



# The Sentinel

UUP – Oneonta Local 2190

Volume 12, Number 7

March 2012

## Faculty Retention at Around 6 Years

*By Tom Horvath, Secretary*

I hope I caught your attention. If faculty were leaving this college after 6 years, I would think that the retention committee and the rest of us would be on high alert. That's probably not the case, for us faculty at least.

In 2008 I wrote an article about the rather short time that athletic coaches experience in their positions. At that time, it seemed like Oneonta was turning over coaches at a pretty high rate. In order to see if my impressions would be supported by data, I set about collecting data from the athletic web sites of Oneonta and its sister SUNYAC (SUNY Athletic Conference) schools. What I found was actually more alarming than my impressions led me to believe. In 2008, the data showed that on average, our coaches were able to stick around for less than 5 years before they were replaced (see Table 1). We ranked near the very bottom of the SUNYAC in terms of average time in a position. I did not have any data to suggest why they were leaving. Some may have left to better their careers somewhere else, others may have felt uncomfortable at the college for whatever reason and left of their own volition.

Once again in 2012, it seems that we are again experiencing high turnover rates. Just this year we have had to replace a baseball coach, a tennis coach, and a women's lacrosse coach. So, back to the data I went. Once again, I constrained my data collection to the information that I could collect from athletic web pages. The intention here is that I would get comparable data across SUNYAC schools. What I found was that once again Oneonta finds itself near the bottom of the conference (see Table 2).



scholar activist Tom Horvath

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**Faculty Retention (continued from page 1)**

Now, I can't say why coaches tend to leave after only 6 years, nor can I say how typical the SUNYAC is across the country for D-III programs. What I can say is that we as a campus should be concerned that we may not be as welcoming a place for coaches as other SUNYAC schools when it comes to allowing coaches to have a career. A few items of protection come to mind.

Table 1. Comparison of mean tenures (in years) of coaches in 2008 and 2012. SUNY Geneseo and Oswego are not included because data were unavailable in 2008.

College	2008 Mean	2012 Mean	change
New Paltz	4.2	5.8	1.6
Oneonta	4.8	6.6	1.9
Potsdam	5.3	7.5	2.2
Cortland	5.8	8.8	3.0
Buffalo State	6.6	9.2	2.6
Fredonia	7.5	9.7	2.2
Plattsburgh	10.0	10.6	0.6
Brockport	12.6	12.6	0.0

Table 2. Rankings of SUNYAC Colleges in terms of mean length of tenures of current coaches. Data were collected from college websites. All sports are represented with the exception of Oneonta tennis, where no data were available on the website at time of collection.

College	Mean
Oswego	4.8
New Paltz	5.8
Oneonta	6.6
Potsdam	7.5
Geneseo	8.3
Buffalo State	8.8
Cortland	9.2
Fredonia	9.7
Brockport	10.6
Plattsburgh	12.6

**We Have FERPA, Coaches Don't**

I have been involved with student orientations during the summer for quite a few years. I have seen the "helicopter" parents that attempt to control their student's life down to the time of day that she/he takes their math course. Even as an instructor I have had to deal with the occasional parent telephoning in to find out more details of their student's life in my class. Thank the gods for FERPA, which gives us teaching faculty some breathing room. However, our brothers and sisters that work as coaches do not have many of the same protections we teaching faculty have. For example, parents have very direct lines to coaches regarding players' performances or lacks thereof. I remember from my playing days how uncontrollable parents could be from the sidelines. Parents can put unbearable pressure on coaches to demand explanations as to why their little Bobby of Sue isn't starting every match or isn't the team captain. Coaches have to deal with these every-day headaches in a professional manner, and they do. But over time, these pressures can weigh down a person.

## Faculty Retention (continued)

### We Have Tenure & Permanent Appointment, Coaches Don't

The other protection that coaches don't have is that afforded by permanent appointment. The data that I collected do include a few outliers. For example, the wrestling coach at Brockport has been in that position for 41 years and may be on a permanent faculty line. So some of the numbers may not be directly comparable. But what if we would offer coaches permanent appointment? One negative is that we could end up with dead wood. The dead wood scenario plays out like this: a coach does a good job for a couple of years (remember coaches have to recruit, train, instruct, play parent to students, be concerned with academic performance, be concerned with athletic performance, etc.), gets permanent appointment, then sits back and relaxes for the rest of their career. The dead wood scenario just doesn't seem plausible to me. One, coaches are probably as competitive as their student-athletes. Two, even if they did become dead wood, their program would fall apart, and there would be no demand for that sport – hence they are out of a job. However, there may be positives to offering coaches permanent appointment. One, it puts coaches on the same level as other professionals on campus. I personally don't like the fact that friends and colleagues here can be fired without a public reason even after many years of successful service to the College and community. In addition to the high pressures that come with the job, having an additional fear of being canned at any time seems inhumane. Can you imagine being called into HR, being told you don't have a job right before the start of the semester and being given 2 hours to vacate your office (oh, and having armed police officers there to make sure you comply)? Faculty would be on constant edge around here – especially given these still fiscal tough times. This is what our brothers and sisters in Chase and the Field House go through every day. **I think that if a coach has proven after 7 years (7 chosen because that's generally what tenure-lines get) that they are productive members of the campus community and the community at large, that they should be given the protections of permanency!** We think so for teaching faculty, why not for coaches that work every bit as hard as we do, and for less money I may add.

Let's remember that we are a Division III athletic department, which celebrates the student-athlete. Our coaches are providing our students with excellent athletic opportunities and producing students with higher GPAs on average than the overall student body. We as teaching faculty should be holding coaches up as success stories, not watching them disappear from our ranks after only 6 years.



## UUP Oneonta 2012-2013 Budget Passed by Chapter



**EAP Coordinator Melissa Nicosia addresses UUPers** Thanks to UUP Chapter Treasurer Rich Tyler for preparing the budget and for his excellent work throughout the year.

At the February 23<sup>rd</sup> Chapter Meeting, Melissa Nicosia made a presentation of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Melissa is EAP Coordinator, and her informative presentation and service are appreciated.

On Monday, February 20<sup>th</sup>, the proposed 2012-2013 UUP Oneonta Chapter Budget was passed unanimously by the Executive Board. Subsequently, the Budget was passed unanimously by the members of the bargaining unit at the Thursday, February 23<sup>rd</sup> Chapter Meeting. Final action on the Chapter Budget will take place at the spring 2012 Delegate Assembly.



**UUP Treasurer Presenting Budget**

## Volunteers Needed for UUP and CSEA at *Saturday's Bread* — Saturday, April 14, 2012

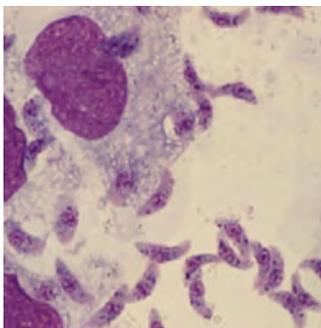


On Saturday, April 14, 2012, UUP and CSEA will again staff *Saturday's Bread*, a community kitchen that dispenses hot meals and good cheer. Linda Drake will, as previously, co-ordinate participation in this worthwhile community service. Although *Saturday's Bread* is housed at the First United Methodist Church, 66 Chestnut Street, Oneonta, the program is a non-denominational and humanitarian service open to all. To be part of the volunteer group at *Saturday's Bread* on April 14, you must be willing to work from 9 AM to 2 PM. As we need an exact list of the names and numbers of participants, please e-mail ([drakelm@oneonta.edu](mailto:drakelm@oneonta.edu)) Linda Drake to volunteer. When you contact Linda, please provide her with your full name, e-mail, and telephone number.

Kudos to Linda, the College at Oneonta's Executive Director of the Center for Social Responsibility and UUP's Director of Community Service, for continuing to facilitate the involvement of volunteers in a variety of benevolent enterprises. UUP Oneonta has participated in post-Katrina reconstruction in the Gulf, flood relief in our region, collection drives, Habitat for Humanity, and other volunteerism under Linda's leadership. UUP is proud to collaborate with CSEA in this current *Saturday's Bread* endeavor. Service is central to our mission.



### SENTINEL QUIZ



Infectious agents as a possible cause of schizophrenia and related disorders have been a topic of research in the past decade. What organism, associated with cats, is currently under investigation? The first person to email Nancy Cannon ([cannonns@oneonta.edu](mailto:cannonns@oneonta.edu)) with the correct answer will receive a UUP cap.

The February *Sentinel* quiz asked, "Which two presidents of Ivy League universities were subsequently elected President of the United States?" The answer is Woodrow Wilson (Princeton) and Dwight Eisenhower (Columbia). The first correct answers were submitted by Bill Ashbaugh and Armand LaPotin.

