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From the President's Desk

by Mary Rose Kubal

And just like that, the fall semester is in the books! My semester flew by but came to an abrupt halt as I tested positive for Covid at the end of exam week. I don't know who needs to hear this (apparently,

I do), but it is okay to mask up to protect your health and the health of those around you. Like most of us, I put my masks aside this semester, but intended to wear a mask the final two weeks of class after Thanksgiving. I didn't and ended up with Covid.

I'll try to set a better example for myself, my students, and colleagues by masking more next semester. But sadly, this will cause me extra stress. It is hard to mask when those around you aren't; when as educators we have received the message that masking hurts the quality of the classroom experience. In reality, the administration at my university has supported those who choose to mask and although I feel judged when I wear a mask, I think it is much more by myself than others.

This is one the many stressors that add up and really affect faculty mental health – especially when our students are also experiencing so many mental health issues. At our NYSC AAUP fall conference we continued the conversation about the mental health challenges on our campuses, with some excellent speakers and panels.

Our state conference continues to work on this issue. At the end of November, our Executive Director, Sally Dear-Healey, testified at an open hearing of the New York State Assembly Standing Committees on Higher Education and Mental Health, calling attention to the mental health needs of faculty and staff as well as students. We are advocating for more state resources for campus mental health in next year's state budget.

Sadly, the mental health crisis isn't the only major crisis affecting higher education. Citing "business realities" the

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NYSC Outstanding Achievement and Service Awards

(Nominations due February 3, 2023)

The New York State Conference (NYSC) of the AAUP has created several awards in order to recognize the outstanding efforts of an individual (or chapter) in advancing academic freedom or shared governance; promoting the economic security of academics; helping the higher education community organize; ensuring higher education's contribution to the higher good; and/or service to the NYS Conference.

These awards are made only when the contribution is deemed to be truly outstanding, and as such may not be awarded yearly. When awarded, awards will be presented at the NYSC AAUP Spring Meeting and Conference.

NYSC AAUP Awards

- Irwin Yellowitz Award for Service to AAUP Members in New York State
- Pat Cihon Award for Service to the NYS Conference
- Francis "Frank" Higman Award for Service to AAUP Collective Bargaining Chapters in New York State

Nomination Process:

A nomination from an AAUP chapter or faculty senate or union ordinarily begins the process, however individuals may

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Confidential Presidential Search Underway at Utica University

by Leonore Fleming

The unexpected announcement of a confidential presidential search and the threat of program elimination set forth by the Board of Trustees have come to define the campus culture at Utica University. Both are clear examples of how shared governance is being sidestepped and how faculty are not meaningfully being included in these processes, despite the fact that faculty are essential to the mission and functioning of the university. COVID-19 was an excellent catalyst to bolster administrative control. Confusion, crisis, and a faculty more willing to trust—or at least tolerate—cases of shared governance being sidestepped in the name of “keeping things running” have all been prevalent over the past two years. Faculty may be back to teaching in a more “normal” environment, but the pre-pandemic climate of transparency and shared governance never fully returned.

The success of Utica University hinges on the success of transparency and shared governance. In regard to the presidential search, not only is shared governance necessary so that faculty and other members of the campus community are given adequate opportunity to participate in the process, but also so that any potential candidate can get a true sense of the campus culture. Indeed, the harm of confidential searches is emphasized in the following charge from the AAUP’s 2015 “Statement on Presidential Searches”: “Faculty members should demand that their institutions observe established norms of shared governance by involving faculty representatives in all stages of the search process and by providing the entire faculty and other members of the campus community the opportunity to meet with search finalists in public on campus.”

With a new university president on the horizon, the Board of Trustees and the administration would do well to heed the AAUP’s caution that “an institution cannot be rebuilt on mistrust or worse on a broadly shared sense of betrayal. Action that manifests regard for the faculty’s collective role is essential in order to rebuild commitment and trust” (“Report of an AAUP Special Committee: Hurricane Katrina and New Orleans Universities” 2007). The promise of a new university president can and should be a time for hope. This is not the case, however, when a campus culture is defined by threats of program elimination or when a campus culture is defined by a confidential search for the next leader of the university. The slow, but continual erosion of shared governance at Utica University has been made abundantly clear by the events of October, 2022, which included unexpected announcements of both a confidential presidential search, and an academic program review with threats of program elimination.

