



# Unifier

UNITED UNIVERSITY PROFESSIONS

FARMINGDALE CHAPTER

FEBRUARY 2026



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## Negotiations Underway!



We're pleased to report that yesterday, February 4, the UUP Negotiations Team met with representatives from New York State to begin bargaining our next contract.

Months of intensive preparation meant that UUP was able to present a comprehensive package of bargaining demands on the opening day. An ambitious and transformative package for higher education workers, the UUP proposals reflect the needs and priorities that all of you have voiced in town halls, survey results and emails. Thanks for your continued participation! Presenting a complete set of proposals on day one is part of our strategy to deliver the first on-time contract in recent memory.

We invite all UUP members to review the package of **conceptual proposals** which are now available on the [Members' Only Negotiations](#) page. We've also posted a video of our negotiations kickoff zoom event from the day before. Please take a moment to log in. We'll be posting regular, detailed negotiations updates as bargaining progresses, and we want all of our members to stay informed. Let's work together to get the contract we deserve.

In solidarity,  
Frederick E. Kowal, UUP President  
Bret Benjamin, UUP Chief Contract Negotiator

## UUPF Office

### Ward Hall

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## GENERAL MEMBERSHIP Meeting

Thursday, February 19, 2025 ◆ Gleeson 104 ◆ 11:00 am

Unsure of your active membership? Enroll [HERE](#) today:

Send us your questions, suggestions or concerns by clicking the mailbox →



# Professionals' Corner

## AI is Coming: Know Your Rights

By Solomon Ayo

Welcome to the Spring 2026 semester, and to the sudden reality of unpredictable winter weather. The recent heavy snowfall is a testament to the dedication of UUPF professional members. They are keeping the College running and supporting our students in a welcoming and comfortable atmosphere despite the challenging weather. Thank you for your excellent service.

Last semester, several issues were raised, and there are two that deserve clearer understanding. One is the protection of professional jobs in the world of artificial intelligence (AI). The other is the issue of the deadline for applying for promotion or salary increase.

UUP is committed to minimizing any negative impact of AI technology that is gradually making its way into our job settings. Earlier last year, UUP President Fred Kowal emphasized UUP's commitment to safeguarding members' jobs from the effects of AI and AI programs that are increasingly entering general work spaces. By the end of 2025, President Kowal shared the new AI legislation UUP collaborated on, which was subsequently enacted by Governor Hochul. This legislation provides protection for UUP employees against AI technologies introduced into our workplace.

It is very important for professionals to remain vigilant and contact the UUPF chapter

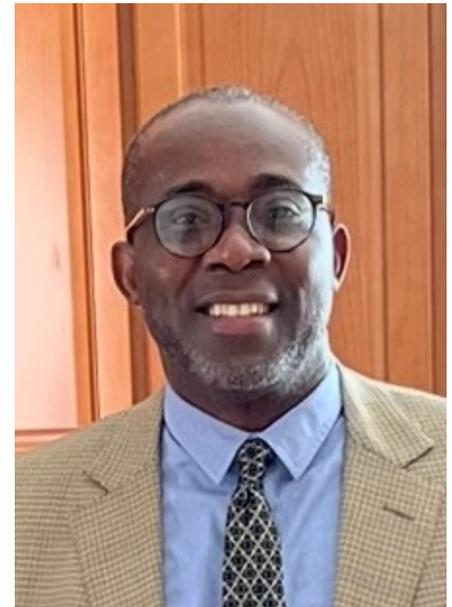
The new law stipulates that the use of AI by SUNY shall not:

- \* Affect existing collective bargaining rights or representation;
- \* Result in an employee's discharge, displacement, or loss of position; this includes partial displacement such as a reduction in the hours of non-overtime work, wages, or employment benefits; and
- \* Permit the transfer of duties and functions currently performed by UUP members to an AI system.
- \* Alter the rights, benefits, or privileges of SUNY employees, including but not limited to terms and conditions of employment, civil service status, and collective bargaining unit membership status."

office regarding any actions or incidents from campus administration that may infringe upon your job protections outlined above. Please see the UUP's [Statement of Principles on Artificial Intelligence](#) for further information.

**A Promotion** is a permanent, substantial increase in the scope or complexity of duties and responsibilities, as evidenced in an applicant's Performance Program. A promotion entails a change in State Budget title, an elevation in rank (SL), and a corresponding salary adjustment. For comprehensive classification standards, please refer to the Management Advisory Committee on Classification and Compensation ([MACCC](#)) Guide to UPP Campus Titles and Job Descriptions.

