

# Connection *uup*

Binghamton Chapter, United University Professions

## From the Chapter President

# Start-Up New York: Private Gains Over Public Property

by Benita Roth  
Sociology Department

Since becoming the Binghamton UUP chapter president, I've found myself needing to pay attention to many, many things that I was happy to ignore as a faculty member. I think of the new learning challenges that I face as being one of working through concentric circles: the innermost one is our campus, with large circles encompassing the state-wide union, then New York state politics and bureaucracy, then the structure of the labor movement and federal policy around labor law, and there is certainly a global level to consider. So far, the inner circles have been keeping me pretty busy. .

On the state level, one of the political initiatives that I've needed to pay attention to is Start-Up NY, Governor Cuomo's self-professed "ground-breaking initiative to promote job growth in New York" by offering companies that either relocate or start up here a tax-free environment for ten years. (The official site for the program is <http://startup.ny.gov/>.)

Cuomo's promise to let these businesses come to New York "tax-free" is no joke; eligible businesses would pay no taxes—*no income tax, business, corporate, state or local taxes, sales and property taxes, or franchise fees*—for 10 years. Lots of types of businesses are ineligible, so unfortunately, budding restaurateurs need not apply.

From our standpoint here as employees at SUNY Binghamton, the



most significant thing about Start-Up NY is that the initiative offers up SUNY as the "framework" for the program. Not only does Start-Up NY spell out SUNY (clever that), the full name of the bill is the "SUNY Tax-Free Areas to Revitalize Transform UPstate NY," showing the kind of violence that politicians are willing to do to the basic rules of English grammar in order to get a good acronym. The bill asks for SUNY to offer up "empty space" on their campuses that would be suitable for new businesses. The new businesses in principle need to be tied to the educational mission of the schools.

Another provision in the law allows SUNYs to acquire land within one mile of campuses in order to make that land into "empty space" and available for business. You can read the governor's program bill in all of its legislative-language glory at <https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/default/files/documents/GPB32-START-UP-NY-MEMO.pdf>.

Cuomo is hugely invested in Start-Up NY; he sees it as his bulwark against challengers claiming that he hasn't created enough jobs dur-

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ing his term. On a recent visit to Albany, I was witness to a highly placed official with the SUNY Research Foundation imploring President Stenger to submit a Start-Up NY plan so as to aid Cuomo's ability to speak to the issue of jobs in his re-election campaign.

Leaving aside the question of whether Cuomo needs to actually worry about re-election in a state where he sewed up his party's nomination (and the Working Families Party's endorsement) with virtually no effort—and where his opponent is yet another lackluster Republican—you might ask, well, just what has the administration of Binghamton University done about Start-Up NY?

BU submitted a rather minimal plan. I had circulated a summary of BU's plan to members during spring semester last year. As required by the Start-Up NY law, the administration consulted with UUP about the plan, and promised to further

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## Connection

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

The editor welcomes letters and other comments of interest to the Binghamton Chapter.

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## NYSUT Professional Issues Forum Focuses on Health Care

**by Susan Seibold-Simpson,  
UUP Binghamton Chapter**

Last February, I was approached by Benita Roth, UUP Binghamton Chapter president, about attending the NYSUT Professional Issues Forum on Health Care. Being a fairly new executive board member, I try to accept every opportunity to learn about the union and its benefits to employees, so I gladly accepted her offer.

The first session I attended was the Higher Education Health Care Faculty and Professionals networking group. This was a small group session designed to identify challenges and concerns associated with teaching within the health care industry. The group was comprised mostly of nurses/nursing faculty, but also included a dentist teaching dental assistants, and an individual working with the New York State Poison Control Center.

We discussed seamless transfer; the waiver of 64 credits for transition to BA/BS programs from community colleges and the need to apply for a waiver (deadline is end of April); the transition of public health to privatization; adjunct salaries; and the impact of hiring only BS prepared RNs in organizations. (Some organizations might indicate an inability to fill open positions, saving the institution money, but leading to overworked nurses.) It was a great session, and I noted at the end that this session alone was worth attending the conference.

