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The Active Retiree

A Newsletter for Retiree Members of United University Professions

UUP president urges retirees to 'speak out'

by Frederick E. Kowal, Ph.D.
UUP President

An increasing number of our SUNY retirees are becoming more involved in the work of our union—as volunteer activists, chapter leaders, and repositories of union and University history and scholarship.

We recognized the important contributions of our retirees when our Delegate Assembly last fall amended the UUP Constitution to include a chapter Officer for Retirees. This spring will be the first time our active and retiree members will vote for an individual to act as liaison between the two constituencies, to bring retiree issues to the fore and to create a pathway where the professional expertise and union perspectives of our retirees can be most beneficial.

Just take a look at Judy Wishnia's commentary in the April 2017 issue of *The Voice*, in which she responds to a newer union colleague's question on why she became involved in unions. From 2003-2015 Judy, a member of the Stony Brook Core Chapter, served as the retirees' elected chair of the Committee on Active Retired Membership, a position that carries the added responsibility of being the

sole elected delegate representing retiree members, as well as serving as a member of the statewide Executive Board. She is the embodiment of "union."

And COARM's newest Chair, Jo Schaffer of Cortland, continues in Judy's tradition.

The commitment of our retirees is also why I now state UUP's membership at 42,000 instead of the 36,000 figure we've used in the past. That recognition is now part of our "tag line" at the bottom of UUP news releases and other correspondence to the broader community.

I decided to add our retirees to this number, instead of setting them apart, because I wanted our membership figure to reflect the huge, positive impact our retirees have had on this union—and will have in the weeks and months to come.

I value our retirees and I believe they play a crucial role in UUP. Our retirees are involved because they choose to be. Our retirees are engaged, motivated labor veterans who volunteer their time to work for the betterment of UUP and its members.



Fred Kowal

Our retirees have never been more important to the future of this union than right now. We need our retirees to stand up and speak out, to help us protect our members and defend UUP's hard-fought gains.

It's no secret that billionaires like the Koch brothers and corporate CEOs would like nothing better than to

plunge a stake through the heart of organized labor. That threat could easily become reality now that their pal, billionaire Donald Trump, is in the White House.

One look at Trump's proposed budget, released in March, shows just how little he cares about retirees, education and the arts. For example, his spending plan would end a program that funds Meals on Wheels, which feeds 2.4 million seniors.

He would also cut funds to programs that assist the elderly and the poor, including the decades-old Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, which helps low-income Americans with their heating bills. He's slashing programs like

see **Kowal**, page 10

The Active Retiree

UUP Officers

Frederick E. Kowal/President
 J. Philippe Abraham/VP for Professionals
 Jamie F. Dangler/VP for Academics
 Eileen Landy/Secretary
 Rowena J. Blackman-Stroud/Treasurer
 Thomas C. Hoey/Membership Dev. Officer

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The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily the opinions of United University Professions.

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Book report

SUNY Poly retiree publishes book on energy solutions

A retired SUNY Poly professor has just published a new book.

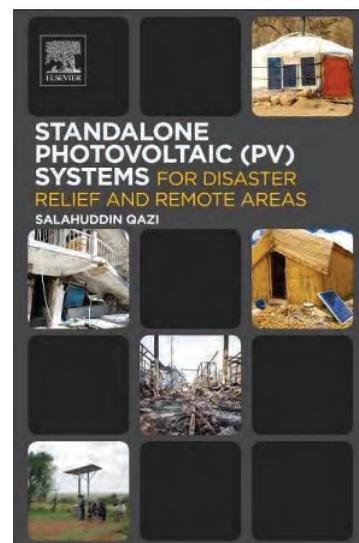
In *Standalone Photovoltaic (PV) Systems for Disaster Relief and Remote Areas*, Dr.

Salahuddin Qazi explores the increased demand for energy, including clean energy alternatives and the ways that solar energy is fast becoming a vital source for meeting peak demand, a solution for energy demand in disaster and remote areas, and a viable source to meet emerging energy security needs.

