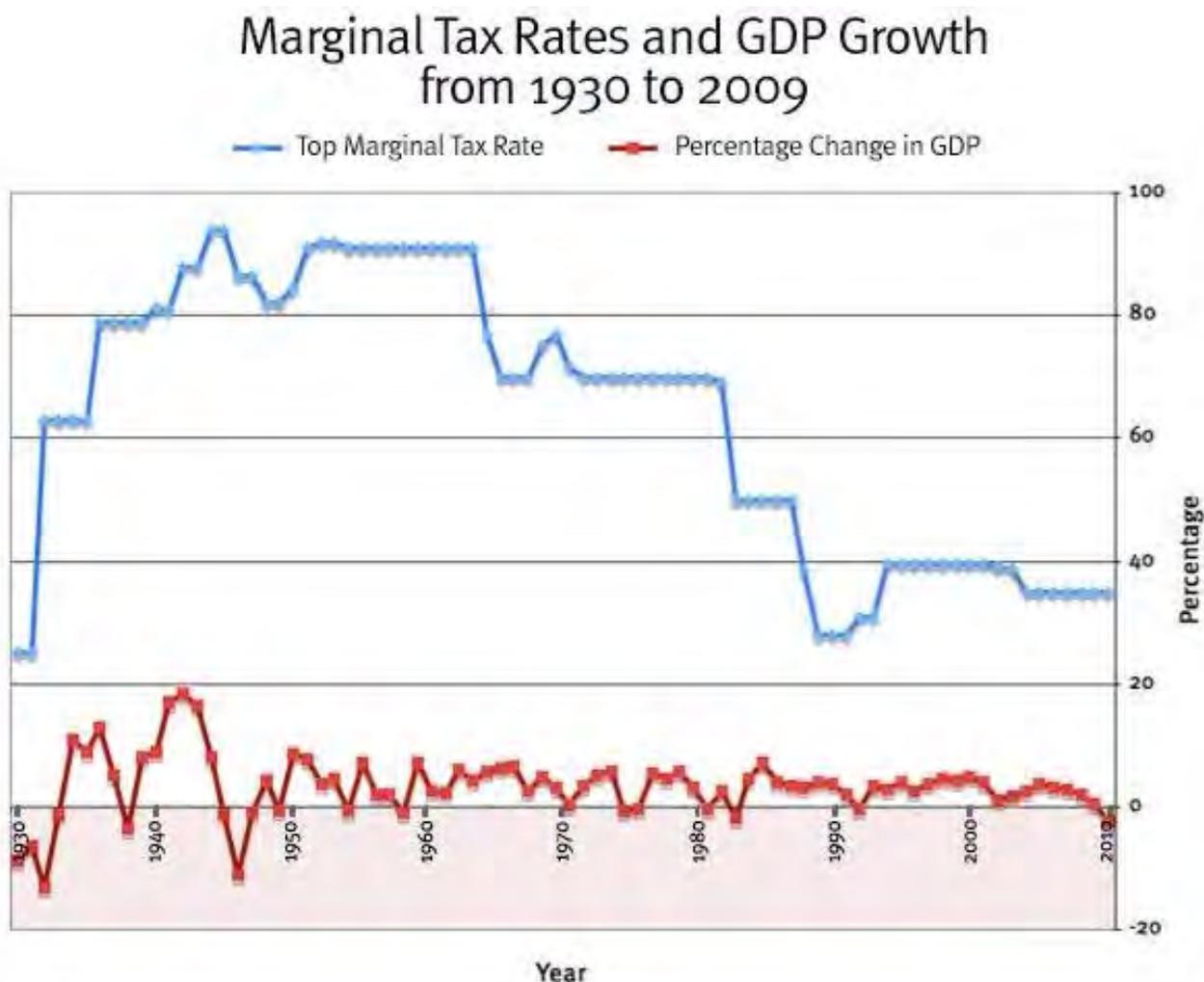
[This article originally appeared in the May 2011 issue of *The Cortland Cause*. It is republished with the permission of the author and of UUP Cortland.]

Few of us in public higher education are affected by the current "quarter-millionaire's" surtax, and fewer still would be affected by the proposed extension of it as the "millionaire's" surtax. But many people object to it. There are people who orchestrate the "flat tax rate" argument -- remember millionaire Steve Forbes? -- as a "fairer" tax structure than a "progressive" tax structure. Others who object (or perhaps some of the same) choose to forget that during the Eisenhower (Republican) administration, while the highest personal tax rate reached 90% and corporations were dunned at the 25% tax rate, the nation's economy grew at one of its highest rates. Huh??

What about the seeming crowds of columnists, bloggers, and just plain down home folks expressing their opinions in the online comment rolls who think that taxing the rich more in proportion to their ability to pay (i.e., progressive taxing) will keep them from investing, from hiring more people, from creating jobs -- all the roles that they are supposed to play in a capitalist society.