A Timeline of Shared Governance in Decline

October 3: The president of the Utica University Chapter of the AAUP (AAUP-UC) has meetings with the university president and provost. There is no discussion in either meeting about the status of the search for a new university president.

October 5: The provost gives a report at the monthly Faculty Senate meeting, which all fulltime faculty and librarians are required to attend. There is no discussion about the status of the presidential search.

October 6: The provost emails faculty the “Board of Trustees resolution directing the institution to conduct an academic portfolio review.” The resolution, drafted by the Board of Trustees on August 19, 2022, begins with the claim that “shifting enrollment patterns and a significant decline in enrollment have resulted in an unsustainable faculty-to-student ratio at the university,” and concludes, “the Board of Trustees of Utica University direct the administration to undertake an academic portfolio review designed to provide recommendations for any changes to credentials offered by the institution, including possible program design, redesign, or elimination.”

October 7: At 12:18pm—the Friday before October Break—the Utica University faculty and staff receive an email with the subject line “Presidential Search Update.” In this email, the search committee chair states the hired search firm “recommended the committee undertake a ‘confidential search’ process to potentially broaden the prospective pool of qualified candidates. A confidential search means the candidates are not introduced to the University community until a president is announced.”

October 14: The Black Student Union (BSU) sends a letter condemning the presidential search process because of the “glaring lack of racial diversity on the search committee,” and symbolically tapes its letter to the office door of one of the members of the Board of Trustees. Four days later, the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees responds to the BSU with a letter that does not adequately address the concerns raised in the BSU letter.

October 16: The governing board of the AAUP-UC writes an open letter to the Chairperson of the Presidential Search Committee and copies the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees. The letter asks that “the Board of Trustees reconsider their decision to undertake a confidential presidential search and conduct an open and fully transparent final selection process.” The letter ends by noting that a shift to an open final selection process would “demonstrate regard for the faculty’s collective, meaningful, and central role in

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CUNY Faculty and Students Demand More Funding

On December 8, members and leaders of the Professional Staff Congress (PSC)—the union representing 30,000 CUNY academic workers—gathered with student leaders in the Bronx, home to three underfunded CUNY colleges and tens of thousands of CUNY students, to call on Governor Hochul to increase state funding for CUNY by \$428 million. They also called on City leaders to reject the Mayor’s planned mid-year cuts to CUNY community colleges, including Hostos and Bronx Community Colleges.

“CUNY needs increased investments from both the State and the City to strengthen our workforce and put right years of chronic underfunding of working-class communities and communities of color and the institutions that educate them,” said James Davis, President of the Professional Staff Congress. “We cannot allow disruptive mid-year city cuts that deprive colleges of the faculty and staff that support a quality education.”

After years of public disinvestment, CUNY colleges are vastly underfunded, facing staffing shortages, uncompetitive salaries and crumbling buildings, CUNY senior colleges are funded primarily by the state. The community colleges are funded by both the City and the State.

Last year, the Governor announced a five-year \$1.5 billion plan of reinvestment in the state’s two public university systems, CUNY and SUNY. The union and students are urging her to accelerate and expand her reinvestment plan for CUNY by increasing State senior college funding by \$350 million and State funding for community colleges by \$78M in her next Executive Budget.

The Mayor has already cut CUNY’s city funding for this year by 3% (\$14.6 million) in the budget deal he struck with the City Council. In November he proposed an additional 3% (\$13.7 million) mid-year cut as part of his “Program to Eliminate the Gap” plan to cut most city agencies. The union and students are calling on the City Council to reject the mayor’s cuts.

The Governor’s last budget led to the hiring of 475 new full-time lecturers and 120 new professors to bolster CUNY’s long depleted faculty. The Mayor’s enacted and proposed cuts will leave CUNY unable to fill 226 empty faculty and staff positions at the community colleges.

“What you see behind me are dedicated faculty who create pathways for all of our students. We need to make sure that there is investment in CUNY. When you invest in CUNY you are investing in the next generation of leaders,” said Vanessa Gibson, Bronx Borough President.