In addition, the book discusses the use of solar PV systems to create environmentally friendly power systems for remote communities that can be operated independently, also comparing the costs, emissions, and practical applications of other technologies.

Prior to becoming an Emeritus Professor, Dr. Qazi spent a year completing a project on developing instructional material for a National Science Foundation-funded project on "Visualization and Manipulation of Nanoscale Components using Atomic Force Microscopy."

Earning his Ph.D. in Electrical engineering from Loughborough University in the United Kingdom, Dr. Qazi taught at SUNY Poly for three decades, developing courses in the area of fiber optics, wireless communication, optical communications, nanotechnology, photovoltaic energy, computer and data communication. During his tenure at what was during that time known primarily as SUNYIT, he was chairman of



the EET department, coordinator of the photonics program and Director of the Master of Science program in advanced technology, which he helped to develop.

Professor Qazi is a recipient of several awards including the William Goddel award for research creativity at SUNYIT and engineering professionalism by Mohawk Valley Engineering Executive Committee. Professor Qazi is a life member of IEEE and a member of American Society of Engineering Education.

Professor Qazi retired in August 2011 after teaching at SUNY Poly (then SUNYIT) for nearly 30 years.

With a list price of \$79.95, the 246-page book is available through a myriad of booksellers, including Amazon.com.

(The above article was reprinted from SUNY Poly interface. The article first appeared in November 2016.)

From the COARM Chair

Where are we going?

“**W**here do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?” Boston MFA, is the enigmatic questioning title of a famous painting by Paul Gauguin describing the path of life (see below). It is an intriguing interior vision of his later life in Tahiti put into tropical colors and design about a readable story of birth to maturity. For me, it is a visual reminder of our academic and professional lives in SUNY made fruitful with the help of UUP.

Most of us, academics or professionals, started in positions of modest titles and salaries: some even have memories of salaries, at the time, of no more than 5 figures. It was only with UUP contracts after contracts, each with some increases in salaries and benefits that mounted over the years, for the full time employees, into “liveable” circumstances. I can remember my father, who started his career at Brooklyn College in 1930 at the enormous salary of \$1200 annually, being absolutely stunned that I had a starting contract in 1967 of almost \$7000. We need to remember that it was with our dedicated advocacy in the legislative halls that those starting salaries have augmented over the years. Annual 2% increases, while small, had at least a cumulative effect over the years. Again, UUP is engaged in contract discussions, advocacy for the support of our university, support for equity for our contin-

gents, maintenance of EOP and EOC budgets, and continued support for retiree benefits. All of these ask for your participation, either by letter or local visit to your state representatives. There is nothing more important in our democracy than a constituent who takes the time to share a particular point of view with your elected representative. They count each and everyone of your voices, your emails and your letters.

What are we? We are a learned, concerned, committed and involved specific group of “privileged” professionals. Of all people, we know the value of education as a personal and professional route to a fuller life. We know the full value of our state university. You are asked once again to rise to the support of this system by addressing the critical shortage of a full time faculty, student debt, ability to graduate in a timely way. We are the Active Retiree Members, (ARM) by choice, of the country’s largest higher education union and we support that union’s absolute right to represent us as active and active retiree members. This goes beyond New York state. It goes to defending the National Endowment for the Arts and the Humanities as well as educational TV and radio, NPR and PBS, as part of overall education opportunities.

And finally, where are we going? There is an enormous amount of work left for us, as ARM, to do. Not only should you be involved in the advocacy and support



for UUP’s interest in the success of SUNY and its students, but many other areas of social and political action. Coming up this November will be the vote to determine whether or not, after twenty years, shall New York State convene a Constitutional Convention. I wrote an article earlier on why this proposal should be defeated. Let me say again that having such a convention will provide a multi-million dollar zipper opening into eliminating some of the most basic “privileges” we enjoy: free public education for all NY youngsters, the right to organize and bargain collectively, to maintain the integrity of retirement pensions, protecting forever wild acreage, no aid for denominational schools, unified judicial system, and many other important articles.