The next session I attended was on addiction disorders and their impact on families, presented by Dr. Brian Freidenberg from University at Albany/SUNY. This was a very strong session that included group participation, also interesting. One take-home message was, "children later on could be addicted to excitement and danger to feel alive. This is due to trying to recreate the family environment to feel normal." One

strategy for adult children of alcoholics is coping skills training, which has been found to be very effective.

Cynthia McDonald gave a warm, heartfelt, and emotional acceptance speech for the NYSUT 2014 Health Care Professionals Member of the Year award.

There was a wonderful keynote speaker during lunch, Amy Clary from the American Federation of Teachers.

She spoke about the cost of health care and the role of the union in establishing a climate of safety and speaking truth to power. She discussed the priorities of spending and noted that unions have a role in reducing the gap between the "haves" and "have-nots." She provided compelling charts from the Economic Policy Institute ([www.epi.org](http://www.epi.org)).

The final session, sponsored by the UUP Nursing Professions Work Group, was "Impact of the Affordable Care Act: Where Do We Go From Here for Real Care Fairness?" The quick answer is: single-payer universal health care.

Martha Livingston opened the session. Mark Hannay provided a most excellent handout on the Affordable Care Act and health care reform in New York specific to 2014. Ben Johnson gave information about single-payer in Vermont—but he noted it is not "single-payer," as other government sponsored programs such as the VA's, Medicare, and Champus continue. He focused on how to build momentum to move the process forward.

Laurie Wen (and Martha Livingston) discussed the NY Metro Chapter of Physicians for a National Health program, which is focusing on a Medicare-for-all program. The bill is called the Gottfried-Perkins bill, or the NY Health bill. She noted, "Without a sense of hope, we are going nowhere. ... We need to work at the State level to make it feel possible. ... We need a victory in the Assembly."

# How UUP Binghamton Matters

by Heather DeHaan  
History Department

As the 2014-2015 academic year begins, we want to invite all faculty to participate in UUP life—not just in “beat the blues” events, but more importantly in UUP’s ongoing discussion of campus affairs. Many faculty and staff have little sense of what UUP is or does—only that it negotiates the contract and serves as a handy resource for faculty whose security or jobs are threatened. UUP is these things, of course, but it’s also much more.

First, UUP is a body engaged in the ongoing discussing and negotiation of the “terms and conditions of employment” for all UUP members. We have a dynamic, growing campus whose “conditions of employment” (UUP’s area of concern) are not entirely defined by the contract.

Increased online teaching, the lack of parking, limited classroom space and the resulting rules regarding prime time classes affect the hours and conditions of our work.

Smart classrooms, where lectures can be videotaped, require protection for intellectual property rights, as does any possible SUNY contract with Coursera. These issues have been raised and discussed at monthly executive board meetings, as well as at UUP’s monthly meeting with University administration. By keeping the communication lines to faculty, staff, and administration open, we try to identify and resolve issues as they arise.

Second, UUP assists members at moments of crisis, from impending loss of employment or tenure to “disciplinary action” or a filed grievance.

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*“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.”*

—William Butler Yeats, writer,  
Nobel laureate (1865-1939)



Heather  
DeHaan

We are required to represent both members and fee-payers equally—and we do that.

Third, your executive board members serve as delegates to the statewide assemblies of UUP members. Statewide gatherings are sites for exploring “terms and conditions” issues by exchanging information and experience, while working out issues to be resolved in the next round of contract negotiations. Here, UUP tries to decipher and respond to the challenges posed by such SUNY-wide initiatives as OPEN SUNY. It also seeks a broad, SUNY-wide, contracted solution to the problem of low adjunct pay.

Delegates work hard—networking, giving and sharing information, trying to better understand and address broad state educational or political initiatives that have an impact on our careers and on education.

