



# Unifier

UNITED UNIVERSITY PROFESSIONS



FARMINGDALE CHAPTER



MARCH 2025



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## What's Goin' On Rallies, Rallies Everywhere Demonstrating That We Care!

Thick fog and cold air did not deter thousands of demonstrators from the Fight the Cuts March in Manhattan on Saturday morning, March 15, 2025. It began in front of the New York County Supreme Courthouse and ended in Battery Park three hours later. Present were educators, medical workers, trade unions and ordinary citizens from all over the country. There were visitors from around the world who were moved enough to make signs in-the-moment, and join the crowd. See more images on page 10.



## UUPF Office

### Ward Hall

First Floor, West Wing  
Tel: 934-420-4UUP (4887)

Email: [uup@uupfarm.org](mailto:uup@uupfarm.org)  
URL: <https://uupfarm.org/>

## GENERAL MEMBERSHIP Meeting

Thursday, March 27, 2025 ♦ Gleeson 104 ♦ 11:00 am

Unsure of your active membership? Enroll today:  
<https://uupunion.org/myuup/Membership/>

Send us your questions or concerns. Click the mailbox at <https://uupfarm.org/>



# Professionals' Corner

## Continuation of Benefits is Everyone's Responsibility

By Solomon Ayo

As the UUP 2022-2026 contract gradually concludes, a new negotiation team will soon be formed. I urge you to closely review the UUP's past successes and actively participate in the upcoming negotiation process. Your voice should be heard regarding changes and improvements you desire in the next contract on various topics, such as:

- Paid leave
- Wage increases
- Pensions & insurance plans
- Disability & long-term care
- Safety & security
- Scholarship programs
- Job security

It is important that the negotiation team considers your concerns and is aware of your desired additions to the negotiation list presented to the New York State government. Please note that UUP does not negotiate your health benefits directly with management at your local campus. So, your participation is paramount to ensure that your concerns are acknowledged in Albany, where they hold significant weight.

For professionals, a key aspect of effectively conveying your message is the upcoming survey. This survey is prepared by the Statewide VP for Professionals and her team to gather information about your interests.

The survey's purpose is to enable UUP to better understand your concerns and tailor its approach accordingly. A common concern for professionals is the distinction between "rights" and "benefits". Participating in the survey may actually assist in clarifying numerous terms in our contract. For instance:

**Job Rights:** You have the right to your personnel files. There is only one official personnel file, and it is located in the Human Resources office. You have the right to view your file, know of items placed in your file and know if your file has been viewed by anyone other than you.

**Job Benefits:** All professional employees earn vacation and sick days, both full-time and part-time. However, your appointment type identifies the benefits for which you are eligible: health, sick, and vacation leave.

A unique feature of this survey is its ability to be adjusted to address local chapter concerns or issues that may not be statewide but are equally important to your chapter and the local environment. I strongly encourage you to complete the survey and submit it on time. This will help to facilitate its processing before the new negotiation team is formed and commences negotiations for the new contract.



Another area of interest to professionals is workspace. At FSC there is a shortage of office space, but spaces allocated should meet a minimum standard of functionality. The location where you work should be safe, secure and accessible. This is especially true for individuals with physical challenges. It goes without saying that all work locations should have adequate heating, ventilation, electric service and lighting. Equally important is having the equipment necessary for the duties assigned in your performance program. This includes the right computer and software, scanning, printing and copying facilities, and adequate phones and phonelines. If your space is lacking, it is your responsibility to process the proper requests. If you have any questions, please contact me. ♦

# President's Message

## Write Your Epitaph

My father gave me the three principles that I live by. Although he only went as far as the eighth grade, he was the smartest, bravest man I ever knew. As a child, I was quick to anger at witnessing seemingly educated people talk down to him, confusing his accent for ignorance. But he would just smile, and later remind me that a man's value will be determined by the size of his funeral parlor.

He was so right. When his time came, the service that was supposed to take place next door had to be moved off site, when it became clear the first afternoon that my father would need all three parlors for two days. Papi was *platinum*!

What will your children say about You? What will your grandchildren say about how you "answered the call" in 2025? What will their lives be like, and how will you have affected that? Write your epitaph. Then pick from any of the things on page 8 to help you achieve it.