The Bronx is home to three underfunded CUNY colleges—

Bronx Community College, Hostos Community College and Lehman College. More than 30,000 CUNY students and almost 2,000 CUNY faculty and professional staff live in the borough. At Hostos Community College, the shuttering of the cafeteria has made it difficult for students to get affordable, nutritious food and the IT department is so understaffed that students were not informed about timing for finals until just this week. At Bronx Community College, broken heating systems could not handle dropping temperatures and forced the administration to move classes to remote learning the week before Thanksgiving. And at Lehman College, less than 40% of undergraduate instruction is provided by full-time faculty; the majority of classes are taught by underpaid adjunct faculty hired on short-term appointments.

“We need more resources. To enable a student-teacher ratio that allows us the one-on-one contact our students need to thrive. To hire more full-time counselors as students navigate the twin perils of a pandemic that is not yet over and a skyrocketing cost of living. And to fulfill the promise of affordable higher education in New York,” said Craig Bernardini, English Professor and Professional Staff Congress chapter chair at Hostos Community College.

“The state must invest in CUNY and SUNY as a matter of educational equity. Building on the progress made last year, we are here today to call for renewed investment because students still struggle to find help from advisers, or to pay for tuition, textbooks, childcare, or meals. The work is far from over to meet the financial needs of New York’s students, faculty, staff, and institutions,” said Ayesha Schmitt, NYPIRG Higher Education Coordinator.

Speakers talked about the difference CUNY makes for individual lives and for the city and state. CUNY graduates contribute \$4.2 billion annually to the state economy and make up about half of all new nurses and one third of all new teachers each year in New York City.

“One million young people invest in our public education system every year. That one million is our economic backbone. The state must bear the responsibility of funding their education,” said Noshin Hoque, Policy Coordinator, Young Invincibles.

With their collective bargaining agreement with CUNY expiring at the end of February, PSC is also preparing for a contract campaign fight amid record-high inflation and forecasts of a recession, a daunting context for salary negotiations. But nationwide, labor organizing for fair contracts in higher education has reached a fever pitch. Since

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The AAUP Sets 2023 Legislative Agenda

Since 1915, the AAUP has fought to maintain academic freedom in colleges and universities to ensure academic quality. The AAUP's 2023 policy agenda calls for a new deal in higher education, one where we will build prosperity from the bottom up, advance social, racial, and economic justice, strengthen democracy and civil society, and foster knowledge and critical thinking.

We also support continued investments in federal higher education programs, such as those in the Higher Education Act and federal research and development programs. As institutions recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and face increasingly politicized state governing boards, this federal policy agenda affirms the central role of higher education as a public good.

A Federal-State Partnership for Free College

The AAUP supports the establishment of a federal-state partnership to fund higher education. The federal government has historically funded students directly in the form of grants, while states have primarily funded institutions. States balance their budgets on the back of higher education, reasoning that they can turn to alternative sources of revenue such as tuition and fees in ways that line items like health cannot. In a federal-state partnership, the federal government, with matched funds from the states, would shift the burden of paying for college from students and their families to the public, much like public health, transportation, and other essential government services.

The AAUP has long supported the College for All Act, which would provide tuition-free college to students at community colleges and four-year institutions, provide additional funding to public or private historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), tribal colleges and universities (TCUs), and minority serving institutions (MSIs), ensure that state funding of higher education is supported during a recession, and direct funding to academic and instructional costs. The AAUP welcomes other proposals that would move higher education finance closer to a federal-state partnership for free college and ensures that federal funding for higher education directly supports academic expenditures.

The AAUP supports legislation on federal-state partnerships and free college that would:

- Dramatically reduce the price of attending college, with the ultimate goal of ensuring students can attend college tuition-free

- Provide funding for two- and four-year institutions so students can choose the pathways that work best for their careers and families

- Direct funding to academic and instructional costs, which directly impact student success

Federal Funding for Higher Education Programs

The AAUP supports increased funding to current higher education programs and reforms that will make programs more accessible and equitable for students across institutions. Increase and Expand the Pell Grant program

The purchasing power of the current maximum Pell Grant has not kept pace with current college costs. Among full-time undergraduates, 72 percent of Black students, 60 percent of Hispanic/Latino students, 59 percent of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students, and 62 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native students receive a Pell Grant. Aligning the Pell Grant with current college prices is important for college access for low-income students and students of color. The AAUP is part of the Double Pell alliance and backs increases and improvements to the Pell Grant, such as:

