

# THE voice

uup

Winter/Spring 2019



## Taking on the TAP gap

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COVER PHOTO BY  
KAREN L. MATTISON

## Close the gap

7—UUP goes all out to encourage state lawmakers to close the TAP gap, which has reached \$65 million at SUNY.



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Unsigned letters will not be published.

Email letters to UUP Director of Media Relations and Publications Mike Lisi at [mlisi@uupmail.org](mailto:mlisi@uupmail.org) or send them to his attention at: *The Voice*, United University Professions, P.O. Box 15143, Albany, New York 12212-5143.

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AFTCN

# More than just a union

**I**t's tough to get time with Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie.

If you're lucky, you might be able to buttonhole him for a minute or two while he's walking between meetings in the halls of the Capitol. He's the Speaker and his time is in demand, especially in early March when legislators are hard at work putting together the new state budget.

But the Speaker made time March 6 for more than 150 students enrolled in SUNY's Educational Opportunity Program, who came to Albany March 6 as part of UUP's annual [EOP/EOC advocacy day](#).

A former EOP counselor at Stony Brook University, the Speaker spent about 20 minutes talking to the students, stressing the importance SUNY's opportunity programs—the EOP, SUNY's Educational Opportunity Centers and the ATTAIN Labs (a network of technology laboratories across the state set in rural and low-income areas) and telling them that lawmakers want to see these programs succeed.

"It's going to be a tough budget," the Speaker said, "but this is always at the top of our list."

Why? Because SUNY's opportunity programs have a history of successes.

SUNY's EOP is one of the nation's oldest and largest opportunity programs, which serves some of the highest-need students—a majority of whom come from households with an annual income of \$25,000 or less. Many EOP students are the first in their families to attend college.

And most graduate. Since its inception 52 years ago, the program has graduated more than 75,000 students. The EOP six-year graduation rate is 73 percent, which



KAREN L. MATTISON

PRESIDENT FRED KOWAL SHARES HIS THOUGHTS WITH DELEGATES AT THE 2019 WINTER DELEGATE ASSEMBLY IN ALBANY.

is higher than the national average. Of the students who graduate, 72 percent are still employed in New York.

Sonny Hostin, co-host of ABC's talk show "The View," and MSNBC anchor Kendis Gibson are EOP grads. So are Assembly members Latoya Joyner, Latrice Walker, and Victor Pichardo.

Yet, despite its many successes, the EOP only has enough funding each year to accept 20 percent of the 15,000 qualified applicants who sign up for the program. That's why UUP has made it a priority, year after year, to strongly advocate for EOP, the EOCs and the ATTAIN Labs.

And that's why so many EOP students were at the Capitol March 6. Each year, UUP invites students and faculty from SUNY's opportunity programs—offered at 48 of SUNY's 64 campuses—to Albany to meet with lawmakers and tell them how necessary these programs are.

Their stories are similar; most wouldn't be in college without the EOP. All will quickly tell you that these programs have changed their lives.

The Speaker knows this. He's seen it, firsthand.

And that's why he told EOP students that the Legislature would do all it could to restore \$12.3 million in cuts to EOP, EOC and the ATTAIN Labs made by the governor in his 2019-20 Executive Budget. In their one-house bills, the Assembly funded and increased dollars to the programs, while the newly Democratic-led Senate restored the governor's cuts.

The 2019-20 state budget had not been finalized at the time this issue of *The Voice* went to print. However, I am hopeful that the governor and the Legislature will agree to restore and boost funding to these important programs.

But the Speaker was confident, and he shared that confidence with students.

"I look at all these faces and the intelligence that I see, and I just can't imagine where all of you will be 10 years from now because of the opportunity you were given," he said. "We're doing this for a reason, because we want you all to go on and be successful."

The Speaker has been an incredible ally for EOP, a man whose word is his bond. He means what he says. And when he says that SUNY's opportunity programs are a priority for the Legislature, believe him.

I do, and so do the students who listened to him speak from the heart at the Capitol that March day.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the initials 'Al'.



# Carpe diem

Members seize every opportunity to advocate

BY DARRYL McGRATH

**U**UP members threw everything they had this budget season into an all-out effort to secure funds for SUNY's campuses and hospitals that were not just adequate, but sustainable.

Their efforts included strong turnouts at three Albany advocacy events; productive Albany meetings with lawmakers who recognize the value of a SUNY education; and in-district meetings with legislators, including many who are newly elected and passionate about public education.

"Our members have really responded in this very challenging academic year," UUP President Fred Kowal said. "At many campuses, they have taken the initiative, by acting as political coordinators, chapter leaders and committee members, or simply as activist members concerned about the future of SUNY and willing to give of their time and effort to their union."

SUNY faces \$700 million in flat funding for its four-year campuses, and the loss of the \$87 million state hospital subsidy in Gov. Andrew Cuomo's original budget proposal. Several SUNY campuses face multi-million-dollar budget shortfalls, the long-range result of funding cutbacks during the Great Recession of 2008-2013, compounded by rising costs and an increasing number of unfunded mandates.

SUNY campuses are required to fully fund the gap between the amount of tuition that students pay from their own resources and financial aid, and the actual cost of their tuition. That gap occurs in two major ways right now in the SUNY system: when students maximize the Tuition Assistance Program aid, but still cannot meet their tuition—thereby forcing their campus to make up the difference; and when students are admitted to



MICHAEL LISI

UUP EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER KIM HARTSHORN OF PLATTSBURGH, LEFT, TALKS WITH QUEENS DEMOCRATIC ASSEMBLYMEMBER MICHAEL DENDÉKKER DURING A FEB. 12 ADVOCACY DAY IN ALBANY. UUP ADVOCATES DISCUSSED THE UNION'S LEGISLATIVE AGENDA IN SEVERAL MEETINGS WITH LAWMAKERS.

the Excelsior Scholarship Program, where tuition is frozen at the level it was when the student entered college. Again, campuses must make up the difference.

The so-called "TAP Gap" is expected to be at least \$65 million in the coming year. A decade ago, it didn't even exist. The state's new DREAM Act, which opens state financial aid programs to undocumented immigrants who were brought to the United States as minors, could increase the unfunded costs. These unfunded access issues are especially a problem at the smaller SUNY campuses, many of which are seeing declining enrollments.

## VALUE OF FACE-TO-FACE TALKS

The in-district meetings drove home the message about the SUNY funding crisis to elected leaders who know the economic value of a SUNY campus in their region, and who seem far more inclined to speak out now about the governor's underfunding of SUNY than in previous years.

Assemblymember Steven Englebright,

a UUP Stony Brook Chapter member as a contingent academic, and a Long Island Democrat whose district includes Stony Brook, didn't mince words in a meeting with UUP members at the statewide Feb. 12 Advocacy Day.

"Both of my children are graduates of Stony Brook, so I know from my own family this institution is vital," Englebright said. "We're the largest of the SUNY campuses, so this is worth fighting for."



VEENSTRA

## HOSPITALS DESPERATELY SEEK SUBSIDY

Richard Veenstra, the chapter vice president for academics at Upstate Medical University, and a member of the statewide Executive

Board, found that in-district meetings with local lawmakers were especially effective this year. He has met with Assemblymembers William Magnarelli, a

20-year Democratic incumbent; and with newly elected Senator Robert Antonacci, a Republican and longtime former comptroller of Onondaga County who now serves on the Senate Finance Committee. Both lawmakers include Upstate in their districts.

He said that Antonacci, who is known to dislike unfunded mandates, “got it,” as Veenstra explained that the hospitals must cover their own fringe benefits and debt service, but barely have the money to do so.

“I feel like we got through to him,” Veenstra said. “He listened to us, so I felt good about it, given he’s a new member. We got the \$87 million hospital subsidy on his radar, and he’s on the Finance Committee.”

UUP chapter leaders at the three hospitals say the subsidies are essential; without them, the hospitals may have to cut programs and services.

“We are a tertiary-care hospital and we do things that community-care hospitals can’t do,” said Carolyn Kube, UUP chapter president at Stony Brook Hospital. “We’re always at maximum capacity.”

SUNY Downstate Medical Center serves an especially high-need, diverse community with a large immigrant population in the hospital’s neighborhood. That drives up the hospital’s costs, said UUP Downstate Chapter President Rowena Blackman-Stroud.

“It’s important that SUNY and the campus administrations join UUP in advocating for the SUNY hospitals, which provide such high-quality care to anyone who needs it,” Blackman-Stroud said.

Downstate Medical Center’s College of Health Related Professions is so strapped that it is at risk of losing its accreditation.

## TEAMING UP WITH ADMINISTRATIONS

At Fredonia and Buffalo State, UUP members have worked with their administrations to reduce budget deficits and steer the colleges through a difficult time.