### "Eat the Rich" Movement

The concept of eat the rich is not an American creation, nor is it limited to this point in history. There is language in the Bible that speaks to this. It is not evil to be rich, it is evil to hurt or take advantage of others, in order to stay that way.

The current movement focuses on the super rich, the top 1%, the folks who were front and center at the 2025 presidential inauguration. So far, consumer boycotts have been very successful. Specific targets have been companies and markets that support the current regime, which seems intent on hurting *We the People* of the United States. Companies and markets that have sponsored, supported, and accommodated anti-DEI policies and initiatives have suffered significant losses through consumer boycotts. The movement intends to adjust and grow as new targets are identified. The plan is to attack where it hurts: in their pockets.

### General Strike

The Taylor law prohibits UUP members from striking. However, there is a movement around the country that all of your friends and neighbors can participate in. It is called The General Strike; find more information at [generalstrikeus.com](http://generalstrikeus.com).

As indicated on their website, a general strike is when working people refuse their labor until demands are met. For a general strike to be successful, they need 3.5% of the population to strike simultaneously. That's 11 million people. Their website has a "strike card" that ordinary people can fill out so that a general strike



can be called when that population percentage is reached.

### Reliable Sources

I know how you feel. Who can you trust? Determining fact from fiction may require some research — or trusting those who already do so. Several sources for you to explore are listed on page 8. Taking action is up to you.

Make the call. While you're at it, make 5. Download this app and reach your congressional leaders easily and effectively.



**5**  
**Calls**

*In Solidarity,  
Yolanda Drakkir*



# Chapter Elections

## Additional Officer Candidates

There was a glitch in our Chapter Election nomination mailing system, so we have a few blanks

on our local ballots. **Before you mail them**, please **write-in** the names of these two candidates

who have agreed to serve you and your chapter as follows:



### Vicki Janik for Vice President for Academics

Vicki has served just about every important role there is in UUPF throughout her long history at the College. She has been Delegate, Officer for Contingents, Grievance Officer, Vice President for Academics, and Chapter President. She has also been very active at the statewide level, including chairing the Women's Rights and Concerns Committee for many years.

There are MANY members who owe their careers to Vicki's tireless work behind the scenes as a long-term advocate for the over-worked and under-represented.

Please show your support for our Chapter by writing-in Vicki Janik for VPA.

### Debbie Nilsen for Chapter Secretary

Most members know Debbie as the "Defensive Driving Lady" and an enthusiastic cheerleader for all things *Farmingdale*. Debbie embodies the Farmingdale Family Spirit in everything that she does, with an energy that began when she was a student!

Debbie has served in a variety of roles in UUPF, including Delegate, Secretary, and Membership Development Officer. She has also participated at the statewide level, including Delegate Assemblies and legislative advocacy events.

Please show your support for our Chapter by writing-in Debbie Nilsen for Secretary



UUPF is collecting nominations from retired members for the **Officer for Retirees** position, although it is open to ALL members. So, if you aspire to retire

and would like to become more involved, feel free to volunteer! **Please hold onto your ballots** at least until the General Membership

meeting in case there are more members interested in becoming delegates. ♦

# Academic Corner Anti-union Animus

By Tara Singer-Blumberg\*

Every UUP member has the *legal right* to consult with the union over *any* issue involving the terms and conditions of employment. This right is written into the *Public Employees Fair Employment Act*, commonly known as the *Taylor Law*, a labor relations statute covering most public employees in New York State. The legal term for the violation of this right is *anti-union animus*.

UUP consults with our members every day. Reaching out to the union for information or assistance does not make an employee guilty of creating a confrontational situation. He or she is using a resource *guaranteed to them by law*.

In addition, both the UUP contract and the Taylor

*Law prohibit anyone from retaliating against an employee for exercising his or her right to consult with the union.*

It is therefore completely improper for any colleague or supervisor to tell an employee that he or she “should not go to the union” or “should not have gone to the union,” or to retaliate against an employee either directly or subtly for exercising this contractual right.

UUP takes such behavior very seriously, so if it occurs, please advise your grievance officer at once. We cannot change this practice if we don’t know where or when it occurs. Your name will be held in confidence and only used with your explicit permission.



