FAUW FORUM

Issue 143
February 2010
David Wang, Editor

President's Message

George Freeman, Electrical & Computer Engineering

My story for today is not about new decade resolutions but rather about 'shame' and your two-dollar investment (this is a crude, one significant figure, engineering upper bound to the average cost per member) in the preservation of democracy. FAUW spent that money to send two people—me, representing the Faculty Association of University of Waterloo, and Kieran Bonner, representing the St. Jerome's University Academic Staff Association—to Thunder Bay, Ontario to take part in a rally on December 21 in opposition to recent events at Lakehead University (LU). In a nutshell, LU got into financial difficulty so their administration unilaterally decided to close the university from December 21 to 24 and not pay anyone for those four days. Effectively a two-percent salary cut was imposed, in apparent violation of the collective agreement between their Board of Governors and the Lakehead University Faculty Association (LUFA). Some were also calling it a lockout, which too would violate the collective agreement, because of the attempt to fully close and lock down LU for four days. As you might expect, this didn't work out so well because lots of people have keys, some services are essential, some labs can't be unsupervised for that long, etc. Still, conditions were not conducive to working, much like we would see when UW is closed for the Christmas holidays. Certain noninsured benefits and vacations were to be suspended for the four days as well. The matter is in arbitration and some wonder if the associated legal costs will in fact take a big bite out of any financial gain to LU.

How does a university get into such dire financial straits that it turns *on* (instead of *to*) its own? What I heard was that LU may have overborrowed, made risky monetary investments, overextended itself with a campus in Orillia (1250 km south-east by car from Thunder Bay, 115 km north of York University), and made poor strategic

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

FAUW ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, April 6, 2010
2:00 pm, MC 4020

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moves such as purchasing and partially renovating a building well removed from campus for a planned law school which was subsequently not approved by the province. If negotiating a pay reduction, I assume LUFA would have wanted some type of independent budget analysis to justify financial exigency. Thus, speculation is that the unilateral move was to avoid such disclosure. Jim Turk, Executive Director of CAUT, referred to the closure as the most flagrant violation of collective agreements that CAUT has seen in Canada.

Recently, in another context, I read a remark where the writer claimed that democracies are most prosperous during periods when property rights are most respected. What is a contract, if not the essence of a property right? Will actions like this one lead Ontario to higher prosperity? I reserve one last 'shame on you' to the LU administration for the implications inherent in the closure timing: that if it's done in a period of low impact on students then it doesn't matter, and that the job of professor can be randomly paused and restarted like a building construction site. Professors profess a discipline. That is what we bring of value to the university. We don't turn our minds on and off on a schedule. The times when student demands are low are precious for other tasks. I dare say that LU in all likelihood got the full year of value from its side of the contract with LUFA members.

There were about 250 people involved in the protest, including representatives from most Ontario universities, from provinces across Canada, and from several other unions. The passers-by of Thunder Bay gave lots of support in honks and waves. Santa Claus (who bore a *striking* resemblance to an Adjunct Instructor from Queen's University School of Computing) arrived early to deliver stockings (sadly, containing only coal) for four LU administrators. There was a report on the Thunder Bay television station, but as yet I have not seen the protest reported more widely. Still, I believe it was essential to provide moral support to LUFA, to take a stand in solidarity against something shameful, and for each of us to take home the lessons learned.

Could something similar occur here at UW? With our present administration and atmosphere, I would have to postulate not. First, although I may disagree with some initiatives, I don't see UW becoming trapped in financially risky plays at the moment. For initiatives where I have the knowledge, or where FAUW has pushed for details, I have seen some rational plan and exit strategy. Second, although FAUW stands in opposition to UW Administration on some issues, we are not in an 'us-versus-them' relationship. We talk often and openly about things. I have high respect for our VPAP in terms of his ethical stance and his desire for transparency and proactive problem solving. Still, if you have followed developments at St. Jerome's University over the past year or two, you have seen that threats to collegial governance can grow very quickly and necessitate a large diversion of talent from the mission of the institution into restoration of the working environment.

The LU administration, in justifying their closure, claims a 'right to manage.' To avoid getting into such a situation here, I suggest considering instead 'responsibility to manage' and 'ability to manage.' FAUW works constantly on the first and so can you—just take seriously the approval chain, especially at the Faculty and Senate levels. On the second point, be aware of the importance of nomination/election committees and, again, get involved by encouraging the right people to serve, by agreeing to serve yourself, or by providing input.