This work takes patience and generosity, for no policy decision is made quickly. UUP uses food and fellowship to make the workload less burdensome (a delegates assembly is *never* good for the waistline), but delegates nonetheless sacrifice a great deal of energy and time to shape UUP policies, contract negotiations, and more.

If you want to shape what UUP does on campus or within SUNY, be sure to talk with your local executive board members. The more you speak with us, the better we represent you.

ance. Everyone represented by UUP, whether or not they sign their membership card, is entitled to our support. We clarify for members their specific contractual rights. We offer moral support.

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Fourth, we are here to inform *everyone* of rights and benefits. The information that you need is available online and in handbooks, but many members are unaware of the existence of—or need for—these materials. In response, we hold an annual “Benefits Fair,” designed to inform members of various “perks” that come with being UUP member.

In the coming year, we hope to hold a “How to Read Your Contract” session, so that employees understand fully the terms under which they labor. We would also like to organize a “Preparing for Tenure” session, to help junior faculty forego many common strategic mistakes born of not knowing the details of how the tenure process works. Other events might be organized as the need for them arises.

So, please check out the Binghamton and SUNY UUP newsletters. Let us know of questions and issues that you have, either on campus or statewide. Let us know if you want to put yourself up for election. (You can also pencil yourself in on the ballot, when it comes). Recognize that we’re here to advise “in a pinch.” Know that UUP is actively working for you behind the scenes.



# Professional Kudos Spotted in BU'S 'Inside'

## SEPTEMBER

A conference was held June 16-20 in Columbus, Ohio, to honor Bartle Professor of Mathematics **Ross Geoghegan** on the occasion of his 70th birthday. Titled "Topological Methods in Group Theory," the conference honored the numerous mathematical contributions Geoghegan has made. He was one of the first mathematicians to use topological techniques to study groups, and his textbook, *Topological Methods in Group Theory*, is one of the standard references in the field. Conference organizers will publish conference proceedings in the LMS Lecture Notes in Mathematics series.

Professor of English **Maria Mazziotti Gillan's** *Writing Poetry to Save Your Life: How to Find the Courage to Tell Your Stories* (MiroLand/Guernica Editions), has been named by *Poets & Writers* as one of the "Best Books for Writers." This 200-page writing guide combines Gillan's personal story as a poet and author with her suggestions for writers at all stages of development. More than half of the book is comprised of writing prompts designed to give poets confidence and help them overcome writers block, jumpstart creativity and silence the critical voice. Go online to see the "Best Books for Writers" List.

**Sandro Sticca**, professor of French and comparative literature, has recently published *S. Eustachio Martire. Santo Bizantino* (Parma-Roma, Studies in Christian Thought and Tradition, 2014). The Byzantine saint Eustace was a Christian who suffered martyrdom under the emperor Trajan. Sticca studies the development of the cult of this early Greek-Byzantine martyr whose vita became very popular within the Latin Christian world, becoming celebrated in iconography from the early sixth to seventh centuries in Cappadocia and through the twelfth, thirteenth and sixteenth centuries

in Europe. Sticca tries to separate the legendary and apocryphal elements from the historical reality of the general Placidus-Eustathius. Three authorities on Christian spirituality—Don Michele Persichitti, Antonio Varasso and Professor Vincenzo Centorame—centered a colloquium on Sticca's book on Aug. 10, in the city of Casauria (Abruzzo).

## AUGUST

**M. Stanley Whittingham**, distinguished professor of chemistry and of materials science, has been reelected for a two-year term to the vice chair of the board of directors of the New York Battery and Energy Storage Technology Consortium (NYBEST). NYBEST was created in 2010 to position New York state as a global leader in energy storage technology, including applications in transportation, grid storage and power electronics.

