

Connection

Number 104 December 2023

BINGHAMTON CHAPTER, UNITED UNIVERSITY PROFESSIONS



In Memoriam

Connection

Binghamton Chapter newsletter

Number 104 December 2023

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In memory of Benita Roth



*Brendan McGovern
UUP Chapter President
Program Coordinator,
Geography*

Benita Roth left this world on May 27, 2023, after a short illness. She was a friend, a union comrade, and so much more as evidenced by the beautiful tributes shared by colleagues and friends in this special issue of the Binghamton Chapter Newsletter devoted to her memory.

Benita contributed to the direction of UUP for the past two decades. She first became a state-wide delegate in 2009 and served as Binghamton chapter president from 2013 – 2017 when she stepped down to become Vice President for Academics. She served on

many UUP statewide committees and spearheaded efforts on both the Family Leave and Women's Rights & Concerns Committees to secure paid family leave and to assure fair and equal treatment of women on local campuses. As a member of the most recent contract negotiations team, she helped to lead us to our best contract in decades, characteristically, with special attention for the most vulnerable.



Benita was an inspiration to others as a fervent advocate for marginalized communities, championing the rights of women, LGBTQ individuals, and racial minorities. She fearlessly dedicated herself to the pursuit of justice and never hesitated to confront unchecked authority. Her academic brilliance left an indelible mark, with her books on feminism and the AIDS movement serving as cornerstones of her scholarly legacy. Her visionary work in addressing opioid use disorders transformed the lives of many vulnerable individuals, and her remarkable blend of intellect and

compassion made her a guiding light for aspiring union leaders and junior faculty members. She was a dedicated professor for whom students always came first, leaving an enduring impact on the lives of those she taught and mentored.

Benita's departure leaves a void on our campus, an absence that we all feel. I remember the Benita who taught us to see union work not as a job, but as a community, a place where professional advocacy and personal bonds intertwine. Let's honor her memory by embodying this spirit, by celebrating her life as she lived it — full of passion, full of compassion, full of love.

KEEP UP WITH CHAPTER ACTIVITIES!

Chapter Website: <http://www.uuphost.org/binghamton/>
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/uupbinghamton/>
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From the first time I met Benita I knew she would be my friend. She was a regular contributor to Connection UUP, the Binghamton chapter newsletter. She submitted the following article on April 3, 2023 for what was to be the spring edition of Connection. She says:

“Let’s all make efforts to make the rest of the SUNY campuses, university centers or not, follow in Stony Brook’s footsteps and beyond, so that labor in higher education gets paid an appropriate amount for the vital work that we do.”

How fitting that her closing words in this, her last article, reflect so perfectly her commitment to the union and to the best interests of her colleagues.

— Malcolm Gunter, Copy Editor

Union Activism

Contingent Faculty and the Fight for Fair Compensation



Benita Roth
*Professor and Director of WGSS
Chapter Vice President for Academics*

Across the United States, higher education relies on the work of non-tenure track instructors. It’s estimated that three quarters of college faculty are now non-tenure track, with over half of those in that category part time employees, or what we popularly call “adjuncts” (see <https://www.newfacultymajority.info/facts-about-adjuncts/>). Estimates of what adjuncts are compensated vary, but the best way to characterize the vast majority of these salaries is as pitifully low. The SUNY system also relies heavily on contingent academic labor — that’s what UUP calls adjuncts — to instruct our students. In general, our contingent faculty, full time and part time, are poorly paid, especially given

their education. The majority of them have PhDs or are on track to earn them, but they struggle to find time for their research due to the teaching they need to do to survive.