UUP and COARM will asking you to be more informed and active as we get closer to November.



Left, Paul Gauguin’s painting, *Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?* Boston MFA

**UNITED UNIVERSITY PROFESSIONS
OFFICIAL 2017 ELECTION REPORT
ACTIVE RETIRED MEMBERSHIP ELECTION**

SUMMARY PAGE

Jan. 11, 2017	● Membership certification date.
Jan. 18, 2017	● Date notice of election and call for nominations mailed to home address of chapter members.
Feb. 15 2017	● Date nominations closed.
Feb. 22 2017	● Date ballots were mailed to home addresses of retiree members.
Mar. 22 2017	● Date ballots were due at the UUP Administrative Office in Albany.
Mar. 24 2017	● Date ballots were counted.

RETURNS

1195	● Number of Control Envelopes:
1	● Number of INVALID control envelopes and reasons invalid:
	0 ● Non-eligible voter.
	1 ● Other: _____
1194	● Number of valid control envelopes.
18	● Number of INVALID ballots envelopes and reasons invalid.
	16 ● Not in sealed inner envelope (secrecy compromised).
	1 ● Secrecy compromised by voter (e.g., ballot envelope or ballot signed, initialed, etc.).
	1 ● Other: Duplicate Ballot
1	● Number of blank ballots
1175	● Number of valid ballots.

We certify that this election was conducted in accordance with the UUP election procedure and that this report constitutes the official election report. **The term of office for each position is from June 1, 2017 through: May 31, 2020.**

SIGNATURES ON FILE

David H. Kreh & Jeanne L. Galbraith
Co-Chair, Constitution and Governance Committee

SIGNATURES ON FILE

Eileen Landy
Secretary

Date: March 24, 2017 Tellers: List of Tellers on File

**UNITED UNIVERSITY PROFESSIONS
OFFICIAL 2017 ELECTION REPORT
ACTIVE RETIRED MEMBERSHIP ELECTION**

RETIRED DELEGATE			REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE		
Candidate	Total	Rank	Candidate	Total	Region
SCHAFFER, D JO	392	1	MAGID, ALVIN	47	A
BALLARD, DAVID P	115	2	PURETZ, SUSAN L	44	A
BALKON, NANCY A	104	3	LEFF, ARLENE	7	A
ORTON, JEROME L	98	4	STEEN, IVAN	1	A
JOHNSON, LYDIA L	93	5			
SPIER, SANDRA L	93	6	MCATEER, CHARLES F	122	B
FRIEL, JAMES P	73	7	BOUEY, ORA JAMES	91	B
ROBIN, ABIGAIL J	57	8	FRIEL, JAMES P	59	B
BORGSTEDTE, WILLIAM R	47	9	WILLIAMS, BENJAMIN J	33	B
BUSH, EDWARD W	38	10	SEGNINI, ROBERT	2	B
LEFF, ARLENE	16	11			
STEEN, IVAN	2	12	BENTLEY, PATTY	7	C
MAERTZ, BARBARA	2	13	NIXON, JOHN	2	C
KASPRAK, BOB	1	14	GUYDOS, RAY	1	C
GABLER, GEORGE	1	15	MCCARTY, CINDY	1	C
CODERRO, RENE	1	16			
PIROHO, ROBERT	1	17	JOHNSON, ANASTASIA K	158	D
MAGID, ALVIN	1	18	BALLARD, DAVID P	102	D
			TOSCANO JR., RALPH M	1	D
			DRESCHER, NUALA	1	D
			RICHARDSON, JEAN	1	D
			BUSH, EDWARD	1	D
			BORGSTEDTE, WILLIAM	101	E
			TOROK, CAROLE E	63	E
			HUERTA, RAUL	1	E
			RUSSELL, ERIC P	78	F
			SPIER, SANDRA L	40	F
			KASPRAK, ROBERT	1	F
			TYLER, LORAIN L	137	G
			SCHAFFER, D JO	1	G
			RITCHIE, DAVID	1	G

Election results are listed in descending order of votes received. Candidates are listed in rank order of votes received; tie votes are listed in rank order as determined by lottery.