**A salary increase** is a result of a demonstrable significant increase in duties and responsibilities, *without* a change title or rank (SL). To substantiate a request for promotion or salary increase, it is imperative to provide evidence of the added



responsibilities. That evidence includes the new and the prior performance program, minimally. Additional evidence can include evaluations, commendations, annual reports, etc.

There is no deadline for applying for salary increases or promotions. You can apply for either at any time of the year, if you have experienced a change in duties as described above. Also, here at Farmingdale, we negotiated a local Promotion Cycle in 2003 to synchronize professional promotions announcements with academic promotion announcements. The cycle is outlined on the application form, which can be found on our website.

If your application warrants a promotion or salary increase, you should follow-up with your chain of command to ensure that it progresses all the way up to the College President. For further details, please refer to the Updated January 2026 [UUP Guide for Professionals](#). ◆

# President's Message

## We Need This in NYS

Seattle Washington implemented a millionaire tax last year that is returning huge dividends. They passed a 5% payroll tax on incomes over \$1 million to fund mixed income housing. So, the first million in income is free, then they pay a nickel per dollar above that.

This new tax is the work of a grassroots group called "House Our Neighbors" who gathered enough signatures to put it on the ballot. Of course, the corporate pushback was intense. They supported conservatives on the town council and pushed through an alternate funding option on the ballot. They called it "Option B", but of course it provided almost no funding for social housing, it taxed no one, and it took the little bit of housing funds that did exist

away from poor people. Amazon and Microsoft spent almost a half million dollars to push Option B. But the work of hundreds of volunteers helped prepare voters for this. Some held a press conference in front of Amazon to combat the misinformation of the Option B proposal. They ended up winning by nearly a 2:1 margin and fired the mayor who campaign on option B! That election also turned over the conservative town council that created it.

While conservatives claimed that it would crash the economy, new tax was estimated to generate \$50 million in the first year. Now that estimate is roughly \$115 million — almost 2 1/2 times what was projected! What would a similar tax do for



the state of New York? What should we use it for? I say, let's find out!!!

*In Solidarity  
Yolanda Drakkir*

# UUPF Makes Room for Adjuncts

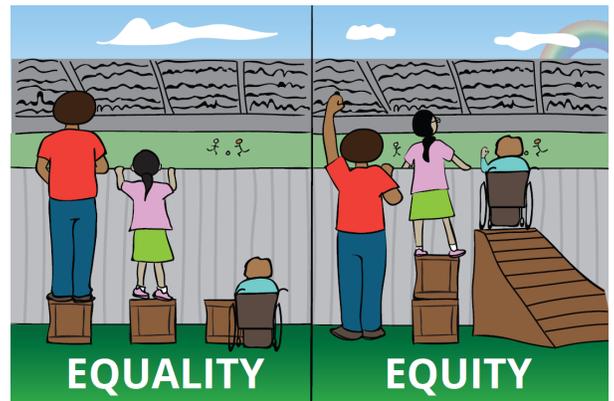
By Yolanda Drakkir

Most full-time Contingent members and part-time Professional Contingents have reasonable work spaces made available to them within their departments. That is not the case for Adjunct Faculty.

UUPF had successfully acquired work spaces for adjunct with prior administrations, but for the past ten years it appears that almost all of those spaces have been taken away. While we acknowledge that space is scarce during never-ending construction projects, the burdens on and

expectations from adjuncts are ever-increasing. If management wants to hold adjuncts to the same standard as full-time faculty, they should at least level the playing field.

Until they do, **UUPF invites adjuncts to use our conference room as office space** whenever it is open and available. We are on the main floor of Ward Hall, to the left of the



Great Room. If you don't need the space, tell a colleague who might, or just stop by and say hello. ♦