“I think a lot of factors are hitting us at

once, and these are hitting a lot of colleges, whether they are private or public,” said Bruce Simon, the Fredonia chapter vice president for academics. “Number one is, the state has not restored funds that were cut during the Great Recession. When you become more tuition-dependent, as the state has made us, it’s another hit.”

In the 2008-2009 academic year, Fredonia received \$18 million in state funding. Now, it’s \$11 million, and just about every expenditure on campus has increased.

To address a declining retention rate, Fredonia is focusing more on nontraditional students, including adults and international students, and examining whether different course schedules—weekends instead of weekdays, for example—would better appeal to them.

The campus has a planning and budget committee whose six members are drawn from faculty and staff, and that committee has asked the administration to provide better information on cash balances and reserves, said Jonathan Chausovsky, a Fredonia UUP member and committee

co-chair. The administration has listened to the committee’s requests, which “made a huge change,” Chausovsky said. The committee also commissioned a budget analysis from Peter Reinelt, chair of the Fredonia economics department, which gave the committee a clear understanding of state support, tuition income, reserves and expenditures.

“We are very involved with the campus initiatives, with budgeting,” Chausovsky said. “It’s not an oversight committee; it’s a monitoring committee, which is essential if you’re going to have shared faculty governance.”

Buffalo State College has been running at a structural deficit for several years, Chapter President Dean Reinhart said. The faculty, staff and administration are working well together to reduce costs without harming programs or personnel, he added.

“Our provost has cut several faculty lines, but not current positions; open positions, or retirements,” said Reinhart, who serves on a campus budget group.

see **ADVOCATE**, page 6



DARRYL MCGRATH

UUP STATEWIDE VP FOR ACADEMICS JAMIE DANGLER, SECOND FROM LEFT, ADDRESSES SUNY’S BUDGET NEEDS WITH A STAFFER FOR STATE ASSEMBLYMEMBER PATRICIA FAHY. FROM LEFT ARE ALANA BYAM, LEONIE HARRIS AND SAMUEL MARQUEZ, ALL OF THE DOWNSTATE MEDICAL CENTER CHAPTER.



## ADVOCATE ...

continued from page 5

“We feel that we’re going to be able to weather the storm. We’re willing to work with the administration in any way possible. All of SUNY is trying to get bigger—it just can’t work for everybody.”

## AN URGENT PLEA

[Kowal testified](#) Jan. 28 before the state Senate and Assembly committees for higher education and finance. He said the governor’s original budget proposal did little to address systemwide funding gaps linked to the Tuition Assistance Program, the Excelsior Scholarship and years of flat funding that can’t keep up with rising costs throughout the SUNY system, especially at the smaller four-year campuses. And the hospitals, which received a total state subsidy of \$150 million within recent memory, received no subsidy at all in the governor’s first proposal.

Among the problems that Kowal outlined:

- The SUNY system has lost more than \$1 billion in state funding since the Great Recession.
- Access to SUNY has achieved national acclaim, but several of its paths to an affordable education are not fully funded by the state.
- The lack of an enhanced maintenance of effort provision means that campuses are dipping into student tuition payments to cover mandatory campus costs such as building rentals, utilities and collectively bargained salary increases and fringe benefits.

As *The Voice* went to press, the budget was still far from decided. The initial unity among Cuomo and Democratic leaders in the Senate and the Assembly fractured over differences in how the state’s limited resources should be apportioned, with lawmakers insisting, among other things, that education funding in general be increased. And

they have sent that message, loud and clear, to UUP and to SUNY students.

Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie was the guest of honor at the gathering of EOP students and UUP members that kicked off a March 6 Advocacy Day in Albany for opportunity programs at SUNY and CUNY. Heastie promised the students

that whatever else happens in the budget, their programs will be funded.

“In a \$70 billion budget, this is one of the smartest investments that we make,” Heastie told the more than 200 students, most of whom are in EOP. “I do want you to remember that this program is at the top of the list.”



MICHAEL LISI PHOTOS



TOP, UUP PRESIDENT FRED KOWAL, RIGHT, TESTIFIES BEFORE MEMBERS OF THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY ON THE NEED FOR MORE SUNY FUNDING. ALSO TESTIFYING WERE NYSUT PRESIDENT ANDY PALLOTTA, CENTER, AND PSC/CUNY PRESIDENT BARBARA BOWEN.

ABOVE, ASSEMBLYMEMBER DEBORAH GLICK ADDRESSES STUDENTS, FELLOW LAWMAKERS AND UNION MEMBERS GATHERED ON THE MILLION DOLLAR STAIRCASE AT THE CAPITOL TO PRESS FOR MORE FUNDS FOR OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS AT SUNY AND CUNY.

# UUP launches social media ad campaign to close TAP gap

BY MICHAEL LISI

**S**ecuring an additional \$65 million in the 2019-2020 state budget to close the TAP gap was the focus of UUP's new social media ad campaign.

And the campaign was successful; UUP's ad was viewed—in part or whole—by more than 2.5 million people.

The 30-second video ad, titled “Sixty Five,” ran March 6-19. The ad targeted legislators and their staffs and Albany political insiders. The ad was also directed at UUP members and union-friendly viewers, using Facebook and a media mix that included connected TV and digital internet ads.

“We accomplished what we set out to do, and that was to make people—especially members of the state Senate and Assembly—aware of the Tuition Assistance Program, which provides thousands of students who can’t afford college a chance to attend a SUNY school,” said UUP President Fred Kowal.

TAP provides access to a public college education—which is still out of reach for many qualified students. Yet the state, which covered the full cost of TAP until 2011, has reduced its TAP funding, forcing SUNY campuses to make up the shortfall.



UUP PRODUCED A 30-SECOND VIDEO AD FOR A SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN TO PRESS STATE LAWMAKERS TO PROVIDE AN ADDITIONAL \$65 MILLION TO THE TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

Now the TAP gap has grown to \$65 million and it continues to widen each year.

“This unfunded mandate is another cost SUNY campuses are forced to bear,” said Kowal. “If the state covered the full cost of TAP, our campuses could use those lost TAP funds to increase course offerings and student services, and hire more full-time faculty.”

Viewers who watched the ad could click on a link that took them to a landing page on UUP's website. There, they

could send an electronic letter to their elected officials (<https://bit.ly/2Hlbr2w>) urging them to support full state funding of TAP.

The ad was produced by UUP Media Relations and Publications, and GPS Impact, a Philadelphia-based company that has produced campaign ads for North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper and Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf, and has created ads for Working Americans for Affordable Health Care.



Support the political action fund of UUP and NYSUT

## Give to VOTE-COPE

VOTE-COPE is the nonpartisan political action fund of UUP and its affiliate NYSUT. It coordinates the voluntary contributions of members and makes contributions to UUP/NYSUT-endorsed candidates and to UUP/NYSUT-supported general campaign committees.

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# The student debt debacle

## UUP offers clinics to assist members with their debt

BY KAREN L. MATTISON

**S**ystem Administration Chapter member Jennifer Redinger had no idea what it would cost her in the long run when she decided to follow the advice of her student loan servicer to defer repayment of her college tuition for six years.

That fateful decision has left 44-year-old Redinger with a staggering \$175,000 of debt. About 75 percent of that is interest—the result of misinformation from Great Lakes Educational Loan Services Inc. about available—and better—repayment options, she said.

“I fell into the interest trap,” admitted Redinger, who earned her undergraduate and graduate degrees from the Rochester Institute of Technology in 1996 and 2009, respectively. “The problems started after I earned my master’s and became a full-time professor at SUNY Delhi. I tried to consolidate my loans with Great Lakes. They ‘lost’ my paperwork seven times in four years.”

Great Lakes finally got its act together, but never informed Redinger about other repayment options, such as the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program, which enables qualifying public workers to discharge their loans after 10 years.

“I took their word for it,” said Redinger, program coordinator for the University Faculty Senate. “And I’ve doubled, almost tripled, my debt.”

### UUP RESPONDS

UUP has been closely monitoring the student debt debacle, and recognizes that it isn’t going to be solved anytime soon. More than 45 million people in the U.S. are carrying debt from student loans worth \$1.5 trillion, an average of more than \$37,000 a borrower. One out of four loan borrowers is in default or behind on a payment, and hundreds of thousands of retirees are carrying student debt into retirement.

The weight of this debt is taking a toll on the national economy; people are putting off buying a home or starting a family, and money that could be spent on goods and services that spur economic growth is being used to pay off loans that were necessary to find better-paying jobs.



KAREN L. MATTISON PHOTOS

SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION CHAPTER MEMBER JENNIFER REDINGER TAKES NOTES DURING A RECENT STUDENT DEBT CLINIC SPONSORED BY UUP. REDINGER WAS AMONG A DOZEN UUP MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES TO GET HELP DEALING WITH THEIR STUDENT DEBT.

“Many of our members have been telling us that they need help dealing with their student loans, and we’ve listened,” said UUP President Fred Kowal. “When you combine on-the-job issues—such as workload creep, bullying and low morale—with seemingly insurmountable debt, it can affect how you do your job and how you live your life.”

