

# BEACON



## President's Message

Alissa Karl, President  
Brockport Chapter UUP

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### Contents

President's Message	1
Course Evaluations	2
Milestones in Labor	3
Congratulations	3
Salary Compression	4
Labor Reading Group	5

### Upcoming Events

- ◆ Last Day of Finals Dec 13<sup>th</sup>
- ◆ Office Closed December 24<sup>th</sup>-Jan 1<sup>st</sup>
- ◆ Classes Resume January 23<sup>rd</sup>

### On Solidarity

Most folks will be aware of the labor action that took place in our own back yard this past fall semester when the United Auto Workers walked out on strike against General Motors for about six weeks. As you probably know, there are GM facilities, and hence were striking UAW workers, in Rochester and Buffalo. We can debate the terms of the contract that emerged from that strike elsewhere. Instead, I want to think about how strikes like this, and the investments that many of us feel in them particularly when they are local, are occasions to think about the solidarity that is the definitional feature of the collective bargaining. Solidarity is not necessarily a complex notion that needs theorizing, though people like us can and do theorize it. When we trouble over striking workers who are risking and sacrificing for better—worried about how they're supporting their families, or how they are feeling on another day out of work—that's solidarity. Such a feeling emerges from the recognition of another workers' precarious position because one also works for a wage in order to survive. I want to reflect upon how such solidarity can be obscured by dominant trends in the workplace and career culture, and to caution that to overlook it is to disempower ourselves by failing to recognize the most basic condition of our labor: the fact that it is waged.

In his recent book *Keywords: The New Language of Capitalism*, John Patrick Leahy observes that the current trend toward workplace "collaboration," while seeming horizontal and egalitarian on its surface, is actually quite different from and undercuts an older notion of solidarity. Collaboration, as Leahy has it, is a process that cultivates workers' identification with the employer's mission rather than with one another. To be sure, and as I have noted recently, one of the aspects of our mission of which we can be most proud is that it is public: we pursue our work via publicly-held goods rather than privately-held capital; we work for the enrichment of the general public, rather than private shareholders. Nonetheless, the public dimensions of our labor are often articulated in terms that are not entirely our

own, or that emphasize certain aspects of the form and style of our work rather than its conditions and outcomes. Take, for instance, the prevalence of institutional documents like the Strategic Plan. Many of us have experienced the imperative to contribute to the formation of such documents, and also to articulate our work under their terms. I don't wish to suggest that making the College a "Great Place to Learn" or a "Great Place to Work" is in itself a bad idea. But the end of the day, do we work for and with one another--as academic and professional workers committed to a shared public mission--or for a Strategic Plan largely devised and guided by management elites? My point here is that this kind of mediation of our work through others' words has the effect of alienating us from one another and thwarting a recognition of our shared interests and conditions—that is, our solidarity.

Many of us know the lengths to which employers today will go to keep workers not just from organizing, but even from recognizing one another as workers. In her recent book *On the Clock: What Low-Wage Work Did to Me and How it Drives America Insane*, Emily Guendelsberger writes first-hand about a series of stints in the low-wage economy--think Barbara Ehrenreich's *Nickel and Dimed* for the contemporary time-surveillance economy. Guendelsberger reveals that the technology that directed her movements in an Amazon fulfillment center deliberately kept her from encountering other workers on her path through the warehouse. Exploitative employers transform the emphasized individuation of the contemporary workplace--with its triangulation of work through the prism of management, its "personal brands" and "human capital" -- into a deliberate isolation of workers from one another. If it is dangerous even for workers to see one another, what might they do if they

*Continued on page 3*

## Seeking Information and Insights on Course Evaluations

Susan Orr, VP for Academics

Statewide officers for UUP are starting to research and gather information on course evaluations. This stems out of a broader national discussion on student evaluation of teachers, and courses, as well as some concerns from within the UUP membership. Issues that have been raised include:

- Validity/Reliability problems in evaluation instruments
- Bias (race/ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, etc.)
- Use of evaluations (whether high stakes/punitive vs. formative/constructive feedback)
- Low response rates in relation to consequential use of evaluations
- Particular concerns regarding their use for contingent employees
- Particular concerns in their application to online courses

To better represent the views of the Brockport faculty on this issue we would welcome any information, or feedback you can provide on the questions listed below. Any information you can provide will be much appreciated and will contribute to the information we pass onto the statewide office. We have already contacted department representatives about this request so feel free to channel information through them, or if you prefer send it to the Chapter office (brockport@uupmail.org).