## Leave Donation

**[UUP Chapter President's Note:** Although Academic and Professional members of the UUP bargaining unit can receive Leave Donation, only Professionals and Librarians in the UUP bargaining unit as well as those in other participating unions can donate Leave Donation. This process transcends union lines: for example, the situation below involves a CSEA member. The only restriction in regard to UUP is that this agreement is limited to the Professionals as academic leave in UUP is calculated in a different manner. Please read the material below and consider making a Leave Donation. To make a donation, contact the Human Resources Office. Undoubtedly there will come times when donations will be solicited on behalf of members of the UUP bargaining unit. Always friendly and helpful to everyone, **Jeanne Clink**, of our Purchasing Department and formerly of the Mail Room as well as part of the CSEA bargaining unit, has exhausted her leave accruals. Jeanne is the mother of a SUNY Oneonta History major, Samantha. The entire Clink family — Jeanne, Clarence, Joshua, and Samantha — express thanks and appreciation for your help. UUP also thanks you for considering this request.]

TO: ELIGIBLE\* UUP EMPLOYEES

\*Only employees who earn vacation accruals are eligible to donate leave. (Employees who only earn sick leave may receive donated accruals, but they have no vacation accruals to donate to anyone else.)

FROM: BILL SIMONS *Bill*, UUP CHAPTER PRESIDENT, ONEONTA

RE: LEAVE DONATION

DATE: February 2012

Under an agreement between applicable public employee unions and the State of New York, a program has been established where vacation time can be donated across unions to those who have exhausted their sick leave. On the Oneonta campus, Jeanne Clink, CSEA, has exhausted her sick leave accruals. Any member of the UUP bargaining unit who accrues vacation leave can donate vacation days to Jeanne Clink so long as they maintain a balance of 10 vacation days after donated days are deducted from their balances. The identity of donors remains confidential.

If you are interested in donating any accruals to Jeanne Clink, please contact the Office of Human Resources at x2509. Your generosity will be greatly appreciated.



## Contract Negotiations Continue

*By Hanfu Mi, Membership Director*

Talks between UUP and state negotiators aimed at reaching terms on a new contract took place Feb. 23 at UUP headquarters. Negotiations have been ongoing and more sessions are scheduled. The latest information on negotiations is posted on UUP's website. Go to "Contract Negotiations" on the state UUP home page at <http://www.uupinfo.org/>. The union will also send periodic updates for distribution via chapter websites, newsletters, fliers and meetings.

## Class Counts: Dr. King and the House of Want

By Bill Simons, Chapter President

The great struggle was and remains that between “the house of Have” and “the House of Want.” From his first battle in Montgomery in 1955 to his last crusade in Memphis in 1968, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., stood with those locked in “the House of Want.” He knew that class counts, and assertions of racial justice remain hallow unless accompanied by universal access to a decent standard of living, encompassing education, employment, health care, housing, diet, and physical security. Poverty provides poor soil for dignity, respect, and opportunity. For history to bend to the good, Dr. King understood the need for human solidarity. Celebration of Dr. King sans emulation undermines his legacy. We must not allow the “the House of Have” to divide the daughters and sons of “the House of Want.”



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr

In the days of southern bondage, the planter class nurtured animosities between poor whites and black slaves. Obscuring their appropriation of black lives, wealthy planters, a minority in the antebellum South, frequently employed poor whites as overseers. Eschewing their own responsibility for the worst abominations of slavery, planters cast the overseers and slave patrols, also staffed by poor whites, as buffers to absorb the hostility of the exploited. With their pose of paternalism, the planter elite sought to misdirect black resentment. Slavery robbed blacks of freedom and debased white laborers. Likewise, with appeals to racial solidarity, the planter elite attempted to blunt the class consciousness of poor whites.

Following Emancipation, the political and legal gains of former slaves during Reconstruction proved ephemeral. Violence and the erosion of federal support left blacks vulnerable. Reconstruction never compensated freed blacks with “40 acres and a mule:” without an economic base, newly acquired rights withered. Exploitable labor of technically free black labor impeded a living wage and unionization on both sides of the southern color line.

The Populist uprisings of the late nineteenth century may have created a fleeting interlude with the potential to forge interracial class solidarity between poor southern whites and poor blacks, but the power of prejudice impeded such an alliance. Unjust and abused laws, brutal convict leasing of blacks “found guilty” of trivial or non-existent offenses, tenancy and sharecropping, debt servitude to large land owners that amounted to peonage, intimidation, lynching, segregation, political disenfranchisement, high illiteracy, and grinding poverty long dominated black life in the South.

The masters of the New South knew the value of tokenism—and its effectiveness when endorsed by a faux spokesperson of the underclass. The white elite found their man in Booker T. Washington. Race leader, principal of the Tuskegee Institute, and recipient of white philanthropic largess, Washington exerted much influence amongst fellow blacks in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Eschewing political and legal rights as well liberal arts education, Washington counseled black accommodation, vocational training, and reliance on the white elite. While Washington’s private correspondence and actions as well as his ultimate intentions deviated from his platform counsel, his public rhetoric endorsed the major tenets of the economic elite — laissez faire, Social Darwinism, Horatio Algerism, imperialism, monopolistic business, and anti-unionism.

## ***Class Counts (continued)***

In *Souls of Black Folks* and throughout his long life, scholar-activist W. E. B. Du Bois luminously provided another prototype of black leadership, rooted in assertiveness. The Washington-Du Bois dialectic on race and class continues to resonate. For a price, disciples of Washington are still available to serve as public tokens to legitimize half-measures. In his brilliant novel, *Invisible Man*, African-American novelist Ralph Ellison savages a Washington-like race leader as a selfish, hypocritical Judas goat.



**W. E. B. Du Bois**

The Great Migration of hundreds of thousands of blacks from the rural South to the urban North did not end racial or class exploitation. Inner-city black poverty still blights the American Dream. Northern industrialists deterred worker solidarity by stoking racial and ethnic animosities. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Pinkerton and government arms were not the only weapons of the industrial elite against labor aspirations for decent wages, reduction of hours, and a work environment that did not maim and kill with regularity. Employers oft accentuated differences between immigrant groups by ethnic-specific task divisions that fragmented the work force. Last hired and first fired, black migrants to the urban North might find themselves deployed as strikebreakers by factory owners, deepening worker cleavages.

Not until the Great Depression of the 1930s and the New Deal's Wagner Act did American workers ameliorate racial and ethnic antagonisms sufficiently to unionize the nation's basic industries. Rejecting the craft unionism and exclusionary framework of the American Federation of Labor, the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) united workers through industrial unionism. In the late 1930s, via strikes, which sometimes met blood reprisals, newly united workers in steel, automobile, rubber, and other basic industries won significant victories.

The CIO and President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal added a new economic dimension to the American democracy, but they did not render racial justice. Nevertheless, the Roosevelts, Franklin and especially Eleanor, came to occupy an iconic status in African-American consciousness. During the 1930s, blacks abandoned the Republicans, the party of Lincoln the Emancipator, for FDR's Democrats in extraordinary numbers. In gestures, substantive and symbolic, such as Eleanor making possible the performance of African-



**Billie Holiday**

American contralto Marian Anderson at the Lincoln Monument, the Roosevelts evoked a strong resonance amongst blacks. Nonetheless, blacks encountered discrimination and/or exclusion from some New Deal programs. Neither the First nor Second Hundred Days included civil rights measures, and FDR, fearful of losing the support of southern congressman for New Deal bills, failed to fight for anti-lynching legislation even as Billie Holiday's rendition of *Strange Fruit* pierced the conscience of America.

The great African-American leader A. Philip Randolph, president of the predominantly black Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP), fused the issues of race and class. The Great Depression outlived the New Deal, and, in 1941 Randolph prepared to confront *An American Dilemma*. He planned a black March on Washington for July 1, 1941, with the purpose of protesting racial discrimination in the armed forces and in defense industries. Many thousands of black Americans responded to Randolph's March on Washington

## ***Class Counts (continued)***

appeal. Concerned about the image of the U.S. in the world at a time of global turmoil, FDR convinced Randolph to call off the March in return for the issuance of Executive Order 8802, which prohibited racial discrimination in defense-related industries. The Fair Employment Practices Committee, created to enforce Executive Order 8802, was limited in its effectiveness, and desegregation of the military did not come until after World War II during the Truman Administration. The 1950s, however, brought the Warren Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* against segregated public schools, the emergence of Dr. King, and the true birth of the modern Civil Rights Movements. Nor did Randolph disappear.