“All of us together, as a union, must get involved and be part of the solution,” he said. “That’s the power of organized labor.”

Working with the AFT, UUP in January began training a core group of member activists to conduct Student Debt Clinics at campuses around the state. The goal: to provide members with tools and information to help them lower their monthly payments and put them on a path toward a debt-free future.

Five “live clinics” were held in March, during which the trainers were observed by a qualified AFT trainer. Now that the first wave of training is complete, the union has begun scheduling additional clinics at the chapters.

Redinger was among a handful of UUPers and their family members who braved icy roads to attend UUP’s first clinic, Jan. 24 at union headquarters in Latham. Chris Hicks, an associate in AFT’s Higher Education Department, led the debt clinic. Earlier that day, he led the first of a two-day training workshop

### BY THE NUMBERS

**\$1.5 trillion**  
in student debt in the U.S.; projected to reach \$2 trillion by 2022

**5%**  
of debtors are over age 65  
(combined total: \$6 billion)

**92%**  
of call logs reviewed by OIG showed student loan servicers failed to offer sufficient options





ALBANY CHAPTER MEMBER PENNY NG ASKS A QUESTION DURING THE DEBT CLINIC. LISTENING IN IS FELLOW CHAPTER MEMBER CAROL ROSENBERG.

for UUP professional organizers and other leaders to hold clinics at the chapters; another 10 to 12 people will be trained in April, according to statewide UUP Secretary-Treasurer Jeri O'Bryan-Losee, who took part in the first training.

"The number of people dealing with student loan debt is staggering," said O'Bryan-Losee, herself a victim of misinformation regarding her two student loans through Direct Loans. "It wasn't until I sat through a debt clinic that I realized I had been lied to on more than one occasion."

"These clinics give people the opportunity to change their lives," she added.

### PREYING ON STUDENTS

Redinger is a prime example of the disturbing trend of predatory lending, misinformation campaigns, and questionable practices by U.S. Department of Education student loan servicers like Great Lakes. A scathing Feb. 12 report by the department's independent watchdog, the Office of Inspector General (OIG), exposed an alarming lack of oversight of nine student loan giants responsible for handling \$1.4 trillion in federal loans to tens of millions of American student loan borrowers. Among the litany of disturbing findings, the report (<https://bit.ly/2GpZfxR>) reveals how the system is often rigged to mislead borrowers to boost the profits of student loan service companies.

The report comes on the heels of an AFT lawsuit against student loan servicer Navient, one of the student loan companies named in the OIG report for noncompliance and other widespread abuses. The AFT's class-action suit filed in federal court in October 2018 (<https://bit.ly/2Tb8Xu9>) claims Navient ignored borrowers' best

interests—in violation of its government contract—by recommending forbearance and other less effective remedies to those seeking debt relief. The suit also alleges that Navient misled borrowers in public service professions from accessing PSLF—which is administered by rival servicer FedLoan—all in the name of profit. A half dozen similar lawsuits were filed by state attorneys general and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

With its student debt clinics, UUP is taking a role in doing what the OIG has shown the student loan servicers are not: telling their members about the federal programs that can significantly lower monthly payments or completely forgive the debt. In fact, 92 percent of call logs reviewed by the OIG showed servicers did not provide sufficient options to borrowers.

Albany Chapter member Penny Ng, who also attended UUP's Jan. 24 student debt clinic, has paid off her UAlbany graduate degree, which she earned in 2017. She took advantage of the UUP-negotiated tuition-waiver program; that program allows union members to take SUNY courses tuition-free on a space-available basis.

**"I was told there was no chance to move my consolidated loans into a consolidated direct-loan program. I now know that's not true."**

*— Albany Chapter member Penny Ng*

But she's still paying off about \$42,000 in student loans that financed her undergraduate degree.

"Once the grace period ended, my student loan payment jumped to about \$300 a month," Ng said. "I was unemployed and couldn't afford to pay it."

Unlike Redinger, Ng often rejected the advice of her loan service provider.

"They mentioned forbearance," she said. "I asked about the interest payments. We settled on a graduated payment plan."

"I've been lucky, I've never missed a payment," Ng added. "But I had to keep on them. I'd call whenever I couldn't make a payment. I was negotiating along the way."

For Redinger and Ng, UUP's debt clinic provided answers to the questions that have nagged at them for years.

"This has been immensely helpful," Ng said. "I was told there was no chance to move my consolidated loans into a consolidated direct-loan program. I now know that's not true. It's like they're trying to keep you from getting out of the hamster wheel you're caught in."

*—The AFT contributed to this report.*

# 3 times

Student debt increase as percentage of household debt from 2003-2013

# 3,000

people default on their student loans each day

# 2.8 million

student loan borrowers in NY state

Sources: AFT Higher Education Department; Sandy Baum, Urban Institute; and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

# UUPers volunteer at home, around the globe

BY DARRYL MCGRATH

**E**very week, hundreds of UUP members take this one step to make the world around them a better place: They see a need, and they volunteer to fill it.

Union membership has always been associated with service, so it's no surprise to hear about UUPers who take the time to do good in their communities, and sometimes far beyond their local boundaries. But these acts of social conscience, often done by members without acclaim and without being asked, really stand out now, when so many members already do much for their students, their campuses and their chapters.

"This is the often-unheralded part of the labor movement that union-busters pretend not to see," said UUP President Fred Kowal. "UUP members do a lot for the world around them; it's that simple. I am humbled, but not surprised, to hear how many of our members quietly go above and beyond what they do in their jobs and for their chapters."

*The Voice* recently spoke with four members about their volunteer work, and what it has taught them.

## BUILDING A BRIDGE

Carol H. Jewell has always noticed people whom society often doesn't see, or doesn't acknowledge.

In 2008, Jewell started what is believed to be UUP's first chapterwide committee to address the needs of LGBTQ employees on the University of Albany campus. A statewide committee was organized the following year, and Jewell was a founding member.

As a student on the UAlbany campus in the mid-1980s, she noticed there were no braille floor directories on the elevators, and she notified the campus administration. Braille signs started appearing at the elevators. Later, she asked that campus administrators put the SUNY reasonable accommodations policy on its campus



KAREN L. MATTISON

ALBANY CHAPTER DELEGATE CAROL JEWELL DISCUSSES A UUP RESOLUTION CALLING ON SUNY PRESIDENTS TO TAKE A STAND AGAINST ANY FORM OF DISCRIMINATION ON CAMPUSES. THE RESOLUTION WAS BROUGHT TO THE FLOOR DURING THE 2018 SPRING DELEGATE ASSEMBLY.

website, which it did, under the human resources link on the website.

Now, Jewell chairs her chapter's committees on LGBTQ and disability rights and concerns.

"Even though we have the Americans with Disabilities Act, some people are still afraid to go to their deans and their chairs," said Jewell, a library professional and delegate whose awareness of her colleagues with disabilities stems from dealing with a chronic physical condition that has caused her own disability. Her advocacy has extended beyond her own campus boundaries; from 2003 to 2010, Jewell was the list-owner and moderator for the Coalition for Accessible SUNY Campuses. Although the list ended in 2010, Jewell remembers it as a valuable tool for connecting a SUNY community of colleagues concerned about greater accessibility, either because of personal need, or as a rights issue.

Her interest in helping LGBTQ colleagues on campus and around the SUNY system stems from her coming out as a

lesbian in 1999; she had been married to a man when she first came to UAlbany in 1985. Now married to her longtime partner, Jewell knows that campus and department social functions can still be painful for people who are either not yet out at all, or not out to their colleagues. In 2014, she received the UAlbany Lavender Unsung Hero Award, which recognizes faculty, staff, students and alumni for their contributions to the LGBTQ community.

Looking back on that early effort to form the chapter committee, Jewell said, "I wanted to have a group where UUP members who were LGBTQ would have a safe space to ask questions and get help."

## A WAY FORWARD

"A lot of people's lives don't go as planned; the challenge is to move on and not get stuck," said Deb Mayes, a professional at Alfred State College. "It's amazing, the resilience of people to recover."

Mayes knows all about resilience and recovery. Her husband, Steve Mayes, a professor at Alfred University, was only 51 when he died of cancer in 2008. The



couple had two children: a 10-year-old son and a 13-year-old daughter.

As Mayes learned, profound grief is a longer process than people realize until they experience it.

Three years after her husband's death, bereft and still seeking a way to heal, Mayes responded to a colleague's invitation to travel to North Dakota to help thousands of people who had been displaced by the 2011 flooding of the Souris River. The trip was organized by All Hands & Hearts, a U.S. nonprofit relief organization that responds to natural disasters nationally and internationally. In helping others who had lost everything, Mayes found



a path to her own recovery.