FAUW Forum

The FAUW Forum is a service for UW faculty sponsored by the Association. It seeks to inform members about current Association matters, to promote the exchange of ideas and to foster open debate on issues with a wide and balanced spectrum of views.

Opinions expressed in the Forum are those of the authors, and ought not to be perceived as representing the views of the Association or its Board of Directors unless so specified. Members are invited to submit letters, news items and brief articles.

If you do not wish to receive the Forum, please contact the Faculty Association Office and your name will be removed from the mailing list.

Editorial

David Wang, Electrical & Computer Engineering

Professors are protected from attacks and harassment based on race, religion or gender by our university policies and guidelines. Most of us take for granted that we won't experience situations that can still occur in other settings or workplaces. Imagine my surprise when it was pointed out to me in March of 2009 that some anonymous person had posted hate-mongering accusations on the infamous Rate My Professor site. I was stunned to read comments such as:

- Do not ever make the mistake of having David Wang as a graduate supervisor. He will treat you as a subhuman if you're not a religious.
- David Wang tries to ram his religious beliefs down other people's throats. What a bigot.
- Your religious bigotry is no better than racial bigotry. David Wang is a vicious bigot who should be fired.

These accusations are entirely false. I do not hide the fact that I am Christian but I have never brought religion into the classroom. It would be pretty difficult to do so as I teach mostly math and engineering courses. I have always had graduate students who were not Christian, including a large number of Muslim students, and I have always treated their beliefs with respect. In other words, this anonymous writer chose to use this website to attack my character in a libelous manner.

After informing the website of these attacks, they did eventually remove the comments but left one very negative rating from this anonymous person, as if to somehow reflect the fact that these negative attacks held some modicum of legitimacy. In December of last year, more comments were posted and they were more threatening:

- David Wang … will try to shove his religion down your throat. Instead, he can shove it up his rear end.
- David Wang is a vicious bigot that should be fired. Waterf*ck shouldn't tolerate his bigotry.

This time, it took over a month for the comments to be deleted but, again, one negative rating was left on the site. This delay in taking any action is contrary to their claims in their FAQ:

- Comments on RateMyProfessors.com are continually moderated by a real person on a daily basis, and any that are not consistent with our guidelines are removed.
- Every now and then an inappropriate rating manages to slip past us. As a safeguard, there are also multiple one-click ways for students or teachers to report errors or inappropriate listings…. Comments are automatically scanned for profanity, racist and disrespectful remarks about professors. They are also automatically scanned for duplication so that no student can add multiple comments about the same subject to one professor during the same session. If there are any comments that are outlandish or inappropriate- we work to quickly address them and correct the situation.

It has definitely been my experience that these claims are false. Although this attack was directed towards someone who is Christian, it could just as easily have been an attack on a person of another religion or comments about one's race or gender. In 2006, the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) published a document, which is accessible on their website (see links at end of article), outlining the difficulty of totally eliminating these types of websites, and how expensive and difficult it would be for an individual to take action. Ratemyprofessors.ca has also come up from time to time with FAUW, but usually in terms of how such sites should not be used in merit evaluations.

Even if elimination of such sites is not feasible, at the very least they should be very tightly moderated by the owners, with every comment and rating evaluated before being allowed to go public, which the website claims to do but obviously does not. Comments that are libelous should be removed immediately, not left for weeks for others to see. Some of my children stumbled onto this site and it was, frankly, quite upsetting to have to talk about this with them. Personally, I am not convinced that some sort of legal action might not at least have this minimal standard enforced.

This particular site appears to be owned by affiliates of MTV, but it is difficult to find anyone who takes direct ownership of the content. Even a single lawsuit could potentially bring some accountability as the website claims it will reveal the identity of an offending contributor under a court order. In any event, if the owners of these types of websites are not willing to expend the resources to ensure that no one takes advantage of the forum to denigrate another individual, then academia should fight hard to have these sites severely restricted in how they operate. Freedom of expression should be protected, but these types of personal and derogatory attacks should never be tolerated.