**A. Philip Randolph and Eleanor Roosevelt**

In 1963, Randolph finally got his March. The August 28, 1963, March on Washington called for **Jobs and Freedom**: racial justice cannot endure without economic justice. Randolph initiated the Great March on Washington in 1963, and labor unions played a key role in its organization. At the Great March, before a vast assemblage in the shadow of the Lincoln Memorial, Dr. King eloquently linked civil and economic rights:

*Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of captivity.*

*But one hundred years later, we must face the tragic fact that the Negro is still not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languishing in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. So we have come here today to dramatize an appalling condition.*

Rooted in non-violent civil disobedience, deeds of courage and confrontation followed. Dr. King and a generation of activists piqued a nation's conscience. The Civil Rights Acts of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the War on Poverty bear testament to that struggle.

Dr. King consistently linked racial and labor rights. Before an AFL-CIO convention, he proclaimed:

*Negroes are almost entirely a working people. There are pitifully few Negro millionaires, and few Negro employers. Our needs are identical with labor's needs — decent wages, fair working conditions, livable housing, old age security, health and welfare measures, conditions in which families can grow, have education for their children and respect in the community. That is why Negroes support labor's demands and fight laws which curb labor. That is why the labor-hater and labor-baiter is virtually always a twin-headed creature spewing anti-Negro epithets from one mouth and anti-labor propaganda from the other mouth.*

Dr. King recognized that labor unions with the right to collective bargaining provide the bulwark against Dickensian child labor, exploitive wages, unsafe working conditions, arbitrary dismissal, denial of medical services, and destitution in retirement. Dr. King evoked a righteous God thundering against greed and privilege: *"The children of my sons and daughters were in need of economic security and you did not provide for them."*

## Class Counts (continued)



A. Philip Randolph (center) meeting with President John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr. and former UAW President Walter Reuther (right)

Dr. King increasingly focused on bringing an end to poverty in America and to the war in Vietnam, a conflict where American combat troops disproportionately came from the racial and economic underclass. Dr. King planned to initiate a Poor People's Campaign in May 1968 with an encampment in the national capital that would advocate for the poor and dramatize their continuing need for jobs, housing, and health care. Prior to the start of the Poor People's Campaign, Dr. King, however, responded to the plight of workers in Memphis.

The unnecessary death of two black municipal workers, Echol Cole and Robert Walker, in Memphis, Tennessee, due to an antiquated garbage compressor precipitated a strike of that city's sanitation collectors for better conditions. City government refused to negotiate with sanitation workers or recognize their union (American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees — AFSCME, Local 1733) and termed their strike illegal. Despite death threats, Dr. King came to Memphis in March 1968 to join the strikers and called for union recognition; Dr. King asserted, *"Workers want a guarantee that there will be a union, that their money will go into the union and if trouble comes, they can help themselves."* At a March 28<sup>th</sup> march, led by Dr. King, Memphis police employed nightsticks and tear gas; police gunfire killed 16-year old Larry Payne. The strike continued. On April 4, 1968, an assassin shot Dr. King to death as he stood on the second floor balcony of a Memphis motel.

Riots engulfed cities across America in response to Dr. King's death. Dr. King, a prophet of peace, was not there that night to quell the violence. In Memphis, a shaken city government engaged in collective bargaining with sanitation workers, recognized AFSCME, Local 1733, and reached a settlement. And the Poor People's March began in Washington on May 12<sup>th</sup>.

Forty-four years have passed since Dr. King's death. His birthday is a national holiday. The problems he spoke about — racism, poverty, labor exploitation, and war — plague us still. As with Muhammad Ali, Dr. King and his message are today too often sanitized, only a few steps removed from the President's Day advertisements that trivialize Washington and Lincoln. The powerful seek to detach Dr. King's call for equality from class and economic issues. Dr. King's legacy is best honored not by celebration but by taking up his unfinished work.



Dr. King marches with striking sanitation workers in embattled Memphis

In an America once again polarized between "the House of Have" and "the House of Want," UUP Oneonta strives to take Dr. King's legacy seriously. UUP Part-Time Concerns Officer Caridad Souza was named co-recipient the 2012 Thurgood Marshall Unity Award by the Oneonta NAACP for work on

## Class Counts (continued)

behalf of “reproductive rights, class equity, gender and feminist causes and against racism in the U.S. and abroad;” Caridad was also named Oneonta UUPer of the year and nominated for the State UUP 2012 Faye Samuel Award for Courageous Service by Part-Time Academic and Professional Faculty. UUP sponsored an open discussion with Terry Melvin, Secretary-Treasurer of the 2.5 million member New York State AFL-CIO, on Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup>; Terry, the highest-ranking African-American union leader in New York State, spoke with eloquence and passion, exhorting us not to forget Dr. King’s commitment and mission for labor unions. A Tuesday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, UUP panel, featuring two minority faculty members and two police chiefs, will engage *Race and the Police* with the intent of an exchange that is civil, candid, and constructive. Dr. Gina Keel, Director, UUP Labor Film Series, will show and lead an inclusive April 2<sup>nd</sup> discussion of *10,000 Black Men Named George*, an examination of labor and civil rights leader A. Philip Randolph’s struggle to organize and gain recognition for The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters union and its black membership. On April 25<sup>th</sup> at Noon in Morris, Dr. Dawn Hamlin, UUP Disabilities Director, will facilitate and moderate a panel on autism and exceptionalities. On Saturday, April 14, 2012, UUP and CSEA will again staff *Saturday’s Bread*, a community kitchen that dispenses hot meals and good cheer.

Stay alert to tokenism—and the elite’s search for a contemporary Booker T. Washington. Cynicism will not prevail. We are forging new relationships with other unions, and this concerns the elite who seek to foster, as in ages past, discord amongst the diverse inhabitants of the House of Want. The House of Have seeks to break the labor movement. Look at the battles fought in Wisconsin and other states. The attack on decent wages, collective bargaining, pensions, and workplace safety comes yoked with surveillance, profiling, and regressive taxation. The House of Have seeks to set worker against worker. Brutal physical violence against labor of former times has yielded to techniques of demonization and the stripping of rights.



Oneonta unions rally: police, fire, Teamsters, CSEA, K-12 teachers, UUP

During the past year, UUP Oneonta hosted a panel attended by workers from diverse unions and then co-sponsored on Muller Plaza the largest rally ever held in modern Oneonta — 300 strong unionists, including police, fire, Teamsters, CSEA, K-12 teachers, and UUPers. UUP has followed up by regular meetings and communications with its new allies. We have picketed with CWA against Verizon, volunteered shoulder-to-shoulder with other unions in flood relief and *Saturday’s Bread*, sponsored Leave Donation canvases for brothers and sister in other

unions, and published articles in *The Sentinel* from leaders and rank-and-file of other unions. Union solidarity and class issues will makes themselves felt: count on it.

### ***Class Counts (continued)***

We applaud the many notable achievements of the College, including the most recent — plans for a master's program in special education with Springbrook. Nonetheless, it takes more courage to confront injustice close by than afar, and UUP will keep faith with Dr. King. To establish trust and legitimacy, whatever succeeds Tripartite needs the independence and mandate to conduct a transparent investigation of the alleged abuses that occurred under the Tripartite Committee. Aside from cases involving danger to self or others or to property, our brothers and sisters in University Police should not be ordered to be involved in employee termination. Too many of our adjuncts are among the working poor. Adjunct starting pay was last adjusted — \$2,500 per course — in 2006: it is time to raise it. We can more effectively engage the 300,000 African Americans who reside amongst the 3.6 million people within a 2-hour drive of Oneonta. Let's remain vigilant to the potential threat that consolidation and sharing of services pose to SUNY's historic mission of accessibility.

Then and forever, Dr. King admonishes us, *"You may not be on strike. But either we go up together, or we go down together."* He recognized that equity and inclusion are hollow without economic rights. Let not Dr. King have lived and died in vain. Let not naked power strip workers of their human dignity. Join Dr. King in worker solidarity.



**Book of Genesis: "Here cometh the dreamer. Let us slay him and see what becomes of his dream."**



### **Best Buddies Challenge: Support Champions with Exceptionalities/Disabilities**

On June 2, 2012, the Best Buddies Challenge will take place in Hyannis Port in support of the 250 million people living with intellectual disabilities.

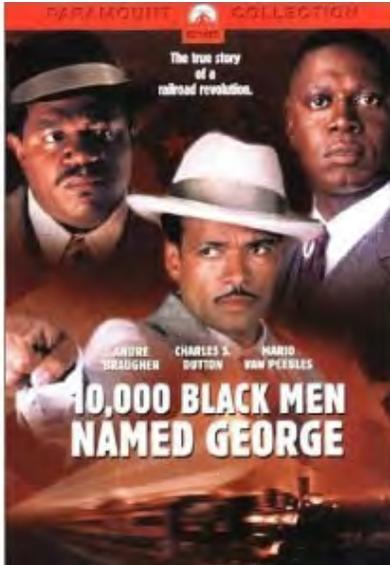


Any amount you can give will ensure Best Buddies continues to provide critical services and job integration for people with intellectual disabilities. And, your donation is tax deductible!