Since then, Mayes has volunteered for numerous All Hands projects, often with Alfred students. She traveled to New York City in 2012 to help after Hurricane Sandy; to Detroit in 2014 for flood relief; to Nepal in 2015, after a devastating earthquake; and to Puerto Rico in 2017 after Hurricane Irma. She is especially proud of the fact that her son, Matt, asked to accompany her to Nepal as his high school graduation present.

"I think students are just amazing when you put them in an area like that; they work hard and they really like to interact with the community," Mayes said.

### COUNSELING COUPLES

Friday night is date night for Donovan Lorde and his wife, Deanne Kennedy-Lorde—the only twist is that they spend it at their church, the Greater Allen African Methodist Episcopal Cathedral

of New York in Jamaica, Queens.

Lorde and his wife, both UUP professionals at SUNY Downstate Medical Center, are counselors in the church's Marriage Enrichment Ministry, which offers Bible study and marital and premarital counseling to couples. They have been doing this for nearly 15 years. The church was founded in 1834, and the congregation has more than 23,000 members. Headed by the Rev. Floyd Flake, a former member of Congress, the church offers a range of programs that help members and, by extension, the surrounding community.

"The majority of the couples that we counsel are still married," Lorde said. "It's just great to see couples that you counseled and see that they are maintaining a successful marriage."

The couple has made outreach a part of their lives in other ways. Lorde is a member of the Brooklyn chapter of Phi Beta Sigma fraternity, founded at Howard University in 1914, and which now has chapters around the United States and in other countries as a service organization for men. The chapter hosts a neighborhood Thanksgiving dinner and provides suits to young men for their high school prom, among its many projects. Kennedy-Lorde is fluent in American Sign Language; her husband is learning it.

Married for 25 years, the couple has two daughters. They were still fairly new members of the church when they decided to undergo the church's training program for lay counselors. It was not a task they undertook lightly; Lorde says they both were initially very nervous. Although they have gained confidence in their role, they do not take personal credit for the help they have provided; they feel that they have just steered couples in a helpful direction.

"Our belief is that if your marriage is centered around God, you will have a successful marriage," Lorde said.



### A DEEP NEED IN APPALACHIA

Melissa "Missy" Ackerly, a nurse and an assistant professor of nursing at SUNY Delhi, loved teaching her students who planned to enter her profession. But as an

educator, she also realized that she missed the clinical experience of working with patients.

"I went into education in nursing, and I realized it doesn't stop here at the School of Nursing," Ackerly explained. "I wanted to get out there; I wanted to get out of my comfort zone."

She had not done clinical work in 15 years when a colleague, professor Kirsty Digger at the Delhi School of Nursing, encouraged her to join a trip in the fall of 2017 to deliver dental care to a West Virginia community. The trip was organized by the Remote Area Medical Volunteer Corps, a major private, non-profit provider of free, mobile health care clinics in the United States and internationally.

Ackerly has since worked at two other Remote Area medical clinics, and now she leads students on these trips. She works as a triage nurse, checking blood pressure and glucose levels in patients, reviewing what medications the patients take, and generally making sure someone is healthy enough to undergo dental work.

The normal anxiety about dental work, combined with serious conditions such as untreated hypertension, can put patients at risk for a stroke or heart attack; at one clinic, a young man had to be resuscitated with an automated external defibrillator. The clinics routinely treat people who have had little or no dental care.

"It's a wonderful experience for our master's students," Ackerly said. It's also been a wonderful experience for her.

Said Ackerly, "I just felt that I had to give back somehow; I've been so fortunate."



PHOTO COURTESY OF DONOVAN LORDE

DEANNE KENNEDY-LORDE AND DONOVAN LORDE POSE OUTSIDE THE A.M.E. CATHEDRAL, WHERE THEY SPEND FRIDAY NIGHTS COUNSELING COUPLES AS PART OF THE CHURCH'S MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT MINISTRY.

# Getting down to business

Delegates vote to eliminate one of three policymaking conventions

BY KAREN L. MATTISON

**D**elegates to the 2019 Winter Delegate Assembly voted to eliminate one of the union's three DAs per year.

But the union won't be losing a DA so much as gaining an opportunity to hold regional meetings and other member-engagement events around the state, said UUP President Fred Kowal.

"Our delegates acted wisely in voting to eliminate a DA," he said. "We will use the resources generally set aside for the third DA to bring together more members in more meaningful ways. This will have a direct effect on the membership; it's simply another way to better our union."

As part of the amendment to eliminate a DA, delegates allowed for the reinstatement of a third DA at a future date by adopting language that UUP will hold "at least two" DAs per year; that distinction allows for the Executive Board to add a DA in any given year, if needed.

## GETTING DOWN TO BUSINESS

Delegates spent two days in Albany in February debating an additional 12 amendments to the UUP Constitution and updating language in the union's Policy Manual—all with the goal of streamlining the internal work of the union, and freeing up time and money that is better spent on serving the membership.

Moving from three to two DAs meant sections of the UUP Constitution and Policy Manual had to be amended. Delegates voted to:

- Amend the Policy Manual to remove reference to the Winter DA for presenting the Judith Wishnia Advocacy Award and the Friend of UUP Award.
- Change the UUP Constitution to give the DA authority to take up matters decided by referendum from the third to the second subsequent DA. The amendment maintains the union's existing one-year waiting period after a referendum has passed before any modifications can occur.



MICHAEL LISI

FREDONIA AND ALFRED DELEGATES, FRONT ROW, RAISE THEIR BADGES IN SUPPORT OF A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO ELIMINATE ONE DELEGATE ASSEMBLY A YEAR. UUP LEADERS DEBATED 13 RESOLUTIONS.

The secretary-treasurer was authorized by resolution to correct article and section designations, punctuation and cross-references, and to make other technical changes to the amendments, as necessary.

## AMENDMENTS ADOPTED

Delegates also adopted constitutional amendments to:

- Change the required majority to adopt amendments to the UUP Constitution. Proposed amendments would now require a two-thirds vote of the DA members who are present and voting.
- Update language in the UUP Constitution's nondiscrimination provision to conform with current provisions of the New York State Human Rights Law.
- Cycle the elections for the president, secretary-treasurer and membership development officer, and for the two vice presidents, between odd and even years. This amendment was necessary after delegates voted at the 2016 Fall DA to change the terms of statewide officers and Executive Board members

from two to three years.

- Remove the requirement that members be present at DAs to be elected as officers or board members, thereby accommodating candidates prevented from attending a DA by an unexpected personal or family emergency.
- Rename the statewide Affirmative Action Committee to the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee. Chapter affirmative action officers will now be officers for diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Require that when there are no nominees for a chapter position, write-in candidates must receive at least five votes to take office. A separate amendment provided that a member must receive a minimum of five votes to be ranked as a delegate or alternate.
- Give the statewide Executive Board the authority to establish election procedures for chapter elections. Delegates also agreed to remove election procedures from the UUP Constitution; the procedures will be part of the union's Policy Manual.



BELOW, UUP OUTREACH COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR PAULA WHITE, STANDING, HELPS ALBANY CHAPTER DELEGATE ZINA LAWRENCE DURING A POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT TRAINING SESSION.



DARRYL McGRATH



MICHAEL LISI

ABOVE, DELEGATES—including BROCKPORT CHAPTER LEADERS SHARON BELLE-RENDER, LEFT, AND JOE TORRE, RIGHT—VOTE ON A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT.

RIGHT, UUP STATEWIDE SECRETARY-TREASURER JERI O'BRYAN-LOSEE REPORTS TO DELEGATES.



MICHAEL LISI

- Revise procedures for altering terms of affiliation with NYSUT and other affiliated bodies.

## AMENDMENTS REFERRED

Two amendments were referred to the UUP Constitution and Governance Committee for clarification. One proposal would authorize the Executive Board to investigate, hear and decide ethics complaints; the other would preclude retiree members from serving as statewide officers or on the statewide Executive Board.

## MEMBERS REMEMBERED, FETED

Mac Nelson of Fredonia and John Hain of New Paltz were honored posthumously for their service to the union.

Former New Paltz Chapter president



MICHAEL LISI

Glenn McNitt read a resolution recognizing Hain for more than 40 years of union service. Hain died Oct. 2, 2018, at age 90.

"For his viewing, John requested that he be buried wearing a UUP hat and T-shirt, along with numerous other union paraphernalia, highlighting his commitment to unionism," McNitt read. The resolution was adopted by acclamation.

A story on Nelson is on page 14.

Delegates also feted former System Administration Chapter president John Schumacher on his retirement.

LEFT, FARMINGDALE CHAPTER DELEGATE HARRY ESPAILLAT OFFERS AN OPINION ON A PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE UUP CONSTITUTION.

## ACTION REQUIRED

- Kowal was directed to send a letter to Gov. Andrew Cuomo and SUNY Chancellor Kristina Johnson urging them to take a stand in support of campuswide efforts to organize, educate and speak out against any form of discrimination and injustice.