Recently there has been some relatively good news in the fight to get better pay for this majority of the higher education teaching force. Contingent non-tenure track and part-time faculty for the New School for Social Research in NYC — a school where 90% of the faculty fall into these categories — recently concluded a three-week strike which won pay raises of 13 percent in the first year of the agreement for the best paid adjuncts and a 36% rise by the end of the fifth year of the agreement (see <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/11/nyregion/new-school-nyc-adjunct-strike.html>). The math still ends up leaving these highly educated and skilled employees with low salaries per course, although

reportedly they were happy that the New School met some important health care demands. Late last year, the largest higher education strike in US history

— some 36,000 graduate student workers and 12,000 other academic workers — took place and was settled at the University of California system, ending in either a victory or a let-down, depending on your point of view about the possibilities of

what a living wage is in California. (<https://calmatters.org/education/higher-education/2023/01/six-takeaways-for-californians-after-the-uc-graduate-student-worker-strike/>). Even more recently, “members of the Temple University Graduate Students’ Association (TUGSA) voted 344 to 8 over the weekend to approve the university’s latest offer,” an offer that included raises both in salaries and in the university’s commitment to pay the *continued on page 4*

Recently there has been some relatively good news in the fight to get better pay for this majority of the higher education teaching force.

continued from page 3
health care premiums of dependents (<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2023/03/14/temple-strike-ends-after-grad-students-accept-deal>).

Adjuncts are, of course, a category that contains both non-tenure-track full and part-time instructors and both stipended graduate student labor and non-stipended graduate student labor. In the SUNY system, the Graduate Students Employees Union (GSEU), not UUP, represents those on graduate stipends for teaching or research assistantships (<https://www.cwa1104gseu.com/>). But plenty of graduate students teach on a contingent basis, especially as they become ABD, and they are represented by UUP. UUP represents all those part-time and full-time folks with MAs and PhDs without whom our SUNY would not be able to fulfill its mission.

While UUP's negotiations with the state of New York continue, there is some good news in the SUNY system — as always there can be debates about how good the news is. One of our sister university centers — Stony Brook — announced in March that they had achieved local — meaning at Stony Brook — raises in the minima, i.e. the floor, for adjunct instructors. I asked Andrew Solar-Greco, who is the Stony Brook UUP Chapter President about the struggle to get these raises, and he sent me this link to the Stony Brook newsletter article about their victory: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gVCktqaXAIPSacmKJGDrMDLc8eqOtgk/view>. For over a year, UUP Stony Brook waged a successful campaign to raise the floor for salaries, even as they added contingent faculty members to their chapter. Furthermore, full-time lecturers are going to be

getting longer contracts, a job security improvement that helps our members in many different areas who are “super adjuncting” or otherwise responsible for high percentages of the teaching done in their unit.

As Andrew writes in his piece: “Our successful advocacy and organizing sets a standard, to which the SUNY system should aspire, by prioritizing the concerns of non-tenure track faculty. ...None of this would have been possible without the collective strength of our union.” Amen to that! Let's all make efforts to make the rest of the SUNY campuses, university centers or not, follow in Stony Brook's footsteps and beyond, so that labor in higher education gets paid an appropriate amount for the vital work that we do.



JONATHAN COHEN

Memorial Service — Celebration of Life

BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2023



Memorial Service — Celebration of Life

BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2023



Tributes and Remembrances

BENITA ROTH



JONATHAN COHEN



Nancy Appelbaum
*Professor
History and Latin
American and
Caribbean Studies*

I met Benita Roth my first official day of work at Binghamton University, 25 years ago. One of my greatest friends, she became close to my partner and daughter as well. Over the years, we enjoyed many walks, parties, and outings; we celebrated holidays and milestones together. Whatever the occasion, she was game. Whatever the topic, she had a lot to say. And I mean a lot. She voiced opinions on pretty much everything and everyone. She was confident, sure of her views, and very, very funny. She expected no less from her friends, co-workers, and students. I learned a tremendous amount from Benita Roth over the years, not least of which was the importance of sticking up for myself and others. Rest in power Benita. May your memory be an inspiration. ■



A. Serdar Atav
*Professor, Decker
College of Nursing and
Health Sciences.*

In our lives, we often encounter individuals who earn our respect for their professional achievements, and others we cherish as friends for their warmth and companionship. Benita was one of those remarkable few who effortlessly bridged the gap between these two realms. With her passing, I have not only lost a dedicated union leader, a brilliant academic, and an invaluable research partner, but most significantly, I have lost a dear friend.