Best Buddies is a non-profit organization founded by Anthony Kennedy Shriver in 1989, dedicated to helping people with intellectual disabilities form friendships and find jobs in their community. The Best Buddies Challenge events are a strong symbol of the lasting friendships and open community that Best Buddies fosters throughout their programs.

By using the link that follows, you can find out how to support the Best Buddies Program: <http://www.bestbuddies.org/>

**N.E. Patriots QB Tom Brady and Special Olympian Jon Derr**



## UUP Labor Film Series

At Hunt Union Red Dragon  
Theater

 95 min

Monday, April 2,  
6 p.m.

## 10,000 Black Men Named George (2002)

Against daunting odds, activist A. Philip Randolph fought to organize black porters of the Pullman Rail Company in 1920s America. The company paid the porters lower wages than white men and subjected them to discriminatory treatment; porters were routinely called the racial slur "George" by white passengers. This docudrama, directed by Robert Townsend and featuring popular actors Andre Braugher, Charles Dutton, and Mario Van Peebles, illuminates an inspirational struggle in an era when economic and civil rights were systematically denied.

The Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters did achieve a first-ever agreement between a union of black workers and a major American corporation in 1937. Randolph continued to fight for civil rights for four decades, initiating the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom that featured a young Martin Luther King, Jr. delivering his "I Have a Dream" speech.

*This film will be followed by an audience discussion. For more information, please contact Professor Gina L. Keel, Film Series Director, at [keelgl@oneonta.edu](mailto:keelgl@oneonta.edu)*

## **The Fifth UUP Survey: *Quality of Professional Life & Administrative Assessment*:**

Chapter Member Input Meeting: Thursday, April 5, 4-5:30 PM, in Room 104, Morris

The next UUP *Quality of Professional Life & Administrative Assessment* member input meeting will be held on Thursday, April 5, 4-5:30 PM, in Room 104, Morris. The April 5<sup>th</sup> meeting is the second of the member input meetings on the UUP *Quality of Professional Life & Administrative Assessment*. The April 5<sup>th</sup> meeting will focus on the content and questions employed in the survey. The meeting is open to and limited to members of the UUP Oneonta bargaining unit. Members are welcome to arrive and depart at anytime between 4 PM and 5:30 PM for the April 5<sup>th</sup> working meeting on the administrative assessment instrument. Stay for the entire session or simply come for a limited interval—the choice is yours.

At its December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011, meeting, the Executive Board of UUP Oneonta voted to conduct, during the fall 2012 semester, the fifth evaluation of the College at Oneonta's administration. The rationale for this decision rested on several factors, amongst them:

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

At the December 19<sup>th</sup> Chapter meeting, the Executive Board voted to create a subcommittee, consisting of Rob Compton, Norm Payne, Andy Perry, and Bill Simons, to design the survey instrument. The subcommittee will consider topics for inclusion in the survey submitted by UUP Oneonta members. All UUP Oneonta are encouraged to send suggestions for questions to Rob Compton at [ComptonRW@Oneonta.edu](mailto:ComptonRW@Oneonta.edu); Norm Payne at [PayneNE@Oneonta.Edu](mailto:PayneNE@Oneonta.Edu); Andy Perry at [PerryAH@Oneonta.Edu](mailto:PerryAH@Oneonta.Edu); and/or Bill Simons at [Simon-SWM@Oneonta.Edu](mailto:Simon-SWM@Oneonta.Edu). In addition, members may submit items for possible inclusion at working Chapter meeting chaired by the subcommittee and held specifically to gather member input about the content of the survey.

In addition to UUP member input, the subcommittee to design the current survey will study past instruments. The most recent UUP Oneonta *Quality of Life & Administrative Assessment*, conducted in 2008, evaluated the President; Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs; Vice President for Finance & Administration; Vice President for Student Development; Vice President for Community Relations; Vice President for College Advancement; Dean of Science; and Social Science Dean of Behavioral and Applied Science.

The 2008 instrument included a free response and statistical questions. Utilizing a scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 7 (strongly disagree), the statistical questions instructed respondents to the survey to evaluate senior administrators in the following areas:

1. is generally accessible if and when there is a need to discuss problems, make inquiries, or suggest changes.
2. is generally tactful, considerate, and concerned about the needs of faculty, professional staff, and support staff.
3. is generally open-minded and flexible in responding to complicated problems.
4. has a grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the College and a vision of what we should strive to accomplish in the future
5. properly utilizes personnel
6. properly utilizes space, supplies, equipment, and budgetary resources
7. is effective in promoting the morale of the faculty, professional staff, and support staff
8. is generally effective in the overall fulfillment of his/her responsibilities to the College Community

## ***The Fifth UUP Survey (continued)***

In addition, each respondent is asked to indicate how he/she feels about the following:

1. informed about the operation of the College
2. recognized and appreciated for my professional work
3. that the College supports my professional work
4. secure in my job
5. adequately paid for my professional activities
6. that our faculty/staff as a whole exhibits positive morale
7. positively toward those in administrative authority at the College
8. that the College has an appropriate number of upper level administrators (Assoc. Dean thru V.P.)
9. that the management style of the current administration is effective in operating the College
10. that the faculty/professional staff play a significant role in the governance of the College
11. that in recent years my department chair/supervisor is more management than employee oriented
12. the administration is aware and makes appropriate distinctions in rewarding professional activities
13. technology is available to meet curricular demands
14. assessment and credentialing activities are meaningful and reasonable in scope and content
15. the administration promotes civility and professionalism on campus

Following the last survey, the complete results and accompanying 178-page report (***UUP Quality of Life & Administrative Assessment: 2008***) were made available to members of the UUP Oneonta bargaining unit at the UUP website. In addition, an abridged version was disseminated in ***The Sentinel***. It is evident that respondents did not view the administration as a monolith. Viewed comparatively, ratings for individual administrators demonstrated significant range. Moreover, respondents also made clear distinctions in their ratings concerning specific attributes of each administrator.

The April 5<sup>th</sup> working meeting on the administrative assessment instrument will provide an opportunity to continue gathering UUP member input about the content of the survey.



## **The Boys of Fall: Red Dragons Men's Soccer Team**

*By Loraine Tyler, Retiree Representative and Director, Special Events*



Before my retirement, I served as the Academic Mentor to the Men's Soccer Team at SUNY-Oneonta and I've been able to continue as a volunteer since. It's been a pleasure to work with the teams since 2003. This year was the pinnacle for me as the team won the SUNYAC championship and secured a berth in the NCAA Division III tournament. Justin Rivera was named SUNYAC Rookie of the Year,

Eric Fortier SUNYAC Player of the Year, Gary Laronde SUNYAC Championship MVP, and Iain Byrne SUNYAC Coach of the Year. In double overtimes, they beat St. Lawrence University and Rutgers-Camden to reach the Final Four and a trip to San Antonio in December. My husband Rich and I traveled to San Antonio to support the team and Coach Ian Byrne. Alumni, faculty, staff and parents cheered the team on. Although they lost to Calvin, I was so proud of them. The men played their hearts out on the field and enjoyed all San Antonio had to offer. They handled the loss with maturity and hope for the future. Working with these guys has been a pleasure. O-State can be proud of them as students as well as players.

## Dodgy Definitions of Merit

By Steve Street, UUP, Recipient of the Fayeze Samuel Award for Courageous Service by Part-Time Faculty

**[Editor's Note:** Steve Street is a lecturer in the writing program at SUNY's Buffalo State College. He has taught writing and literature in colleges and universities since 1980, never on the tenure track. He is a member of United University Professions and the New Faculty Majority, and writes occasionally for the Adjunct Track column in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, where this appeared in somewhat different form on December 19, 2011. Reprinted from and with the permission of the Prof. Brian Obach and the newsletter of UUP New Paltz, *The Bullhorn*—February-March 2012 issue.]



Steve Street, right, receiving the Fayeze Samuel Award for Courageous Service by Part-Time Faculty from UUP President Phil Smith

Just into fall semester I lost my breath. As it turned out, a melanoma I'd undergone treatment for 12 years ago has shown up again, primarily in my lungs. For a long-term adjunct, I'm extremely fortunate: I have health insurance. I qualified for sick leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act, and support from family and friends freed me up to deal with the Stage IV diagnosis and a new treatment that, amazingly, should allow me to return to work in the spring.

