

2009-10 OCUFA LORIMER AWARD
CITATION FOR MARVIN BAER

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Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations
Union des Associations des Professeurs des Universités de l'Ontario



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Read by Ian Sakinofsky, Chair, OCUFA Collective Bargaining Committee

For more than twenty years, the Queen's University Faculty Association (QUFA) and faculty across Ontario have benefited from Marvin's determination, intelligence, negotiating skills, and political understanding of the university structure and of the Administration. He will certainly be remembered for the dignity and security he negotiated for QUFA's Contract Academic Staff and for collective agreement provisions that have been reviewed and modelled by faculty associations across the country, but his work at QUFA encompasses much more.

Marvin's commitment to the protection of the rights of the Members of the Faculty Association and to collective bargaining has been evident throughout his long association with QUFA. Before QUFA had a Grievance Committee, Marvin was an active member of its predecessor, the Advisory and Support Group. This group vigorously defended Queen's faculty threatened with loss of their jobs and other serious matters before QUFA had the leverage associated with a collective agreement. Marvin was on the first bargaining team during QUFA's initial round of negotiations following certification in 1996 and was Chief Negotiator for six other bargaining sessions. He also served twice as President of QUFA before certification from 1989 to 1991 and then after certification from 1998 to 2000. Following those two presidential terms, he served for three more years as Past President.

As Chief Negotiator, Marvin's determination at the table has allowed QUFA to improve the terms and conditions of employment for all academic staff. His wry smile – as he described his attempts to “educate” administrators at the table – will be missed.

He worked hard over several rounds of bargaining to mitigate the growing disparities between the compensation of various disciplines through creative anomalies provisions and other mechanisms.

Marvin helped make gains for librarian and archivist members of the bargaining unit. He worked consistently with this group to ensure that they are treated equitably, and he has retained and extended their academic status and rights and improved their compensation which previously was amongst the lowest in the province.

In 2003, a large group of Contract Academic Staff certified with QUFA and Marvin led the negotiations for their first collective agreement. He consulted with Doug Lorimer regarding the Wilfred Laurier contract for a similar group. Many important improvements resulted from Marvin's support for this exploited group and his talent in bringing a very reluctant and unaware administration to recognize these employees' significant contributions to Queen's.



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When Marvin negotiated for the amalgamated bargaining unit in 2007, he attempted to obtain the same rights for all Contract Academic Staff that Regular Academic Staff already had. Marvin has always bargained with the Administration using the phrase “a professor is a professor is a professor.”

Marvin, an expert in insurance law, deserves much of the credit for QUFA’s success in negotiating for improvements in a wide range of benefits for QUFA Members. Many of these family-friendly benefits have been extended to other employee groups on campus and have gained Queen’s a ranking in Medicorp’s Canada’s top 100 Employers for 2010. It is mainly due to Marvin’s doggedness that Queen’s now enjoys this favourable ranking- although they may not want to admit it!

Marvin has been a valuable resource between bargaining sessions, helping to resolve issues related to the latest version of the collective agreement and how to interpret the intent of what was meant at the bargaining table. His excellent work is also recognized by faculty associations elsewhere, as they often consult him when they are bargaining.

Marvin’s commitment to QUFA and collective bargaining make him an ideal recipient for the Lorimer award and OCUFA is proud to confer this honour upon him. Congratulations.