We certify that this election was conducted in accordance with the UUP election procedure and that this report constitutes the official election report. **The term of office for each position is from June 1, 2017 through: May 31, 2020.**

SIGNATURES ON FILE

SIGNATURES ON FILE

David H. Kreh & Jeanne L. Galbraith
Co-Chair, Constitution and Governance Committee

Eileen Landy
Secretary

Date: March 24, 2017 Tellers: List of Tellers on File

Report from Winter DA COARM meeting

by Loraine Tyler
Oneonta

The following are draft minutes of the COARM meeting held during the union's Winter Delegate Assembly, Jan. 30 at the Hilton in Saratoga Springs.

Present: Jo Schaffer, Chair; Loraine Tyler, recorder and Southern Tier; Barbara Maertz, Long Island; Al Magid, Capital District; Eric Russell, Metropolitan; Patty Bentley, presidential appointee.

Staff: Walter Apple

Guests: Frank Goldsmith, David Peckham, Judith Wishnia, Abigail Robin, Glenn McNitt, Greg Threatte, Carol Braund, Irene Stern, David Curry, Joy Bilharz, Nancy Cannon, Janet Frankl, Jeri Anne Jerminario, Bob Kasprak, Henry Steck, Joseph Greenfield, Robert Reganse.

Chair Jo Schaffer called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and welcomed all. Minutes for September 30, 2017 were approved as submitted. (moved by Loraine Tyler and seconded by Al Magid)

Chair's Report

Check for \$500 for the NYSUT Publication Award for *The Active Retiree* was given to UUP Director of Finance Tina George for deposit in our account. Articles are sought for a special election edition.

Financial Committee and Budget Report—Maertz

- Budget is well within limits. No amount for RELAG as it has been folded into Outreach. Unknown at this time is who will cover costs for retired members who attend Outreach but are not delegates. Fund balance as of 12/31/16 is \$537,460.11.

- Mileage rate: \$.535 per mile.

- New Investment Policy: Allows more flexibility in investments in order to get a better return. COARM can participate if and when it's approved and set up. We



KAREN L. MATTISON PHOTOS

Above, COARM Chair Jo Schaffer discusses retiree issues during the meeting. Behind her are Janet Frankl, left, and Nancy Cannon, both of Oneonta.



Left, David Curry, right, of Plattsburgh explains the work of the Retiree Task Force that he chaired. Also shown, from left, are Bob Kasprak of Optometry and Bob Reganse of Farmingdale.

will follow UUP's recommendation. This will come up before the DA today.

- Regional budget requests will be due in March. Approved at spring DA.

Election Information

- Officer for Retirees elected at each campus for the first time. Person on campus will facilitate with the Regional Rep meetings, Q and A, and COARM can feed info back to campus. Encourage Pre-retirement seminars. All election materials have to be self-paid. Cannot use our list serve or .edu accounts. Note that Office for Retirees is not also a Delegate, but can run for delegate separately. The officer does not have to be a retiree.

Timetable: All retiree nominations must be at UUP by February 15. Ballots go out Feb. 22 and must be back by March 22.

- Retiree Task Force preliminary report—Dave Curry

Recommendations: Acceptance of retirees as a vital part of UUP. Questions still remain as to role. Retirees cannot run for offices elected at the Delegate Assembly. The COARM chair should have a vote on the Executive Board.

Report has been accepted by the Executive Board, which will determine the next step. Number of retirees has now been included in the total membership, number which now includes retirees is 42,000. Keep pushing for a seat on the Negotiations team as they negotiate for health insurance. Report was well received

Staff Report—Apple

- New Benefits

Legal services plan Hyatt Legal Plan:

\$189 annual.

Dental—HMO plan opened to Retirees, will not work well in rural areas.