The resolution also calls on UUP to urge the University Faculty Senate to pass a similar resolution.

- Delegates were also prepared to march with striking faculty at Wright State in Ohio. Unionized faculty there voted to strike beginning Jan. 22, after two years of failed negotiations.

The strike ended Feb. 11, when the two sides reached a tentative agreement.

# Delegates pay tribute to longtime unionist

BY MICHAEL LISI

**M**ac Nelson was a dedicated union man who wasn't afraid to work to make UUP into a union that he could proudly call his own.

But for all that Nelson did for UUP, his greatest gift was his voice.

"I think my best contribution to UUP," Nelson wrote in a 2015 essay, "Sing Out!" published in UUP's *The Active Retiree* newsletter, "is that, three times a year, when we meet to conduct our business, we open the meeting with me (usually) leading 300 sisters and brothers in song."

Nelson passed away unexpectedly Dec. 25 at Brooks Memorial Hospital in Fredonia.

"Mac was an elder, a good friend, and a dedicated unionist,"

said UUP President Fred Kowal. "Mac served his union, his campus and his students with distinction and devotion. He will be missed, especially at Delegate Assemblies where he led the 'Mac-ettes,' those delegates who would stand with and join him in a rousing rendition of 'Solidarity Forever.'"

Nelson wrote about how he loved the line "Solidarity forever, for the union makes us strong!" and believed singing held the same power: "I know that, after I am gone, they will still sing."

And they did.

Delegates to the 2019 Winter Delegate Assembly paid tribute to Nelson with the reading of a resolution honoring his life and legacy, followed by the singing of his cherished song of solidarity.

## PAYING TRIBUTE

"There has only been one Mac for me, for our history, for our professions, for our union, and for all of us who were touched by his presence," said statewide COARM Chair Jo Schaffer, who took



FILE PHOTO

ABOVE, NELSON LEADS DELEGATES IN THE SINGING OF "SOLIDARITY FOREVER" AT THE 2014 SPRING DELEGATE ASSEMBLY.



DARRYL MCGRATH

LEFT, ED ALLEYNE, LEFT, OF STONY BROOK HSC, JO SCHAFER OF CORTLAND, AND CHARLIE MCAETER AND JUDY WISHNIA OF STONY BROOK—SOME OF THE "MAC-ETTES"—SING "SOLIDARITY FOREVER" AT THE DA. A CUBS HAT WAS PLACED ON THE MICROPHONE IN HONOR OF NELSON.

turns reading the resolution with Judy Wishnia of Stony Brook.

Delegates laughed with recognition as Wishnia read of Nelson's love of America's favorite pastime.

"Mac never missed an opportunity to share stories about his beloved Chicago Cubs, including how deliriously happy he was to throw out the first pitch at a Cubbies game at age 77, and how disappointed he was to have fallen asleep on the night his Cubs—finally!—won the World Series in 2016."

On a more personal note, Wishnia told *The Voice* that Nelson was one of the "original builders" of the union, but was quick to point out that there "was more to Mac than his union activity. He was a great teacher, a great writer, a wonderful traveler, and all that with a great sense of humor."

## UUP SERVICE

Nelson was a distinguished UUP member who twice served on the union's statewide Executive Board (1979-84 and

1993-95), and did great work as Fredonia Chapter president. He was a longtime statewide delegate and was honored with UUP's pre-eminent award, the Nina Mitchell Award for Distinguished Service, in 1995.

Nelson was a founder of the State University Federation of Teachers, which merged in 1969 with the Senate Professional Association and eventually became UUP. He was a member of a number of UUP statewide and chapter committees, including the Membership and Constitution Study committees.

Nelson was committed to a strong, vibrant union as a founding member of the former Reform Caucus, which bolstered his election to the statewide board.

## DEDICATED TEACHER

He was a beloved professor who taught Shakespeare, Renaissance Literature, and World Poetry at SUNY Fredonia, where he worked from 1968 until his retirement in 2007. He earned the rank of SUNY distinguished teaching professor and



**E**ach year, hundreds of UUP members publish books and articles, and are recognized for accomplishments on campus and in their communities. *The Voice* is pleased to recognize three members in this issue.

A book written by **Jacqueline Emery**, an assistant professor of English at SUNY Old Westbury, recently earned the 2018 Outstanding Academic Title award from the publishing unit of the Association of College and Research Libraries. The accolade is based on the book's "excellence in presentation, significance in the field, originality of the material, value to students and the importance toward building undergraduate library collections."

*Recovering Native American Writings in the Boarding School Press* (University of Nebraska Press, 2017) is the first comprehensive collection of writings by students and well-known Native American authors who published in boarding school newspapers during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It was among only 10 percent of the 6,000-plus titles reviewed over the last year to be selected for this award.

The book also received a Best Edited Collection award from the Popular Culture Association and American Culture Association in 2018.



EMERY

**Samy Garas**, an associate professor of accounting at SUNY Plattsburgh, was recently named an online teaching ambassador for 2019 by Open SUNY, a compendium of online classes offered at SUNY campuses across the state. He was nominated by his campus for being an exemplary online educator, and a positive and strong advocate for online teaching in our SUNY community.

Garas will receive a certificate of recognition and be featured on the Open SUNY Online Teaching Ambassadors website page.

As an online teaching ambassador, Garas will have opportunities to be an advocate for online teaching and to share his thoughts and engage with the community in various ways in the coming year.

Garas has taught at universities in the United States and the Middle East and has held several executive positions in auditing firms and accounting associations. Topics taught include several levels of accounting, federal taxation, and corporate governance to undergraduate and graduate students.



GARAS

**Laura Kaminsky**, a composition professor-at-large in the School of the Arts at SUNY Purchase, recently received the 2019 Composers Now Festival Visionary Award. The award

recognizes members of the arts community who, through their own creative practice and advocacy for others, have made a profound, positive and lasting impact in our culture.

Kaminsky, an award-winning American composer and a producer of musical and multidisciplinary cultural events, teaches in the arts management program and in the classical composition program in the Conservatory of Music.

From 1999 to 2004, she served as chair of the music department at the Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle and, from 2004 to 2008, as dean of the Conservatory of Music at SUNY Purchase. She has received national recognition for her innovative cultural programming and has held posts at several prestigious institutions, including New York City's 92nd Street Y, and Symphony Space.



KAMINSKY

received the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1975.

His exuberance was felt by his students. "Mac Nelson changed my life," Dave Andrews, one of Nelson's SUNY Fredonia students, said in a message on Nelson's online obituary page in the *Dunkirk Observer*. "There's no other way to summarize his influence."

"Mac was one of the best people I have ever known," said Wendy Corsi Staub, in a message on Nelson's obituary in the *Observer*. "I'm privileged to have had him as a professor."

## PROLIFIC WRITER

Nelson wrote a number of books, which dealt with Native American culture (*Telling the Stories: Essays on American Indian Literature and Cultures*), Cape

Cod (*Epitaph and Icon: A Field Guide to the Old Burial Grounds of Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket*) and Route 20 (*Twenty West: The Great Road Across America*), the highway on which he lived in Brocton, Chautauqua County.

He also wrote extensively for *The Active Retiree*, so much so that a special section, titled "Mac Musings," was created for him in the newsletter. There, he shared stories about Yellowstone, his beloved Cubs, the English language, his favorite authors and, of course, music.

He organized and led a vocal group called The Catch Club, which met monthly to sing catches, canons and glees, mostly from the 17th century. Nelson led that group for more than 60 years.

And he recognized and embraced the

power and passion of music, and of people singing together. In his essay, "Sing Out!" Nelson points out that people love to sing together, at ballparks, at sports stadiums, and even in the classroom.

His love for singing with people is what made him a fixture at Delegate Assemblies, gleefully leading the Mac-ettes.

"Lift your voices at the Winter DA and sing, belting out 'Solidarity Forever' just as he always did," said Nelson's partner Joyce Haines, an Empire State College Chapter retiree, when sharing word of his passing. "He was so supportive to so many in so many ways. What a privilege and honor to have shared a few years with him."

A video tribute to Nelson can be viewed at <https://bit.ly/2DiEPD1>

— Karen L. Mattison contributed to this report.

# Magdalena Rivera

## Oswego

Magdalena Rivera grew up on a family farm in Puerto Rico, and she has never forgotten the lessons she learned from eating the produce that she helped her grandparents plant and harvest.

Today, Rivera is coordinator of student involvement at SUNY Oswego, where many of the projects and responsibilities she has overseen have helped students dream big, plan for their futures and open doors to the rest of the world. Among her accomplishments: She's been the project assistant for several study-abroad trips through the Oswego Office of International Education and Programs. Her exposure to different cultures inspired her interest in learning other languages, and she has studied French and Italian.