- Double the maximum Pell Grant award to at least \$13,000 to increase its purchasing power and cover more tuition and cost of attendance
- Adjust the Pell Grant to inflation yearly so that it maintains its value when prices rise
- Extend eligibility for Pell Grants to DREAMERS
- Make funding for the Pell Grant program fully mandatory, so that funding is automatic and predictable for students rather than subject to the annual appropriations cycle

Student Loan Debt Forgiveness and Reforms

The AAUP applauds the Biden administration for forgiving up to \$20,000 in student loan debt as an essential first step in addressing the structural racial inequality in the student debt system. The AAUP further supports:

- Continue the path to further loan forgiveness as we work on structural reforms to end debt financing of higher education
- Support reforms to income-driven repayment that lower the burden for borrowers and improve student loan servicers
- Expand and streamline the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program so that borrowers do not have to jump through hoops to get the timely forgiveness they deserve

Federal Institutional and Student Aid Funding

- Increase funding for HBCU and TCU programs including infrastructure and capital financing

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AAUP 2023 Legislative Agenda

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- Increase funding for MSI programs, including AANAPI-SIs (Asian American Native American Pacific Islander serving institutions) and HSIs (Hispanic serving institutions)

- Support robust investments in federal-work study and SEOG (Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant)

- Increase funding to programs that support student success, including the College Completion Fund for Postsecondary Success, CCAMPIS (Child Care Access Means Parents in School), TRIO, and GEAR UP programs

Federal Research and Scientific Funding

Federal grants are important sources of funding for faculty and graduate students. Cutting-edge scientific discoveries that benefit the public good are a result of a strong federal research program. Accordingly, we support:

- Robust investments in federal scientific funding of research across agencies, including the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Science Foundation (NSF), and others, to support faculty research in arts, humanities, social sciences, sciences, and other disciplines

- Protections for the scientific integrity of peer review process and keeping political interference out of science policy

Advancing the Economic Security and Collective Bargaining Rights of Faculty

Institutions increasingly rely on contingent faculty, which includes both part- and full-time faculty appointed off the tenure-track. Contingent faculty appointments do not carry long-term economic stability and rarely protect academic freedom. Adjunct faculty members often cobble together multiple classes, sometimes across institutions, to make ends meet. Over two-thirds of faculty members were working on non-tenure-track or part-time appointments in fall 2020. Contingent faculty members—who are more likely to be women and people of color—deserve comparable compensation, continuing employment, appointment and review processes with academic due process, and inclusion in shared governance.

To achieve improved economic status of college faculty, the AAUP supports the kinds of federal and state investments detailed in this agenda that will enable institutions to transition to more economically secure appointments. The AAUP further supports:

- Pro-labor policies at the state and federal levels, including the PRO Act, which protect the rights of faculty to form unions and collectively bargain.

The Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act would meaningfully penalize organizations that violate workers' rights, expand collective bargaining rights of workers, and

strengthen access to fair union elections.

Upholding Academic Freedom and Opposing Legislative Interference in Teaching

Academic freedom is a requisite for quality teaching and research in institutions of higher education. In recent years, over forty states^[2] have proposed or passed educational gag orders or other laws limiting the teaching of specific subjects in K–12 or postsecondary classrooms, particularly those deemed “divisive topics.” These bills specifically target the teaching of history of race or racism. Educational gag orders can chill free speech and the exchange of ideas at universities and colleges, making educators’ jobs difficult if not impossible.

The AAUP opposes policies that use federal or state government laws or administrative action to restrict what topics can or cannot be taught in college classrooms. Under principles of academic freedom, college and university teachers are entitled to discuss their subject matter freely. Curriculum decisions belong in the hands of faculty.

State Funding of Higher Education

Reversing the austerity financing model of higher education demands increased state support of higher education. Not all states have fully recovered in higher education appropriations from the Great Recession. Federal stimulus funding from the COVID-19 pandemic helped states weather the most recent recession, but long-term state financing is necessary to ensure continued higher education funding.

The AAUP supports:

- Increased state appropriations to higher education and ensure equitable funding across four- and two-year institutions

- Equitable funding of HBCUs. For too long, states have deliberately underfunded HBCUs, resulting in legal challenges in some states. States must ensure HBCUs are robustly and equitably funded.