We need information on how course evaluations are used and in what processes, in your department e.g., reappointment, tenure, promotion, including answers to the following questions:

- Is the use of course evaluations in your department voluntary or mandated?
- What weight are they given (either by policy or by practice)?
- Does the weighting/use differ for adjuncts compared to full-time Academics?
- Are there different evaluation instruments for online courses or any other specific type of course?
- Has there been recent discussion in your department about the instruments (i.e., to amend or discontinue their use)?
- Any other information you would like to raise with respect to the issue.

We hope to collate information and pass it along to the statewide officers soon after semester's end. We know that this is a busy time of the semester and do appreciate any insights you can share.

## Milestones in Labor History

Sara DiDonato, VP for Membership

*"The history of America has been largely created by the deeds of its working people and their organizations. Nor has this contribution been confined to raising wages and bettering work conditions; it has been fundamental to almost every effort to extend and strengthen our democracy."* -William Cahn, labor authority and historian

It is human nature to begin to take the freedoms and benefits we enjoy for granted when they are all we have known. This goes for democratic governments as well as for working conditions in the United States. This is when it helps to turn to history to see the crucial part that unions have played to ensure the fair pay, work safety, humane hours, and job security that we enjoy. In the often quoted (and misquoted) words of philosopher **George Santayana**, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." In these days of rampant anti-labor and anti-union sentiment, as demonstrated by the meteoric rise of so-called "right to work laws" and the dismantling, piece by piece, of the power of labor unions by the courts (fueled by billionaires and corporate interests), it's not hard to imagine the kind of past we might be condemned to repeat if this constant assault on labor continues from the federal level on down.

So, in the interests of remembering the past so as not to take the present for granted, I'd like to visit some **December Labor Milestones** throughout U.S. history.

**On December 3, 1866**, textile strikers in Fall River, Massachusetts won a 10-hour work day.

**On December 9, 1869**, the Knights of Labor was founded. The Knights broadened the labor movement beyond a few skilled trades and reached out to all working men and women. Its goals of equal pay for equal work, abolishing child labor, and the eight-hour day provided a rallying cry for all workers

**On December 8, 1886**, the American Federation of Labor (AFL) was organized in Columbus, Ohio by twenty-five craft unions.

**On December 12, 1898**, the Accident Benefit Association (ABA) was established.

**On December 24, 1913** seventy-two miners' children were killed during a strike in Calumet, Michigan.

*Continued on page 3*

## President's Message Continued..

identified with one another's interests? We enjoy very different conditions from those documented by Guendelsberger. We are part of the approximate 10.5% of US workers, and 34% of US public sector workers, who work under collective bargaining agreements and thus an enhanced form of economic democracy that is not available to most workers in this country. But there are ways in which our posture toward such relative empowerment sometimes undercuts the collectivity and solidarity that are at its basis. The rights and protections that we have established through 47 years of collective bargaining with State are frequently treated like individual rewards; I am as aware as anyone that the most common means of contesting infractions against our rights is on individual, case-by-case bases. Yet do we think more about how collective bargaining and union representation benefit us *individually*, or how it is derived from our common interests and mutual identification as workers—that is, as people who *work for a wage*? Rather than bestowing individual favors, the function of a contract is to secure the conditions under which the labor of a class of workers will be sold for a wage.

Labor actions reorient us toward this fundamental commonality. Strikes are moments when workers coalesce around their own collective aspirations as *workers* rather than the employer's vision of what the "team" ought to be doing. They are also, by definition, moments when workers refuse to sell their labor, and in rejecting the employer's wage, striking workers remind us all of our underlying solidarity. For it is not the form or style of our work, or our or management's rhetoric about our work, or the ways in which we categorize our work that defines our relation to our jobs and to one another. It is, instead, the fundamental fact that such work is waged, and that we're all essentially in the same position of selling our labor for survival (this is not, of course, to overlook unwaged work - and this is perhaps the topic of a future article here). When we focus on this most basic form of commonality, we recognize that the most powerful feature of our solidarity is also the defining feature of our labor.

### From your Brockport UUP Chapter



## Congratulations to Millie Sefranek, UUP REOC Representative

Brockport UUP Executive Committee Representative for EOC, **Millie Sefranek** won election to the Henrietta Town Council! Millie also attended the NYSUT pipeline training. NYSUT is looking to recruit more members to seek public office at all levels, especially since legislatures make many decisions about education!