But there is no correlation between the marginal tax rate and Gross Domestic Product growth! At least in the US from 1930 to 2009. That's the basis of what Eliot Spitzer, a former governor of New York, wrote in *Slate Magazine*

on February 23, 2010. Here's his graph:



From Spitzer, Eliot, "Tax fraud: debunking the claim that higher income-tax rates reduce GDP," *Slate Magazine* (posted Feb. 23, 2010), <http://www.slate.com/id/2245781/>.

Of course, he notes that GDP and other economic growth rates are products of lots of factors, so the graph is comparing apples to oranges. But that is comforting, for it means that the wealthy will go about their business (or maybe just put their extra money into gold, or the bank, or the mattress) whether or not they are taxed a bit extra for their having that wealth.

Bottom Line: the people who shout that it's basically unfair (or socialism, or some other epithet) to tax the wealthy disproportionately, ignore certain historical facts. History shows that the rich can afford it, and will go right on gaining money, so the society can benefit from their propensity to accumulate wealth without harming them. Isn't that symbiotic?

# We Need a Progressive Tax System

*By Fred Floss, State UUP Vice President for Academics*

**[Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in May/June 2011 issue of *The Voice*, the official publication of State UUP.]**



**Fred Floss**

In the current debate on New York state taxes, the elephant in the room is fairness. Are we treating retired property taxpayers fairly? Are school taxes too high on Long Island compared with the rest of the state? Are millionaires and corporations paying their fair share? Are millionaires' concerns more important than our children's education?

In most cases, the debate centers on egregious examples. For instance, in Buffalo, a millionaire lawyer buys a million dollar condominium but pays no property taxes because of an Empire Zone Tax Credit, a savings worth \$260,000 over the 10 years of the credit. At the same time, just blocks away, a middle-class family must pay full taxes on a \$60,000 home. The builders of the project supported the tax break, saying, "It was the only way the project made economic sense." But what does this say about the fairness of the system as a whole and how it should be changed?

One dictionary definition of fairness states: free from favoritism, self-interest or preference in judgment. This is the common sense definition that most of us have in our heads when we talk about taxes. Tax theorists have long tried to deal with the many concepts of tax fairness.

Is horizontal theory (treating individuals in the same category) or vertical theory (treating individuals in different categories) more important? How do we treat intergenerational tax burdens? Should we look at taxes for an individual in a single year or over a lifetime? What about regional differences? Should we make allowances for high-cost areas?

In each case, a good argument for using one category over the other to talk about tax fairness is possible. In each case, one group of New York state residents will be helped and another hurt. One way philosophers get around these problems is to use what they call the "veil of ignorance." In other words, if you were unaware of your economic status, what type of tax system would you choose? This is the reasoning behind conservative Chicago professors Blum and Kalven in their book, [The Uneasy Case for Progressive Taxation](#). They argue the value of progressive taxes based on "distributive justice." Put simply, the authors argue that people who make more money, have a greater ability to pay and who benefit the most from government should pay more taxes.

For Blum, Kalven and most of their readers in 1952, this was obvious. Today, the rich try to confuse the argument of justice and turn to efficiency as the measure as if more goods for fewer people is a just outcome for society.

So, if a progressive tax system at some level is important to having a fair tax system, how does New York stack up? Even with the current millionaire's tax in place, the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy calculates the

***We Need a Progressive Tax System (continued)***

top 1 percent of New York State taxpayers pay 4.4 percent less as an effective tax rate than the middle 20 percent of New Yorkers. In fact, the top 20 percent pay a lower rate on their income than the lowest 20 percent, who make less than \$16,000 per year. The table below shows the entire distribution. How many New Yorkers understand that we have a regressive system that taxes the poor more than the rich? Would knowing this change the public debate?

UUPers are members of the working class, and the working class deserves to be treated fairly. It is our job to ask these tough questions and to bring the taxation discussion back to the issue of justice.

	Lowest 20%	Second 20%	Middle 20%	Fourth 20%	Top 20%		
					Top 15%	Top 4%	Top 1%
Average Income	\$9,600	\$24,400	\$43,800	\$73,100	\$133,000	\$338,100	\$3,165,800
TAXES							
Sales	7.30%	6.00%	4.70%	3.70%	2.80%	1.70%	0.90%
Property	5.80%	3.80%	3.90%	3.80%	4.10%	3.30%	1.50%
Income	-3.50%	0.30%	3.40%	4.70%	5.80%	11.80%	9.40%
<b>Adjusted Total Tax</b>	<b>9.60%</b>	<b>10.60%</b>	<b>11.60%</b>	<b>11.00%</b>	<b>10.70%</b>	<b>10.80%</b>	<b>7.20%</b>

**New York State and Local  
Taxes in 2007**

Note: Table shows 2007 tax law updated to reflect permanent changes in law enacted through October 2009.