A few years ago, I had the privilege of acknowledging Benita's departure from the presidency of the UUP Binghamton Chapter, and I find that my words from that occasion still resonate with me today. Allow me to share a part of that speech with you:

“What can I say? The best way I

can describe you, Benita, is by saying that you are truly a ‘nasty woman,’ and I mean that in the Trumpian, the most honorable sense of the term, of course. You are a ‘nasty woman’ because you are an unapologetic feminist, an articulate advocate for justice, brilliantly intelligent, admirably gutsy, incredibly courageous, and yet, remarkably compassionate.

You are a ‘nasty woman’ because you didn't tolerate anyone's nonsense. You fearlessly confront challenges head-on, and you inspire those around you to do the same. You are unflinching in the face of power, and you never allowed intimidation to silence your voice.

When my niece, herself an academic, had the privilege of meeting you, she was in awe. She wanted to be like you, to emulate your unwavering commitment to your principles.

You have set a new standard for the presidency of the UUP, and it will be a daunting task for any future

president to fill your shoes. I am grateful to the UUP for selecting you as our leader, but even more grateful that, through the UUP, I found not just a dedicated leader but a true friend.”

Benita’s impact as a staunch union leader, her brilliance as an academic, and her unwavering commitment to justice were evident to all who knew her. But what truly set her apart was her compassion, kindness, and her ability to make everyone she met feel valued and heard.

I feel Benita’s absence deeply, but her legacy will continue to inspire and guide us. Thank you Benita for gracing our lives with your friendship and your remarkable presence. ■



Bret Benjamin
*Associate Professor,
English, SUNY Albany
and UUP Chief
Contract Negotiator
for the 2022-2026
Agreement*

There are some folks you just trust. Benita Roth was one of those people. I knew I could trust her to give an honest opinion. I could trust her to listen, to learn, to change her mind when called for, and to stick to her guns when needed. I could trust her to be simultaneously pragmatic and principled (an exceedingly rare combination). And I could trust her to do the work. You don’t find too many people like that. I’m grateful to have worked with such a trusted friend and colleague.

We became chapter presidents at the same time, and we gravitated towards each other to help work through the frustrations and aspirations of that job. We shared some academic interests — enough to speak at length about research projects — even if we differed somewhat in our method or emphasis. I have the utmost respect for her scholarship on the AIDS crisis,

as well as her more recent research and activism around substance use. Her intellectual and institutional work was driven by her personal and political convictions, a model academic career in my mind.

When we began to assemble the UUP Negotiations Team, Benita’s was among the first names that came to my mind. I was expecting her to say “no” given her research and administrative duties. As it turns out, though, it was an easy conversation. She told me, “I know it’s important. I know I will learn a lot. I’m at a point in my career where I want to spend my time on things that matter.” That was that. It took no convincing. It was a great pleasure to work closely with her again over the past two years. I valued her intelligence, her humor, her tenacity, her style, and her maturity. She talked often with team members about her plans to retire and return to LA where she grew up and where she most wanted to be. She told us on several occasions: “I’m going to sell my house in Binghamton and rent a closet in LA.” It’s heartbreaking to know she never got to live that retired life in her LA closet.

Benita’s passing is a grievous loss for all who knew and loved her; it is a particular loss for UUP. Her presence as a committed unionist will be sorely missed. In her final email to me, Benita wrote, “The union is life to me,” and she urged me and the other members of the negotiations team to



“roll it on, roll it on!” I find this deeply moving. As she faced her last days—obviously an intensely personal time of introspection—she found comfort, strength, and meaning in solidarity, in the collective union struggle for a better world. She recognized that the labor movement, to which she had given so much, was bigger than her, bigger than any of us. Benita helped carry that labor struggle into the future, and she asked us all to do the same. Hers was a committed life, well-lived. The 2022-26 contract between UUP and New York State will have a dedication to Benita that includes her final rousing words of encouragement to the team. She did not get to see the conclusion of that contract, but I know she would be proud of many of the gains our team was able to secure. In addition to our words of loving remembrance, it now falls to all of us to honor Benita’s memory and her legacy of the labor and social justice struggle. In union, we roll it on. ■



Leslie C. Gates
Director of Undergraduate Studies and Professor of Sociology, Faculty Affiliate of the Latin American and Caribbean Studies Program

Benita Roth was Professor of Sociology and History, and Director of the transdisciplinary program in Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies at Binghamton University. From 2010-2015, she also served as the associate editor for the *Journal of Women's History*.