So with the size of those fish in my pan, can you believe that what I've been mulling lately has been why my college denied the application for a merit pay raise that I dropped off on my way to the emergency room?

I'm not looking for pity or tears here. The Israeli writer Amos Oz once said that the most parochial of stories have the best chance of becoming the most universal. And though some of the particulars of my adjunct career might constitute a worst-case scenario, they illustrate a dynamic of the two-tiered faculty system that goes beyond the commonly conceded wisdom that teachers with offices can do more good than teachers without.

Applicants who are denied a merit raise don't receive any specific notification of that in the first round of the written protocol for "discretionary salary increases"—that's the name that my state university system gives to its merit-pay program, in which the equivalent of 1 percent of each campus's payroll is earmarked for merit raises. If you don't hear by a certain date, you can assume you didn't get a merit raise and can file an appeal. If that, too, is denied, the college president writes a letter informing you of the decision and thanking you "for your continued service."

The policy for awarding merit raises states that their purpose is "to reward and encourage excellence in: teaching; scholarship or creative activity; campus and community service; professional performance." In practice, cynics say, the key word in the discretionary salary policy is "discretionary." They say the raises

## ***Dodgy Definitions of Merit (continued)***

aren't an indicator of meritorious work so much as a signal of who toes the line and who doesn't, who makes waves and who doesn't. In that view, the raises are an administrative tool for fomenting dissension among the ranks.

The edition of the union newsletter that publishes who got merit raises, and for how much, is said to be the most widely read issue of the year. And the process of handing out those raises is always contentious among full-timers.

It's less so among part-time faculty members, who stand to gain or lose less than the full-timers. A former officemate who got a merit raise once told me that it amounted to an extra \$10 a week; the raises are more generous for the already better-paid full-timers.

Another guideline for distributing the pay raises—"to redress base salary inequities"—is apparently less promising than it appears. Setting aside 1 percent of the payroll wouldn't even begin to fix the inequities in adjunct salaries. Even if it could, what administration would admit that the per-course amount paid to adjuncts constitutes an inequity, or that adjuncts must apply for a merit raise to have it redressed?

Actually, I did receive a merit raise once at another campus. A department chair nominated me for a raise after I'd developed and successfully taught a new course, helped her vet a new system for evaluating adjuncts, and scored particularly well on student evaluations. Keep in mind: I receive a per-course salary, not an annual salary. The chair had promised a true salary increase, which, for adjuncts paid by the course, could have added up, especially year after year. But instead of a \$75 increase in the amount I was paid per course, the \$75 raise I received was a flat annual bonus which, parceled out in my checks, amounted to a whopping \$2.35 more a week. The stink I raised probably figured in my nonrenewal at that particular campus, after some dozen years of service.

You'd think I'd have learned my lesson. But in my seventh or so year at my present campus, I began applying for merit raises again, partly because no other changes—like a new job title—were available to me. (Call me crazy, but even adjuncts like a little recognition for our work.) I tried various approaches to the Catch-22 of proving my exceptional performance in a job that strictly limits my contractual obligations: Even though service, publications, and other professional development can help adjuncts solidify our position in a department, none of those can be acknowledged in evaluating our work for a merit raise. Our job descriptions cover teaching only, to help distinguish us from our tenure-track peers.

So this year, my ninth as a lecturer (although, as a writing teacher, I rarely lecture), I focused my application on my teaching. I highlighted my student-evaluation scores of over four out of five in my required first-year courses. I mentioned the new pedagogies I'd been using, the all-new syllabi I had developed, and the summer work I did scoring AP essays. I included comments from course evaluations such as this remark: "Thank you for reading every sentence of every essay," as if, in this student's experience at least, not all teachers do.

Of the 135 students I had taught in the period under review, almost 40 percent earned grades under C, calculated by a time-consuming (for me) but transparent (for students) 1,000-point system I devised. Only 13 percent earned an A. Of course I knew my application wasn't perfect. Hints had been dropped in faculty meetings that contributing to a newsletter promoting our program might help with merit awards, and I hadn't done that.

## ***Dodgy Definitions of Merit (continued)***

But in the end, it seems, merit raises to part-timers are handed out for a whole host of reasons that have little to do with our performance in the classroom. Our program is staffed by one tenure-track director, four full-time contingent faculty members on annual salaries, and 25 to 30 part-time adjuncts paid by the course. We all teach the same two writing courses, but part-timers teach three quarters of those classes—and that's our value to management.

In the business model's bottom-line view, our value as part-timers lies in qualities that will ensure course coverage for the program: for example, in being the spouse or partner of a tenure-track faculty member (you offer a free long-term commitment with little financial urgency); in being a retired high-school teacher, hobbyist, or field professional, with a pension and career satisfaction derived from outside academe; or in being newly credentialed, as I was 25 years ago, full of energy and happy to suffer for job experience.

Those are some of the qualities of part-time faculty members that the two-tiered system needs to reward first, especially in times of limited budgets. Not only because determining teaching excellence itself is so time-consuming and tricky, but because when part-time faculty members realize how hard good teaching can be—how much time, work, thought, knowledge, intuition, empathy, and emotional toughness it takes to do well, and how lousy it can feel to do it poorly—they might not be so willing to continue.

In fact, where adjuncts are concerned, one of the university system's final guidelines in awarding merit raises might be the most forthcoming: "to respond to market factors in an effort to *retain* [my emphasis] meritorious employees."

In my own case, given the value that academe in general places on part-time instructors, the merit-pay review committee might have simply figured that an employee like me didn't need an incentive to stay. After all, as a nine-year lecturer on the campus, with a 25-year academic career entirely off the tenure track, I won't be going anywhere soon (according to the common wisdom), no matter the quality of my work.

Possibly. Another dropped hint was a reduction in my contractual course load this year, from the habitual three courses a semester to two. Meanwhile, among the new lecturers introduced at our program's fall orientation was a 2011 graduate from our very own institution.

Tears might indeed be appropriate here, but not for me. One of the benefits of having worked for my state and its university system for as long as I have is health insurance at the group rate for life, irrespective of my course assignments—which sure comes in handy now. Amos Oz also said he considers curiosity a moral value, engendering, as it does, other values, like courage. Certainly a college education should instill curiosity. But what values are engendered by a self-justifying system that, even if regretfully and for reasons of financial exigency, can reward most what helps perpetuate the system itself?

### **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.

## Part-Time Labor-Management Meeting: February 27, 2012, 9:00 AM

**For Management:** E. Maria Thompson, Provost, and Lisa Wenck, Senior Executive Employee Services Officer

**For UUP:** Caridad Souza, Officer for Contingents, and Rob Compton, Vice President for Academics

I. Management and UUP discussed Part-Time faculty and assessment in regards to the need for training, streamlining expectations, and payment for attending training and conducting assessment. Management indicated the need to find out how many Part-Time faculty are affected by the process.

II. UUP and Management discussed on-going developments regarding Part-Time evaluations vs. classroom observations. Both Management and UUP agree that evaluations are different from observations. Management is in the process of developing a mechanism to proceed and will share it with UUP in the future.

III. UUP brought up parking for Part-Time faculty, especially congestion due to the prime times that they may teach. Management noted that parking in general is problematic and a complex issue that requires careful examination. UUP and Management agree that the issue will become more complex as construction begins in FITZELLE.

IV. Management and UUP discussed procedures regarding changes in Part-Time percentages. UUP and Management to continue discussions after finding out more information to ascertain current practices.

V. Management and UUP discussed whether Part-Time (non-teaching) employees have the sufficient time to complete the tasks assigned to them within the allocated work schedule.

VI. UUP brought up the discrepancies regarding Part-Time faculty salary and extra service. UUP

provided specific examples (e.g., summer teaching \$2750 and then a return to a lower rate during the academic year and full-time extra service pay being lower than Part-Time per course pay). Management to examine the number of PT faculty still below \$2750.

VII. UUP noted that several departments have expressed problems hiring and retaining good Part-Time faculty given the low rate of pay. UUP asked for an increase in their pay.

VIII. Management and UUP discussed mechanism for Part-Time faculty promotion which at this time does not exist on SUNY campuses or within the contract. UUP and Management discussed nomenclatures for such promotions and agreed that any changes must be in accordance with the contract and Board of Trustees Policies.

IX. UUP and Management discussed making part-time lines permanent. We noted that this issue is tied to (#8) above.

X. Other terms and conditions: UUP requested sensitivity from Management regarding statements that could be construed to create fear among our members. Management and UUP acknowledged that in these economic times, people are afraid.

