

DONNA YOUNG

## STATEMENT

Academia is in crisis. Colleges and universities are increasingly pressured to act as training grounds for corporate interests. The defunding of public institutions, the attacks on diversity, the legal assault on collective bargaining, the reduction in tenure-track positions, the exploitation of contingent faculty, and the staggering student debt are part of a corporate model in which critical inquiry must yield to market imperatives. As an AAUP council member, I would welcome the opportunity to help harness the energy, creativity, and commitment of faculty from around the country to organize against these threats to higher education's traditional role of serving the public good, and to help recruit younger and more diverse members to better reflect the changing face of the academy.

As a professor of labor and employment law, I understand too well that the law is almost entirely ineffective in addressing the incursions into higher education of business interests that foster contingency, insecurity, and hostility to tenure, academic freedom, and shared governance. But I have an abiding faith that faculty can organize to sustain the values and practices necessary to do our jobs and to promote the common good.

During the most tumultuous time of my career, when my institution was threatening a "headcount reduction" involving the dismissal of tenured professors without cause or demonstrated bona fide financial exigency, I turned to the AAUP, not to the legal system. The AAUP staff nurtured my activism, provided a national support system for my campus AAUP chapter, and helped us effectively organize resistance to the assault on academic norms at my institution.

In 2014 I took a leave of absence from teaching to join the AAUP staff in the Department of Academic Freedom, Tenure, and Governance. I was exposed to the intricacies and incoherence of college and university governance and saw firsthand the methods employed by legislatures, governing boards, and administrations to undermine the promise of higher education.

Though I have returned to teaching and I continue to serve on Committee A, I hope that as a council member I can help the AAUP not just survive but thrive.

## BIOGRAPHY

As an AAUP staff member and a member of Committee A I have had the great honor of visiting college and university campuses, meeting with faculty members, AAUP chapters, faculty senates, and administrations to discuss shared governance, academic freedom, diversity and due process, race on campus, student protests, Title IX, and the connection between neoliberalism, austerity, and contingency.

I have led training sessions at the Summer Institute, organized and participated on panels at annual meetings, guest edited an *Academe* Issue on *Race on Campus*, and co-authored *The History, Uses, and Abuses of Title IX*, a report prepared by a joint subcommittee of Committee A and the Committee on Women in the Academic Profession.

I have been a professor at the Albany Law School in Albany, New York for more than two decades where I have taught and researched in the areas of employment and labor law, criminal law, and feminist and critical race theory. Before entering the academy, I worked at a union-side labor law firm in Toronto, as a consultant at the Ontario Human Rights Commission, and in the legal department at the City of New York, Mayor's Office of Labor Relations. I taught at Columbia Law School as Associate-in-Law while obtaining an LL.M. I have been awarded fellowships and served in visiting positions in the United States, Canada, and Italy where I also served as a consultant to the International Development Law Organization. I have presented my work at conferences in the U.S., Canada, Sri Lanka, Italy, Germany, Hungary, France, Mexico, and the U.K.

I received a B.Sc. from the University of Toronto, an LL.B from Osgoode Hall Law School in Toronto, and an LL.M. at Columbia Law School. I am a member of the New York State Bar.