Racial Diversity and College Admissions

The AAUP has long supported affirmative action as a way to increase the diversity of colleges and universities. As recently as this year, the AAUP joined an amicus brief with thirty-nine other higher education associations in support of affirmative action admissions policies that consider race and ethnicity as part of a holistic review of students’ applications.

The AAUP believes that a diverse student body advances the educational objectives of colleges and universities, and that academic freedom affords institutions the ability to conduct holistic admissions. Our policy agenda opposes attempts to undermine race conscious holistic admissions at colleges and universities.

UUP Urges Lawmakers to Reverse Multimillion-Dollar Deficits that Threaten the Future of SUNY Colleges in Western New York

Massive Projected Deficits Plague SUNY Buffalo State College (\$16M) and SUNY Fredonia (16.8M)

Advocates, Lawmakers, and UUP President Kowal Call for the State to Fully Fund SUNY Campuses in Western New York

United University Professions (UUP), the nation's largest higher education union, rallied in Buffalo on December 6 to highlight massive projected operating deficits at SUNY Buffalo State College and SUNY Fredonia, which threaten the viability of public higher education and the economic future of the surrounding communities in Western New York.

UUP President Frederick E. Kowal joined Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown, State Senator Tim Kennedy, Assemblymember Monica Wallace, and Assemblymember Jon Rivera at Buffalo State to reiterate the critical and immediate need to reverse projected multimillion-dollar deficits plaguing SUNY campuses in the Western New York region. For the current fiscal year, Buffalo State faces a \$16 million deficit and SUNY Fredonia faces a \$16.8 million deficit.

"The future of SUNY and the affordable education it delivers to students is in jeopardy. Today, we are urging lawmakers to take the initiative to alleviate the financial burden that continues to loom over the very students who benefit from this institution," said Kowal. "SUNY campuses are under massive financial pressure, and this is not an issue we can resolve on our own. State officials must take action to deliver funding that will safeguard access to high-quality higher education in New York."

Senator Kennedy said, "We know that when we invest in higher education, we're not just investing short-term in our students - we're investing in their futures and a sustainable, vibrant local economy. New York State must prioritize the institutions that have provided access to high quality education for decades and step up to fully fund SUNY colleges in WNY."

Assemblymember Wallace said, "Our state university schools provide a pathway to the middle class for millions of first generation college students in New York State, like me. They also serve as economic drivers, providing investments and jobs in the communities where they are located. As we negotiate the budget in the coming months, we must commit to funding levels that maintain the quality and affordability of our excellent public university system."

Assemblymember Rivera said, "Higher education is the bedrock of our community, and our SUNY system has provided evidence of that for generations by producing countless graduat-



ing classes of educators and community leaders for the future. The operating deficits now being encountered by some of our SUNY schools threaten the progress and affordability of higher education in Western New York. Our state government must work to reverse these severe deficits and ensure that our region's affordable collegiate system has a healthy, sustained future."

SUNY campuses in Western New York are a key driver of economic growth in surrounding communities, supporting local businesses, and helping to generate a positive economic impact. Buffalo State and Fredonia contribute significantly to the region's supply of educators, as well as the greater industry workforce and population.

Buffalo State contributes approximately \$680 million to the local economy, helping more than 14,000 businesses invest more than \$131 million by creating or saving approximately 8,000 jobs.

SUNY Fredonia has supported various local small businesses, including hotels, restaurants, and transportation services, by organizing approximately 150 events per year and drawing approximately 43,000 people to the area annually. SUNY Fredonia has a significant impact on the local economy; students spend nearly \$50 million off-campus, and campus visitors spend an additional \$4 million.

Boosting operating aid for state-operated campuses is a pivotal and essential first step to protecting affordable public education jobs and reversing the state's decades-long disinvestment in SUNY. SUNY campuses across the state face structural or projected deficits totaling over \$155 million. UUP and other leaders will continue to urge state lawmakers to fully fund SUNY campuses facing multimillion-dollar budget deficits at a series of rallies across the state this fall.

Executive Director's Report



by Sally Dear-Healey,
Executive Director, NYSC AAUP

It's December. It's winter. It's dark and it is cold. It is also the end of the semester for many faculty and professional staff and a time to regroup – personally and professionally - before it all begins again in the spring.