# Reactions to ICE: American Hypocrisy

Speech by Musician and Activist, Melody Angel

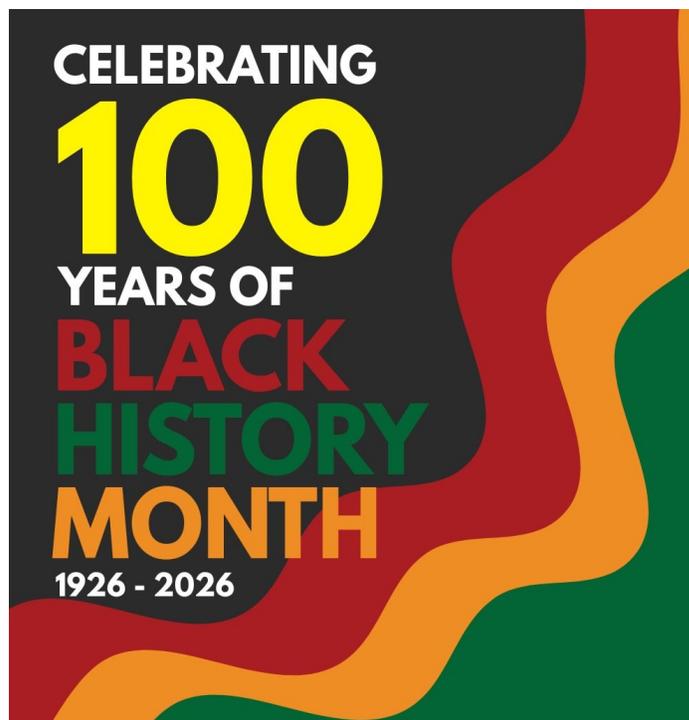
The hypocrisy of America is never ending for black folks. ICE and American Policing are often discussed as separate issues, but they are not. They both function inside the same framework. ICE's tactics of raids and detention without trial, family separation, aggressive street arrests are now widely described as cruel, authoritarian or unconstitutional.

And yet **black folks have lived with comparable tactics for generations** through policing. Things like "Stop & Frisk", no-knock warrants, excessive force, mass surveillance, followed by mass incarceration. It's the routine criminalization of our everyday black lives. So what feels new or shocking to many Americans when ICE does what it has been doing, has been structurally normalized when policing is done to black communities.

We have always been criminalized before due process. Presumed guilt is the similarity here.

ICE treats people as illegal first, and human second, detaining them before hearings, sometimes without clear evidence and using force preemptively. Black folks have long-been treated this way. Treated the same way by police. Assumed dangerous, criminal or non-compliant before any crime is proven. George Floyd was treated as a

threat over an alleged counterfeit bill, and lost his life for it. Philando Castile was killed while complying and legally armed. Sandra Bland was arrested over a traffic stop and lost her life. Tamir Rice was A CHILD with a toy gun at a playground, and lost his life. Breonna Taylor was murdered in her bed with a no-knock warrant that was approved



by police detectives by lying about her involvement in a crime, and she lost her life. In all of these cases, the punishment proceeds the trial, and most times the punishment is death for black folks. The police act as our judge, jury and executioner and this anti-Black society that we currently live in, and have always lived in, has allowed it for centuries and continues to allow it. Which leads me to the hypocrisy of the national outrage with ICE.

When ICE abuses power the nation talks about Human Rights; use words like authoritarian, fascist and un-American. When black Americans are killed by police, the first thing that happens in the media is their character assassination. And the conversation shifts

to *their* past, *their* behavior, or procedure. Accountability is slow, rare or symbolic. *Our* outrage is framed as divisive or political or woke. Names like George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Trayvon Martin, Philando Castile, Mike Brown, Sandra Bland, and Tamir Rice, just to name a few — those names, those stories sparked *moments* of attention. But what it didn't spark, what it never sparks, is sustained structural change. The police are still given free reign and big budgets to harass, vilify and murder Black people in their own communities. The world is outraged when America treats non-citizens and white citizens this way,

but has repeatedly justified, minimized, and therefore normalized the same violence against black American citizens. But as Malcolm X once pointed out, our citizenship has always been conditional. Black Americans are citizens on paper, but we're treated as suspects in practice. Why this comparison makes people uncomfortable is obvious. This framing unsettles people, because it challenges a comforting belief. The comforting belief

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# Academic Corner

## Review of New York Times article: "Is the H.R. Department Really on Your Side?"

By Vicki Janik

Since we all work in an organization that includes an H.R. Department, it seems useful to read what this two-column *NYT* article [headline printed above] says. The article comments on H.R. Departments in "corporate America" seemingly in response to a query from a contributor. This contributor writes that complaining about a supervisor in their job could well be "career suicide."

The reporter responds that if this is the case, "*there isn't much trust between people or departments.*" In such work environments, the primary mission appears "*to be to protect employees in upper management.*" The reporter recalls a personal situation when "*it was unlikely that H.R. would or could, do*

*anything to ameliorate the situation. And that was enough to make me want to leave.*"

The reporter consults Peter Cappelli, the Director of the Center for Human Resources at the Wharton School. Mr. Cappelli adds that the best H.R. will probably do is give advice about what *you* can do. He reminds us that H.R. is "*working for the company's hierarchy and your boss is above you. So, if they had to choose who to believe, they're going to believe your boss.*"

The SUNY Board of Trustees has created a strict hierarchy in SUNY and at each of its campuses. Therefore, being the boss means more than extra money. According to Mr. Cappelli, it also means people will believe your boss more than they will believe



you or other subordinates.