WEBSITES & LINKS FOR THIS ARTICLE:

Rate My Professor:
www.ratemyprofessors.ca

CAUT Legal Advisory:
Rate My Professor.ca—
What Can be Done?

Update on Merit and Women's Salary Equity Reviews

David DeVidi, Philosophy, FAUW Past President

Since FAUW and the Administration are in the middle of salary negotiations, it is probably apt to report on the results of two important initiatives that were part of the previous salary agreement. When a two year salary settlement was reached in 2008, it included provision for the creation of working groups to investigate two issues of longstanding concern to FAUW members, namely salary equity for women faculty and the annual performance review process for faculty. Membership in the two working groups was jointly determined by the Provost and FAUW President of the day, Amit Chakma and me.

Women's Salary Equity

The report of the salary equity committee was released in the spring of 2009. The full report is available on the FAUW web site (http://www.fauw.uwaterloo.ca). FAUW has only limited information about the outcomes of specific cases (e.g., we do not know how large an adjustment individual members received, which members fell into which categories—unless they told us, but I will review some of the relevant information we do have.

In the second stage of their investigations, the committee looked carefully at the files of those women faculty for whom a preliminary round of investigation suggested there may be a significant salary anomaly. In the end, the committee divided those cases into three categories. In the first category were **six*** women for whom there was unquestionably a salary anomaly. These **six*** received an immediate salary adjustment, the amount of which was determined by the Provost. At the other end of the spectrum were women whom the committee determined not to have a salary anomaly.

This left a group of 27 women in a middle category. These cases were variously described by members of the committee as not having a current salary anomaly but needing to have their cases watched carefully as they were in danger of becoming anomalous, or as arguably having an anomaly but the case not being as clear as for those in the first category. These members received letters from the University describing their status. Unfortunately, the wording of these letters left many of them with the impression that it had been determined that there was a problem, but that the University was not now going to do anything about it. FAUW heard from more than a dozen members who received these letters; Associate Provost Bruce Mitchell, the chair of the working group, also heard from several.

When the impression these letters left with members was raised as an issue by FAUW at Faculty Relations, the University took the matter to Deans' Council. The deans decided that: (a) each of these 27 cases would be considered by the dean of the faculty member's faculty to determine whether an adjustment was warranted; and (b) the deans would work to come up with a mechanism by which the salaries of all faculty members can be monitored each year to spot potential anomalies as they arise.

This was a very positive development. FAUW's remaining worry at the time was that the deans did not take up our suggestion that there be a uniform mechanism applied by all the deans as they reviewed these 27 files, in hope of a fair result across campus; instead, what FAUW was told was that each dean would use the methodology standard in the particular faculty for determining whether a salary was anomalous.

The result of the deans' review was good news for several members. More than half (14) of these 27 members received a salary adjustment. However, there is a residual worry for FAUW: all of the 13 cases that did not receive an adjustment were clustered in two faculties—that is, in four of six faculties, 100% of women faculty in this middle group received salary adjustments, while in one small faculty it was 0% (zero out of three), and in one large faculty the success rate was about 17%. It seems to FAUW unlikely, or at least in need of explanation, that the methodology used by the working group would turn up "false positives" in such a discipline specific way. As we understand it, at least one of the deans from the low-success-rate faculties will be checking to see whether using the methodology employed by another dean would have made a difference to the results.

By pointing to remaining concerns, FAUW does not intend in any way to diminish the quality or importance of the work done by the committee. We also recognize that this process was undertaken for the best of motives all around, namely to address an important and ongoing issue of fairness, and were pleased that Deans' Council responded constructively when expressions of concern were heard after the release of the report. However, as things

stand, we are concerned that the results will leave some of the very faculty members at the centre of the concerns the whole initiative disillusioned. We therefore hope the deans will continue to work with us on these residual concerns, so that we can all be sure that the end result was fair to faculty members all across campus.

Faculty Performance Evaluation
The working group investigating the annual performance review process also released its report in the spring, and it too is available on the FAUW web site. The report includes many recommendations that the committee suggests would improve the fairness and transparency of the process.

Since the release of the report, FAUW has in a number of different ways sought feedback from faculty members (writing to them directly, putting out appeals via the Council of Representatives, etc.), and received some. The FAUW Board of Directors discussed the recommendations at length, taking this feedback into account. In general, the report has been positively received both by the members who have read it and by the Administration. This generally positive reception set the stage for discussions at the Faculty Relations Committee in the fall term of how and whether the recommendations of the report would be implemented.