Those that know me understand that while I like winter, I do not like cold weather. This may seem odd, or perhaps logical given that I grew up/lived in the Buffalo area (Lockport) for 19 years, spent the next 3 years living in Rochester (I was there during the 'Blizzard of 77'), and then lived in Watertown for 20 years (where I once went 14 days without power) before moving to Binghamton to attend grad school. In other words, I have a history with cold winter weather. That said, I must admit I contemplate the wisdom of friends who are choosing to 'move south,' some of whom have decided never to return to the frosty north. And yet I stay here, with no intention of leaving. Instead, I embrace the concept of 'wintering in.'

I was first introduced to the concept of "wintering" by Katherine May, author of *Wintering: The Power of Rest and Retreat in Difficult Times* (2020), and former university lecturer who left academia "hoping to find a better life outside the perpetual stress and noise of the contemporary university." When describing her experience at a time her husband fell ill, May reflected that "there are gaps in the mesh of the everyday world, and sometimes they open up and you fall through them into somewhere else while everyone else carries on" (9).

May further describes wintering as "a fallow period in life when you're cut off from the world, feeling rejected, sidelined, blocked from progress, or cast into the role of an outsider." One of my roles as the Executive Director of the NYSC is to interface with and support our members and chapters. Accordingly, I am often the first person that people reach out to when there is an issue. Many of the calls and emails I receive come from faculty and academic professionals who are not only stressed, but they are also angry and scared. Many are at a point where they see no solution and no end in sight at the same time others and the world around them seemingly carry on. In turn they feel disconnected and unsupported.

As I have come to realize, faculty and professional staff who are experiencing these 'gaps' see themselves as having three choices. They can either stay and give in, an expression of either learned helplessness or 'hive mind'); they can stay and work to implement institutional/relational change/repair, or 3) they can leave. What we most need to be aware of is

that these 'freeze, fight, and flight' trauma responses speak volumes about not only the present situation, but the individual(s) involved and their own trauma history. From this perspective we come to realize that these responses are also extremely clever ways in which our individual bodies, minds, and spirits have learned to deal with the gaps in the mesh of our lives. And yet we also have agency, or as Ben Zander, founder and conductor of the Boston Philharmonic wrote in his book *The Art of Possibility: Transforming Professional and Personal Life*, "we are the chessboard on which our lives are played" (2002).

We hear you and want you to know that the NYSC is here to support you however it is able. Toward that end, our fall Conference, "The Mental Health Crisis and Higher Ed: Recognizing and Standing up for the Needs of Faculty, Staff, and Students and Creating Opportunities for Positive Change" was the beginning of our formal efforts to address the mental health crisis in higher ed, with an intentional focus on the needs and experiences of our faculty and professional staff. Please note that this emphasis is not in any way meant to diminish the student's experience, but rather it is meant to help fill in the obvious gaps in awareness, research, and knowledge about the faculty and professional staff mental health crisis that impacts everyone, including our students.

Since the Conference I/we have continued to bring attention to the faculty mental health crisis and integrate it with conversations about academic integrity and freedom, shared governance, and other needs, issues, and concerns currently facing faculty and professional staff. For example, on October 14th I spoke at the Mental Health Association in New York State (MHANYS) "Mental Health in Higher Education Summit" hosted by Siena College. Then, on November 30th I was invited to present testimony at a hearing on the "Mental Health Needs of Students at Institutions of Higher Education," held by the Assembly Standing Committee on Higher Education and the Assembly Standing Committee on Mental Health. In addition, the NYSC has applied for two different grants, including the Crisis Response Fund, which targets funds for "increasing mental health literacy and whole health parity among faculty and staff in higher ed using a trauma-informed perspective" and, recognizing the role of bullying and discrimination on one's mental, physical, and spiritual health, "to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion in the NYS Conference, chapters, and institutions in NYS." We also have other events planned for you, and still others are in the works, so please watch for emails and announcements on the NYSC AAUP website. We are not freezing. We are not fleeing. We are here to fight for you!

Let's face it, some people who don't like the cold spend most of those days inside, lamenting the weather 'out there'

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The AAUP Calls on President Biden to Continue to Protect Student Borrowers

The AAUP issued the following statement on November 18. Subsequently, the payment pause was extended until June 30, 2023.