- Report on contacts, telephone calls
- 2016 had 103 life insurance claims

Acclamations for Walter's work.

- 13 pre-retirement presentations, 11 COARM events
- normal day 10-20 calls per day, answering e-mails, file beneficiary cards



Above, Al Magid of Albany shares a thought on a possible constitutional amendment. From left are Carol Braund and Greg Threatte, both of Upstate Medical, Al Magid of Albany and Patty Bentley of Plattsburgh.

Political Action—Bentley

- Advocacy on Tuesday, Jan. 31
- Retirees are Outreach Committee Members
- Political Action

Seven from this meeting are attending Advocacy on Jan.31. Retiree issues on NYS budget.

Regional Meetings

Regional Meetings—approved. Motion made by Loraine Tyler and seconded by Patty Bentley. Approved. Invitations first go through Walter and an invitation sent to Walter for the file.

- Barbara Maertz—Long Island: Two meetings at Stony Brook April 25 and Farmingdale April 21.
- John Nixon—North Country: Meeting this spring May 24, Plattsburgh. Late may, early June in Potsdam/Canton.
- Carole Torok—Central NY: Will meet this spring.
- Eric Russell—Metropolitan: Continuing theme of outreach and political action spring and summer meetings.
- Loraine Tyler—Southern District: Three meetings, Cortland (May 9), Oneonta/Delhi (April 28), Binghamton (March 27)
- Stacey Johnson—Western NY: Spring meeting will be held on May 2.
- Al Magid—Capital District: May 18 brunch. Forum on SUNY empowerment



Right, Farmingdale's Barbara Maertz outlines the COARM budget, as Charlie McAteer of Stony Brook looks on.

our own scandal.

- Florida meeting in Boyton Beach, Feb. 13, arranged by Schaffer.

New Business

- Name Change: COARM consists of the elected representatives and presidential appointees, for those who have signed a card to become a UUP retiree member. Suggested name, "Active Retiree Members," may require further review. Resolution will be available at the next DA. Will require a new logo. Motion to postpone the discussion of a new name. In the Spring DA, bring wording appropriate for a constitutional amendment.
- Summer retreat: Agenda—Retiree officer on all campuses and new regional reps. will need training and input on duties. \$5,000 budgeted for the retreat. Move \$1,000 for new initiatives to the retreat. Moved by Barb Maertz and Al

Magid. Maybe we can coordinate a meeting with Outreach, Executive Board, or CAP. This could be done on a regional basis as well. Postponed to 2017 Spring Delegate Assembly.

- Resolution posed by NYSUT Patty, Al — NYSUT Retiree Proposal Proposed Resolution for NYSUT Retiree Members was discussed. The resolved:

- NYSUT will encourage locals to increase the involvement of their retirees in local initiatives;
- NYSUT will continue to include retirees in all aspects of future political action and mobilization;
- NYSUT increase its focus on retirees as an integral part of our entire union.

The proposal was endorsed and returned to the Executive Board and NYSUT.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

The scandal of vast inequities in retirement pay

by Lawrence Wittner
Albany

Cato the Elder, a Roman senator and historian, once remarked: “Cessation of work is not accompanied by cessation of expenses.” For centuries, retirees have been aware of this unfortunate fact, which led them to demand and, in many cases, secure old age pensions to help provide financial security during their “golden years.” But as indicated in a recently released report by the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS), the financial security of retiring corporate CEOs is far, far greater than the financial security of average Americans.

According to the extensively-researched IPS report, *A Tale of Two Retirements*, 100 corporate CEOs possess company retirement funds totaling \$4.7 billion—an amount equivalent to the entire retirement savings of 41 percent of U.S. families (50 million families, including 116 million Americans). The retirement funds of these 100 CEOs are also equivalent to those of 75 percent of Latino families, of 59 percent of African-American families, of 55 percent of female-headed households, and of 44 percent of white working class households.