Rivera spent part of the semester break with a group of students and several Oswego colleagues in Puerto Rico, where they helped residents with the ongoing cleanup and repair from the record-setting 2017 hurricane season. During an afternoon break, she talked about her students, being a UUP member (she joined in 2009) and the advice she would give to a 12-year-old who wants to succeed.

### **How would you describe your Oswego students on this trip to Puerto Rico?**

Oh, my goodness ... they are dedicated—that is one of the main things I see—focused on developing themselves. They're not afraid to be part of this project. We've taken students to do a variety of jobs—cleaning, picking up garbage—it could be clean work, dirty work—they're not afraid.

### **What's the best way that your colleagues can relate to their students?**

One thing that's very important is listening to them. We learn from them. We are mentors and guides, but we have to listen to them, as well. Understand that when you are working with students, you are the leader, but you also have to follow, as well.

### **How has UUP helped you in your work?**

It has provided empowerment for me, to represent the campus in different projects. I've been able to grow, and I've been empowered as a member of UUP. It has created a path, a lot of opportunity, for me, to be involved.

### **What would you tell an adolescent who aspires to college and a career?**

If you don't speak a second language, start learning to speak a second language now. And start looking at opportunities for community service.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MAGDALENA RIVERA

— DARRYL MCGRATH





DARRYL McGRATH

## Veterans Committee

THE UUP VETERANS COMMITTEE HAS RAISED MORE THAN \$1,000 IN THE PAST YEAR FOR FISHER HOUSE IN ALBANY, WHICH PROVIDES HOUSING, CARE AND COMFORT FOR FAMILIES OF HOSPITALIZED VETERANS AND ACTIVE-DUTY SERVICE MEMBERS. COMMITTEE MEMBERS MARKING THIS MILESTONE AT THE WINTER DELEGATE ASSEMBLY ARE, FROM LEFT, CO-CHAIR JUSTIN CULKOWSKI OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND FORESTRY, MIKE KNEE OF ALBANY, STU L'HOMMEDIEU OF BINGHAMTON, STONY BROOK CHAPTER PRESIDENT KEVIN MORIARTY, CLIFF DAVIS OF COBLESKILL AND STATEWIDE EXECUTIVE BOARD LIAISON RAY GLEASON OF ALFRED.

## Buffalo State Chapter

ABOUT 20 UUP MEMBERS, FAMILY AND FRIENDS—including DEBORAH JONES, PAT GHEE, MARIA BRICKHOUSE, CURTIS BRICKHOUSE, CHAPTER PRESIDENT DEAN REINHART AND JUDE JAYATILLEKE—TAKE PART IN SPORTS NIGHT. THEY ENJOYED PIZZA AND WINGS BEFORE WATCHING A BUFFALO STATE BASKETBALL GAME.



DANIELLE JUDGE



DAVID THOMAS

## Upstate Medical University Chapter

UPSTATE CHAPTER MEMBERS DON THEIR UUP T-SHIRTS AND JOIN OTHER SYRACUSE-AREA UNIONISTS TO PACK FOOD THEY DONATED FOR TSA FAMILIES AFFECTED BY THE GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN IN DECEMBER 2018 AND JANUARY. THE EVENT WAS HELD IN JANUARY AT TEAMSTERS LOCAL 317.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JIM McMAHON

## Empire State College Chapter

ESC CHAPTER DELEGATE JIM McMAHON WORKS ON A ROOFTOP IN PUERTO RICO. McMAHON WAS AMONG SEVERAL DOZEN UUP MEMBERS STATEWIDE TO MAKE VARIOUS TRIPS TO HELP REBUILD THE STORM-RAVAGED ISLAND.

# Fourteen UUP members awarded distinguished ranks

**T**he SUNY Board of Trustees awarded nine UUPers with distinguished professorships for national and international achievements; two with distinguished teaching professorships for mastery of teaching; one with a distinguished service professorship for extraordinary SUNY and community service; and two with distinguished librarian professorships for fostering information literacy.

## DISTINGUISHED PROFESSORSHIPS



BRUNEAU

**Michel Bruneau**, a structural engineer in the department of civil, structural and environmental engineering at the University at Buffalo, is a Fellow of the American Society

of Civil Engineers and the Canadian Academy of Engineering. He has traveled the world to assess structural damage caused by earthquakes and was sought out for a reconnaissance visit to New York City in the aftermath of the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center. He has more than 500 publications to his credit.



GUREVITCH

**Jessica Gurevitch**, an ecologist in Stony Brook University's department of ecology and evolution, was elected as a Named Fellow of the Ecological Society of America and is

a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. She is a leader in research synthesis and meta-analysis, biological invasions, and plant ecology. She co-edited the bestselling book, *The Design and Analysis of Ecological Experiments*, and is the lead author of a major undergraduate textbook, *The Ecology of Plants*, and co-authored the *Handbook of Meta-analysis in Ecology and Evolution*.



KHARZEEV

**Dmitri Kharzev**, a member of Stony Brook University's department of physics and astronomy, is nationally and internationally recognized as one of the world's leading theo-

rists in nuclear physics. He is best known for his groundbreaking work on the Chiral Magnetic Effect. Based on Kharzev's prediction, he and a team of condensed matter scientists discovered a new way to generate very low-resistance electric current in a new class of materials. This discovery points to a range of potential applications in energy, quantum computing, and medical imaging. He has authored nearly 200 scientific publications.



MEIDINGER

**Errol Meidinger** is the Margaret W. Wong Professor of Law in UB's School of Law. He is credited with conducting research that helped demonstrate the vast

potential of non-governmental institutions, and his scholarship has greatly broadened national and international strategies to address critical environmental challenges. He has served the Law School as vice dean for research, director of the UB Environment and Society Institute from 1998-2001, and director of the Baldy Center for Law and Social Policy.



MOLL

**Ute Martha Moll**, a member of Stony Brook University's department of pathology, is an internationally renowned research scientist with many important discoveries

in health and disease. She has authored more than 175 research manuscripts and her work has been cited more than 19,000 times. She has also maintained continuous grant support for more than 25 years from the National Institutes of Health, the American Cancer Society, and others. She has received numerous honors, including a SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activities. She is a member of the Association of American Physicians.



RAJARAM

**Suparna Rajaram**, a member of Stony Brook University's psychology department, is a leading scholar in the experimental study of human memory. Her research has

appeared in top journals and has received support from the National Institute of Mental Health, the National Science Foundation, and others. She is the recipient of the prestigious FIRST Award from the National Institute of Mental Health. She was president of the Association for Psychological Science, and chair of the Psychonomic Society Governing Board. She also co-founded an international group, Women in Cognitive Science, supported by NSF to promote gender equity in cognitive sciences.



SAMPSON

**Nicole Sampson**, a member of Stony Brook University's department of arts and sciences, is an internationally known scholar in chemical biology and organic chemistry.

Her research contributions include drug and diagnostic discovery for treatment of tuberculosis. She has received \$16 million in research support from federal and private agencies. She has written more than 100 research papers and journal reviews, and she holds five issued patents. Her honors and awards include the Camille and Henry Dreyfus New Faculty Award, a National Science Foundation CAREER Award, and the Pfizer Award in Enzyme Chemistry from the American Chemical Society, among others. She has provided major service to the National Institutes of Health and NSF, and she currently co-directs an NIH-funded Chemical Biology Graduate Training Program.



SCHELL

**Lawrence Schell** is a member of the University at Albany's anthropology department, with a joint appointment in the epidemiology and biostatistics in UAlbany's School

of Public Health. He also serves as director of the university's Center for the Elimination of Minority Health Disparities, and he holds the title of clinical associate professor at Albany Medical College's department of pediatrics. Schell is a biological anthropologist known internationally for his research on human



growth and development. He has received more than \$25 million in research funding, and has generated nearly 200 publications across the fields of anthropology, biology and public health. He is an elected Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and an honorary scientific advisor for the Institute for Anthropological Research in Croatia. He was a Fulbright Senior Research Scholar in Italy.



TAKHTAJAN

**Leon Takhtajan** is a mathematical physicist and former chair of Stony Brook University's mathematics department, who has produced fundamental and pioneering work on the theory of classical and quantum integrable systems and string theory. He played an instrumental role in founding the Simons Center for Geometry and Physics, and he has co-authored several highly influential textbooks. Takhtajan received a Clay Math Institute Fellowship and was elected to the inaugural class of Fellows of the American Mathematical Society.

## DISTINGUISHED TEACHING PROFESSORSHIPS



EVANS

**Beverly Evans**, a member of SUNY Geneseo's department of languages and literatures for more than 33 years, has taught a wide array of courses, including advance-level courses; key general education courses in the humanities; and special programs for study abroad, first-year seminar, and the honors program. Her dedication to mentorship has led to numerous students presenting their research at local and regional conferences. She received the college's President's Award for Excellence in Academic Advising, and has published a significant number of peer-reviewed articles and reviews. She has served as executive director of Pi Delta Phi National French Honor Society; as a member of the board of directors of the Association of College Honor Societies; and as editor of *Encomia*, an annual

publication of the international Courtly Literature Society.