**UUP Oneonta Executive Board Co-Sponsors Resolutions in Support of Part-Time, Adjunct, and Contingent Labor**

At the Wednesday, July 13, 2011, the UUP Oneonta Executive Board Meeting, the following action in support was taken in support of Part-Time, Adjunct, and Contingent Labor:

1. UUP Oneonta Part-Time Concerns Officer Caridad Souza presented a motion that the Oneonta Chapter serve as co-sponsor, along with other chapters, of the five proposed amendments to the State UUP Constitution at the fall Delegate Assembly in Albany September 23-24, 2011.
  - I. Allow any person in good standing on a term appointment who has been involuntarily terminated or whose appointment has been involuntarily non-renewed to be eligible for a Sustaining Membership in UUP for up to two years;
  - II. Create an additional category of employment in keeping with the definition of "contingent" approved by the statewide Executive Board on June 24, 2011;
  - III. Change the name of the "Part-time Representative" at chapters to "Vice President for Contingents" and give this person the fourth delegate seat;
  - IV. Change the name of the statewide Part-Time Concerns Committee to "Contingent Employment Committee";
  - V. Designate two seats for contingents on the statewide Executive Board, one for a part-time and one for a full-time contingent employee.
    - A. The motion was discussed.
    - B. The motion was approved unanimously.
    - C. Caridad agreed to inform other chapters of Oneonta's endorsement of the motion and to serve as Oneonta's chief spokesperson for the motion at the fall Delegate assembly.

# Thoughts From A “First Timer”: My Trip to Albany as an Advocate For UUP and SUNY

*By Matthew Hendley, History Department and Member, UUP*

[Editor’s Note: During state budget season, a UUP Oneonta delegation travels to the State Legislature in Albany almost every Tuesday to participate in SUNY advocacy along with UUPers from other chapters. On May 24, 2011, the Oneonta delegation included Fred Miller, Gina Keel, and Bill Simons, all veterans of legislative advocacy, and first-timer Matthew Hendley. On May 24th, the Oneonta contingent visited the offices of Senator James Seward, Senator Kemp Hannon, Senator Neil Breslin, Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton, Senator Timothy Kennedy, Assemblyman Sam Hoyt, and Senator Velmanette Montgomery to advocate for restoration of both SUNY funding and the millionaires tax. Matthew, along with the others, did a great job; a modern-day Frank Capra might retitle the old Jimmy Stewart film “Dr. Hendley Goes to Albany.” Below is Matthew’s own account of the day. As he notes, UUP needs more SUNY advocates.]

I would like to share some thoughts on my first ever trip to Albany on May 24, 2011 as an advocate for UUP and SUNY. After my exams were graded I decided to take up Bill Simons on a long standing invitation to all faculty to participate in the lobbying process. Going to Albany for UUP Advocacy Day was an informative, useful and memorable experience for me. Transportation was kindly provided by Bill, and I drove up with him and Fred Miller, a retired professor and long time union supporter. After an early departure (6:30 a.m.!) from Oneonta and many interesting conversations en route, I arrived

in Latham by 8:15 a.m. and was given a full briefing by Phil Smith, State UUP President. Our briefing room was in the impressive NYSUT building which was completed in 2002 (and is full of memorabilia of union struggles and triumphs past and present). We were brought to the Empire State Plaza on a chartered mini bus by 9 a.m. and spent a full day in both the New York Senate and Legislative Building offices.



**Advocating for SUNY: left to right: Fred Miller, Bill Simons, Senator Seward, Matthew Hendley, Zhongchun Jiang, & Gina Keel**

A few impressions – The Empire State Plaza complex is a feast for the eyes! It is full of modernist art beloved by the late Governor Nelson Rockefeller. The offices in which made our cases were an interesting combination of late 19th century Romanesque (Senate) and functional 1960s (Legislative Building). I was amazed at how accessible our elected politicians were. We met face to face with a State Senator and an Assemblywoman. We also talked to members of the staff of several other elected officials. In all cases, our audiences were attentive and interested in hearing our message. At our briefing in Latham we were told to include specific examples in our lobbying efforts. We all broke into groups of about 5 UUP members each and were assigned a schedule. We had about 30-45

### Thoughts From A "First Timer": My Trip to Albany (continued)

minutes to spend in the office of each elected official on our list from about 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. (with a break for lunch) . Our group consisted of a professor from SUNY Cobleskill, three current professors from SUNY Oneonta and one retired professor from SUNY Oneonta. We soon found a rhythm in our group's presentation and highlighted various impacts of underfunding on SUNY. We all focused on different topics.

My part of the session highlighted teaching loads and adjunct faculty. I spoke about the growing number of students many History faculty are now required to teach. Many times during the day I mentioned that several of my colleagues each taught 170 students in the Spring 2011 semester. I stressed that in History courses, which are centered on written assignments and essay tests, that this is an unsustainable number of students. The grading alone takes up an enormous amount of time and leads to faculty burnout. I also mentioned the plight of adjunct faculty. I



mentioned how due budget cuts, the college is becoming overly dependent on individuals who are paid extremely low wages and who lack job security, office space and the dignity of a more stable position. All of our words made some impact. At the office of one senator, the staff member was flabbergasted not only at how badly adjunct faculty were paid but also at the generally low starting salaries of assistant professors. This is proof that sharing such information in face to face sessions counts.