## Milestones in Labor History ctd..

**On December 5, 1955** the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) merged, forming the AFL-CIO. The merger ended a 20-year split in the American labor movement, and recognized that both craft and industrial unions are appropriate, equal, and necessary as methods of union organization.

**On December 13, 1924**, Labor leader Samuel Gompers died. He was president and founder of the American Federation of Labor. One of his most famous remarks, in response to the question, "What does labor want?" was: "We want more schoolhouses and less jails, more books and less arsenals, more learning and less vice, more constant work and less crime, more leisure and less greed, more justice and less revenge."

**On December 28, 1936**, United Auto Workers begin a sit-down strike against General Motors at the Fisher Body plant in Cleveland.

**On December 30, 1936**, United Auto Workers begin a sit-down strike in Flint, Michigan.

**On December 29, 1970** Congress passed the Occupational Safety & Health Act.

Tune in to the next Beacon for more Labor Milestones.  
Compiled and adapted from <http://www.apwupostalpress.org>

# Fast Facts: 2019 Salary Compression

## Your Union Contract At Work!

**FAST  
FACTS**

Message from UUP President Fred Kowal

### 2019 SALARY COMPRESSION ANALYSIS and DISTRIBUTION

The 2016-2022 NYS/UUP contract includes an historic agreement to establish four annual salary pools, each one-half percent (.5 percent) of total basic annual salaries at each campus, for distribution to eligible UUP-represented employees to address salary compression and inversion.

For the first time, the State has acknowledged that salary compression exists system-wide and has dedicated resources to begin to address it. While we anticipate that the extent of identified salary compression and inversion will significantly exceed the resources available to remediate it in the 0.5 percent compression pools, this represents a critical step in addressing a problem that plagues not just SUNY, but higher education nationally.

Generally, salary compression exists when the salaries of more experienced employees have not increased sufficiently relative to the salaries of colleagues hired later. Inversion occurs when new hires are recruited with salaries higher than those of more senior colleagues. The extent of salary compression and inversion will be measured by multiple regression analysis, a statistical technique that can measure the relationship between salary and several factors that potentially impact it.

The 2016-2022 contract established a joint NYS/SUNY/UUP executive-level committee to develop the guidelines and methodology for analyzing salary compression and inversion. The 2019 guidelines are now complete. These guidelines provide the

campuses with detailed instructions on how to complete the analyses and how to distribute the 0.5 percent pool to address compression identified in the analyses.

First, the guidelines identify the employee data necessary to complete the analyses. Much of this data is contained in existing payroll records. Some isn't. Campuses are responsible for reviewing the accuracy of data in existing records and for gathering and inputting data not currently in those records.

Generally, data for each employee includes such things as basic annual salary (excluding stipends, differentials, also receives, and prior DSI), state budget title, campus title for professionals, years of service in title, academic discipline, professional functional area, and a benchmark market salary for the employee's discipline or functional area. The guidelines contain additional detail about the data used for different types of academic and professional appointments and obligations.

Once data collection is complete, campuses must run regression analyses to identify the extent of compression and inversion among full-time and part-time academic and professional staff. These regression analyses are designed to analyze the different variables that may influence salary and isolate the extent to which the salaries of more experienced employees may be compressed or inverted relative to the salaries of less-experienced employees in their academic disciplines or professional functional areas.

over

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## Your Union Contract At Work!

**FAST  
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Detailed instructions and hands-on training on how to conduct these regression analyses have been provided to the campus personnel running the analyses.

The data collection and analysis guidelines must be followed to the greatest extent possible. However, it is impossible to anticipate every campus-specific variation that may require campus-specific deviations. The UUP bargaining unit contains many different types of academics and professionals at different campus types (technology sector and comprehensive colleges, university centers, hospitals, medical schools, and specialized institutions). When campus-specific deviations must be made, they must be consistent with the overall intent of the guidelines and the objective of remediate salary compression and inversion. They may not be made on a person-specific basis and they must be cleared with SUNY at the state level.

Once the regression analyses are complete, each campus must determine the distribution of their 2019 compression pool consistent with the guidelines. Management discretion to determine how the pool will be distributed is expressly limited.

The compression pools must be used to address compression identified in the analyses. It is not appropriate to use the compression/inversion pool for any other purpose, including but not limited to merit, addressing perceived inequities not identified in the analysis, or providing for larger market-rate adjustments.