HARTMAN

**Mark Hartman**, a trombone professor at The Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam, has had several students from his trombone studio perform with the Boston Symphony and the New York Philharmonic orchestras, among others. He maintains a rigorous professional performing schedule as a member of the Potsdam Brass Quintet and as principal trombone with the Orchestra of Northern New York and the Northern Symphonic Winds. He has toured the state conducting the Crane Trombone Ensemble, and has authored articles on trombone pedagogy. He earned the SUNY Potsdam President's Award for Excellence in Teaching and the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching, and received the New York State Band Directors Association Award for his service to music education. He was awarded lifetime membership to the International Trombone Association.

## DISTINGUISHED SERVICE PROFESSORSHIP



KRITZER

**Mary Kritzer**, a member of Stony Brook University's department of neurobiology and behavior, has volunteered to serve on medical school governance, the university's athletics programs, services for underrepresented graduate students, and services for commuter students. She is also reputed for participating in science programs in local high schools, serving as an effective leader in numerous NIH study-section activities, and bringing the Healthy Minds Across America Outreach program to Stony Brook University. She has twice served as graduate program director for her department. She has received numerous awards, and her research program on cerebral cortex function has been externally funded and published in international journals.

## DISTINGUISHED LIBRARIAN PROFESSORSHIPS



HUANG

**Michael Huang**, serves as director of Global Library Initiatives (GLI) at Stony Brook University's Health Sciences Center Library, developing relations between U.S. and Chinese libraries. Through his teaching as a course instructor, library workshops and consultations, he has contributed to the understanding of evidence-based practice and the acquisition of information literacy skills for the students and faculty in Stony Brook's health sciences programs. He has published four co-edited books, more than 25 articles, nine research guides, and more than 85 presentations, among others. He serves as editor of the *International Journal of Librarianship*. He has received awards from the Library Society of China, the Guangzi Society for Library Sciences, and the Chinese American Librarians Association. He has twice received the Stony Brook President's Award for Excellence in Team Achievement.



KOMARA

**Edward Komara**, director of the Julia E. Crane Memorial Library in SUNY Potsdam's Crane School of Music, is internationally recognized as a librarian and musicologist. A two-time inductee of the Blues Hall of Fame, he has published six books, more than 23 articles, and 121 reviews of sound recordings and books. He has thrice won the Association for Recorded Sound Collections' Award for Excellence in Historical Sound Research: in 2002 for his essay and discography in *Screamin' and Hollerin' the Blues: the Worlds of Charley Patton*; in 2007 for the two-volume *Encyclopedia of the Blues*; and in 2014 for his co-authored book *100 Books Every Blues Fan Should Own*. He has served as a consultant on the blues for the Library of Congress and for the American Folklore Society, the American Folklife Center. He is also an adjunct instructor, and he leads bibliographic instruction sessions.

# Stagnant wages finally see some light

BY DARRYL McGRATH

If the economic expansion in the United States lasts a few more months, it will be the longest in the country's history.

That's good news for most people.

But economists have consistently marked one perturbing off note in this otherwise rosy outlook: Wages for workers have not increased at a pace commensurate with the rest of the economy's growth.

At first, this trend doesn't make sense. Job growth is steady, unemployment is low—why can't workers just demand higher wages? Because the situation is more complex than just asking and receiving, as economists have noted. Fewer workers are moving around from job to job, for example, and a less mobile work force sees slower wage growth.

## ANTI-UNION, ANTI-WORKER

And a generation's worth of anti-worker, anti-union sentiment in the U.S.



is difficult to upend, even in a period of almost record-setting growth.

As Jared Bernstein, a former economic adviser to Joe Biden, has noted, "... stagnant wages for factory workers and non-managers in the service sector—together they represent 82 percent of the labor force—is mainly the outcome of a long

power struggle that workers are losing. Even at a time of low unemployment, their bargaining power is feeble, the weakest I've seen in decades. Hostile institutions—the Trump administration, the courts, the corporate sector—are limiting their avenues for demanding higher pay."

Read "Why Real Wages Still Aren't Rising" at <https://nyti.ms/2zSSfat>

## SIGNS OF HOPE

However, there are several positive signs that this missing piece of the economic expansion may be about to fall into place, in favor of workers:

- The U.S. Labor Department wants to expand overtime eligibility, and most salaried workers earning less than \$35,000 a year would qualify. The current threshold is \$23,700. The proposal is in a 60-day public comment period and is likely to become effective in early 2020.

The overtime threshold has not been raised in 15 years.

- The minimum wage is rising around the country. The federal minimum wage

## UUP expands clerical staff

UUP has hired two UUP Benefit Trust Fund clerks and made a couple of internal changes in the UUP Administrative Office. They are:

- Dakota Billings and Haley Ennis joined the Benefit Trust Fund staff in early February. The BTF administers UUP's vision, dental and life insurance, and the scholarship program for eligible dependent children.

The two are responsible for assisting the Fund with filing, scanning, and assembling of New Hire Kits. The two will also answer calls from UUP members.

Billings, who will work full time, and Ennis, part time, had been assisting the BTF on an interim basis since June 2018.

Prior to UUP, Billings was an activities assistant at the Capital District YMCA, where she led group activities and an after-school program for 30 children. Before that, she was a food service leader at Cumberland Farms and a cashier at Virgilios Expressstop.

Ennis was a sales associate at Marshalls and a YMCA counselor.

- Amy Sheldon has shifted to UUP Organizing. As the



BILLINGS



ENNIS

union's new communications and policy associate, Sheldon is working to find ways to effectively reach the membership using social media and other methods.

- UUP Communications is now UUP Media Relations and Publications.

## The pros of minority-serving institutions

A recent study showing that low-income students who attend minority-serving institutions—like Hispanic-serving and historically black institutions, and tribal colleges—are more likely to climb the economic ladder than their peers who opt to attend predominantly white institutions.

The paper, called "Minority Serving Institutions as Engines of Upward Mobility," published by the American Council on Education, looked at the income of students' parents when those students entered college and compared it to the students' own income at age 30. They found that income-mobility rates—or the rate at which institutions move their students from the lowest-income quintile to the top quintile—are two to three times higher at minority-serving institutions.

The full study can be read at <https://bit.ly/2DE3AJW>





is \$7.25 an hour, a figure that was set in July 2009. But around the country, states and even municipalities are increasing the minimum wage. Now, 29 states have a minimum wage higher than \$7.25, with several of those states on track to gradually increase their minimum wage to \$15 in a phased-in process.

For a compelling look at what this means to real people, read *The New York Times* interactive feature “The \$15 Minimum Wage Doesn’t Just Improve Lives. It Saves Them” at <https://nyti.ms/2tvCmk8>

- Manufacturing is making a comeback, in pockets around the country. As noted by the website *FastCompany.com*, which reports on business and economic trends, the Brooklyn Navy Yard is now a manufacturing incubator that typifies the new type of manufacturing—cleaner, leaner and far more high-tech. The story also notes that manufacturing jobs have been on the rise in the U.S. since 2010, a reversal of a longtime decline.

“The manufacturing job of the future: clean, urban and better paid” can be read at <https://bit.ly/2HxnnOT>



DARRYL McGRATH

## Romain earns Albany Common Council award

Albany Chapter Assistant VP for Professionals Patrick Romain, center, earned an Albany Common Council award for his work as an Educational Opportunity Program counselor at UAlbany. He received his award at Albany City Hall Feb. 20. UUP Membership Development Officer Tom Hoey, left, the Council’s 15th Ward representative, nominated Romain. Common Council President Corey Ellis is at right. The annual celebration of African-American history recognizes a prominent individual or organization from each Common Council ward for significant contributions to the city or to society, through achievements in education, health care, business or community service.

## Educators join the AFT

The faculty at a folk music school in Chicago and a group of educators in a Pittsburgh charter school recently joined the ranks of the American Federation of Teachers.

More than 200 teaching artists at the Old Town School of Folk Music in Chicago voted in January to join the Old Town Teachers Organization.

Old Town faculty began organizing in November 2017, working with Arise Chicago and the Illinois Federation of Teachers. Nearly 70 percent signed union cards indicating they wanted to call a vote.

They’ve been disgruntled for several years, according to organizers, as school administrators failed to address their concerns about their lack of agency at the same time they drifted away from the school’s original mission.

At Pittsburgh’s Environmental Charter School—a tuition-free K-8 charter school in Pittsburgh—teachers, nurses, counselors, social workers, academic coaches voted in December for a union voice on the job.

## Report addresses gun safety in schools

A report from the National Education Association, the AFT, and Everytown For Gun Safety provides a policy blueprint to



curb gun violence in schools and support safe and healthy learning environments.