If you suspect Anti-Union behavior, please contact [UUPF]. ♦

*\* Tara Singer-Blumberg is a former NYSUT Labor Relation Specialist for the UUP chapters at SUNY Buffalo Center and SUNY Fredonia. This column first appeared in the April, 2020 edition of UUP Now, the newsletter of UUP Buffalo Center.*



## Ballots for 2025-2027 Chapter Elections

were mailed

March 12-14, 2025. If you have not received a ballot, please call MK Elections at: (203)403-8401 to have another mailed.

## Part-Time Academics Information Session

Join UUP for an information session geared toward part-time academics in the bargaining unit. The sessions will be facilitated by a UUP Organizer, a Labor Relations Specialist, and statewide VPA Alissa Karl.

Please bring your questions and concerns. You may submit them ahead of time here: [bit.ly/uupinfoptac](https://bit.ly/uupinfoptac)

**Session 1**  
Friday, March 28<sup>th</sup>  
at 9:30 am

**Session 2**  
Monday, April 7<sup>th</sup>  
at 12:00 pm

UUPF strongly encourages part-time Farmingdale academics to attend. Since we are a uniquely adjunct-heavy campus, it is vital that your voices are heard at the statewide level.



# Contributions to American History

## Made by Women... Before They Are Erased



*Harriet Tubman, Underground Railroad Pioneer*



*Victoria Woodhull, 1<sup>st</sup> Female  
Stock Broker & Presidential Candidate*



*Clara Barton, "Angel of the Battlefield"*



*Sandra Day O'Connor, 1<sup>st</sup> Female  
Supreme Court Justice*



*Rosa Parks, Civil Rights Leader*



*Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Gender Rights leader*



*Oprah Winfrey,  
Renown entrepreneur,  
philanthropist, and  
1<sup>st</sup> black female  
billionaire*

*These women stood  
between "their men" and  
heavily armed thugs  
hired by GM in a 44-day  
strike that catalyzed la-  
bor organization across  
the country, and lead to  
the victory of the UAW.*



*1937 Women's Emergency Brigade , Flint Sit-Down Strike against General Motors*



# Contributions to American History

## Made by Women... Before They Are Erased



*Amelia Earhart, 1<sup>st</sup> female pilot to circumnavigate the globe*



*Sally Ride, 1<sup>st</sup> American female and youngest American astronaut in space*



*Lt. Col. Caroline Jensen, USAF, 1<sup>st</sup> Mom and 1<sup>st</sup> Reserve Officer to fly with Thunderbirds*



*Admiral Michelle Howard, 1<sup>st</sup> black female Commander, 1<sup>st</sup> 4-Star Gen, Vice Chief Naval Ops*



*Lt. General Nadja West, 1<sup>st</sup> black female 3-Star General, 1<sup>st</sup> black Army Surgeon General*



*Sara Faulkner, 1<sup>st</sup> female USCG Rescue Swimmer, saved 48 in Hurricane Katrina*



*Suffragettes, leaders of the American Women's Rights Movement*



*Lt. Colonel Christine Mau, 1<sup>st</sup> female pilot of F-35*

# Push 'em Back, Push 'em Back, Waaay Back!



## ECONOMIC BLACKOUT TOUR

April 7-14

Walmart Boycott

May 20-26

Walmart Boycott #2

April 18

Economic Blackout #2

June 3-9

Target Boycott

April 21-28

General Mills Boycott

June 24-30

McDonalds Boycott

May 6-12

Amazon Boycott #2

July 4

Show & Sale Boycott

## ELECTION SECURITY

Election Truth Alliance

<https://electiontruthalliance.org>

## STEALTH ACTIVISM

Resistance 2025

<https://resistance2025.info>

## Trustworthy News Sources



Bluesky



CBC



substack



THE  
CONTRARIAN  
Not Owned By Anybody

TPM  
TALKING POINTS MEMO



THEBULWARK

## Join Us for a UUPF 101 Workshop!

UUP invites you to attend a virtual UUP 101 workshop, hosted by statewide UUP Secretary-Treasurer Jeri O'Bryan-Losee.