Meeting adjourned 10:00am

## Historian Diane Ravitch on Merit Pay: Illustrated by Fred Miller

[Editor's Note: Text from *Claus von Zastrow*, "Interview with Education Historian Diane Ravitch," *New York Teacher*, June 3, 2010, 14; original cartoon commentary by Fred Miller, Outreach Representative and Academic Delegate.]

Education historian Diane Ravitch offers the following perspective on merit pay:

*Merit Pay is like a bad penny that comes back again and again, but never works. The idea has been tried again and again since the 1920s and disappears because it doesn't work and disrupts the shared goals of the school.*

*Anyone who has read the philosophy of Edward Deming knows that merit pay demoralizes the workforce and undercuts the goals of the organization by pitting employee against employee.*



## Oil and Gas Well Abandonment in New York

By Ron Bishop, Health/Safety Officer

**[Editor's Note:** With the permission of author Ron Bishop, this article is excerpted from an article which has been accepted for publication in a special issue of *New Solutions*.]

Introduction:

New York's oil and gas industry is just nine years from its bicentennial, since the pilot project, a natural gas well near Fredonia, was drilled in 1821. As our first oil and gas wells went into decline, a new issue was recognized, and New York became the first state to require the plugging of abandoned wells in 1879 (1). No particular state entity existed to monitor compliance or enforce the plugging law, but an 1882 amendment to it offered half of any collected fines to informants who reported violations (1). One hundred thirty years later, we have a dedicated and sophisticated Bureau of Oil and Gas Regulation (BOGR) within the Division of Mineral Resources (DMN) of our Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). State guidance documents and regulations have undergone multiple updates, including those newly proposed in the revised draft Supplement to the Generic Environmental Impact Statement for the Oil, Gas and Solution Mining Regulatory Program (rdSGEIS), and 6 NYCRR Parts 52, 190, 550 – 556 and 560 (new regulations).



**Ron Bishop**

With great attention paid these days (and justly so) to questions of proper gas well construction, appropriate control of chemicals and wastes, and other production issues, post-production cleanup has received relatively little notice. In numerous discussions with both opponents and proponents of shale gas development, all appear to consider our state's legacy of improperly abandoned oil and gas wells a "real" problem, but an "old" problem; the common perception is that the DEC now has this issue under control.

However, the issue is both nuanced and pressing, according to Lou Allstadt, a former senior oil and gas company executive (2): "Very little attention is paid to the end of the life of an oil or gas well. I think you will find that it is rare for the larger companies to plug and abandon their older wells. Rather, at some point, a smaller company with lower overheads and less expensive operating costs will offer to buy the old wells at a price that gives the original company a better return than continued operations. The original company uses the cash to finance new investments. The buying company operates with lower costs because they spend less on maintenance and safety items and they have fewer well qualified people to pay. The chain may end there or continue through smaller and ever lower cost operators who do no preventive maintenance at all, do the bare minimum of repairs to keep the well going and eventually walk away, maybe after plugging the hole as cheaply as possible and maybe not plugging at all. The smaller companies often operate each well or group of wells under a separate corporate entity that is always stripped of cash, so if something goes wrong there are no assets to pay off claims. Not all small operators will do this, but it happens.

"In conventional fields these selling/buying cycles might start when the field is 20 -30 years old and run for another 20 -30 years. By the time these wells are abandoned, the casings have been subjected to corrosive fluids for many years. At the end there is just enough left to squeak past any inspections. When it costs too much to repair versus what might be produced, the well is abandoned. Whether it is plugged before it is abandoned depends on the final operator. In tight shale this could all take place over a much shorter time period and the abandoned wells could increase quickly." (2) Indeed, industry analysts have presented evidence that tight shale gas wells decline much more quickly than oil and gas wells in conventional deposits. (3)

## Oil and Gas Well Abandonment in New York (continued)

A second area of concern is that well casings deteriorate over time, and begin to leak. Due to a combination of cement cracks and continued development of pressure from gases and other fluids (4), leaks have been shown to develop in half of the well casings studied in just fifteen years (5). Leaks in plugged wells have also been demonstrated (6). The idea that plugged wells are indefinitely stable is obviated by these industry reports, so to be effective, our oil and gas regulatory program must not only ensure that abandoned wells are properly plugged, but must also periodically inspect – and, if necessary, repair – the plugged and abandoned wells.

New York State’s oil and gas regulatory program has been formally reviewed twice. The first was carried out in 1994 by the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission in cooperation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (known as the STRONGER panel). This panel noted deficiencies in practically every area examined, with the most severe problems identified in financial and human resources (7). A second review of the regulatory program was done as part of a nation-wide assessment by the Ground-Water Protection Council (GWPC) in 2009. These evaluators concluded that New York’s oil and gas regulatory program contained all the elements needed to protect ground water, but made no attempt to assess the program’s actual effectiveness (8).

Partly to determine which of these reviews was more reliable, this study asks the question, “How successful has our oil and gas regulatory program been, particularly with respect to post-production plugging, reclamation and inspection?” Credible answers to this question have been, as this author discovered, “hiding in plain sight” for years.

### Data Sources:

Most data for this investigation came from annual reports by the DEC’s Division of Mineral Resources (DMN). Reports which were accessible from the DEC’s web site included those from 1994 through 2009 (9). Reports from 1985 through 1993 were obtained by request from the DEC. Other data came from the 1994 New York State Review (STRONGER) report (7) and the New York State priority plugging list (10). These reports constitute the entire official body of public records on this topic in the State of New York.

### Results:

The results of this study are summarized in the following table:

**Table I: Annual Plugging Rates of Abandoned Oil and Gas Wells in New York State**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Inactive*</u>	<u>Plugged</u>	<u>Percent</u> <sup>†</sup>	<u>Comments</u>
1966	4500	N.A.	N.A.	earliest official records
1967	4600	N.A.	N.A.	
1968	4450	N.A.	N.A.	
1969	1009	N.A.	N.A.	
1970	1350	N.A.	N.A.	
1971	1567	418	26.7	earliest plugging records
1972	1619	573	35.4	
1973	1484	544	36.7	
1974	1862	622	33.4	

## Oil and Gas Well Abandonment in New York (continued)

1975	1883	553	29.4	
1976	1825	442	24.2	earliest reporting of “shut-in” gas wells
1977	1820	455	25.0	
1978	1864	352	18.9	
1979	2020	117	5.8	
1980	1900	119	6.3	
1981	2128	184	8.6	
1982	2304	262	11.4	
1983	2431	90	3.7	
1984	2296	182	7.9	
1985	2519	269	10.7	
1986	2468	471	19.1	
1987	2543	417	16.4	
1988	2348	322	13.7	42,322 estimated wells of unknown status (11)
1989	2620	260	9.9	
1990	2707	961	35.5	record high number of wells plugged
1991	2069	376	18.2	“shut-in” wells first referred to as “inactive”
1992	1502	244	16.2	
1993	1642	263	16.0	13,070 O& G wells known to be plugged (12)
1994	1887	248	13.1	48,000 abandoned O & G wells estimated (7)
1995	1784	219	12.3	
1996	2215	233	10.5	96 newly discovered abandoned
1997	1974	187	9.5	200 newly discovered abandoned
1998	2169	169	7.8	
1999	1748	138	7.9	270 newly discovered abandoned
2000	2190	131	6.0	220 newly discovered abandoned
2001	2259	79	3.5	150 newly discovered abandoned
2002	2272	146	6.5	first mention of priority plugging list
2003	2379	142	6.0	
2004	2526	145	6.0	
2005	2658	150	5.6	2117 known wells unreported
2006	2871	213	7.4	1103 known wells unreported
2007	2460	192	7.8	822 known wells unreported
2008	3071	221	7.2	57,000 total abandoned O & G wells est. (13)
2009	3043	240	7.9	
2010				not yet released to public
2011				priority plugging list details 4722 wells (10)

\* Oil and gas wells reported to have zero commercial production

† Plugged divided by inactive wells x 100

## Oil and Gas Well Abandonment in New York (continued)

As indicated in the table (above), oil and gas industry operators have consistently failed to plug and properly abandon most inactive oil and gas wells as long as records have been kept by New York State. Over the 39 years available for study, just one out of every nine depleted wells was plugged properly, (mean average = 14.2%). And the most recent segment of the record is worse than the earlier parts: Throughout the 2000's, plugging rates ranged from 3.5% to 7.9%, with a mean average of 6.4% for that 10-year period. By comparison, plugging rates for 1981 – 2000 ranged from 3.7% to 35.5%, with a mean average of 12.7% for those twenty years. And plugging rates for the decade 1971 – 1980 (the earliest period for which records were available) ranged from 5.8% to 36.7%, with a mean average of 24.2%.