**Maria Mazziotti Gillan**, professor of English and award-winning poet, was honored on June 29 by the Cultural Ministry of San Mauro, Cilento, Italy, province of Salerno, the region her parents came from before they emigrated to America in 1936. Gillan was presented with a book of her poems about the town of San Mauro called, *In a Place of Flowers and Light*. In addition, a parade was held in her honor, as well as a concert of traditional Italian songs, a reading of her poems in Italian and English, and a dinner. Gillan was then escorted by the mayor to her mother's childhood home, where a plaque dedicated to the writer and her literary contributions to the town of San Mauro had been affixed to the front of the stone house. The following evening Gillan was again honored with a reading of her poems in Italian, as well as a concert of Italian folk songs and a dinner. She was later interviewed by Italian television. The broadcast was aired in Southern Italy.

**Susannah Gal**, interim dean of libraries and professor of biological

sciences at Binghamton University, recently graduated from the HERS Bryn Mawr Summer Institute for Women in Higher Education Administration, held July 6–19 at Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, Pa.

Since 1978, the HERS Institute for Women in Higher Education at Wellesley College has annually offered women faculty and administrators the opportunity to participate in an intensive program that prepares them to be leaders in higher education.

The 73 participants in this year's institute represented institutions across the U.S. and focused on "Women Leaders: Facing the Challenges as We Re-Invent Higher Education."

## JULY

A presentation titled "Campuses as Community Partners During Disaster: An Integration of Planning and Process for a Common Purpose" by the Center for Civic Engagement's director, **Allison Alden**, and assistant director, **Christie Zwahlen**, was recently published in *Issues in Engaged Scholarship, Community-Campus Readiness: Approaches to Disaster Preparedness* from the 2013 New York Metro Area Partnership for Service-Learning (NYMAPS) Symposium Working Papers Series, Vol. III. The publication can be found online.

**Nancy Um**, associate professor of art history, has been selected to serve a three-year term as reviews editor for *The Art Bulletin* published by the College Art Association, effective July 1, 2015. She will serve as reviews editor designate until then.

Two Binghamton University students had their artwork selected for display at the "Best of SUNY Student Art Exhibition" at the New York State Museum. "Figure Study 2" by **Joanna Sanchez** and "five words" by **Shannon Swenson** were chosen.

# How to Effectively Use ‘Performance Program and Evaluations’ and ‘Promotions and Raises’

by John Oldfield  
Officer for Contingents

Over the summer, I attended a workshop covering “Performance Programs and Evaluations” and “Promotions and Raises.” The workshop was attended by about 50 people, mostly from Upstate Medical and Cortland. I am glad that I attended because I left with four bits of information you may find valuable.

## Performance Programs

Should your responsibilities change during your program year, you should ask for a new Performance Program reflecting those changes.

For example, if a member of the department leaves, and you are re-assigned some, or all, of that member’s duties—even if “It will be only for a short time”—those duties should be reflected in writing. Remember, if your Performance Program changes “a substantial amount” you can ask for an increase in compensation. *Do not wait until the next cycle.*

## Evaluations

The only standards here are “satisfactory or unsatisfactory.” You should not receive “grades” such as on a scale of 1-5. What you do want included are written descriptions of your performance and/or changes that your supervisor requests to improve performance. Any inconsistency between your evaluation and your performance program should be brought to the attention of your supervisor, particularly relating to anything “unsatisfactory.”

It is important that you receive a signed (by your supervisor) copy of your Evaluation *at the time you meet with your supervisor.*

**These processes  
are important for  
every member of  
UUP.**

## Additional Duties Assigned/ Raise Denied

Imagine that you have been cooperative and performed some additional responsibilities for a short time. After six months, you feel an increase of compensation is warranted. You go to your supervisor and discuss a raise, but this request is denied.

At this point, there is a provision for members to then request a review of that decision via the College Review Panel. A large part of how successful that action will be depends on how well the previous two items (Performance Program and Evaluation) have been executed.