Indeed, the top 100 CEO nest eggs, if averaged, would generate a \$253,088 monthly retirement check to these 100 individuals for the rest of their lives. By contrast, workers who had 401(k) pension plans at the end of 2013 had only enough in these plans to pay them an average monthly benefit of \$101. Of course, these were the lucky ones. Among workers 56 to 61 years old, 39 percent had no employer-sponsored retirement plan at all, and would likely depend on Social Security, which pays an average of \$1,239 per month, for retirement security.

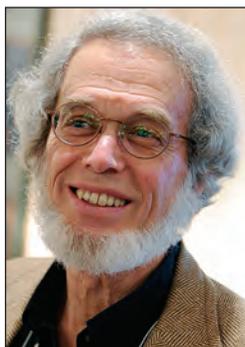
Of course, these are only averages. When one looks at individuals, the contrasts are even starker. Glenn Renwick, the Progressive Insurance Company’s CEO who retired in 2016, receives a monthly retirement check from his com-

pany for \$1,035,733. Among Walmart’s 1.5 million employees, fewer than two-thirds have a company-sponsored retirement plan and, if they do, it will pay them, on average, only \$131 per month. But Walmart’s CEO, Doug McMillon can expect to receive at least \$360,000 per month—more than 2,700 times the amount a typical Walmart worker with a 401(k) account can expect.

And there’s also CEO David Cote of Honeywell—a company that has locked out its workers from its factories in Green Island, NY and South Bend Indiana for over eight months for rejecting a contract that eliminated workers’ pensions—who receives a monthly retirement check from the company for \$908,712.

Things were not always like this. From 1946 to 1980, a combination of union action and government policy led to the expansion of pension benefits for American workers. By 1980, 46 percent of private sector workers were covered by defined benefit pensions. But, in the following decades, declining union strength, corporate attacks on pension funds, and government action resulted in a severe erosion of worker retirement security. By 2011, only 18 percent of private sector workers were covered by defined benefit plans.

As demonstrated by the authors of the IPS report, the growth of economic inequality in retirement provisions resulted from rigging things in favor of CEOs through new rules for pensions, taxes, and executive compensation. “Since more than half of compensation is now tied to the company’s stock price,”



Larry Wittner

“The financial security of retiring corporate CEOs is far, far greater than the financial security of average Americans.”

— Lawrence Wittner
Albany

the authors note, “CEOs have a powerful personal incentive for slashing worker retirement benefits in order to boost the short-term bottom line. Every dollar not spent on employee retiree security is money in the CEO’s pocket.”

Although changes in public policy could close the widening pension gap, such changes do not seem likely to occur while a zealously pro-corporate party controls the White House, Congress, and the courts. Indeed, as the authors point out, thanks to the shielding of enormous CEO income in tax-deferred ac-

counts, Fortune 500 CEOs will see very substantial gains in their retirement checks if President Trump succeeds in implementing his plan to slash the top marginal income tax rate.

It’s possible that, in the long run, the rising tide of retirement insecurity will spark a revolt challenging the severe economic inequality between corporate CEOs and their American workers. Until then, however, it’s tempting to propose updating Jonathan Swift’s eighteenth century satirical suggestion, made in *A Modest Proposal*, that poverty among the poor might be alleviated by selling their babies as food for the rich. Perhaps, in twenty-first century America, retirement insecurity might be alleviated by selling elderly workers to the corporate rich, who could use them for the burgers sold by their fast food companies.

(Lawrence Wittner—www.lawrencewittner.com—is a professor of history emeritus at SUNY Albany. His latest book is a satirical novel about university corporatization and rebellion, *What’s Going On at UAardvark?*)

The road to totalitarianism

by Bill Scheuerman
Oswego

The other day I was rereading Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, a book documenting the rise of totalitarian governments in Nazi Germany and the Communist Soviet Union. Arendt shows how anti-semitism, propaganda, hyper-nationalism, and declining trust in social and political institutions helped subordinate the rule of law to the passions of the mob and the whims of dictators. I was struck by the close parallels between Arendt's analysis and current political events in the United States.