The AAUP continues to appreciate President Biden's bold action to attempt to tackle the crisis of student debt in our country. We condemn the sham lawsuits and latest court actions that have stalled these historic efforts.

We applaud the administration's decision to immediately appeal the most recent setback in the courts. This decision must be accompanied by an extension of the student debt payment pause which is scheduled to expire in January.

The AAUP calls on President Biden to continue the pause on student debt repayment until the administration's debt relief plans are fully implemented.

Affordable, accessible, high-quality public higher education serves the common good. And yet, state legislatures have all but abandoned their responsibility to

fund public higher education. While corporations and high earners got tax breaks, students and their families were stuck with higher and higher tuition costs, turning the student loan industry, assisted by predatory lenders, into a profit center for Wall Street.

Higher education does not fulfill its role as a public good in a democracy when the cost of a degree is a lifetime of crushing debt.

Twenty-six million student borrowers from all walks of life have applied for debt relief. Many will have their debt significantly reduced or eliminated once their applications are processed. Pell Grant recipients may see \$20,000 dollars of student debt forgiven, and 64 percent of recipients are from families making less than \$30,000 per year.

Debt relief for so many is on hold during the appeal of the latest court decision. It is only fair that repayments be on hold during this time, too.

PSC President James Davis testifies remotely before the Assembly Hearing on the "Mental Health Needs of Students at Institutions of Higher Education," which took place November 30.



NYSUT Community College Conference

by Ángel L. Martínez

The New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) held its 43rd Annual Community College Conference - in person - in Saratoga Springs on November 4-6. Just uphill from the legendary waters, hundreds of activists gathered representing two-year institutions across SUNY and CUNY. This year's theme was "Overcoming Challenges Through Solidarity." In a year where adjunct faculty have, and as of this writing continue to, agitate for better wages and working conditions from the New School in New York City to the University of California, solidarity has had this added dimension. It also was augmented by the buzz of a temporary reprieve for adjunct faculty to qualify for student loan forgiveness.

The highlight of the Friday evening session, in which the principal officers of NYSUT were present, was a rousing

presentation by keynote speaker Irene Mulvey, President of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP).

A significant change this year has been the decision by AAUP to affiliate nationally with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT, AFL-CIO). In New York State, this means a coming together of AAUP into NYSUT, which unites in-state collective bargaining units of AFT and the National Education Association as well.

Saturday workshops covered topics of strong relevance to attendees. Attendees packed workshops including "How Community College Locals in California are Making Progress for Adjunct Faculty," "Challenges to Academic Freedom," "Adjunct Student Debt Clinic," and "Community College Finances." The latter was an introduction to analyzing budgets to help in formulating bargaining demands.



AAUP President Irene Mulvey, Monroe Community College faculty and Angel Martínez attend the meeting

(Photo Credit: New York State United Teachers)

From the President's Desk

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board and administration of Cazenovia College, which opened its doors in Western New York in 1824, announced earlier this fall that it would be closing after the spring 2023 semester. Although there is no AAUP chapter there, Sally has reached out to faculty leaders at Cazenovia who are still reeling from the news of the campus closing. The announcement from Cazenovia follows recent announced closures of several small liberal arts colleges and universities including Chattfield College in Ohio, Lincoln College in Illinois, and Marymount California University and Mills College both in California.

Given the large number of small liberal arts institutions in NYS this is unsettling news. Indeed, we have been hearing from many of our members and chapter leaders about financial troubles on their campuses, which inevitably seem to lead to administrative violations of tenure and shared governance standards. We are doing our best to support these colleagues, but increasingly it feels like we are swimming upstream.

Colleges and universities' core educational mission has been chipped away by neoliberal pressures to run them like businesses (the NCAA hasn't helped) and now populist hand wringing about bias and dangerous ideas and elitism is doing serious damage.

If we hunker down and try to fight all these battles individually or even on a campus level, we will win some battles, but may lose the war for the soul of higher education. Now is the time to think big, grow our networks, and use our training and our gifts to reimagine higher education. It will be hybrid (on many levels). It must be diverse. It must come from a place of hope, not fear or exhaustion. It must be joyful.

So as 2022 draws to a close and we begin a new year, I urge us all to reflect on what brings joy to education and to our work as educators. It is from this place that I would like to begin some big conversations in 2023.