To summarize the data: Reported plugging rates started out at 24% for ten years, fell by half for the next twenty years, and then fell by half again for the last ten years. Obviously, none of these post-production cleanup rates approach 100%.

Now, the true scale of our problem with orphan abandoned oil and gas wells in New York State is not definitely known. The reports consulted did not distinguish between newly depleted wells and inactive wells which were carried over from previous years. Thus, the “snapshot” found in each annual report does not provide a basis from which one can construct a running tally of these wells. However, the estimates indicated in Table I follow a pattern: The historic well survey of 1988 established a baseline of 42,322 oil and gas wells of unknown status (11), while the plugged wells estimate of 1993 identified 13,070 wells which were known to have been plugged (12). The STRONGER report built on those two values to estimate 48,000 abandoned wells in 1994 (7) and the estimate of 57,000 abandoned wells from the 2008 annual report (originally found in (13), but absent from with the subsequently revised online version) represented an increase of 9000 wells over 14 years, or 3½ times the number of oil and gas wells which were plugged in that period. Conversely, about 16,000 wells were known to be plugged out of approximately 75,000 total oil and gas wells developed, leaving a difference of 59,000 which were not known to be plugged. Therefore, the current estimate of 57,000 unplugged, abandoned wells is arguably a conservative estimate.

What significance does this issue have for anyone? As if to answer this question, the authors of the 2002 and 2003 annual reports (Mineral Resources Division Director Bradley J. Field and his staff) (14, 15) presented case studies of individual abandoned oil and gas wells. Selected cases are re-presented below for illustration.



**Figure 1:** “This Priority Plugging List well in the City of Rome, Oneida County was discharging brine at a rate of five gallons per minute into a wetland adjacent to Brandy Brook and had already killed over an acre of vegetation in 1998.” (14)

**Figure 2:** “During construction of a new bus garage at the Bolivar-Richburg High School in Allegany County, several buried abandoned wells were uncovered. Since no well records were available, the school had to bring in a small service rig (red equipment in foreground) to check the condition of the wells. All the wells had to be plugged before construction could resume. This is not the first school well incident that the Division has handled. For example, in nearby Wyoming County DEC plugged a gas well that was leaking brine in the parking lot of Wyoming County Central School in 1991.” (14)



## Oil and Gas Well Abandonment in New York (continued)



**Figure 3:** “Old abandoned oil well under water in Town of Bolivar, Allegany County” (15)

**Figure 4:** “In 2003 a landowner in Allegany County reported that a leaking well was causing an oil scum on their pond. The party responsible for the wells is an inactive company that has been the subject of pending DEC legal action for over 12 years. This is just one of the company’s hundreds of long-abandoned wells.” (15)



### Conclusions and Recommendations:

From the evidence presented, it is clear that New York State’s problems with abandoned oil and gas wells have never been brought under control and are growing worse with time. Notwithstanding efforts by the DEC’s Bureau of Oil and Gas Regulation, industry operators routinely neglect post-production plugging and reclamation, and the ill effects are visibly widespread across the state. Compliance with existing laws and regulations will arguably require a change of culture within the industry, an objective which has eluded state officials from their earliest attempts to the present. With respect to post-production well plugging and site reclamation, New York State’s oil and gas regulatory program has failed. From this perspective, the 1994 Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission review of New York’s oil and gas regulatory program (7) appears to have provided a more reliable evaluation than the 2009 Ground Water Protection Council review (8).

Under current regulatory conditions, the advent of high-volume, hydraulically-fractured (HVHF) shale gas development to New York can reasonably be expected to result in an escalation of environmental and public health impacts, due to the increased scale of shale gas projects and compressed time frames for project development and decline. Therefore, this author’s first recommendation is to prohibit all HVHF projects until all oil and gas wells in New York State which are known or suspected to require plugging have been added to the priority plugging list, and every well on that list has been plugged and the area reclaimed. The objective would be to demonstrate oil and gas industry compliance with existing laws before approving any more intensive industry operations in the state.

Secondary to that measure, BOGR officials should immediately be directed to prevent financially unqualified owners from obtaining oil or gas wells through transfer requests. If there isn’t enough money available to locate and plug the state’s abandoned wells, then our bonding and security levels are set too low. They should be revised – using comprehensive cost-based analysis – to provide for bonding and financial security levels sufficient to plug and reclaim all oil and gas projects.

Finally, the New York State Bureau of Oil and Gas Regulation, Division of Mineral Resources, Department of Environmental Conservation should invite the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission to conduct an updated STRONGER review. The objective would be to provide our state regulators with a comprehensive plan for improvement, including progress on this issue of oil and gas well abandonment in New York.

## Oil and Gas Well Abandonment in New York (continued)

### References:

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## Anti-Fracking is Pro-Development in Delaware-Otsego Counties

By Nancy Cannon, Academic Delegate and UUP Representative, Joint Labor-Management Individual Development Awards Committee

**[Editor's Note:** Sources include "Painting Otsego County as Anti-Business Is a Destructive Tactic," *Hometown Oneonta*, February 24, 2012, A-4]



**Fracking does not promote sustainable development**

*Boomtowns & Natural Gas: Implications for Marcellus Shale Local Governments and Rural Communities"*

The potential scale of development of the Marcellus and other gas-bearing shales beneath our feet dwarfs any previous human activity in our area. What are the long-term social and economic implications?

The land and water of Delaware and Otsego counties constitute our greatest treasure. The frackers — those who would pump carcinogenic chemicals into our earth to extract natural gas — claim they will unleash an economic boom in our area. The frackers call their opponents anti-development. This is a canard. A paper published by the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development at Pennsylvania State University "Energy

It is evident that, at present, technological and legal infrastructures are insufficient to ensure the safety air, water, and soil from fracking. Corporate interests have targeted our own area for horizontal gas drilling. Just below New York's Southern Tier, the experience of Bradford County, Pennsylvania with fracking provides a cautionary tale. In the areas blighted by fracking, a select few have benefitted while home values and the quality of life have plummeted. Fracking has never initiated a sustainable boom.

In our region, the grass-roots anti-fracking coalition champions and welcomes sustainable, innovative local business whose success depends on clean and abundant water. Fracking would threaten the continued presence of Chobani, the largest producer of Greek-yogurt. Nicole Dillingham, Board President of Otsego 2000, observed of Brewery Ommegang, with its expanding workforce and economic impact:

*Anything that damages the supply of water to the brewery is clearly a significant threat to their business as much as it is to all of the people who live and work in Otsego County and the Susquehanna watershed. The brewery has received support and investment for its growth from regional and state agencies and has been a particularly successful example of a business that is flourishing and creating employment in the region despite the current economic difficulties. How much more could we all lose if polluted water is what upstate New York becomes known for?*

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## ***Anti-Fracking is Pro-Development (continued)***

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**Brewery Ommegang**

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Likewise, fracking would decimate the revitalization of area agriculture. It would abort plans for large increases in local goat flocks to accommodate the needs of a cheese plant scheduled to soon begin operation. Expansion of herds of grass-fed cattle to satisfy burgeoning demand also depends on ecological integrity.

Our physical environment provides one of the significant attractions to prospective College students and their parents as it does to young and talented faculty. Fracking would not enhance the marketing of SUNY Oneonta or Hartwick amongst either students or employees. Nor would it entice graduates or faculty to remain. A welcoming physical environment that added to our human capital, in the form of innovative and talented people, would create Green industry and attract nanotechnology investment.

Moreover, the tourist industry rests on the scenic beauty of our rivers, lakes, and land. Fracking would devastate restaurants, motels, summer rentals, and other businesses. The Board of Directors of the National Baseball Hall of Fame issued the following statement:

*The natural beauty and quality of life are the essence of Cooperstown. Tourists, who view Cooperstown as a pristine and pastoral escape, would unquestionably consider other destinations unspoiled by the harmful ecological impact of hydrofracking.*

Fracking is not an economic panacea for our region. As *Hometown Oneonta* counsels:

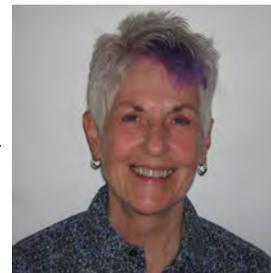
*Let's not be bullied by the pro-frackers, who are looking for a quick fix and a dangerous one. There's a good economic foundation here...*

*Happenstance brought fracking here. But progressive thinking, not fracking, is what's needed for our local economy to truly become an engine of local prosperity and opportunity for all.*

## Fawly Ivory Towers Part 2: Diversity's Growing Discontents

By Kathleen O'Mara, Professor, Africana & Latino Studies/History & UUP LGBTIQ Committee

In the December 2011 *Sentinel* I reported on OSC student frustration over the lack of diversity on campus, and their feeling unwelcome and harmed by acts of racism by UPD, campus staff and faculty. Students of color, in particular, recorded their views on inequitable treatment in a number of autumn *State Times* articles and in Student Association meetings. Fortunately, at semester's end, there was an administrative response. On December 7, 2011 OSC President Kleniewski held an open Student Forum on Diversity to listen to student *complaints and wished for solutions. A short summary of those points were later distributed* by email to the campus. These included numerous safety and quality of life issues such as frequent racist, sexist and homophobic graffiti in dorms and on student tee-shirts, racial, gender and sexual identity insensitivity by faculty, staff and fellow students, especially poorly trained RAs, feelings of racial harassment and lgbtqi insensitivity from the UPD, a paucity of AALANA faculty, and inadequate inclusion in the curriculum of minoritized US cultures and Global South national cultures. Students spoke about initiating a required course for all OSC students on *discrimination and power or race, class, gender, sexuality* similar to what is required on other SUNY and private campuses. Other complaints such as the geographic isolation of the Women & Gender Studies Department and the CME/Center for Multicultural Experiences are two decades old and oft-repeated examples of campus practices of the marginalization of difference.