There are two times a year that requests are accepted by the College Review Panel: January and June. *Be sure to keep all copies of Performance Program and Evaluations.*

## Department Expansion

Your department may be assigned new areas of responsibility. You have been receiving satisfactory evaluations and are highly regarded. The supervisor tells you the department is going to grow by a substantial number of employees and would like you to supervise four people. This should result in a promotion and a compensation increase and you are

excited; however, *don’t forget the new Performance Program.*

Remember, these processes and use of these tools are not meant to be confrontational. Rather, proper use of these tools should lead to a better understanding of your responsibilities and duties, a more effective, efficient department, and a less-stressed supervisor. It may even result in increased job satisfaction and a better execution of our mission, which is the *education of our students.*

Performance Programs, Evaluations, and Raise and Promotion actions are important for every member of UUP, but navigating the processes on your own can be a challenge. If you have read relevant sections of the agreement and find you need guidance or still have questions, please call one of your chapter officers—you are the reason we are here! (You can reach me at [johno@binghamton.edu](mailto:johno@binghamton.edu).)

On a personal note, I retired from the University in July. However, I would like very much to stay involved in representing you as chapter delegate and officer of contingents. I plan on attending the monthly UUP Executive Board and Labor Management meetings as well as Delegate Assembly, workshops, and other events. In order to continue, however, *I need you to vote for me* as delegate and officer of contingents.

One last thought: I have had many jobs in my career, from entry level to middle management, and Binghamton University is the best organization I have ever worked for. Is it perfect? There is no such thing. The University has, however, over my short 16 years, continuously improved, and the future looks even brighter!

## Failure to Get Annual Evaluation A Disservice to All

by **Fran Goldman**  
**Asian and Asian American  
Studies**

As we begin a new academic year, I hope that you all had an opportunity this summer to take some time to relax, rejuvenate, and prepare for the coming year.

What many forget is that most professional staff are calendar year employees and are here when classes are in session and even when they are not. We serve many functions on campus but most of them revolve around the students and the academic mission of the university.

In that vein, what we do and how we do it should be evaluated by your supervisor on a yearly basis. This is something that is in the Board of Trustees Policies as well as the Agreement between UUP and the State of New York. Failure on the part of your supervisor to provide an annual evaluation is a disservice to all, as the performance program and evaluation provide not only a measure of how well you are doing, but is also the basis for promotion and salary increases.

In the last *Connection* I highlighted the importance of your performance program and how you can ensure that what you do is correctly documented. I want to take time in this issue to outline the evaluation process and your role in this procedure.

As I hope you are aware, the evaluation as noted in the Board of Trustees Policies should include such areas as effectiveness in performance, mastery of specialization, professional ability, effectiveness in University service and, continuing growth.

There are many ways to satisfy the above criteria. To begin with, you should keep a list of how you



achieved these goals and objectives over the evaluation period. Items that you need to keep in your files and to use in your self-evaluation should include:

- Activities that either improve your ability to deal

with the duties of your position or that reflect such improvement

- Professional, scientific, administrative or technical innovative methods, programs or inventions you may develop or refine

- Participation in University programs (i.e. active committee work, local or SUNY governance, student

or community activities)

- Continuing evaluation courses, training programs or participation in professional conferences or organizations, related to continuing professional growth

- Degrees, licenses, honors, awards or other recognition in your professional field.

Lastly, remember that your evaluation should be a reflection of what you have accomplished over the past year and how well you did it based upon the duties and responsibilities outlined in your Performance Program.

If you are not evaluated on a regular basis, please contact me and we can work together to see how we can get this done.

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## UUP Vision Benefit Update

UUP benefits-eligible employees' vision care providers require a seven-digit identification number to verify eligibility for coverage. The number is available on any UUP-affiliated card as "Enrollee No." To obtain your number, contact the UUP Benefits Trust Fund at 1-800-887-3863.

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## Deficit Reduction Program to Restart for Those Represented by UUP

The Office of Human Resources recently reminded UUP-represented faculty and staff that the Deficit Reduction Program (DRP) payroll deductions will restart in the check beginning Sept. 24, 2014, and conclude with the paycheck of June 17, 2015. A total of four days of gross compensation will be deducted from those checks.