First, Trump transformed segments of an angry population into a passionate mob by appealing to voters' fear and xenophobia. He characterizes Mexicans as murderers and rapists and vows to deport 11 million undocumented people. (Do you have your papers?) He falsely claims that he witnessed thousands of Muslims cheering the collapse of the Twin Towers and then pledges to bar all Muslims from entering the U.S. For good measure, Muslims already living in the U.S. will be entered in a registry and will be subject to heightened police surveillance. (Do you have your papers?) Always, he fuels the belief of his white supporters that they are the true victims of racism.

Along with his campaign of xenophobia, Trump's hyper-nationalist slogan "Make America Great Again" exploits an already record low public confidence in political institutions. He campaigned against a government controlled by what his supporters feel is an incompetent and unresponsive elite cabal. "Drain the swamp!" they chant. Challenging his "elitist" Wall Street political opponent, Hillary Clinton, Trump leads his followers in chants of "Lock her up!" For Trump, the "swamp" is international, too. Not only did government destroy the U.S. economy by making bad deals with foreign countries, but it put foreign affairs in the hands of other nation

states. The United Nations, he charged, is nothing but a social club, and NATO is obsolete. Trump's America will rely on unilateralism, not international cooperation.

Control of the media and the propaganda machine is essential to totalitarian control. Every day Trump's actions delegitimize mainstream media.

When news coverage is uncomplimentary, he blasts it on Twitter as fake news propagated by failed elites. Early on, he kicked *Washington Post* and *The*

New York Times reporters out of the campaign press corps. Even now, the list of reporters he attacks continues to grow. And the week of his inauguration, he kicked the Press Corp from the White House. During his first week in office on federal agencies and his chief of staff, former chief of Breitbart News Steve Bannon, called the press the opposition party and told them to "shut up."

Throughout his campaign, he told outrageous lies about his opponents. Remember the one about Ted Cruz' father participating in JFK's assassination? Trump supporters also ate up fake reports that went viral on the internet, stories that made outrageous claims about Clinton's mental and physical health, and accused her of all kinds of crimes, including running a child prostitution ring out of a Washington D.C. Pizza restaurant. Trump's hard core supporters believed it. Trump's communications director claims that there is no such thing as a real fact. A fact is what you believe.

All these conditions—fueling a mob mentality, replacing facts with the Big Lie, undercutting political institutions,



Bill Scheuerman

"(By) fueling a mob mentality, replacing facts with the Big Lie, undercutting political institutions ... scapegoating minorities (and) attacking journalists, (Trump) aims to destroy the rule of law."

— Bill Scheuerman
Oswego

threatening political opponents with jail, scapegoating minorities, attacking journalists—aim to destroy the rule of law. Trump boasted that he could shoot somebody in Times Square and his supporters wouldn't care. He boasted of sexually assaulting women. He encouraged Russia to hack his political opponents. He

worships the authoritarian KGB thug who runs Russia. He sees no problem with profiting from foreign dignitaries staying in his Trump hotels and resorts in violation of

the Constitution's Emoluments clause, which prohibits taking money from foreign governments. In fact, his lawyer proclaims that as President, Trump can do anything he wants because he is above the law. He is the law.

Republicans now control Washington. They own both houses of Congress, the presidency, and are about to break the deadlock in the Supreme Court by appointing one of their own. But power also brings with it responsibility, and, given Trump's disdain for the law, they may soon have to confront a fundamental issue of our constitutional democracy. Will they do whatever is necessary to ensure that no person is above the law? Or will they simply continue enjoying the rewards of power and ignore their constitutional responsibilities? If they choose to do nothing, American democracy as we know it will be lost.

I suspect we'll find out soon.

(Bill Scheuerman is a retired political science professor at SUNY Oswego and a former head of the National Labor College in Maryland. He served as UUP president from 1993-2007.)