Meetings at the Legislature: Gina Keel and Matthew Hendley

By the end of the day, I was pretty tired but also felt that I had made a difference. My day was filled with moments of wonder and camaraderie. A buffet lunch of high quality was provided by UUP in a dining room at the Empire State Plaza and was a major bonus. Throughout the day, I was able to chat with UUP members from our own campus and others. I also left with a new appreciation about the political process and the need for advocacy. By the end of the day, lobbying seemed far less abstract and a more immediate and human process to me. I lack the stamina and time management skills to make this trek every Tuesday while teaching during the semester. However, I will definitely plan on making another trip next May to Albany for future UUP advocacy work. I would encourage other newer faculty to make at least one trek to Albany themselves for 2011-2012.

#### 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). Norm Payne 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.

## Dr. Ashbaugh Goes to Albany: Rebuild SUNY Intellectual Infrastructure

On June 7, 2011, a UUP Oneonta delegation returned once again to Albany for SUNY advocacy. This was the fourteenth visit of UUP Oneonta to the New York State Legislature in recent months; through Albany and in-district meetings, the Oneonta chapter visited the offices of 87 lawmakers during that interval. The June 7th Oneonta delegation included veterans Fred Miller, Rob Compton and Bill Simons as well as rookie Bill Ashbaugh, Chair and Associate Professor, History. On June 7th, the Oneonta contingent visited the offices of Assemblywoman Nicole Malliotakis, Senator Patrick Gullivan, Assemblyman Mike Miller, Senator Tony Avella, Assemblywoman Nancy Calhoun, and Senator Michale Nozzolio to advocate for restoration of both SUNY funding and the millionaires tax and against deferential tuition.



**Two Bills at the Capital: Simons and Ashbaugh**

A Fulbright Scholar, Dr. Ashbaugh noted that during his recent sabbatical, he found that Japan is investing heavily



in higher education, providing a lesson for New Yorkers to take to heart. With eloquence and passion, Bill Ashbaugh called for New York to rebuild the intellectual infrastructure of SUNY. An early morning briefing, quick lunch, impromptu corridor introductions with area representatives Senator Jim Seward and Assemblyman Pete Lopez, and visits to the historic legislative chambers framed Bill's day.

Bill Ashbaugh found the experience interesting and significant. UUP looks forward to Bill joining us again during the legislature's next session. SUNY advocacy, whether in-district, in Albany, or electronically is the responsibility of each and every UUPer.

**L to R: Bill Ashbaugh, Assemblyman Pete Lopez, and Bill Simons**

# Lateral Networking: UUP New Leaders Orientation

UUP facilitates lateral networking between chapters. Through the years, UUP Oneonta has shared and received information, counsel, newsletter articles, campus visits, and advocacy with other chapters. UUP State officers and professional staff, headquartered in Latham, provide direction, framework, resources, and expertise as well as opportunity for the chapters to benefit by lateral networking. Recognizing that knowledge is power, UUP leaders employ lateral networking to augment the resources of chapters. With a strong foundation as a prerequisite, State UUP empowers strong chapters. On June 22-23, 2011, State UUP advanced this process by featuring panel presentations by veteran chapter leaders at the New Chapter Leaders Orientation at NYSUT Headquarters in Latham.



**Rob Compton, second from right, makes a point**

Oneonta President Bill Simons and Vice President for Academics Rob Compton were amongst those invited to address newly elected UUP chapter vice presidents and presidents. In addition to Bill and Rob, the following veteran chapter officers shared perspectives with newly elected officers in a program entitled “What New Leaders Need to Know”: UUP Purchase President John Delate, UUP Upstate President Carol Braund, UUP Stony Brook President Arty Shertzer, UUP Farmingdale President Yolanda Pauze, and UUP Buffalo President Mike Behun.



**New Leaders Orientation Panel, left to right: Arty Shertzer, Yolanda Pauze, Bill, Rob, Mike Behun, and Carol Braund**

At the New Chapter Leaders Orientation, veteran officers provided newly elected officers with accessible information and perspectives concerning newsletter and website communication, working with the CWA administrative assistant, relations with campus administration, shaping agendas and conduct of Labor-Management Meetings, Executive Board responsibilities, roles of the president and vice presidents, time prioritization, resource utilization, grievance procedures, and crisis management.

In keeping with the spirit of the orientation, communication between veteran and new leaders flowed both ways. New leaders shared their own perspectives, posed significant questions, made suggestions, and participated in discussions. New leaders are well prepared for their upcoming responsibilities. In addition to strong support from State UUP officers and professional staff in Latham, new leaders — and veteran officers — know that bilateral networking between chapters links us in solidarity to 36,000 sisters and brothers throughout New York State.

# Report to Membership: Oneonta Speakers Bureau (2010-11) and Beyond

*By Rob Compton, Vice President for Academics*

An innovative program, the Oneonta Speakers Bureau (OSB) sought to engage UUP members with the Greater Oneonta area high schools and primarily two-year institutions. Conceived as a mechanism to promote collaboration between UUP and Oneonta Administration and SUNY-Oneonta and institutions in the region, the program provides opportunities for UUP members to make interactive invited presentations. For academics, community service is part-and-parcel of the reappointment and tenure and promotion process. The OSB gives employees the opportunity for community service with a small stipend and mileage reimbursement.

