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UNITED PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES UNION

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THE ADVOCATE

Making a Difference in the Workplace

Winter 2010

TOWN OF ISLIP BLUE COLLAR UNIT EMPLOYEES VOTE TO JOIN UPSEU

After forty years of City Union Local 237 of the Teamsters representation, Town of Islip Blue Collar unit employees finally said enough is enough. With ten wage freezes in just the past sixteen years, grievances ignored, phone calls unanswered, and a town management that was never put in check by the union, workers said they had enough.

By a vote of 180 to 123, the 385 member unit joined UPSEU in an election conducted by PERB. The Teamsters reached an agreement after two and a half years with no contract. The contract included two more zeros and raises averaging only 1.6% per year over six years. With dues being \$60.00 monthly for many unit members, unit employees kept falling further and further behind. The town certainly was banking on continuing its relationship with the Teamsters and went out of its way to attempt to assist the Teamsters throughout the period leading up to UPSEU's petition filing and throughout the entire campaign.

UPSEU hit the ground running after winning the election, conducting and completing elections for unit officers and beginning the process of electing departmental and location stewards throughout the township. The unit is diverse in departments and work locations so in order to ensure adequate representation in the unit, shop stewards have been elected in worksites throughout the town.

“While the town continues to attempt to thwart our visitation efforts, initially going into a lockdown of all Bay Shore yards, UPSEU is not swayed and will continue to visit our members even if it means getting a ladder to climb the fence to visit members,” stated UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. “Eventually the town will get the message that we are going to change the way they operate when it comes to how they treat town employees. Respect is a two way street,” Boyle continued on to say.



TOWN OF ISLIP BLUE COLLAR UNIT OFFICERS

L to R: UPSEU Town of Islip Release Liaison Peter Pollak, Aviation/Transportation VP Dave Chan, Unit Secretary John A. Mattia, Unit President Tom Snyder and Recreation VP Chris Warren. Not pictured: Public Safety VP Tom Keane, Public Works VP Ken Lipton and Environmental VP Bernard Dennis

Our Mission

United Public Service Employees Union is committed to being the preeminent labor organization representing public sector employees by providing professional, on-site representation, superior negotiations, and adherence to democratic principles which maintain the integrity of the Union for the benefit of our members and their families.

“We are making a difference in the workplace”



Officers of UPSEU

Kevin E. Boyle, Jr.

President

Gary M. Hickey

Executive Vice President

Kimberly Nowakowski

Vice President

Randy Tillman

Secretary/ Treasurer

James Gangale

Recording Secretary/ Trustee

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Linda Pickwick, *Editor*

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



UPSEU President
Kevin E. Boyle, Jr.

It seems as though nearly every time we open up a newspaper these days, incidents of bullying are making their way into headlines. Whether based on race, sexual orientation, jealousy, boredom, or just a matter of being in the wrong place at the wrong time, the end result is often a young person taking drastic measures to avoid the continuance of shame. Again and again there is public outrage over the needless loss of these young lives.

Now you may be wondering what this all has to do with the union or the labor movement itself. It was this very abuse of power that created the labor movement and continues to keep your UPSEU representatives busy fielding calls for help. Years ago the Pinkertons carried bats to discourage union organizing and worker solidarity. Today even though these attacks are often more psychological than physical, it is no less damaging to the workers. We have spoken with many forward thinking employers who agree with us that, "School bullies can grow up to be workplace bullies."

Statistics show that from 50% to 75% of all American workers have been affected by workplace bullying: 13% of all U.S. employees are currently bullied, 24% have been bullied in the past, and 12% have witnessed abusive behavior against a co-worker.

Legislators have been slow to grasp this or to create laws to protect the victims, educate the masses, and impact the culture of workplaces. Although the attention received is not nearly enough to end the bullying, it has created a greater awareness of this issue by our schools and has stressed the importance of early detection from childhood through college age.

With schools being pushed to take action, and students urged to speak up, workplaces are beginning to understand that workplace bullying is not a productive means of leadership. In fact, workplace bullies, not unlike student bullies, are marred by increased absenteeism, less productivity, and at times lethal consequences.

UPSEU has been an advocate for the creation of legislation involving workplace bullying, and as well, seeks workplace policies which allow complaints to be heard without retribution, but instead with corrective measures.

If you or someone you know has been or continues to be bullied in the workplace, please do not hesitate to contact your UPSEU representative. It is just as important for you as the witness to speak up as it is for the victim, since research has shown that being a witness can be just as damaging.