What's to do? You can, of course, cross your fingers, close your door, keep your head down, and plan for a peaceful retirement.

Or, you can remember that there's a lot more subordinates than bosses. *And* New York State has a unionized work force.

So, recognize the power of that high headcount! Get involved in the union! ◆



## A New UUP Scholarship for Undergraduate Students

In honor of a long-term UUP leader and staunch advocate of public higher education, for women's rights and for retiree benefits, D. Jo Schaffer, from SUNY Cortland. Please share with your students this opportunity to earn \$3,000 with the

### Jo Schaffer Second Chance/ Returning Student Scholarship

Application Deadline: June 1, 2026

[APPLICATION LINK](#)



## **A Pivotal Point for American Democracy: A Joint Statement by UUP, PSC/CUNY, Rutgers AAUP- AFT and Rutgers Adjunct Faculty Union**

United University Professions (UUP), representing 42,000 faculty and professional staff at the State University of New York's state-operated campuses; the Professional Staff Congress-CUNY (PSC/CUNY), representing 30,000 members at the City University of New York; and Rutgers AAUP-AFT and Rutgers Adjunct Faculty Union, representing 9,000 Rutgers University academic workers, today issued a call for an end to the militarization of American cities and the brutal treatment of immigrants and those peacefully demonstrating against actions by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and associated federal agencies.

What follows is a joint statement by UUP President Frederick E. Kowal, PSC/CUNY President James Davis, Rutgers AAUP-AFT President Rebecca Givan and RAFU President Heather Pierce:

"As unions representing those engaged in the education and training of future citizens of the world and as active participants in a democracy, we are committed to the central principles of the U.S. Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. In the U.S., state power flows from the people and the purpose of government is to secure the 'unalienable rights' with which all persons are endowed. No political authority can legitimately claim for itself powers that go beyond those established in the Constitution.

"Federal troops have been unleashed against tens of thousands of U.S. residents, with particular brutality from ICE. The result has been the detainment and deportation of immigrants, the overwhelming majority of whom have committed no crime but have, in many cases, been arrested while pursuing federally established processes to attain legal status in this country. These attacks are attacks on us all.

"The use of masks to hide agents' identities, the violent tactics employed against unarmed citizens, the seizing of clearly innocent children and the blanket immunity granted to agents by the federal executive have established an out-of-control, heavily armed domestic army answerable only to the president. Such actions are antithetical to the principles upon which our nation was founded and are actively eroding the gains that generations of Americans have struggled to realize throughout our history.

"Most disturbing has been the use of deadly force by federal law enforcement, chiefly by ICE and CBP, including the recent murders of Renee Good and Alex Pretti in Minneapolis. Victims include those killed while in custody at internment camps as well as those peacefully protesting or simply witnessing ICE agents conducting their 'operations.' The power of the state to kill is not one that can or should ever be used indiscriminately. Yet, that is what is happening in our country right now.

"In this hour of deep division in our nation, with a president operating without any checks on his actions, we call on our representatives in Congress to investigate the actions of ICE – including those policy actions implemented by U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem and incidents that resulted in the deaths of those in custody or on the streets of Minneapolis, Los Angeles, Chicago and other American cities. Additionally, we call on our congressional representatives to immediately cease all funding for ICE operations and suspend ICE activities across the country. Finally, it is time for Congress to pass humane immigration reform legislation.

"But it will take more than Congressional action to prevent further assaults on our democracy and our communities by the Trump administration. UUP, PSC/CUNY and the Rutgers academic unions strongly support an escalating, comprehensive and coordinated series of national actions by unions, faith organizations, businesses and communities to oppose the militarization of our country. It is time to redouble our efforts to organize sustained, widespread, non-violent protests, targeted economic shutdowns and non-cooperation—as has been done so courageously in Minnesota.

"Without broad, escalating resistance, the Trump regime will continue to accelerate state terror – including invoking the Insurrection Act – and stoke unbridled fervor to undermine the Constitution and our freedoms. Failing to act collectively in this moment would be an abdication of our responsibility and would certainly intensify the violence perpetrated by the federal government against the people of our nation. More people will surely die.

