

AAUP AT-LARGE

CHENJERAI KUMANYIKA



VOTE THE SLATE: UNITED FACULTY FOR THE COMMON GOOD

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**AT-LARGE
CHENJERAI KUMANYIKA**

My name is Chenjerai Kumanyika and I'm running for the position of at-large member of the AAUP as part of the United Faculty for the Common Good slate.

Most of us understand that after years of decreasing budgets and faculty governance there are forces that want to turn our universities into corporations, crush our academic freedoms, saddle us with more debt and divide us. All of this will gain more momentum with the coming election. But let's remember that we've won before during challenging times. And that's why the coherent and unified vision for an AAUP that our slate is bringing is more important than ever. Even during the pandemic, because the scholars and leaders on this slate were organized we were able to carve out some powerful wins - and we have similar opportunities and responsibilities before us right now.

I come to AAUP through my experience as an African-American tenure-track faculty member who has experienced and struggled through moments of disempowerment, organizing and tremendous victory in the university. I've lived and/or worked in South Carolina, Philadelphia, New Jersey and New York, and I've seen how transformative organizing in higher education can be when we forge alliances with their broader communities and prioritize the common good.

I've experienced what it's like to work in conditions where workers don't have collective bargaining rights, places where tenure track faculty don't work in solidarity with non-tenure track faculty, staff or students, and where workers in higher education aren't in solidarity with the broader community. The outlines won't be surprising. Especially for the non-tenure track faculty, and graduation students, this meant increasing course loads, decreasing pay, and more unrecognized service commitments. I listened to stories of staff who had experienced forms of racial and sexual harassment - but feared retaliation if they attempted to take action.

My time in higher education also overlapped with several national movements including Black Lives Matter, Me Too, the resistance to the Trump administration's attacks on immigrants and higher education. Occupy ICE, and conservative movements against DEI and the humanities more broadly and currently the move for divestment from war profiteering and attacks on Gaza. While these issues have galvanized sections of our community, our leverage and our ability to stand up for the common good could have been strengthened by an AAUP that was willing to play a more engaged role in these fights.

Both collective bargaining chapters and advocacy chapters play key roles in what we are taking on. Currently, at New York University in our advocacy chapter, I've joined students, faculty, and staff across the world on the front lines as the spectacle of cops on campus and suppression of human rights, academic freedom and scholasticide abroad is pulling the higher education community together across disciplines, political opinions and work classifications to fight for the common good.

So I look forward to getting to know more of my colleagues and fellow

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workers in universities and in communities across the country and fighting with you.

BIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

My name is Chenjerai Kumanyika and I am an Assistant Professor of Journalism at New York University. Alongside my scholarship and teaching and disciplinary service on the intersections of social justice and media, I specialize in using narrative non-fiction audio journalism to critique the ideology of American historical myths about social justice advocacy, race, and gender, the civil war, and policing. I have written in scholarly venues such as *Popular Music & Society*, *Popular Communication*, *The Routledge Companion to Advertising and Promotional Culture*, as well as public venues such as *The Intercept*, *Transom*, *NPR Code Switch*, *All Things Considered*, *Invisibilia*, and *VICE*. I'm also the co-creator, co-executive producer and co-host of *Uncivil*, Gimlet Media's podcast on the Civil War and the collaborator for *Scene on Radio's* influential Season 2 "Seeing White," and Season 4 on the history of American democracy.

My work has been recognized with several prestigious honors including the George Foster Peabody Award (2018) for *Uncivil* and The Media Literate Media Award (NAMLE) for *Scene on Radio* (2021). In 2021, I received the Union of Democratic Communications' Dallas Smythe Award for my career accomplishments and advocacy.

Additionally, I serve as a board member for several organizations including, the Moth, Resolve Philly, Street Poets Inc., and the steering committee for the Union for Democratic Communication.

I studied mass communication and critical media studies at The Pennsylvania State University's Donald Bellisario College of Communication where I earned my Ph.D.

Link to candidate page:

unitedfacultyforthecommongood.org/chenjerai-kumanyika

For more information



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