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Candidate Biography

I am a native of Boston, Mass., where I attended Boys Latin School. It is a tradition for Harvard to select about twenty Boston Latin kids each year, and I was one of them. After graduating from Harvard with a degree in psychology I attended Boston University, graduating with a Ph.d. in English. I have for a little over twenty years been an English professor at NYIT where I have published poetry, literary criticism, art criticism, and some political writing. A book of poetry and travel essays, with art and photographs by Dennis Balk, *Border Crossing*, appeared a few years ago. I serve on the Executive Council of the AAUP at NYIT and on the National Council. I started Centerfood Co-op. This involvement in the movement to support earth friendly food production dovetailed with many of the concerns addressed in Occupy Wall Street, as did my work with the union. I play a leading role in various Occupy groups in Long Island. Currently, I am organizing an Occupy arts festival to be held this summer in Huntington and I am doing a good deal of writing for an Occupy arts organization in Zuccotti Park. I taught for four semester at NYIT's satellite campuses in Bahrain and Jordan, and this experience has led me to advocate at my college and in the state conference of the AAUP for the rights of contingent faculty abroad. I am also a strong supporter of global education. I was tenured during a period of financial exigency at the college. The stress of tenure review under such conditions is vivid in my memory. I would like to do anything possible to help colleagues avoid such anxieties and to help build models of governance beneficial to academic institutions and to the professorate.

Candidate Statement

My experience in social and political organizations, from mental health and anti-poverty work in the poorer neighborhoods of Boston to recent involvement in the AAUP and the Occupy movement, suggests that the AAUP can and should play a role as a vanguard labor and intellectual force for social justice, if we take deliberate steps to follow such a course. This means offering more than policy papers and statements, important as they are. We have begun to reach out to political organizations, including the Occupy movement, and we should, I argue, do more of that. We can, and should, take the initiative to call or otherwise reach out to colleagues in campuses around the country to offer our support and at a minimum to maintain the dialogue and organizational help that member dues pay for, or so one would hope. I admire the exhausting work of Howard Bunsis and others do to help organizing drives around the country, and would advocate making support of such efforts our first priority when it comes to allocation of resources.

It may be uncomfortable to point this out, but the AAUP leadership is, on average, rather gray and stiff in the gait. It might be time to enlist officers for the national AAUP who can outrun pepper spray cops and college presidents, outwork the opposition lawyers and outthink the right wing shells who make our lives difficult. My time in the mile is still under six, and the rest comes naturally.