Building on feminist intersectional scholarship, Benita Roth's research foregrounds the work of feminists and those who fought the ravages of AIDS and opioids, even as it unflinchingly captures the inequalities that fissured these movements. In recognition of the important contributions it made, her first book, *Separate Roads to Feminism: Black Chicana, and White Feminist Movements in America's Second Wave* (Cambridge U. Press, 2004), earned the distinguished book award in sex and gender from the American Sociological Association. According to the awards committee, the book filled "a critical gap by... taking on the mainstream account that claims women of color came late to feminism." Instead, as Roth's work shows, "Black and Chicana feminism emerged at the same time as women's liberation" and that "by incorporating race and class, not just gender, in their analyses, these women-of-color groups anticipated the "intersectional" theorizing that has so influenced our field over the past 20 years."

The insights offered by Benita Roth's research are not limited only to the academic. They are also strategic, as her comments on how to avoid "Healing' the US back to an Anti-Feminist Future" (January 2021) reveal. Her second book, *The Life and*

Death of ACT UP/LA (Cambridge U. Press, 2017), tells a "largely lost" success story of "the accomplishments of direct-action anti-AIDS protest." In keeping with her book's assessment that gender inequalities undermined the group's momentum, she advises activists to "always be actively conscious of how they construct solidarity, who is included, whose voices are excluded, who gets listened to." She underscored such strategic lessons when she interviewed former ACT UP/

NY activist, Ron Goldberg. Her most recent research project focused on the fight against the opioid epidemic in Central New York by people involved with Truth Pharm — similarly derived strategic implications for activists facing different local political and institutional contexts.

Benita Roth's commitment to equity extended beyond her scholarship to praxis. As described by her colleagues at UUP, she vigorously represented the interests of all professionals at Binghamton University through more than fifteen years (2007 – 2023) of dedicated service, including the Chapter Presidency (2013 – 2017) and the Vice Presidency for Academics. Most recently, Benita was also a member of the state-wide contract negotiations team and a member of the state UUP Executive Board. As in the



case of her early experience of research and activism with ACT UP/LA in the 1990s, her recent work with Truth Pharm also drew her into an immediate fight for justice. In recent years, Benita became a vocal advocate for harm reduction, conducting Narcan training in the community.

In losing Benita, we also lose a dynamic instructor, loyal colleague and friend. A champion of sociology as a seed for social change and a committed advisor to the independent research of both undergraduates and graduate students, Professor Roth received the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2007. She brought a steady hand and witty repartee to departmental deliberations in Sociology and WGSS, and an infectious confidence in all

our endeavors. To many of us at the University and to many more beyond, she was also a trusted friend, one who might admonish self-doubt just as easily as regale with anecdotes of the absurd and the obscene from Hollywood to politics. ■



Matthew D. Johnson

Director of Clinical Training and Professor of Psychology

To me, more than anything else, Benita was a good and true friend. I enjoyed her company whether we were gossiping during AHL hockey games, solving the world's problems playing poker, or playing "what I would do if I were [fill in the blank university administrator]" over lunch in the Chenango Room. I will not write here about the gossip we shared nor about how she or I would run the university (as you know, Benita was not shy about sharing feedback directly with [fill in the blank university administrator]). Rather, I want to share my memories of Benita and me — the sociologist and the psychologist — discussing the hard problems of the human condition.

Initially, I did not see the overlap of our professional interests. My side of the fence was all about the scientific study of intimate relationships and her side was all about the ethnographic study of up-from-the-ground social movements. This changed as I started reading more sociological scholarship and shamelessly stealing these ideas for my research. This led to my conversations with Benita about the overlap in our research. These discussions illuminated our mutual disdain for those who promise a quick fix to pernicious social problems whether proposed from the ideological left, right, or middle.