This workshop is ideal for new and newly engaged members, members running for chapter office, or anyone who needs a refresher on UUP. It will cover UUP's structure, representation, responsibilities, and its role in the labor movement. This session is open only to members of the Farmingdale chapter. This is a great opportunity to focus on more Farmingdale-specific questions and to take the workshop with a smaller audience.

The webinar will be held on **Wednesday, March 26th at 3:00 PM.**

Please RSVP by replying to [uup@uupfarm.org](mailto:uup@uupfarm.org) by 12:00pm noon on Wednesday, March 26<sup>th</sup> to receive the Zoom link and login details.

For questions, contact Jeri O'Bryan-Losee at [jobryan@uupmail.org](mailto:jobryan@uupmail.org) or the chapter office at [uup@uupfarm.org](mailto:uup@uupfarm.org).

We look forward to seeing you on the webinar!



# Celebrating Women's History Month

## Elizabeth Kortright Monroe: The "First" First Lady from New York

By Daniel Scott Marrone

Among James Monroe's grand achievements was the Louisiana Purchase. While U.S. president, Monroe promoted "The Era of Good Feelings," and helped postpone for decades civil war in the nation through his championing of the Missouri Compromise (also known as the Compromise of 1820). Monroe declared in his 1823 address to Congress that the Western Hemisphere was "off-limits" to European colonization. This essential and enduring American foreign policy, staunchly advocated even to the present day, is called "The Monroe Doctrine."

Through turbulent politics, numerous perilous transatlantic ocean voyages, and thwarting danger during the "Reign of Terror" in Paris, Elizabeth Monroe was always at James Monroe's side, though her health steadily deteriorated over the years.

By the time James was President (1817-1825), Elizabeth was quite ill and noticeably absent at social functions in the Executive Mansion (later named the White House during the Theodore Roosevelt Administration). Thus, she has been viewed by some historians as aloof and lacking as First Lady. This is a gross injustice. In fact, Elizabeth Kortright Monroe, the "first" First Lady from New York State, was an American hero during the French Revolution!

From November 7, 1785 until November 3, 1786, the Congress of the Confederation met in the nation's temporary capital in New-York City (spelled with a hyphen until the five boroughs united into the City of Greater New York on January 1, 1898). While there, 27-year-old Virginia Senator James Monroe was introduced to 17-year old Elizabeth Kortright, who was a gifted student who excelled at the piano and with the French language.

Elizabeth possessed expressive blue eyes and a beautiful face enhanced by sumptuous brunette hair. She came from a *Nieuw Nederlander* family that was originally named van Kortryk. After a brief courtship, the six-foot strapping Virginian married the petite Dutch New York girl on February 16, 1786, at Trinity Church in lower Manhattan Island.

James planned to bring Elizabeth back to Virginia when his term in the Congress of the Confederation ended. By then, however, she was expecting a child and loath to leave her New-York City family. Nevertheless, she dutifully relocated to Virginia. In a letter to close friend Thomas Jefferson, James proudly wrote of his loyal, vivacious New York wife: "She left her state and her family and became a good Virginian."

James Monroe was appointed



Minister to France in 1793 during the French Revolution. James and Elizabeth both spoke French, though Elizabeth was far more adept with the language. On her 26<sup>th</sup> birthday, June 30, 1794, while residing in Paris, artist Louis Sene painted her portrait that he titled, "Little Smiling Venus." Parisiennes as a whole were agog with her attractiveness—thus, her French sobriquet was *La Belle Américaine*.

Not only beautiful, Elizabeth was also courageous. More than once, she risked her life to save Madame Marie Adrienne, noble-born wife of Continental Army Major General Marquis de La Fayette. Amid the French "Reign of Terror" and continuing in the "Thermidorian Reaction" years, those of noble birth were being imprisoned, with many being guillotined with "le rasoir national."

By the time Marie Adrienne was imprisoned, her sister, mother, and grandmother had already been executed by the "French national razor." Marie

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# Rallies, Rallies Everywhere Demonstrating That We Care!



*If you do your part, we —>*



# Celebrating Women's History Month

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Adrienne, la Marquise de La Fayette, was awaiting the same fate.