In general, members of FRC have agreed that the bulk of the recommendations, subject to certain clarifications or adjustments they have worked out, can be implemented immediately: that is, they can be put in place as of January 2010 so that they can be used when 2010 performance is evaluated early in 2011. In particular, the recommendations designed to increase the transparency of the process, and the usefulness of the feedback the process provides to (especially pre-tenure) faculty members do not require significant modifications to policy or the Memorandum of Agreement, and should be put in place as soon as possible.

Two of the recommendations have been set aside for further discussion, and so will not be implemented for the coming year. Both would require significant adjustments to policy or the M of A, and the second requires further consideration of its implications. These are the recommendations that: (a) tenured faculty and continuing lecturers have merit reviews only every second year; (b) the existing rubrics (e.g., 1.0 is "satisfactory", 1.5 is "very good", etc.) be replaced by a system in which there is a fixed mean and median score that corresponds to "the very strong performance typical of Waterloo faculty members", with strict percentage limits on the number of people who can receive scores above that level in each faculty in any given year.

Finally, while FRC recognizes that some distortion to the merit process results from the informal practices used to persuade people to take on significant administrative roles like being a Chair or an Associate Dean, the recommendation that a percentage of the stipend one gets for holding such a position become a permanent salary enhancement has been set aside as something that needs to be considered apart from the merit process.

*Note: This figure has been corrected from three to six after publication.

How to contact FAUW

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FAUW NOTICES

David DeVidi Wins CAUT Distinguished Service Award

At December's General Meeting, the Faculty Association was pleased to present David DeVidi with the Canadian Association of University Teachers Distinguished Service Award in recognition of his tireless efforts on behalf of the membership over the past several years. As the FAUW President (2007-09), the interim chair of the Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee, a member of the committee that authored the Report on Faculty Performance Review, a long-serving Senator, and a key member of the Faculty Relations Committee, Dave has always modeled highly effective and collegial leadership in sometimes-challenging conditions and continues to give his time generously to many initiatives on campus.

FAUW Vice-President Shelley Hulan presented David DeVidi with the CAUT Distinguished Service Award

CAUT Workload Study

How much do university faculty members work, and what exactly is it that they do?

The Canadian Association of University Teachers will be launching a national study in early February to gather hard data on these two questions. CAUT will email invitations to a sample of more than 10,000 Canadian faculty members asking them to complete the comprehensive online survey. To facilitate accuracy, respondents will be able to download and review a complete copy of the survey instrument prior to logging into the survey instrument. The survey may be completed in stages and respondents will be able to revise previous responses prior to completion. The survey will be open through the month of March.

If you are among the faculty members invited by CAUT to participate in the survey, we urge you to take the time to complete it. A high response rate will better equip CAUT as a national organization to articulate the needs and value of the professoriate, while also providing local associations with important comparative data to assist in their advocacy efforts.

FAUW Membership at Grad House Discontinued

Since 1999 the Faculty Association has purchased an annual membership in Grad House for all those who pay dues to FAUW. This began as a way to support Grad House at a time when it found itself in financial difficulties. The cost has remained at $1,000 a year, which works out to just under $1 per person with our current numbers.

Grad House is no longer offering this membership plan to FAUW as the rate cannot be justified when compared to that paid by grad students, about $45/year. Individual members of the UW community may purchase an affiliate membership at $20 per term. Information is available online at http://www.gsa.uwaterloo.ca/house/membership/ or by contacting Rose Vogt at rvogt at uwaterloo.ca.

Call for Submissions: 37th Annual OCUFA Teaching and Academic Librarianship Awards

Each year the Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations celebrates outstanding achievement in teaching and academic librarianship at Ontario universities. Nominations can be submitted by any group or individual within the university community. Award recipients are selected by an independent OCUFA committee that consists of faculty members, librarians and student representatives.

Nomination guidelines and information on this year's awards are available from the Faculty Association office or online at http://www.ocufa.on.ca/Awards.tala.gk. The nomination deadline is May 7, 2010.