As I began thinking about the efforts of Democrats and Republicans to solve poverty/violence/addiction (you

name it!) by convincing more people that they should get and stay married, Benita helped me think about what sociological theories and ethnographic research had to say about this. In what became a theme of our 24-year-long conversation, she accurately predicted what rigorous psychological research would later demonstrate. As my research shifted to intimate partner violence and public policy regarding violence against women, I again turned to her wisdom and reading of the scholarly literature. In turn, I was fascinated by her work and shared what I could with her from a psychological perspective. We talked for hours about the harm reduction movement and the ways addiction and the criminalization of addiction tore families apart and broke hearts, minds, and bodies.

None of this will be evident on our respective CVs. We did not acknowledge each other publicly in our respective research publications (only those sitting near us at hockey games might realize the extent of our professional overlap). We simply knew that we could count on each other to provide a perspective that foregrounded the other's discipline and, in doing so, brought ideas we had unintentionally marginalized to the center of our thinking. I will miss guest-lecturing about family policy in her classes. I will miss having her as a committee member on my students' theses. I will miss going to hockey games with her. I will miss playing poker with her. Indeed, I miss her already...

But, I will not miss speaking with her about my research because I plan to continue asking her for her perspective on my future ideas. These interdisciplinary conversations about difficult problems exemplify the advantages of being

a faculty member of a liberal arts college. In losing Benita, we have lost a member of this scholarly community. Her loss dims the lights in Harpur and in the hearts of those who knew her. ■



Sean G. Massey

Associate Professor Women's, Gender, & Sexuality Studies Program (WGSS)

I was really excited all those years ago when I first heard that there was a researcher in the sociology department who was a scholar of the AIDS movement and who had not only written a book about ACT UP, the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power, but had also been a participant. Most of you here know how rare and exciting it is to find someone, a colleague, whose interests overlap with yours — someone who is willing to spend time bouncing ideas around and who will call out nonsense, but then point you toward an idea or resource you had no idea existed and that changes everything. You know how validating it can be to have your — often very particular — research interests and ideas supported. Benita became one of those rare people for me: a colleague, a mentor, a co-conspirator, and a friend.

Benita was an unyielding defender and advocate for our UUP family.



Whether someone had been the victim of injustice, or had simply received some unexpected bad news, she was there to counsel that person about their rights, their responsibilities, and to help them plan a pragmatic course of action. Benita never shied away from speaking necessary truths to power. If a supervisor or Dean or even the occasional University President needed a reminder about a particular term or condition of our contract, or simply what was the right thing to do, Benita never hesitated to outline her expectations with a confidence (and when necessary, ferocity) that could not be ignored. And when it came time to sit across the table to push for a fair contract and fair compensation for the important work we do, Benita was always there, a formidable voice that had to be taken seriously.

Some of you know the story of my tenure struggles and the important role our union played, for which I am forever grateful. Benita taught me that the gratitude I felt is most useful when channeled into solidarity and action. She reminded me about the lessons learned from the AIDS movement — the importance of showing up, standing together, and adding our voice to that of our colleagues and comrades in the struggle. Benita always brought that wisdom to organizing.

It was very difficult to come into work the months after Benita left us. I would find myself walking into the WGSS office thinking about something I wanted to tell her about an oral history interview the day before, or something I just read in the archive about the AIDS movement, or a question I wanted to ask that I knew she would know the answer. And then I would see her door was closed and I'd remember why.

It's still hard sometimes. But those feelings of loss reflect the important place Benita had in my life, in our lives, and the impact she made. I try to hold those memories close. I'd like them to always be there. ■



Dora Polachek

*Visiting Associate
Professor of French,
Dept. of Romance
Languages &
Literatures*

Benita's death came as a shock to all of us who knew her and who still find it hard to believe that she is no longer with us. The whirlwind speed of those final months, as well as her funeral, made clear what an incredible assortment of loyal and loving friends and family filled her life, and what a difference she made in everything she undertook. Benita was an inspiration in more ways than I can count. She was never shy about expressing her opinions, and she fought tirelessly for what she thought was right. Her sense of social justice defined her to the core, and was reflected in her research, in her classes, and in the causes she supported. Her devotion to UUP was evident in all the positions she held and the time she devoted to making things better for all of us. May her memory be a blessing. ■



Alexis Pleus

*Founder, Executive
Director & Board
Ex Officio Chair,
Truth Pharm*

I first met Benita in the early part of 2017, although she had been following Truth Pharm and our work since our first biggest effort of activism on August 31, 2016 dubbed "The Trail of Truth." She decided by February 2017 that she wanted to 'follow Truth Pharm' while engaging in research. She told the story of this first encounter most vividly.