UUP leadership and the College Administration worked together to submit a Joint Labor Management (JLM) Grant application during the Spring 2010 semester. The grant application required that the Principal Investigator be a member of UUP and that the campus would be committed to cost sharing 40% of the total grant budget. We set up a Joint Labor Management OSB Committee to administer the grant, up approval. The administration created a web site with UUP input and the details of the program can be found at: <http://www.oneonta.edu/admin/humres/HR/OSB.asp>

Applications are being solicited on a rolling basis and the committee members made important contacts with area principals in the Southern Tier by making a presentation at a meeting in April, 2011. The committee approved nine prospective presenters and listed their abstracts on the webpage. Dr. Jennifer Schlosser (Sociology) recently spoke at the Deposit High School. Her presentation "Learning How You Learn: Socialization and Popular Culture" focused on how socialization impacts notions of gender, success, interaction rituals, and techniques for self-evaluation.

President Nancy Kleniewski is committed to funding the program after the expiry of the Joint Labor Management grant. The committee plans to open up the program to management confidential and members of other units on campus during the 2011-12 academic year but retain the program's structure and purpose.



## UUP Gets Golf Cart Tour with Associate Vice President for Facilities

### Tom Rathbone

To keep the College community knowledgeable about physical facilities, SUNY Oneonta Associate Vice President for Facilities and Safety Tom Rathbone invites individuals from various components of the campus to accompany him on his ubiquitous campus inspections. For years, Tom has graciously included UUP on the list of invitees. On Tuesday, June 21, 2011, UUP Oneonta Chapter President Bill Simons accompanied Tom on his afternoon inspection. They travelled by golf cart. These tours provide information that facilitates Labor-Management discussions about physical facilities.

**UUP Gets Golf Cart Tour with Associate Vice President for Facilities Tom Rathbone (continued)**

With \$24 million allotted for this fiscal year, numerous construction sites punctuated campus this summer. Supervising campus facilities is comparable to managing the physical infrastructure of a small city. Projects encompassed renovating the Golding and Littell dormitories; ratcheting up classrooms; completing special projects in the Chase Physical Education, Fitzelle, and Schumacher buildings; rendering bathrooms more disability accessible; improving hot water and sewer pipes; and upgrading boiler furnaces. Energy savings and feasibility remain the watchwords.



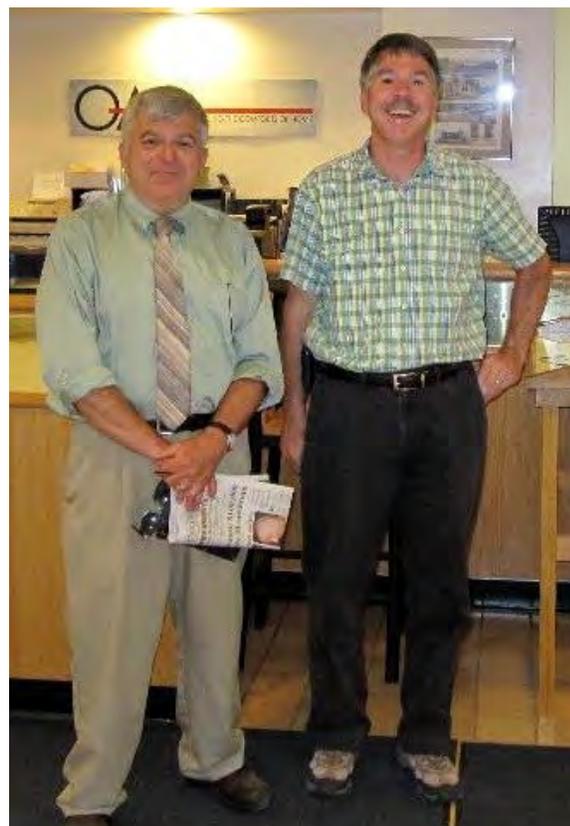
**Tom Rathbone at the Wheel**

In addition to current projects, a still evolving Master Plan for facilities augurs significant construction in the decade ahead.

A 2008 recipient of the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Service, Tom supervises facilities planning, facilities operations, energy management, infrastructure, construction and Environmental Health & Safety. He continues to coordinate many notable infrastructure improvements and additions at the College. From blue prints to materials to costs to personnel, Tom expertly directs construction, operations, and safety. Tom did a superb job coordinating the College-based relief response following local flooding in 2006.