"FAQs for the DRP Affecting UUP Represented Faculty and Staff 2014," including rates of deduction, are available on the HR site @ HR News. These deductions were suspended for the summer and were not deducted from the checks of July 2, 2014 through Sept. 10, 2014.

Repayment of deductions eligible to be paid back will occur over 39 pay periods beginning in April 2016. Details regarding repayment will be available closer to that time.

For more information, contact Cheryl Robinson-Boyett at 777-2129 or [clrobin@binghamton.edu](mailto:clrobin@binghamton.edu), or Bonnie Jenson at 777-6613 or [bjenson@binghamton.edu](mailto:bjenson@binghamton.edu).





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*NYSUT members are encouraged to shop and compare prices before making a purchase with this program and consider it as an alternative to using their credit card. Please note that PayCheck Direct will have access to certain information from NYSUT's membership files to verify levels of eligibility for those NYSUT members that choose to participate in this program.*

**For more information about PayCheck Direct,  
call toll-free 866-441-9160 or visit *memberbenefits.nysut.org*.**



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

# Start Up New York: Private Gains Over Public Property

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consult on any amendments or changes. So far, BU's administration seems to take very seriously the idea that businesses that come to "empty space" here really do have to mesh with the educational mission of the university; new businesses housed here have to offer potentially synergistic effects with various programs here on campus, in the form of providing student internships and the like.

As of this summer, there are five companies that will be locating in space on campus. *The Press & Sun Bulletin's* website article (<http://www.pressconnects.com/story/money/2014/07/26/binghamton-startupny-jobs-taxfree/13217143/>) lists the companies that will be situating themselves on campus. Three will be housed in the Innovative Technologies Complex and two in the Center of Excellence building.

Despite BU's minimal response to Start-UP NY, I still have reservations about the potential downside of such initiatives for the future of public education. For one thing, Start UP NY was supposed to attract *new* businesses to the state, according to the newspaper story; two of the companies were relocating from spaces in Vestal and from that distant, exotic Village of Johnson City. One hopes that their presence on campus contributes something to our educational mission, but that remains to be seen.

And however much we seek businesses that mesh with educational objectives, some parts of our student body will be left out.

On the broadest level, what does it mean for SUNY campuses like ours to openly seek profit-making enterprises to come onto campus and use our "empty space?" There's a reason I keep putting quotation marks around "empty space;" BU is slated to grow by thousands of students in the near future and we are to do so on a campus that is already very small, given the number of students we have. We will, apparently,

and for the near future, be offering many more night classes than ever before in order to accommodate these students.

I have concerns as well about promises that UUP has been made that Start-Up NY businesses that locate on campus won't use BU's resources. After all, these businesses won't be islands, and once on campus, the potential for use (and abuse) of campus resources, including our labor power, is there.

Lastly, I have concerns about Start-Up NY's stated goal: to turn SUNY campuses into economic engines to boost a lagging (up)state economy. The unstated goal, besides re-electing an incumbent governor

with national aspirations, is privatizing public institutions. While I don't think public universities should be walled-off ivory towers, I consider Start-UP NY to be a deeply anti-public program. It literally turns public space into private space and, as such, is a program that by its very design exempts businesses from participation in the public good in the form of paying taxes. It also inevitably shrinks the public space available to our students and our members. My hope is that BU as an institution, and we as its employees, continue to resist attempts to compromise our oft-stated mandate to be the premier *public* university of the 21st century.

## Annual Library Book Sale

**Glenn G. Bartle Library, East Reading Room on first floor**

**Friday, Oct. 17, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.**

**Saturday, Oct. 18, Noon - 4 p.m.**

**Sunday, Oct. 19, Noon - 4 p.m. (Bag/Box Sale)**

Close to 10,000 books, ranging from academic texts to popular history and classic fiction, will be on sale at prices from \$.25 to \$3. Proceeds go directly to fund library activities. Returning alumni are cordially invited to visit the book sale and help support the University Libraries. On Sunday, a bag of books is \$5 and a box is \$10.

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