Truth Pharm was presenting the results of a community survey to ten elected officials with an audience of over 120 concerned citizens in attendance. I noticed Benita in the audience. I don't know how anyone would ever have missed her — her

red hair, artistic clothing, peering over her large-frame bright colored glasses while intensely writing and emphatically nodding. I wondered who she was: a reporter, an investigator, a county employee? At the end of the event, she came up to talk to me. Comparing her 5' stature to my 6', somehow the distance between our heads seemed even greater. I'll attempt here to blend her recounting of this first meeting with my own memories. Benita would say:

I walked straight up to her, looked straight up (because she is much taller than I) and said, "I would like to follow your organization and attend your events and meetings so that I can do research on you and your organization. Would you be agreeable to that?" And Alexis looked straight down at me and said, "You can come to anything you want to."

She reveled in telling this story.

To be honest, I really didn't know what her presence would mean to our organization — what she would do or how much she would become involved — but I was intrigued and hoped to see more of her.

Since Benita passed, many of her friends and family have asked me what her level of involvement was with Truth Pharm. I can tell you that it was more than I ever would have first imagined. She attended many volunteer meetings, many of our events, and several of our out-of-town advocacy actions. She spent considerable time with me and my family as well. She was not a detached researcher. She was involved, she volunteered and she cared deeply about our organization, the health and wellness of our volunteers and the people we served. Each year, she attended and volunteered at The Trail of Truth events that followed 2016. Each year, she volunteered signing in the bereaved families, a job that she described as "very difficult and emotionally taxing." For two years, she willingly stayed behind to help with clean-up while the families marched to the governmental plaza for our live performance art piece so that the rest of us could participate.

She gave in so many important ways.

Benita was a source of laughter, encouragement, kindness, and brutal honesty for our entire organization. She wasn't there just for the research; she was there to make a difference, to personally have an impact and ultimately, to write about it.

We spent time together talking about the movement, what it means to "do the work" and in what direction our organization should next go. She was a voice I could trust with solid judgment, years of experience in researching and studying movements, no fear of radical activism, and a deep desire for positive outcomes. Our volunteers loved her deeply and sought her approval, calling her "the smartest person they knew." She loved our volunteers deeply, and whenever disaster struck, as it all too frequently did, she was always one of the first to reach out to ask what she could do in support.

Benita spent just shy of seven years with our organization during which

she took a sabbatical for a year to work directly with the organization. She conducted comparative research in three counties in our region to include in her work. She spent countless hours dedicated to this cause. Along with another colleague, we designed a program called "See me, Hear me, Treat me." She was very proud of this.

Benita was endlessly dedicated to Truth Pharm and we will endlessly miss her. ■



Melissa Zinkin

Professor, Philosophy

I first met Benita in 1998 at the orientation for new faculty at Binghamton University.

I liked her immediately and wanted to be her friend. At that time, however, Benita said to us, in her sociological voice: "We must keep in mind that we are really colleagues, not friends." But after about ten years of, well, being