Wishing you a joyful holiday season and new year,

Mary Rose

New York AAUP at Mental Health Association of New York State (MHANYS) Higher Education Summit: Addressing the Mental Health Crisis in New York.

NYS AAUP Executive Director Sally Dear-Healey was invited to speak at the event, which took place at Siena College on October 14. She presented on the faculty and professional staff mental health crisis.



The College Mental Health Crisis: Framing the Challenge. Sally Dear-Healey and John Dunkle, Senior Clinical Director, Knowledge and Advising at the JED Foundation.



Sally Dear-Healey, John Dunkle, Kate K. Burns, Director of Health Promotion, Siena College, and John Richter.



Welcome and Introductions: John Richter, Director of Public Policy, MHANYS).

Executive Director's Report

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and instead staying warm and cozy (and safe). Others brave the elements all the while they curse as the frigid wind whips their coat and takes their breath. Still others simply embrace their experience of the cold with the wisdom of knowing the difference between what they have and don't have the power to change. Those who believe resistance is futile may find themselves clinging to the hive mind, or "collective," a reference to 'The Borg' often lost on my students. Others, like May, simply find a path less threatening to their emotional, and in turn physical well-being. I invite you to think about where you are, right now, in this "mesh of the everyday (academic) world" and what you need as a faculty or professional staff member to

be emotionally and physically healthy.

In turn, I also invite you to consider taking your winter break to truly winter in, as May suggests, as a form of "compassionate leave, in other words a time to reconnect, rejuvenate, reenergize, and recover. Spring will come. The sun will shine. It will be warm again.

As always, please don't hesitate to reach out to me if there is anything the State Conference can do to help support you as an AAUP member or as a chapter or if you "just" need to talk. I can be reached at sdearhealeyaaup@gmail.com or by phone at (607) 656-9477.

Be well, stay safe, and in solidarity,

Sally

NYSC Outstanding Achievement and Service Awards

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also submit nominations.

Submission Process for Nominating Letters and Supporting Materials

1. Nominations should be submitted in the form of a letter and be accompanied by biographical material and supporting letters of endorsement from colleagues, chapter members, State Conference leadership, etc.

2. Include a description of the specific ways in which the candidate has demonstrated their exemplary achievement and/or service to members and/or chapters in NYS and/or the NYS Conference as referenced by the name of the award. Be as detailed as possible.

3. Also, please include references to specific examples of the candidate's strong commitment to academic freedom or shared governance; promoting the economic security of academics; helping the higher education community organize; or ensuring higher education's contribution to the higher good.

Submission Process:

Nominations in the form of letters and supporting materials should be sent as one complete packet to “Sally Dear-Healey, Executive Director, NYSC AAUP at sdearhealeyaaup@gmail.com no later than Friday, February 3, 2023.

QUESTIONS? NEED ADDITIONAL INFO?

Please reach out to sdearhealeyaaup@gmail.com.

Presidential Search Underway at Utica University

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later, the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees responds to the AAUP-UC with a letter that does not adequately address the concerns raised in the AAUP-UC letter.

(Visit aauputicacollege.org to view the AAUP-UC letter and response.)

October 19: The Faculty Senate holds a special session and passes two resolutions unanimously: 1) an endorsement of the BSU letter, and 2) an endorsement of the AAUP-UC letter. In each resolution, the Faculty Senate notes the response by the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees is inadequate.

October 26: The Faculty Senate holds another special session and passes a unanimous resolution condemning the confidential search, stating, “...the Faculty Senate of Utica University vehemently opposes the decision to conduct a confidential search for the next President of our university community.”

October 31: All three Faculty Senate resolutions are sent to the Board of Trustees. As of November 21, the Faculty Senate has received no response.

CUNY Faculty and Students Demand More Funding

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November 14, 48,000 academic workers across the University of California system are on strike in the largest labor action of the year. And at The New School in New York City, adjunct faculty have been on strike since November 16.

The rally and press conference are part of PSC's Union Week, a citywide organizing effort to demand funding to support a New Deal for CUNY and a fair union contract. Other actions included dozens of union members testifying at Monday's CUNY Board of Trustees hearing to discuss their upcoming budget request to the City and State, union members wearing #red4HigherEd, and local mobilizations at campuses across the city.

Watch for updates and announcements on the NYSC AAUP website

<https://nyscaaup.org>