"Unions have always been at the forefront of the struggle against authoritarian regimes. It is time for organized labor to take the necessary steps toward escalating widespread resistance against this one. PSC/CUNY, UUP and Rutgers academic unions have an obligation to our members, our campus workplaces, the students we teach and the communities where we live and work to speak out, to organize and to take a stand.

"As those who do the work of higher education, we are committed to freedom of thought, the pursuit of truth, inquiry and creativity in all its forms and the discovery of scientific knowledge. Our work serves the purposes of our democracy uniquely well. We stand in defense of this work, the aspirations of our students, and the democracy we hold dear. We hope to be joined by all who are committed to the principles of democracy. Like never before, our efforts, our commitment, and our courage are urgently needed."

# Still Trying to Fix the Six

A Short Message from Fred Kowal, President of UUP

There is a rally being held on Sunday, March 8th. If you'd like to join the rally, use the link at the bottom of this announcement. You must register to get your ticket (free) to have a seat. Though UUP is part of the advocacy effort to fix the many

issues with Tier 6, the fact is that the proposals so far will not address issues that impact the majority of our members, namely, those of us who are in optional retirement plans. We are working with our NYSUT colleagues to get all of our members included

in any fix but in the meantime, in a spirit of solidarity and because UUP members could be impacted positively should the budget include a partial fix of Tier 6, I wanted to share with you the chance to be a part of the rally. ♦

[Fix Tier 6 rally on March 8](#)

It's time to designate your Committee of 100 representatives.

## NYSUT COMMITTEE OF 100 LOBBY DAY 2026

March 9-10 | The Albany Hilton

**DON'T FORGET:**  
Fix Tier 6 Rally in Albany  
on Sunday, March 8 at  
the MVP Arena!



## Reactions to ICE: American Hypocrisy

*continued from page 4*

is that ICE is an aberration; that police violence is just a few bad apples, not a system based on slave patrol. But the reality is harder to accept. Both are products of systems built to control marginalized populations. Both rely on public indifference. Both reveal whose lives are considered expendable. And guess whose lives are always considered expendable in America?

Bottomline, outrage over ICE is not wrong. They have

taken innocent lives. They have destroyed countless families. But the outrage is incomplete without acknowledging that black Americans have endured the same treatment for centuries and continue to endure the same treatment with far less sympathy and far fewer consequences for those responsible. The police are responsible. The mayors that fund their budgets and their actions are responsible. The government is responsible, because they make the laws that

protect the police. And finally, this society, the majority that runs this society, is responsible for its callous disregard for the suffering of black folks. What's being exposed now isn't new cruelty. It's selective empathy. Policing in America has historically treated black communities as internal outsiders. We are consistently over-policed, under-protected and denied the presumption of innocence afforded to everyone else. ♦



## FARMINGDALE CHAPTER

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# FIGHT BACK!

{ [CLICK HERE](#) }

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WHO WE ARE

MEMBERSHIP

THE ISSUES

TAKE ACTION

RESOURCES

## About Detention Watch Network

English

Español

Detention Watch Network (DWN) is a national coalition building power through collective advocacy, grassroots organizing, and strategic communications to abolish immigration detention in the United States.

WE HAVE THE POWER AND ARE CLAIMING IT TOGETHER.

NO THRONES. NO CROWNS.

# NO KINGS.

JOIN AN **EYES ON ICE** TRAINING BEFORE YOU JOIN A **NO KINGS** ACTION ON **MARCH 28.**

[NOKINGS.ORG](http://NOKINGS.ORG)



### STATEWIDE UUP COMMITTEES ♦ Contact UUPF if you are interested in joining any of these:

<https://uupinfo.org/committees/>

#### HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS COMMITTEES:

- Disability Rights & Concerns
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Opportunity Programs
- Gender and Sexuality Interests
- Veterans Affairs
- Women's Rights and Concerns

#### ADVOCACY/LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES:

- Academic Medical Programs
- Black and Latino Faculty/Staff Legislative
- Environmental Advocacy and Issues
- Outreach

#### MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEES:

- Contingent Employment
- Future of Public Higher Education
- Membership

- Solidarity
- Teacher Education
- Technology Campuses
- Scholarship Development subcommittee
- Scholarship Selection subcommittee

#### PROCESS COMMITTEES:

- Compliance/Audit
- Constitution and Governance
- Finance
- Grievance

The UUPF Newsletter welcomes articles and letters submitted by members of the UUP Farmingdale community. Remember, this is your newsletter, share your thoughts with us, we want to hear from you. Persons who have material they wish to submit should contact Yolanda Drakkir at [youupf@gmail.com](mailto:youupf@gmail.com)