OUT AND ABOUT AT THE 2017 WINTER DA

Retiree members were active throughout the 2017 Winter DA. They served on committees, participated in the discussion on constitutional amendments and resolutions, and shared their thoughts in meetings and presentations throughout the two-day policymaking convention.

Right, top, Stony Brook HSC retiree Ed Drummond makes a point during a DA committee meeting. Looking on is Kiko Franco of Old Westbury.



Right, retiree Nuala McGann Drescher of Buffalo State, a former statewide president of UUP, stresses the importance of “seizing reapportionment” and doing whatever it takes to protect public education.



Far right, retiree Loraine Tyler of Oneonta, seated, gets help from UUP staffer Yvette Gedeon. Tyler was taking part in the union’s political action campaign by sending an electronic letter to lawmakers.



KAREN L. MATTISON AND MIKE LISI PHOTOS

Kowal

(continued from page 1)

the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the National Endowment for the Arts so he can spend more on the military and law enforcement.

Trump’s America is a bizarre, dark and scary place. We must resist; we must fight. And we have the support of our retirees if we hope to succeed.

Our retirees are highly educated, politically astute advocates who know UUP’s issues and aren’t afraid to speak their minds to elected officials. They have the time, the energy, and the drive and determination to effectively advocate for their union. I have seen firsthand just how effective our retirees can be.

Now, more than ever, we need all our members—active and retiree alike—to join us on the front lines.

There are so many ways for our retirees to get involved. To find out how, email COARM Chair Jo Schaffer at schaffer@twcny.rr.com. Or you can call UUP at (800) 342-4206.

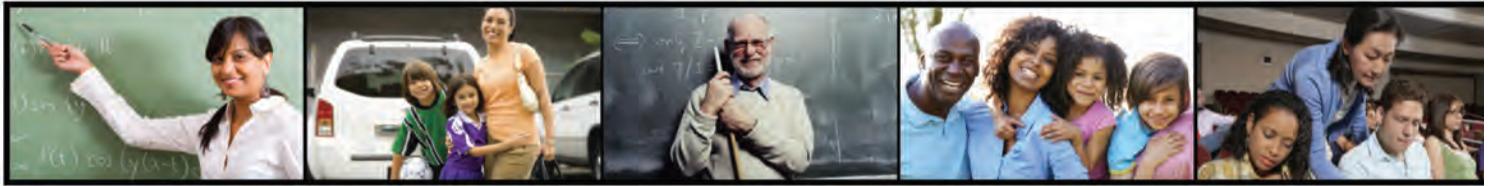
So please, join us.

Floridians come together



PHOTO BY JOY INVENTASCH

COARM Chair Jo Schaffer addresses a meeting of South Central/East Coast Floridians. There was a lively discussion of current politics and how retirees can enter the fray. Answers were given to the many questions about benefits.



Save with NYSUT Member Benefits

We salute our hard-working members for their dedication and the sacrifices they make on a daily basis to help improve the lives of others.

And NYSUT Member Benefits is proud to offer you—the hard-working UUP bargaining unit member—an opportunity to participate in the more than 40 endorsed programs & services offered by NYSUT Member Benefits.

Look to Member Benefits for crucial insurance programs such as life, long-term care or vision plans. Member Benefits also offers a variety of travel, entertainment & shopping options to help you with everything from daily purchases to those special once-in-a-lifetime excursions.

The following is just a sampling of the endorsed programs & services available to UUP bargaining unit members & their families:

- Life Insurance
- Vision Plan
- Financial Counseling Program
- ID Watchdog
- PayCheck Direct
- Car & Truck Rentals
- Wyndham Hotels
- Endless Vacation Rentals
- Buyer's Edge, Inc.
- American Solar Partners



To learn more about Member Benefits-endorsed programs & services, visit memberbenefits.nysut.org or call **800-626-8101**.



For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.



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UUP created its College Scholarship Fund in 1985 to celebrate the union's commitment to academic excellence and the life of the mind by awarding up to four scholarships each year to qualified SUNY undergraduates. In 2010, the union awarded its first post baccalaureate scholarship.