New Amalgamated Daycare Board of Directors Needs Faculty Involvement

In October 2009, UW announced plans to combine its three existing day care facilities (Paintin' Place, Klemmer and Hildegard Marsden) into one new facility. The result will be a net increase of approximately 50 daycare spaces on campus. The new daycare centre will be located in the Columbia Lake Village townhouse complex. The project is scheduled to go out to tender soon. The centre will be managed by a board of directors which includes representation from the various campus employee and student groups, including FAUW. In addition, volunteers will be needed to help get the new centre up and running. For more information, please contact Doreen Fraser (Philosophy) at dlfraser at uwaterloo.ca or x32780.

Are you a Faculty Association member?

Under the Memorandum of Agreement, Faculty Association fees are deducted automatically from the pay cheques of all regular faculty members; however, **membership in FAUW is voluntary.** FAUW needs the involvement of members from all units in order to serve those we represent effectively. If you're not a member, please fill in the online membership form at www.fauw.uwaterloo.ca. If you're uncertain about your status, please contact Miriam Kominar at x35158 or mkominar at uwaterloo.ca.

Membership is required to nominate candidates or run for election to the Board of Directors (see p.8), to vote in FAUW elections and at general meetings, to serve on the Council of Representatives and FAUW standing and ad hoc committees, and to serve on University committees whose members are jointly appointed by the Vice-President, Academic and Provost and the Association President.

Presidential Nominating Committee Seeking Opinions

Memorandum

To: Faculty and Staff, University of Waterloo
From: Bob Harding, Chair, Presidential Nominating Committee
Date: January 25, 2010

As prescribed by Policy 50, the Presidential Nominating Committee has begun to solicit the opinions of the members of the university with respect to the institution's sixth president and vice-chancellor who is expected to take office July 1, 2011.

One way in which the committee is seeking opinion is by inviting written comment. The committee is particularly interested in knowing your views on the issues and challenges the president will face, what the next president should accomplish in her/his first term (you may wish to refer to the *Sixth Decade Plan* at http://www.secretariat.uwaterloo.ca/sixth_decade/theplan.html) and the qualities a president should possess to achieve this.

Written comments and opinions should be submitted to the committee through the Secretary of the University, Lois Claxton, Needles Hall, Room 3060 on or before March 31, 2010. If you prefer to make your comments orally, please feel free to contact any member of the committee. The membership list can be found at: http://www.secretariat.uwaterloo.ca/elections/pncmembers.htm.

This invitation for comment is only one means by which the committee will solicit the views of the university community. Any information or comments provided to members of the committee will be held in confidence by the committee.

FAUW CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

PRESIDENT (one-year term of office) and **DIRECTORS** (four to be elected to two-year terms of office)

The Faculty Association of the University of Waterloo invites nominations for its Board of Directors. The Board consists of eleven Association members: the president, past-president, eight at-large directors, plus one director elected by and from the St. Jerome's University Faculty Association. All faculty and librarians who are members of the Association are eligible to sit on the Board. Under the Memorandum of Agreement, service to the Association is considered service to the University when faculty members are assessed for the purposes of annual performance reviews, tenure, and promotion.

The Board considers all matters concerning faculty relations with UW's administration, university governance as it affects the Association membership, and the Memorandum of Agreement. The Board meets bi-weekly.*

The positions of president and director (four vacancies) are open for terms that will begin July 1, 2010. The term for the president is one year and for directors, normally two years. Incumbents may run for re-election subject to limits specified in the Constitution. Nominations must be signed by three members of the Association and nominees must agree in writing to stand for election. Nomination forms may be found on the FAUW website (www.fauw.uwaterloo.ca) or obtained from the Faculty Association office in the Math and Computer building, Rooms 4001 and 4002. **The deadline for nominations to be received in the FAUW office is 4:30 pm, March 5, 2010.**

The Faculty Association is one of the few bodies on campus where faculty and librarians can effect changes in University policies and procedures. It needs the involvement of members from all units in order to serve the membership effectively and to represent its concerns well to other members of the University community. Please consider standing for one of these positions.

Elections Committee:
Shelley Hulan, English Language and Literature, Chair
David DeVidi, Philosophy

*Board meetings are scheduled bi-weekly on Thursday afternoons from 2:30-4:30 pm, September through June.