Campuses are strongly encouraged to provide proportional adjustments to everyone (whether academic or professional, full-time or part-time) who is identified in the regression analysis as compressed or inverted. Campuses have some limited discretion to make decisions as outlined below. However, these decisions may not be made on a person-specific basis.

**Campuses may choose to:**

- Remediate certain departments/functional areas more rapidly to address retention beyond that which is achieved by a proportional distribution (however, no department may be excluded from remediation entirely);
- Establish a dollar threshold for full-time employees, prorated for part-time employees, of identified compression below which employees may not be remediated to better remediate highly compressed employees (if established, the threshold may not exceed \$2,500 and must be uniformly applied campus-wide);
- Exclude certain types of less senior employees to better remediate longer-term employees (visiting academics with less than four years of service and some types of part-time employees with less than two years of service);
- Exclude any full-time employee serving in their final year of service, who has been non-renewed.

Except for those employees identified above, individual employees with identified compression or inversion may not be excluded from remediation. Once these decisions are made, campuses must notify the campus community of the method of distribution being used, including any deviation from proportional distribution. If non-proportional distribution is used, the method and rationale for more rapidly remediating particular departments and/or functional areas must also be provided.

Employees who receive salary compression adjustments are not disqualified from consideration for Discretionary Salary Increases (DSI) from the 0.5 percent DSI pool. Receipt of DSI also does not disqualify employees from eligibility for compression adjustments.

On behalf of the UUP team that worked with the state over the last year to develop the methodology and guidelines for distribution of our first-ever contract, I express my gratitude for your patience and understanding about the time it took to reach this point. UUP's goal has been to make sure the salary analysis at every campus is done as accurately as possible, given the variation in employee positions across our campuses and data limitations we encountered.

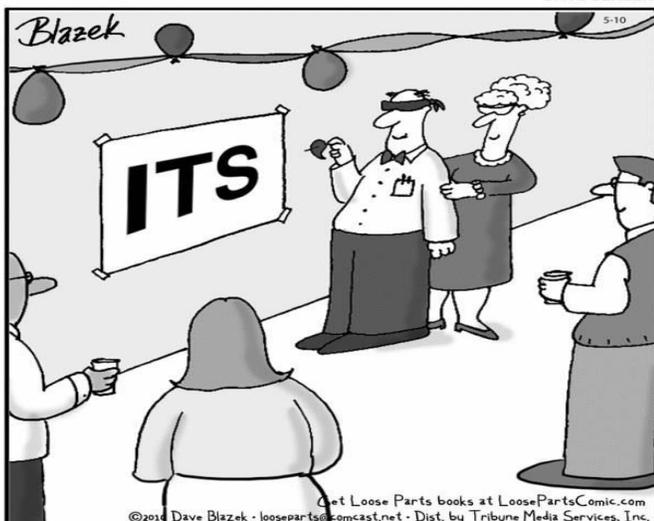
The 2019 distribution of compression/inversion salary adjustments will be followed by analysis of the outcomes. UUP, SUNY, and the state can reconvene executive-level discussions to review this year's process and make any needed improvements for 2020, 2021 and 2022.

To view the above PDF please visit

<https://uupinfo.org/contract/pdf/CompressionFastFactsNov2019.pdf>

## Laugh of the Day

### LOOSE PARTS

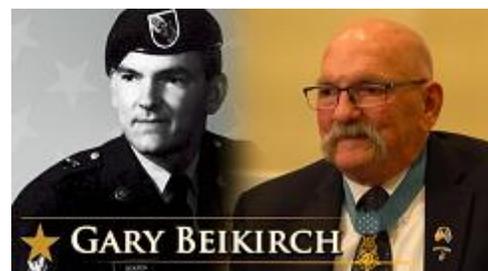


The games get pretty crazy at English teachers' parties.

## UUP Supports Veterans

The Brockport Chapter was proud to support the Veteran's Day 5k, Walk, Run, and Roll.

This event funds the Gary B. Beikirch '81 Student Military Scholarship, giving scholarships to Brockport military and veteran students.