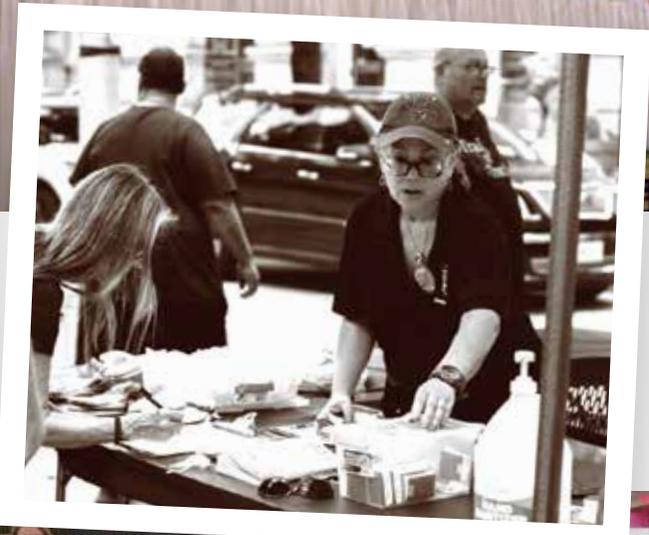
friends, it was hard to maintain that she and I were just colleagues; and after 25 years (of Oscar parties, poker games, walks on the rail trail, museum-going — including in Berlin — and just hanging out) it was clear that we enjoyed a great friendship. In Benita's orientation statement to us, I now see her professionalism and her savvy about how institutions work.

And, indeed, in addition to being my friend, Benita was also a wonderful and supportive colleague to me as she was to many others. Benita intuitively felt that it was unacceptable that anyone be taken advantage of or bullied. She had the courage of her convictions and stood up for others. She had the conviction, for example, that people were often entitled to more than they felt they could ask for, and she advocated on their behalf. We in the UUP are all lucky to have known and worked with Benita. I am so grateful to have had her as my friend all these years. I will miss her strength and wisdom, and, especially, her laughter. ■



JONATHAN COHEN

Remembering Benita





RESOLUTION PASSED IN MEMORY OF

Benita Roth

Whereas, Benita Roth passed from this life on May 27, 2023; and

Whereas, Benita served as a statewide academic delegate from Binghamton University from 2009 – 2023; and

Whereas, Benita served as UUP Binghamton Chapter President from 2013 – 2017; and

Whereas, Benita served as UUP Binghamton Chapter Vice President for Academics from 2017 – 2023; and

Whereas, Benita contributed to many UUP statewide committees by serving on Outreach, Negotiations, AAUP, Future of Public Higher Education, Online Education Courses Advisory, Retiree Participation, Link Development, Technology Issues, and Task Force on Emerging Issues of Diversity; and

Whereas, Benita spearheaded efforts on both Family Leave and Women’s Rights & Concerns Committees to secure paid family leave and to assure fair and equal treatment of women on local campuses; and

Whereas, Benita answered the call to serve her union once again by serving on the 2022 – 2023 Negotiations Team and helped to lead us to our best contract in decades, with special attention to the most vulnerable; and

Whereas, Benita was an inspiration to others as a fervent advocate for marginalized communities, championing the rights of women, LGBTQ individuals, and racial minorities; and

Whereas, Benita fearlessly dedicated herself to the pursuit of justice and never hesitated to confront unchecked authority; and

Whereas, Benita’s academic brilliance left an indelible mark, with her books on feminism and the AIDS movement serving as cornerstones of her scholarly legacy; and

Whereas, Benita’s visionary work in addressing opioid use disorders transformed the lives of many vulnerable individuals; and

Whereas, Benita’s remarkable blend of intellect and compassion made her a guiding light for aspiring union leaders and junior faculty members; and

Whereas, Benita was a dedicated professor for whom students always came first, leaving an enduring impact on the lives of those she taught and mentored

Now Therefore, be it

Resolved, that the 2023 Fall Delegate Assembly honor Benita Roth for her service and dedication to UUP; and be it further

Resolved, that the 2023 Fall Delegate Assembly express their condolences to Benita’s family; and be it further

Resolved, that UUP contribute to a scholarship fund created in her name at Binghamton University supporting students whose educational trajectory and research reflects outstanding work in gender justice and social justice at Binghamton University.

Scholarship Fund



JONATHAN COHEN

A scholarship has been created in Benita's name to support students whose educational trajectory and research reflects outstanding work in gender justice and social justice at Binghamton University. If you would like to donate to this cause, gifts can be sent to:

Binghamton University Foundation Memorial Fund #10351

<https://advance.binghamton.edu/s/1796/lg22/form.aspx?sid=1796&gid=2&pgid=427&cid=1081&bledit=1&dids=105>

Under "Special Instructions/Comments" insert "The Benita Roth Fund, #10351"