UPSEU recommends the following websites which provide information regarding what constitutes workplace bullying, strategies for dealing with bullies, and new legislation to encourage workplaces to be pro-active against workplace bullying:

www.nyhwa.org
(NY Healthy Workplace Advocates)
www.bullyinginstitute.org
www.bullyfreeworkplace.org
www.ehow.com/workplace-bullying

As always, your UPSEU representative is available to support and assist you.

Troy Command Officers Join UPSEU

UPSEU would like to welcome the City of Troy Command Officers to UPSEU's COPS Division. We are proud to add these officers to our growing number of police officers, who are now represented by COPS Division Labor Relations Representative Jack Rogers.

First Contract Settled for Parish Hill BOE

UPSEU and the Parish Hill Board of Education Clerical Unit recently settled their first contract. Although negotiations took more than a year, both sides felt that a fair agreement had been reached. Although the three year contract included modest wage increases, it did not include a zero for any year. A freeze on medical insurance for the length of the entire contract was also crucial to the settlement. UPSEU thanks negotiating team members Anne Mullen and Katherine Brown for their dedication in getting the job done by becoming unionized and settling their first contract.

Town of Marlborough Members Unanimously Ratify Contract



TOWN OF MARLBOROUGH NEGOTIATING TEAM
L to R: Gary Lazaroff, Shop Steward John Alonge and Cliff Rood

UPSEU members in the Town of Marlborough unanimously ratified a new four year contract. This new agreement provides members with wage increases, longevity increases, increased clothing allowance, new meal allowance and Article 41-J of the NYSERS, as well as enhanced health care benefits.

UPSEU Executive Vice President/Regional Director Gary M. Hickey, who headed the negotiations, extended thanks to the team of Gary Lazaroff, Cliff Rood, Shop Steward John Alonge and Labor Relations Representative Bill Sullivan for their efforts in achieving a great contract for their co-workers.

Washington County Dispatchers Join UPSEU

UPSEU adds yet another unit to their growing Coalition of Public Safety (COPS Division). Our newest members are all full time dispatchers for the County of Washington. Collective bargaining will begin soon. We welcome these dedicated employees into our family of public safety personell. These members will be represented by Labor Relations Representative Jack Rogers.

Welcome Aboard Allendale

New UPSEU members in the Borough of Allendale White Collar, Clerical and Dispatch Unit are currently in negotiations for their first union contract. Previously unrepresented, the committee led by Regional Director Jim Gangale and Labor Relations Representative Jim Bush consists of Shop Steward Jennifer Sidoti and Assistant Shop Steward Gwen Gordon. Welcome aboard Allendale.

Waterford Police

UPSEU/ COPS Division would like to formally welcome the Waterford Police Officers. The Connecticut State Labor Board has now certified UPSEU/COPS as their exclusive bargaining representative. Several attempts by AFSCME to have the results of the February 16, 2010 election overturned, were rejected by the Labor Board who ruled in favor of UPSEU/COPS.

Several hearings were held and both sides had the opportunity to provide evidence and present their case to the State Labor Board for a ruling. In spite of all the stall tactics and delays used by AFSCME, once again UPSEU/COPS prevailed.

Thank you to all who made it possible for UPSEU/COPS to have the opportunity to serve you, and to provide a better future for you and your families.

Welcome Fairview Library

UPSEU would like to welcome our new members at Fairview Library in New Jersey. These employees, previously with CWA Local 1045, said they were abandoned by their former union who stopped visiting, failed to return phone calls and didn't respond to their request for negotiating a new contract. Having a negotiating committee will be a new experience for members Laura Rodriguez and Michael Grourev, as their former union only met with management and never involved the unit in the negotiating process.

We look forward to providing our Fairview Library members with the representation they rightfully deserve.

Town of Dickinson Reaches Agreement

The Town of Dickinson and UPSEU were able to come to terms on a new three year contract for the years 2011 thru 2013. The agreement added Columbus Day as a holiday, as well as provided increases in both wages and longevity. The committee included Labor Relations Representative Phil Sedlock, Steward Rick Yaddow and Rennie Smith.



SPOTLIGHT ON UPSEU

Labor Board Rules in Favor of UPSEU/ COPS New Milford Police Officers

The Connecticut State Labor Board issued two findings for the police officers of the New Milford Police Department. Attorney Barbara Resnick who joined UPSEU in early 2010 presented the two issues before the state board.