CURRENT FAUW BOARD OF DIRECTORS

TERM ENDING 2010

President

George Freeman (Electrical and Computer Engineering)

Past President

David DeVidi (Philosophy)

Directors

Kelly Anthony (Health Studies and Gerontology)

Susan Leat (Optometry)

David Porreca (Classical Studies)

Frank Zorzitto (Pure Mathematics)

TERM ENDING 2011

Directors

Shelley Hulan (English Language and Literature)

Doris Jakobsh (Religious Studies)

Doug Kirton (Fine Arts)

Metin Renksizbulut (Mechanical and Mechatronics Engineering)

Director elected by and from the St. Jerome's University Faculty Association

Cyntha Struthers (Mathematics)

Parking Update

Roydon Fraser, Mechanical & Mechatronics Engineering

Usually parking changes move slowly, at least until the day you are required to move out of Lot B and into Lot X. Fact is UW has a parking shortage on the South Campus, unless you believe UW should actively discourage driving to work and school. I am not going to debate the pros and cons of our vehicle based society and how to implement social change. What I am going to do is provide you with an update that I personally find encouraging.

For quite a few years now I have been your faculty representative on the Advisory Committee on Traffic and Parking. It has not been easy. Nevertheless, in December 2009, with much prodding from me but also with a willingness by staff and the new parking administration, the Committee finally started to look at ideas that might actually start to reverse the dismal parking situation for many faculty and staff. The future situation for students is less certain.

So let's get to the meat of this update. Here is a summary of a few important ideas being considered by the Advisory Committee on Traffic and Parking:

1. I proposed that faculty, staff, and students be assigned parking lots based on job function. This got the discussion going with agreement to pursue the acceptability and feasibility of the following PARKING PRINCIPLES:

a. Give faculty, staff and, hopefully, graduate students priority for South Campus parking.

b. Implement fee differentials, with those parking around South Campus paying more than those parking on the fringes (e.g., Lot X). Part of the fee differential would pay for a real bus(es) with all-day and night hours travelling from fringe lots and also providing transportation around campus.

c. Give faculty and staff the option to move to fringe lots to pay less.

d. Make any lot that has card access available to other card access holders in the evening and night, with the possible exception of Lot H.

e. If the above principles fail, then a specific job function matrix scheme that includes seniority as per the campus vote will be pursued.

Note: Please realize that the above principles need your support as well as that of the Provost, as the Parking Committee is only advisory to the Vice-President, Academic and Provost.

2. A consultant has been engaged to present ideas on the construction and funding of a PARKING STRUCTURE on the South Campus. In parallel, Math will be looking at how to optimize parking.

3. In the near future there will be NO COIN VISITOR PARKING; payment for visitor parking will be by debit and credit card only.

4. It is hoped that a notice board approach to SWITCHING PARKING LOTS can be implemented. Specifically, if you want to move to a different lot and there is someone in your desired lot who has expressed an interest on the notice board in moving to your current lot, then a direct switch could take place.

If you have any strong opinions (OK, all parking opinions are strong) on the above, please tell me so I can get a sense of the acceptability of the above principles. It is not clear how students will react to the above as there was no student representative at the last meeting. However, the shuttle will be much improved and students will pay noticeably less for parking.

In closing, nothing is set in stone yet, but it is very encouraging to see the above seriously considered. And honestly, much of this change in attitude and considerations can be attributed, with thanks, to the new administration within parking.

A Note from the Editor

It has been a pleasure serving as editor of the FAUW Forum over the past 3 years. As I reported last year in one of my columns, a flood destroyed our house and the ensuing unsuccessful attempts to get any insurance coverage made it very difficult for me to put out the normal four issues of the Forum in 2009. Then, on New Year's Eve a pipe burst in E3, flooding an area that included my office (see photo) and decimating 20 years of work.

My life is becoming a blend of Job and Noah. As much as I have enjoyed writing and stirring the pot, this setback now requires me to focus on reproducing years of teaching and research material and I am, therefore, stepping down as editor.

I would like to thank all the fine people in FAUW who put in countless hours in support of the faculty. Roydon Fraser, Dave DeVidi and George Freeman have been amazing FAUW presidents and it has been exciting to see them at work. Finally, Pat Moore has my heartfelt gratitude for the enormous amount of work she puts into this fine organization.

David Wang