

**The 2016 National AAUP Conference
June 15-19, 2016
Reported by Yuko Kurahashi**



**Capitol Hill Day
June 16, 2016**

At the Constituent Coffee Session in the morning, Senator Brown addressed an imperative of gun control measures at all levels. He commended Senator Chris Murphy who filibustered for nearly 15 hours, moving Republican Party Leaders to agree to allow votes on two proposed gun control measures. Senator Brown also expressed his deep concerns about soaring student loan debt, reduction of state funding, increasing burden placed on faculty (adjunct faculty in particular). He so engaged in a conversation with us--the AAUP Ohio delegates-- that one of his aides had to tell him "it's time to go." Later we had an opportunity to visit Senators Brown's and Portman's offices, as well as some house representatives.



We pointed to, constructively, a vicious cycle caused by the current job market, rising tuition, and standardized exams, course, programs (and degrees) driven by profit-centered organizations such as Complete College America. Specifically we addressed the need for reassessment of "Prior Learning Assessment and Competency-Based Education " and "Higher Education and the Student Loan Industry" and advocated "Reclaiming of the promise of the Higher Education Act." Senator Portman's assistant Allen Ernst told us that an intern at the Senator's office last year was from Kent State University and she told him that without the Perkins Loan Program, she would not have completed her degree.



Nene Roy, a professor at Akron University and I visited Anne Sokolov, Legislative Director in the office of Rep. Tim Ryan. In addition to these issues of higher education, we addressed the importance of working for gun control at all levels, and how "critical thinking skills" learned in higher education would help people to examine today's gun-related violence more constructively as opposed to treating them as "ISIS attacks."

In the late morning, some of us could attend Congress in session. When we entered the gallery, Nancy Pelosi was calling for action on gun control legislation.

This is my second Capitol Hill Day. Last year was my first and it was great to work with new and "old" Ohio delegates. I see lobbying as part of our ongoing efforts to provide students with higher education as a "public good."



Sessions on June 18, 2016

Session 6E **Service Learning**

Jennifer A Yee discussed the creating of a service-learning class in her department, Asian American Studies. Yee has worked on since the mid-2000s at California State University, Fullerton and developed it into a general education course. Diana I Rios (U of Connecticut) presented how La Comunidad Intellectual, a learning community she served for as the faculty director. Both professors' presentations demonstrate how individual professors can take a step to enhance a university-community partnership to enhance service learning, social justice, and diversity education.

Session 7-B **The History, Uses and Abuses of Title IX**

Risa Lieberwitz (Cornell University), Tina Kelleher (Towson University) and Donna Young (Albany Law School) explain how Title IX was created, and how the interpretation of some terms are so freely and arbitrarily interpreted, used, and abused to the extent it constantly harms students, faculty, administrators, and institutions as seen in the case of Teresa Buchanan at LSU. This is a big issue that all of us need to work on and continue to educate people at the Office of Civil Rights and beyond. They first need to read Lillian Hellman's *The Children's Hour* for sure.

Session 9B

The Great GASB (Government Accounting Standards Board): Statement 68 and Its consequence. Linda Rouillard and Thomas Atwood (U of Toledo) made a presentation of how Statement 68 in GASB

"Statement 68 requires governments providing defined benefit pensions to recognize their long-term obligation for pension benefits as a liability for the first time, and to more comprehensively and comparably measure the annual costs of pension benefits." (Homepage). What it means is that the universities have to carry the liabilities for faculty pensions, rather than the state.

Rouillard and Atwood recommended David Sirota's *The Plot Against Pensions* (2013).

Session 10A **Faculty Governance**

James L DeBoy (Lincoln University, PA) gave us a historical glimpse of faculty governance and shared governance dating back to Yale College President A.T. Hadley's words "In the government of Yale College, the Faculty legislates, the President concurs, and the Corporation ratifies" addressed at the turn of the 20th century.

Timothy Kaufman-Osborn (Whitman College) discussed three phases of the University of Wisconsin system. In the most recent phase, with the elimination of tenure from state law, the principle of shared governance has been drastically weakened.

Reception

I had a pleasure of talking to a professor at the College of Saint Rose (New York) who was instrumental in efforts for protest against the termination of 23 tenured and tenure-track appointments. At the general meeting, the College of Saint Rose was added to the list of censured administrations.