Tom came to Oneonta in 1988. He is a graduate of the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland. Tom has traveled widely; serving on Naval ships in many areas of the world. When he left active Naval duty in 1983, Tom retained his commission as a reserve officer, serving in a variety of commands, including as Officer in Charge, Forward Logistics Support Site, Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Shield/Storm. He retired from the Naval reserves in 2004. Tom is bright, affable, energetic, and a top-flight professional. His interests are wide-ranging and eclectic, encompassing baseball (particularly the Baltimore Orioles), theater, and Rotary. Many of us who have gone on golf cart tours of the College with Tom can attest to his commitment and vision. The first impression many prospective students and visitors have of the College derives from the physical plant, and thanks to Tom that is one of the College's great assets.

**Tom and Norm Payne, Assistant Director, Facilities, and UUP Vice President for Professionals.**



# UUP Labor Management Meeting, Monday, May 16th, 2011

**For Management:** President Nancy Kleniewski and Lisa Wenck, Senior Executive Employee Services Officer

**For UUP:** President Bill Simons and Rob Compton, VP for Academics

I. Budget Update: UUP and Management discussed budget developments and noted that so far, SUNY System has not parceled out the budget cuts but campus administration does not expect changes to department budgets or faculty development funds at this point. The projected enrollment numbers for the fall look good, with slightly higher than anticipated freshman deposits confirmed. In regards to sabbaticals, the administration noted that sabbatical saving would be less than anticipated, so developments in this area are still ongoing. UUP and Management agreed that strong sabbatical proposals and reports protect taxpayers' interests.

II. UUP offered to meet with incoming Provost Maria Thompson to exchange insight and information. Management noted that it will so inform Provost Thompson regarding UUP's offer.

III. Labor asked about non-renewals for this year compared to last year and Management noted that there are a handful for both years in the academic and professional areas. UUP noted its concern that on some campuses, non-renewals have been used as a primary tool to address budget cuts. So far, that is not the case at Oneonta.

IV. Management and Labor agree on the need for timely notification of Part-time Faculty Renewals and Non-renewals. While sudden changes in the scheduling can occur, Management noted that it will work on streamlining the process as new administrative personnel come on-line.

V. UUP asked about the outcomes of the 2010-11 faculty searches and Management noted that most have been successfully completed with only three having failed. UUP noted that the starting salaries for faculty now are considerably lower than Cortland's for a tenure track assistant professor.

VI. Management and UUP discussed DSI for the coming year. UUP stated that its position remains across-the-board and Management noted that it believes in the merit approach. Management said that it is committed to that for the following year but would take into consideration UUP's proposal given the tough economy and the lack of a new contract. Management also noted that the DSI study would be done but it would take some years to address the pay inequity and that funds would come from a variety of sources. UUP offered to invite Statewide VP for Academics, Fred Floss (who has done numerous equity regression analysis for campuses including ours), to make a presentation. Administration stated interest in this.

VII. Both Labor and Management are committed to the future of the Oneonta Speakers Bureau as a Joint Labor-Management project. Initial speakers will be going to campuses in May and June, 2011.

VIII. UUP and Management agreed to continue the current Labor-Management format in to the coming year. September and December will be the small group and the other months were designated as the large group meetings.

IX. On other terms and conditions, UUP asked Management to consider a stipend for PT faculty who attend Sexual Harassment and other mandated employee training.

Meeting adjourned at 4:15pm

## UUP Joins in Welcome to New Provost



**Dr. Evelyn Maria Thompson**

Dr. Evelyn Maria Thompson will serve as the next SUNY Oneonta Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, effective July 18, 2011. UUP joins in welcoming her, and sent Dr. Thompson a note of congratulations. The union had the opportunity to meet with Dr. Thompson and the other finalists during the search process. UUP looks forward to a new era and to working with the incoming Provost. An abridged version of President Nancy Kleniewski's announcement of the appointment appears below:

*I am delighted to announce the selection of Dr. Evelyn Maria Thompson as SUNY Oneonta's next provost and vice president of academic affairs. Her appointment will begin on July 18.*

*Dr. Thompson currently is vice president of research and sponsored programs at Tennessee State University in Nashville, where she has served in various positions since 1989. Prior to her tenure there, Dr. Thompson was an assistant professor at the University of Kentucky and an instructor here at SUNY Oneonta.*

*As provost, Dr. Thompson will ensure the overall integrity of SUNY Oneonta's curricular program and lead all academic departments, the Milne Library, and several administrative offices in support of our mission. She will succeed Dr. F. Daniel Larkin, who last year announced his intent to retire from the position of provost and return to the college's History Department.*

*Dr. Thompson earned a Ph.D. in textile science and textile economics from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, a master's degree in textiles from The Ohio State University and a bachelor's degree in home economics from Tennessee State University. Her extensive research portfolio includes projects funded by the National Science Foundation, Tennessee Board of Regents, Air Force Office of Scientific Research, and the federal departments of Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, and Energy.*



## What Fracking Can Bring: Horizontal Gas Drilling Not Ready for Prime Time

*By Bill Simons, Chapter President*

*The Sentinel* has featured a series of articles by Ron Bishop, George Hovis, Ken Jaffe, and Nancy Cannon examining fracking—horizontal gas drilling, a process that fractures shale with water, sand, and chemicals, some of them carcinogenic. It is evident that, at present, technological and legal infrastructures are insufficient to ensure the safety of air, water, and soil from fracking. Corporate interests have targeted our own area for horizontal gas drilling. The experience of Bradford County, Pennsylvania, just below New York's Southern Tier, with fracking provides a cautionary tale.