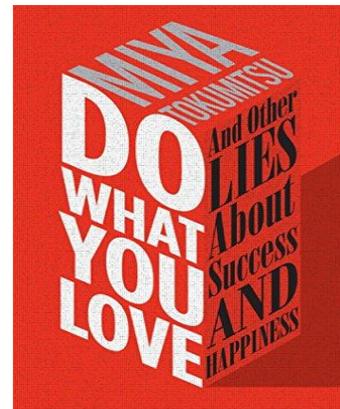


## Shot of Love: Miya Tokumitsu's Do What You Love: And Other Lies About Success & Happiness

Michael J. Kramer, History

In October, the Brockport Labor Reading Group discussed Miya Tokumitsu's *Do What You Love: And Other Lies About Success & Happiness*. The book began as an essay in *Jacobin* magazine (<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2014/01/in-the-name-of-love/>). Tokumitsu argues that we should be wary of the mantra to pursue careers that one loves (she calls it the ideology of DWYL), which, "by keeping us focused on ourselves and our individual happiness...distracts us from the working conditions of others while validating our own choices and relieving us from obligations to all who labor, whether or not they love it." It is not that Tokumitsu wants us to fall out of love with work, but rather to situate it more clearly in collective struggles for fair compensation and working conditions. "No one is arguing that enjoyable work should be less so," she contends, "but emotionally satisfying work is still work, and acknowledging it as such doesn't undermine it in any way." The DWYL ideology has been particularly pernicious, she points out, in academia. As she notes, "Instead of crafting a nation of self-fulfilled, happy workers, our DWYL era has seen the rise of the adjunct professor and the unpaid intern – people persuaded to work for cheap or free, or even for a net loss of wealth." DWYL has also disproportionately affected women: "it's no coincidence that the industries that rely heavily on interns – fashion, media, and the arts – just happen to be the feminized ones." As she notes, DWYL "ruthlessly... works to extract female labor for little or no compensation. Women comprise the majority of the low-wage or unpaid workforce; as care workers, adjunct faculty, and unpaid interns, they outnumber men." In place of the DWYL ideology, Tokumitsu calls for a more frank recognition of work loved or not as work, and a collective effort to strive for decent conditions and fair pay for it. "If we acknowledged all of our work as work," she concludes, "we could set appropriate limits for it, demanding fair compensation and humane schedules that allow for family and leisure time." We enjoyed

debating Tokumitsu's polemic in the context of UUP's role in advocating for faculty and professional staff at Brockport. How might we treat our own labor, when we love it and when we don't love it? And how might we educate our students in other dispositions and attitudes toward work and labor, so that they can find work that is satisfying but also refuse to be taken advantage of in the labor markets? Not even Tokumitsu comes up with fully developed alternatives, but her book serves as a shot of love to the mind as well as the heart when it comes to thinking about how, why, and to what ends we work.



Don't forget to , find details here: <https://uupinfo.org/benefits/btfscholar.php>

Your Union Contract  
**At Work!**



**UUP Benefit Trust Fund  
Scholarship Program**

**FAST  
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Online Education Advisory Committee

Please take a few moments to share your experiences and thoughts on the delivery of online education..  
<http://uupinfo.org/negotiations/online.ed.php>

Coming Up in Spring Semester

Professional Employees: Workshop on Performance Programs and Evaluations (Date TBA)

Labor Film Screening: "Pride" - evening of Wednesday, February 12



We're on the Web!  
<http://www.uuphost.org/brockport/>

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2019-2021

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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.



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/UV1> for a complete list of eligible professions. Both programs offer significant savings and flexible finance options for home purchases or refinances.



Real Estate Advantage Program through Daniel Gale Sotheby's International Realty offers rebates paid at closing on the sale and purchase of a home, apartment or condo.



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



Denise M. Bargo, Director, Member Benefits & Services



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Not by a computer? Use your phone camera or QR scanning app to access the site:



Company Code: Call the UUP Benefit Trust Fund at 1-800-887-3863

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There's something for everyone with savings on:

November Highlights

- Experience wonder like never before with the ultimate New York City holiday celebration at the Christmas Spectacular. Save up to 30%.
- Marinette Mountain has your recipe for an epic vacation at California's highest resort. Save up to 40%.
- Park City Sport is a full-service, family owned and operated ski and snowboard rental shop located at the base of Park City Mountain Resort. Save up to 50%.
- Celebrate the magic of the holiday season at Moscow Ballet's Great Russian Nutcracker tour. Save up to 25%.
- Get 3rd Park free when you buy at Universal Orlando Resort™. Blockout dates and restrictions apply.
- Come live your very own Star Wars™ story in a whole new land where a galaxy far, far away unfolds all around you. Welcome to Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge at Walt Disney World®. Save up to \$75 off gate prices.
- Cirque du Soleil on Tour: Volta - Atlanta, GA; Amaluna - San Francisco, CA