The President then held an open Employee Forum on Diversity Feb 8, 2012. While attendance there was high—Craven Lounge, Morris Hall was packed—there was much less participation than at the student forum: three men, all non-white, and fewer than ten women spoke. The fear and tension in the room was even more palpable than at the student forum. Again, a short summary of points was distributed by email and also delivered in the College Senate where Dr. Kleniewski reported on still evolving plans to address the issues raised. The issues were neither as numerous nor as focused on diversity and inclusion as the student forum; staff and faculty reiterated student complaints about insensitivity and bias based on race, ethnicity, class, gender, and sexual identity. Faculty equally noted the lack of AALANA staff and faculty and the non-inclusive, chilly climate for LGBTIQ faculty and staff, the lack of inclusive and global curricula, campus workplace practices of racial, ethnic and sex-gender exclusion and insensitivity and the problem of a dysfunctional, non-trusted grievance procedure. Accompanying the post forum report were steps to begin to address the problems identified, e.g., a plan to bring in the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) to conduct diversity trainings, a program called “A Campus of Difference” which will begin with department chairs and administrators, an expansion of the dissertation fellow program and the inauguration of a post-doctoral fellow program for underrepresented groups in 2013, and several re-examinations of existing policies/procedures to look for better ones, e.g., a different Tripartite Complaint procedure, a search for an affirmative action officer, and a requirement that all job searches address diversity. All faculty and departments were *urged* to consider ways to make their curricula more inclusive.

On March 1, 2012 the President's Council on Diversity (PCOD) held another Forum on Diversity and Campus Climate for students of color and international students. At that one many of the students were angrier and spoke despairingly about being “worn down” and “burned out” by “talk, forums, meetings” and expecting to hear about “bold action this semester” since the “President knows what we want, what the problems are.” A couple transfer students of color talked about how uncomfortable they are on this campus. One young woman compared her feeling of discomfort and lack of inclusion to her “cousin who attends Princeton who feels included and comfortable” as does her “brother at Binghamton University.” Two Asian students spoke about their discomfort at always being stared at and frequently insulted as well as academically frustrated

## ***Fawltly Ivory Towers (continued)***

by the lack of (ESL) helpful English classes. Students from the Muslim Student Association also noted the ignorance about Islam and lack of awareness programs on campus. One African American male student graduating in May said "I've worked the phonathon here, but there's no way I will ever give money to this college" and another opened the discussion with, "As a Black man I do not feel comfortable or safe here." After thirty minutes several students walked out, one declaring, "Enough talk! Enough Meeting! I'm tired of it. We want action! This talk is just to wear us down." The three discussion leaders from PCOD were lost, saying little other than that they had been unaware. One admitted that he didn't "blame them...The campus has a lot of work to do." Another PCOD member said, "We have done some things, we have had trainings." That comment brought to mind the Ga proverb (Ghana), "A blind man does not show the road to a blind man."

Some staff and faculty may wonder how the campus arrived at this juncture. Certainly most must have noticed the rash of forums, and policy initiative announcements related to diversity, inclusion, and the campus climate for difference. Individual faculty and departments have clambered onboard. This semester **diversity** programming has become ubiquitous; thus fewer events have sizable audiences. The February MLK "Beloved Community" kick-off event was attended by approximately two faculty, four staff and two dozen mostly EOP students of color, i.e., more "preaching to the choir" which is something else our students have exasperatedly noted, "We are the only ones attending" diversity events, each other's programs.

The fact that SUNY Chancellor Zimpher has added "diversity" progress to the SUNY formula for campus direct funding has obviously registered with a number on campus. "SUNY-ness" involves diversity, but the actual annual goal(s) remain unclear. For that one must consult both the Strategic Plan on Diversity (Dec 2007) and the State of SUNY 2012. The hard facts of New York state are not vague and the Chancellor sees the states demographics rightfully as relevant to public higher education. *Certain facts are key to SUNY and CUNY. The school age population of New York City is 52% Black and Latino and 64% (2010) of the population is of African, Asian, and Latin American origin. Over 36% of the city's residents are foreign born and 12% of New York City residents have one parent born outside the US. New York City, America's largest city, comprises 40% of the state's people.*

As I noted in the December *Sentinel* student and concerned faculty frustration with the slow progress on this campus is understandable; in the past fifteen years there has been an endless trail of climate surveys and outside consultants. I have experienced "diversity training" by The *National Coalition Building Institute* (NCBI first before Dale Capristo [retired] became a trainer), *ADL-New England*, *Change Works Consulting*-Patti DeRosa, OSC alumna, *Bates Associates*, *Rankin Associates*, and *International Black African Heritage Coalition* training with Joyce Johnson-Shabazz, and I have forgotten one or two consultants, e.g. Dr. Troy Duster in 2009. I have helped organize and implement campus "climate" surveys about women, race and ethnicity and then LGBT faculty and students (in the mid-1990s). Perhaps it is relevant today still that most staff stuffed the surveys wholesale in the garbage or returned them with hostile, homophobic statements. More recently, I was recruited to a "Train the Trainer" in Diversity in 2009 at SUNY-Cortland bringing along five Oneonta colleagues and later our team provided workshops in December 2009 and December 2010 on campus. Does our campus need more "diversity training"? As the saying goes (attributed to Rita Mae Brown), "insanity is to do the same thing over and over and expect different results." Scholars of Diversity now refer to this solution as the "diversity training trap" – throw more money scattershot at the problem and perhaps something will stick (Maher & Tetreault 2007, 151-181). The problem is that 1990s solutions will no longer achieve the goal, and students especially no longer will wait.



## Regional Non-Profit Organization Profile

### The United Way...Short name, long history

*By Michael Sullivan, UUP Professional Delegate*



**UUP Professional Delegate Michael Sullivan**

A women, a priest, two ministers and a rabbi get together in Mile High City.... no, it's not the start of a bad joke, it's actually the history of the United Way. Seeing an opportunity to coordinate and cooperate to better meet the needs of their shared community, these individuals came together 125 years ago to form an organization that has since assisted millions on Americans primarily in the areas of health, welfare, education and self sufficiency.

Today, United Way World Wide—with an international focus; the United Way of America—the national organization, and local chapters like the United Way of Delaware and Otsego Counties assist non-profit organizations and individuals by coordinating resources and services, and distributing funds to each of these constituencies. Like its national counterpart, the United Way of Delaware and Otsego Counties focuses its attention on three major areas: improving outcomes in health, education and financial security for people in our community.

Our local United Way, which is also the partner organization of SUNY Oneonta's SEFA campaign, is led by Executive Director, Terry Capuano and a 25 person volunteer Board of Directors (in the spirit of full disclosure, I'm a member of the board). In recent years, the United Way of Delaware and Otsego Counties has partnered with a number of organizations that provide essential services in our community, these include: The Families Services Association, Planned Parenthood of South Central New York, Delaware Opportunities, Opportunities for Otsego, The Salvation Army, Friends of the Oneonta Health Center, and the Hancock Community Education Foundation.

In addition, like so many individuals and organization in our region, the United Way of Delaware and Otsego Counties responded strongly in response to the devastation caused by Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. With its partners, the local United Way led a fund raising drive that raised more than \$100,000 for flood relief in our community.

For more information on the United Way of Delaware and Otsego Counties—and its good work—visit [www.unitedwaydo.org/](http://www.unitedwaydo.org/) or email the Terry Capuano at [unitedway@stny.rr.com](mailto:unitedway@stny.rr.com).

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