As an American official, Minister James Monroe considered it his duty to obtain the release of the wife of General La Fayette, hero of America's War for Independence. However, Monroe feared that Paris insurgents would misconstrue his actions to free Marie Adrienne as unwelcome U.S. meddling in the French Revolution.

To avoid a catastrophic political faux pas, Minister to France Monroe devised an indirect plan for the French noblewoman's rescue. The U.S. government would demonstrate to the French that the Marquise de La Fayette was, in fact, an American citizen. He assigned one of his diplomatic aides to undertake this perilous rescue plan. However, Elizabeth intervened and offered herself to volunteer for this highly risky task. Fearing for his wife's safety, James initially vehemently said no, but eventually relented to his persistent spouse. James stated in his autobiography:

I procured a carriage as soon as I could and had it put in best order with bold markings, 'Minister of the United States of America.' Accompanied by two coachmen, Elizabeth courageously rode through bloodthirsty street-mobs several times to reach the death-row prison to see the French noblewoman



awaiting the guillotine. Each time Elizabeth exited the prison, she yelled to the guards and mob gatherings [in French] that the Marquise de La Fayette was an American citizen and thus under the protection of the U.S. government.

The Paris *citoyen* took notice and began sympathizing with the noblewoman, who was spared execution and eventually released from prison. In risking her life to save Marie Adrienne, la Marquise de La Fayette, Elizabeth Kortright Monroe was a hero.

At the close of the Monroe presidency in March 1825, James and Elizabeth returned to their modest home they called "Highland," that happened to abut Jefferson's sprawling Monticello plantation in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Tragedy struck nine months later. In December of that year, Elizabeth suffered an epileptic seizure near a lit fireplace. When she awoke, Elizabeth was burned over much of her body. She never fully recovered and died on September 23, 1830, at age 62.

Following Elizabeth's death, James was emotionally devastated. He predicted that he too would soon die not only from a worsening case of tuberculosis, but also from the hurtful loss of his soulmate. Inconsolable, James left Virginia and moved to New-York City to live with daughter, Maria Hester, and her husband, Samuel Laurence Gouverneur. Having known and fought alongside the Marquis de Lafayette in the War for Independence, and of course considering Elizabeth's crucial role in saving la Marquise de La Fayette from the guillotine, it was apt that his daughter's house was located at Lafayette Place on Manhattan Island.

James died on July 4, 1831-- 55 years to the day after the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The cause of death was heart failure and, no doubt, a "broken heart," deeply missing his Elizabeth. Ironically, New Yorker Elizabeth died in Virginia, and James, a Virginian, died in New-York City.

Though James Monroe has been justly ranked in the top quartile of U.S. presidential rankings, Elizabeth Monroe has been forgotten, or even worse, denigrated as First Lady. This mistaken perception of her is iniquitous—grossly unfair and morally wrong. Both James and Elizabeth Monroe, *La Belle Américaine*, the "first" First Lady from New York, were authentically great American Patriots! ♦



## FARMINGDALE CHAPTER

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## Did you know that all UUP members qualify for PUBLIC SERVICE LOAN FORGIVENESS?



**UUP MEMBERS  
HAVE ALREADY  
HAD MORE THAN  
\$10 MILLION  
IN FORGIVENESS!**

### Virtual PSLF clinics held every payday.

Presented by your Statewide Secretary-Treasurer Jeri O'Bryan-Losee, [jobryan@uupinfo.org](mailto:jobryan@uupinfo.org)

Open to all UUP members, these 1.5-hour workshops talk you through the  
Income-Driven Repayment Plans AND Public Service Loan Forgiveness:

**LEARN ABOUT THE NEW DOE PSLF WAIVER!**

### UPCOMING UUP VIRTUAL STUDENT DEBT CLINIC WEBINAR

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2025—5:00 PM—6:30 PM** via ZOOM



Register through the UUP Events Calendar

[UUPINFO.ORG/CALENDAR/](https://uupinfo.org/calendar/)

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

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

#### CIVIL RIGHTS COMMITTEES:

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

#### LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES:

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#### PROCESS COMMITTEES:

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Finance  
Grievance

The UUPF Newsletter welcomes articles and letters submitted by members of the 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)