### **What Fracking Can Bring: Horizontal Gas Drilling (continued)**

Journalist Bryan Walsh ("The Gas Dilemma," *Time*, 4/11/11) relates the Bradford County experience of Bonnie and Truman Burnett when fracking occurred on a property adjacent to theirs:

*In June 2010... tens of thousands of gallons of drilling water that had been stored on the well pad spilled, leaking downhill and into the Burnetts' trees and pond. Truman says that spill ruined a 50-ft. (15 m) swath of forest and affected their water. The pond seems lifeless, and the bass and perch that the Burnetts once fished with their grandchildren are gone... "Did it ruin my life?" asks a tearful Bonnie. "I'd have to say yes."*



**Gas Drilling**

More recently, as a result of a Bradford County accident, at a site for extracting natural gas by hydraulic fracturing, thousands of gallons of wastewater, with chemical concentrations, poured into the Towanda Creek, tributary of the Susquehanna River, on April 19-20, 2011. The site is operated by Chesapeake Energy Corporation, an advocate of conducting hydraulic fracturing in our region of New York.

Of the Bradford County miscue, Binghamton (NY) Mayor Matthew T. Ryan recognizes:

*This accident underscores the numerous risks hydrofracking poses to the health of our communities, including the risk of contamination of drinking water supplies, generation of harmful waste, increasing noise, dust and air pollution, and industrializing small and rural communities. Indeed, we still have yet to fully understand the entire impact such drilling would have on our health and well-being. (Binghamton Press & Sun-Bulletin, April 24, 2011)*

An April 2011 Minority Staff from the Committee on Energy and Commerce of the United States House of Representatives counsels:

*The absence of a minimum, national baseline for disclosure of fluids injected during the hydraulic fracturing process and the exemption of most hydraulic injections from regulations under the Safe Drinking Water Act has left an informational void concerning the contents, chemical concentrations, and volumes of fluids that go into the ground during fracturing operations and return to the surface in the form of wastewater. As a result, regulators and the public are unable effectively to assess any impact the use of these fluids may have on the environment or public health.*

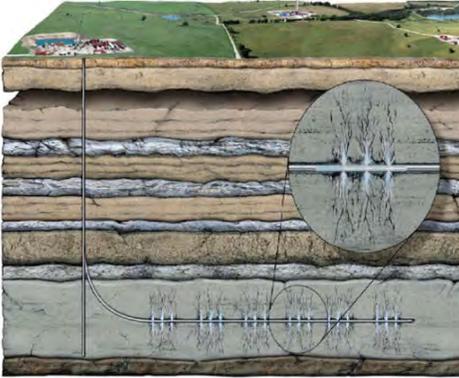
In addition, a July 1, 2011, editorial in *Hometown Oneonta*, which cites and quotes from the June 26, 2011, *New York Times* lead story, reports allegations of misrepresentation by the frackers. Excerpts from the *Hometown Oneonta* editorial appear below:

## What Fracking Can Bring: Horizontal Gas Drilling (continued)

The New York Times...reports a review of "hundreds of industry e-mails and internal documents, and an analysis of data from thousands of wells ...

"In the e-mails, energy executives, industry lawyers, state geologists and market analysts voice skepticism about lofty forecasts and question whether companies are intentionally and even illegally overstating the productivity of their wells and the size of their reserves.

"Many of these e-mails also suggest a view that is in stark contrast to more bullish public comments made by the industry, in much the same way that insiders have raised doubts about previous financial bubbles.



"'Money is pouring in' from investors even though shale gas is 'inherently unprofitable,' an analyst from PNC Wealth Management, an investment company, wrote to a contractor in a February e-mail. 'Reminds you of dot-coms,' the article reports.

"'The word in the world of independents is that the shale plays are just giant Ponzi schemes and the economics just do not work,' an analyst from HIS Drilling Data, an energy research company, wrote in an e-mail on Aug. 28, 2009."

Horizontal Drilling / Hydraulic Fracturing [for extracting natural gas]



## Response to Tsunami Crisis: Thanks to Rob Compton

By JoAnne Murphy, Academic Specialist, Educational Opportunity Program

As the news was broadcast of the massive earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan, I, along with most of the country, sat glued to the television. I watched the situation unfold, dumfounded by the horrific images of seemingly apocalyptic devastation. As Japan shook, so did my world here in Oneonta. My husband's 76 year old mother, my two sons' "Obasan", lives in Fukushima, right at the heart of some of the worst damage.

We immediately went into crisis-management mode, thinking, is she alive? Can we get through to her? Can she get out? What if we cannot locate her? You see, my mother in law speaks English, but we do not speak Japanese. Then I remembered my colleague and friend, Dr. Rob Compton, who is fluent in both Japanese and English. I emailed him to request help, and right away, he responded with the generosity and pragmatic approach that we needed. He was most helpful. Fortunately, my mother-in-law survived the quake and we were able to speak to her. Her city is demolished, and many there perished, but she is alive.