The first grievance dealt with the issue of an officer who was issued a subpoena by the Town of New Milford to testify at a grievance hearing. The contract states that the town is obligated to pay its officers in accordance with the contract if the officer is required to attend court “as long as the required appearance stemmed from actions of the employee while in the performance of his/her official duties as a police officer.” The state board ruled that the town, in failing to compensate the officer for his attendance pursuant to a subpoena, violated multiple sections of the contract. The board further stated, after consideration of substantial and credible evidence of the case and the entire record, that the Town of New Milford did violate the collective bargaining agreement and shall compensate the officer.

A second grievance hearing was put before the State Labor Board concerning the approval of vacation requests. Testimony was presented by both parties and witnesses were sworn. The issue before the board was did the town in fact violate the collective bargaining agreement when the captain denied a request for vacation time off by a member of the police union. “Clearly the reasoning for the denial was of major concern for our members. Time off as a police officer is of the utmost importance with the stressful situations that our officers deal with day in and day out, and down time is essential to maintain a healthy work and family environment,” stated UPSEU/COPS Regional Director Ronald Suraci.

The state board ruled that the captain’s denial was contrary to past practice and the vacation request should have been granted. “Attorney Resnick did an excellent job and it showed in the decision,” Suraci further stated. The testimony of the union officers and all of the hard work of Attorney Resnick was the reason for the successful outcome.

UPSEU Reaches Contract Agreements in Connecticut

In just the last few months three contracts have been settled in the Town of Branford, Connecticut. Bargaining unit members from the Water Treatment Plant, Emergency Dispatchers and the Board of Education Custodians have all reached settlements.

“We were able to secure generous wage enhancements and improved contract language; while containing the costs associated with health insurance coverage,” said UPSEU Regional Director Ronald Suraci.

“Although the negotiations took some time, we worked together and got it done. I would like to thank all of our members who participated in the negotiation process including John Knowlton, John Heatley, Daniel Labanca, Joseph Carbone, Kenneth Cain, Marc Collins, Frank Drago, Paul Piscitello, John Carter, Gerald Deno and Greg Faust. You should all be proud of a job well done!” Suraci concluded.

UPSEU Albany Hosts Shop Steward Training Workshops

Shop steward training workshops were held in early October in Utica and Albany. “There have been some changes made in the last couple of years to some very important laws that protect our members, and we wanted to get the shop stewards and unit representatives together to go over those changes,” said Kathy Wright, UPSEU Regional Coordinator. Wright went on to note, “It also gave us an opportunity to introduce different UPSEU bargaining unit representatives to each other.”

The workshops not only covered the legislative changes, but also provided a refresher course for some, and an introduction for others in the areas of the American with Disabilities Act, New York State Civil Service Law, and grievances versus gripes. Another workshop will be held in Albany after the holidays for the first time stewards and unit officers who have come on board since October of 2010.



SHOP STEWARD TRAINING
UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Bob Stephens and Herkimer Highway Unit President Brian Riesel



UPSEU Vice President Kimberly Nowakowski and Receptionist Elba Morales finalize details for UPSEU’s successful retirement seminar.

UPSEU Long Island Conducts Retirement Seminar

Long Island Regional Director Kim Nowakowski has arranged for a well attended retirement workshop for members in Suffolk for over a decade. Nowakowski remarked, “It’s a lot of work overseeing every aspect of the seminar, but it is a deeply rewarding experience.”

This year’s workshop was attended by over eighty members and twenty guests. “Everyone is always amazed at how much information they walk away with in such a short period of time,” UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. commented. “No matter how much we recommend attending this important workshop, it’s the positive feedback from those who attended which continues to generate future interest in the seminar,” he continued. Special thanks to Kim, Public Affairs Specialist John Biundo from the Social Security Administration and Arthur Green from New York State Employee Retirement System.



MAHOPAC CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Administrative Unit Negotiating Committee

*Front L to R: Rosemarie Mazzella, Peggy Giacomasi and Debra Hudak.
Back Row: Phyllis Ruggiero, Chris Spinosa, Denise Palmiotto, Eileen Lagan and UPSEU Executive Vice President Gary M. Hickey.*

Farmingdale Registered Nurses Ratify New Agreement

Previously as an association, the Farmingdale School District Registered Nurses Unit came to UPSEU after hearing of our work on behalf of other nurses units.

Working with UPSEU's Jim Gangale, who headed up the negotiations and UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Amanda Barker the negotiating team of Shari Rosen, Carol Roesch, and Cynthia Gehlbach reached a new agreement that gives the unit wage increases above the norm, as well as improvements in dental and vision benefits. The team was also able to negotiate the successful elimination of the requirement that nurses repay amounts that the district had previously paid towards dental and optical insurance premiums. Congratulations for a job well done!