The report, “Keeping Our Schools Safe: A Plan to Stop Mass Shootings and End Gun

Violence in American Schools,” focuses on proven measures, such as addressing students’ health, improving schools’ physical security, and keeping guns out of the hands of people who shouldn’t have them. The report can be found at <https://everytown.tw/2BymMc0>

## Electrical Workers go on strike

More than 1,700 members of the Electrical Workers (UE) at a locomotive factory in Pennsylvania walked off the job in late February to fend off their new employer’s efforts to impose a raft of concessions, including two-tier wages, a cut in wage of up to 38 percent, and mandatory overtime.

The former GE Transportation plant formally became a part of Wabtec (Westinghouse Airbrake Technologies), which bought the \$4 billion-a-year division from the industrial conglomerate last year. Read about the strike at <https://bit.ly/2Tha78e>



# MEMBERS ONLY BENEFITS

UUP members are eligible to choose from a wide array of benefits and services. Join your union colleagues and sign up online at <https://goo.gl/g4AQYX> or scan the QR code at right to become a member today!



## UUP Member Services Trust—Voluntary Programs



**Aflac** is supplemental insurance that offers coverage outside your medical insurance for short-term disability, accident, cancer and critical illness. Premiums offered through UUP are up to 40% less than market price.



**Liberty Mutual** offers a 10% discount off auto insurance and 5% off homeowners and rental insurance.



**MetLaw** (Hyatt Legal Plan) offers two options: A Family Plan (\$15.75 a month); and Parent Plus, which covers parents and in-laws (\$21.75). There are no deductibles, no copays, and unlimited use for covered legal expenses.

**MetLife Group Universal Life** offers one policy with two benefits: A life insurance policy with a savings plan.



**UUP Member Services Trust Voluntary Dental and Vision Plans** include coverage for:

- UUP retiree members
- Part-time employees who are UUP members
- Surviving spouses of UUP members
- Surviving domestic partners of UUP members
- Members' aged-out dependents (until age 29)



**Mid-Island Mortgage Corp.** offers two programs: The Union Direct Program is open to all UUP members. The Physician's Mortgage Program is custom-designed for doctors and other medical professionals; go to <https://goo.gl/tiUtV1> for a complete list of eligible professions. Both programs offer significant savings and flexible finance options for home purchases or refinances.



**Retiree members** receive a \$1,000 death benefit and the Travel Assistance Program through Unum Life Insurance at no cost.

## UUP Member Services Trust—Discount Programs

**Apple**—Discounts vary

**AT&T**—20% off your monthly bill

**BJ's Wholesale Club**—\$15 off annual membership and one month free

**Brooklyn Nets**—Up to 50% off ticket prices

**Enterprise Rental Car**—Discounted vehicle rentals

**Goodyear**—10% off all tires, maintenance and repairs

**hp Academy**—Discounts vary

**Jos A. Bank**—20% off all regularly priced merchandise

**Madison Square Garden**—Discounts on seasonal tickets for Rangers and Knicks, and the Christmas Spectacular at Radio City Music Hall

**Mirabito Fuel**—Home heating and gasoline savings

**Sprint**—5% off your monthly bill

**The Walking Company**—15% off exclusive footwear brands; chapter-based wellness programs

**TicketsatWork**—Discounts and special access to theme parks, shows, hotels, and more

**Verizon Wireless**—19% off your monthly bill, plus 10% in-store/25% online off eligible accessories

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# UUP members can now save on comfort shoes, attractions

**T**he UUP Member Services Trust has been working hard to bring UUP members two new money-saving benefits from The Walking Company and TicketsatWork.

## THE WALKING COMPANY

UUP has an exclusive agreement with The Walking Company, a premier retailer of some of the best brands of comfort footwear around the world. The agreement also includes the company's Wellness Partner Program to help members determine which footwear is best suited to them.

UUP members will receive a 15 percent discount on all full-price purchases at The Walking Company's 200-plus retail stores nationwide. To receive the discount, UUP members will need to present their union membership card at the time of purchase.

UUP can also bring The Walking Company to chapters by holding wellness programs. Company representatives come equipped with a digital foot scanner and a selection of products to help UUP members select the most appropriate footwear.

I will be reaching out to UUP chapters for dates and locations for The Walking Company to hold wellness events.

You can check out brand and store locations at [thewalkingcompany.com](http://thewalkingcompany.com)

## TICKETSATWORK

UUPers and their families now have access to exclusive savings and special

Doreen M. Bango, Director,  
Member Benefits & Services



offers not available to the general public.

Members can save money on hotels worldwide, tickets to the country's top theme parks and attractions, movie tickets, spas, ski resorts, sporting events, concerts, car rentals, restaurants, hotels, and others.

You can also purchase gift cards online at [www.ticketsatwork.com](http://www.ticketsatwork.com)

A few of the top attractions include Walt Disney World®, Universal Orlando Resort™, SeaWorld®, Cirque du Soleil®, Cedar Fair® Parks, Universal Studios Hollywood® and Six Flags®.

To gain access to the program, you must contact the Benefit Trust Fund to register your email address with UUP and to receive the access code. You must also register your personal email at [www.ticketsatwork.com](http://www.ticketsatwork.com)

Remember, this is a members-only benefit. To sign up to be a UUP member, go to <https://bit.ly/1RYG65y>

To learn more about the other voluntary benefits and services offered to UUP members, contact a Benefit Trust Fund representative at (800) 887-3863.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

**UUP Benefit Trust Fund** . . . . .800/887-3863

\* Employees must be eligible for enrollment in NYS Health Insurance Prgm

Delta Dental . . . . .800/471-7093

Davis Vision (Vision Care) . . . . .800/999-5431

Laser Vision Correction  
(Client Code 7512) . . . . .800/584-2866

**UUP Member Services** . . . . .800/342-4206

**UUP Retiree Services** . . . . .800/342-4206 x638

**Empire Plan** (Select menu option) ..877/769-7447  
**Press 1.**

United HealthCare (Medical/Surgical)

HCAP (Home Care Advocacy Prgm./Equip./Supplies)

MultiPlan (Basic Medical Provider Discount Program)

MPN (Chiropractic/Physical Therapy Managed Prgm.)

Benefits Mgmt. Prgm. (MRI Pre-certification)

Infertility Treatment (Centers of Excellence)

**Press 2.** Empire BlueCross and BlueShield  
(Hosp./Inpatient/Nursing/Transplant Pre-certification)

**Press 3.** Mental Health and Substance Abuse

**Press 4.** Prescription Program

**Press 5.** NurseLine (Info/Educ./24-hour Support)

**HMOs** . . . . .Call your specific HMO

### Retirement Systems (Pensions)

NYS Employees' Retirement Sys. . .866/805-0990

NYS Teachers' Retirement Sys . . .800/348-7298

Optional Retirement Programs

Fidelity . . . . .800/343-0860

TIAA . . . . .800/842-2776

VALIC . . . . .800/448-2542

VOYA . . . . .800/584-6001

### Tax Deferred Retirement Savings

NYS Deferred Comp Plan 457(P) . .800/422-8463

**NYSUT** . . . . .800/342-9810

Member Benefits . . . . .800/626-8101

**AFT PLUS** . . . . .800/238-1133 x8643

### Workers' Compensation/SS Disability

Fine, Olin & Anderman . . . . .866/362-4887

### Flex Spending Accounts

Dependent Care Advantage Account

Health Care Spending Account . . .800/358-7202

**NYS Dept. of Civil Service** . . . . .800/833-4344

### New York State/UUP Joint

Labor/Management Office . . . . .518/486-4666



## Did you know?

Ninety-four percent of union workers had access to employer-sponsored retirement and medical care benefits in March 2017. For nonunion workers, 66 percent had access to retirement benefits and 67 percent to medical care benefits.

*Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, July 2017*



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# Going on a leave without pay?

## Send a check to keep your union benefits coming

UUP members taking an employer-approved leave must make a payment of \$47 *within 60 days* after commencement of their leave in order to assure continuation of UUP membership rights, eligibility for UUP retired membership and UUP benefits, including coverage of the \$6,000 life insurance and \$1,500 accidental death plans. Access to NYSUT and AFT member-purchased benefits is also included.

**Please note** that these dues are *not* payments to continue your health,

prescription drug plans, dental or vision care. You may obtain information on continuing these benefits from UUP Member Benefits and Services at (800) 887-3863.

You may continue your membership by mailing the following to the address provided: the completed form below; a copy of your employer-provided leave approval letter; and a check for \$47 payable to "UUP Membership Dues." Shorter leaves may be prorated.

### *UUP Leave Without Pay Membership Application*

Name		
Campus	Date of Leave	To
Permanent Address		
City	State	Zip
Temporary Address		
City	State	Zip

**Return this form, along with your check for \$47, no later than 60 days after commencement of leave without pay to:**

**United University Professions  
P.O. Box 15143  
Albany, NY 12212-5143**