Tsunami

Later that day, my husband and I went food shopping. As we walked up and down the aisles, noticing shelf after

shelf of food and bottled water, I began to think of how much we take for granted. I never doubt that I will have food and water for myself and my family. Similarly, I never doubted that Rob would help us. I never doubted that he would step up and do whatever he could. And then I thought about how in our current budget crisis (and now I feel a bit silly using the word “crisis”)....okay, our current budget challenge, we tend to take for granted that there will be people who will step up there too and do whatever they can to help.

And so, I feel compelled to take the time to say a heartfelt thank you to Rob Compton for being there for my family. But I also need to acknowledge all of those individuals who, without even personally knowing all of us who are the recipients of your hard work, step up to advocate and fight for us and for all that we have, and for SUNY. Your tireless dedication and commitment to the causes of education and social justice do not go unnoticed. Thank you for your efforts. Thank you for your hard work. Thank you for caring about more than yourselves. Thank you.



## **The Organization of American Historians Speaks Out on Academic Freedom:**

### **Defends OAH Member and University of Wisconsin–Madison Professor William Cronon**

The Executive Committee of the Organization of American Historians (OAH), led by President Alice Kessler-Harris, R. Gordon Hoxie Professor of History at Columbia University, issued the following statement on March 30, 2011, supporting academic freedom and deploring the recent efforts of Wisconsin politicians to intimidate OAH member and professor William Cronon:

“The Executive Committee of the Organization of American Historians deplores the efforts of Republican party operatives in the state of Wisconsin to intimidate Professor William Cronon, a distinguished and respected member of our organization and currently the president-elect of our sister association, the American Historical Association. As a professional historian, Professor Cronon has used his extensive knowledge of American history to provide a historical context for recent events in Wisconsin. Requiring him to provide his e-mail correspondence, as the Republican party of Wisconsin has now done, will inevitably have a chilling effect on the capacity of all academics to engage in wide public debate. The timing and character of the Freedom of Information Act request for Professor Cronon’s e-mail correspondence leave no doubt that the purpose of this request is to use the authority of the state to prevent William Cronon from freely exercising his rights as a citizen and as a public employee.

Cronon, a professor of environmental and U.S. western history at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, has come under fire from the Wisconsin Republican party. A longtime member of the OAH and a former member of its executive board, Cronon is the incoming president of the American Historical Association. He has been thrust into the spotlight for his March 15, 2011, blog post and for a subsequent op-ed piece in the New York Times, critical of the Wisconsin legislature and Governor Scott Walker. The OAH Executive Committee believes that the action of the Wisconsin Republican party in requesting e-mails sent by Professor Cronon will have a negative impact on academics who engage in wide public debate.”

# Cats—Their Lives and Ours

*By Bill Simons, Chapter President*

Spring 2011. A soft, rhythmic wheeze fills the room. Despite the indignities of age, Brunny can still find reason to purr with satisfaction, particularly when lovingly brushed by Nancy. Although the venerable cat now walks slowly, she continues to mount the couch with a leap. Born to a feral mother nineteen years ago, Brunny, possessed of a jet-black coat and a rambunctious spirit, remained the only unadoptable kitten from the litter.

Once a ravenous eater, Brunny, these days, frequently only licks her food. As now prominent bones attest, Brunny has lost considerable weight. The vet doesn't know how much time remains, but provides reassurance that this special cat feels no pain.

Brunny curls up to Nancy on the couch. These days are bittersweet.

Nancy says "see you later" to Brunny. We drive a few miles to a nursing home to see a good man who had befriended many a stray cat—and many a student—and me. Nancy knows that her presence will make the next hour easier for me.

We sign in at the reception desk and head to unit 3. A soft, rhythmic wheeze fills the room. The retired professor dozes intermittently in a recliner. I place my hand gingerly on his shoulder to announce our visit. He appears very thin.

I talk about our shared times and his substantial achievements. The professor occasionally responds, sometimes poignantly, but mainly takes satisfaction in a familiar voice. He glances at the magazines we brought, drawn back several times to a cover photo of Abraham Lincoln. The retired professor is the best read person I ever knew. A military background and gruff exterior never successfully concealed his great kindness.

Lunch comes on a tray. The pork, squash, and mashed potatoes remain untouched, but the lemon meringue pie, apple juice, and milk gradually disappear.

The professor asks, "Where is the cat?" I don't know how to respond, but Nancy beckons to the nearby empty bed, where a realistic mechanical cat rests. I get the cat and place the figure within the older man's reach. The retired professor affectionately pets the cat's head, eliciting a meow. He offers reassurance, "It's ok, Kitty. It's going to be alright." Through the years, I had seen the retired professor comfort many a cat.

The minutes pass, and it's time to leave.

Long ago, the retired professor shared the following: "In the end, a good heart is all that matters."



**Brunny**

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