Town of Waverly Reaches 3 Year Agreement

In what was at times a difficult and drawn out negotiations, the negotiating committee comprised of Labor Relations Representative Phil Sedlock, Steward Jim Brockway, and team members Sydna Cheney, Bob Clark and John Walker were able to achieve a three year agreement. Highlights of the contract included retroactive increases in wages as well as longevity.

UPSEU would also like to congratulate Bob Clark on his retirement this year. We will be looking forward to some good hunting stories on your next visit.

New Agreement for Town of Constable

UPSEU and the Town of Constable were able to come to terms in a new agreement covering the years 2011 to 2013. The committee led by Labor Relations Representative Phil Sedlock, Steward Rick Spinner and negotiating team member Bill Scott were able to achieve a new stipend for the Deputy Highway Superintendent, with increases in wages and longevity, as well as increases in an IRA. The committee appreciated being able to reach the new agreement in a timely manner.

Old Saybrook Emergency Telecommunicators Join UPSEU

The members of the Old Saybrook Emergency Telecommunicators voted unanimously to join UPSEU on November 9, 2010. The bargaining unit members were part of a town-wide wall to wall group for many years and were dissatisfied with the lack of support they were getting from their former union, AFSCME.

Unable to achieve the enhancements and provisions that a collective bargaining agreement normally provides to its members, the members of Old Saybrook did their homework and approached UPSEU Director Ronald Suraci to see if anything could be done to assist them.

"We looked at their situation and with the support of the members we filed a carveout petition with the State Labor Board, on behalf of the Emergency Telecommunicators," stated UPSEU Regional Director Ronald Suraci.

A hearing was held and evidence was presented to the State Board Agent from all parties involved. Representatives from AFSCME and legal council for the Town of Old Saybrook objected to the petition and wanted to deprive the members of exercising their right under the law to vote and participate in an election.

"We just presented the evidence and applied the law and knew we would be successful in the end. The petition was filed on August 5, 2010 and although it took over three months to accomplish, it was worth it," Suraci added.

The new members of the UPSEU family can now be assured that they will be fully represented now and in the future!

Sewanhaka Security Contract Reached

UPSEU members in the Sewanhaka School District Security Unit recently ratified their new three year contract which included above average wage increases, increased snow days and personal days, in addition to uniform increases. UPSEU Negotiator Jim Gangale led the negotiating team of Carol O'Sullivan, Dwight Bailey, Damian McMillan and Steven Marianro.



Town of Stratford Reaches New 3 Year Contract

Like many towns in upstate New York, Stratford's highway department employees keep the roads safe for their neighbors at all hours of the day, in the worst of conditions and do a great job. However their pay needed improvement, and as a result of their efforts and UPSEU working hard with Town of Stratford officials, we were able to obtain a substantial increase in their wages.

The new agreement also includes longevity and work shoe coverage for the first time. An increase in the health insurance buyout and other important improvements were included. "You keep up the good work on the roads and together we will keep up the good improvements at the bargaining table," said Labor Relations Representative Phil Sedlock, who negotiated the deal along with negotiating team members Roy Cool and Lenny Blood.

Town of Manheim Reaches Agreement

UPSEU would like to welcome the Town of Manheim to our family. After growing concerns about the possible loss of benefits, the town's highway employees called UPSEU to try to obtain their first union agreement.

After several months of negotiations, we were successful in reaching a two year agreement that covers all aspects of workers rights, protects their existing benefits, provides two years of wage increases and creates new coverage for clothing and work shoes.

"We look forward to working out additional improvements in future years for our new members in Manheim," stated Labor Relations Representative Phil Sedlock, who negotiated the contract. Thanks to team members Russell Winkler, Robert Boyer and Vincent Smith for their strong efforts.

Village of Dolgeville DPW Ratifies First Agreement with UPSEU

Led by Labor Relations Representative Phil Sedlock the Village of Dolgeville Department of Public Works negotiating committee comprised of Brad Ploss, John Hough and David Jaquay were able to achieve a new agreement.

Highlights of the unit's first contract included additional time off, increased longevity and close to a full years retroactivity. The Village of Dolgeville DPW had previously been an association, and upon the recommendation of a neighboring highway yard that UPSEU represents, decided they needed more clout at the bargaining table. Our new members feel the resulting agreement was a positive step in the right direction.



TOWN OF COLONIE ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT NEGOTIATING TEAM

L to R (Front Row): Labor Relations Representative Kathy Wright, and members Camille Allen, Angelina Searles, and Karen Stroebel. *(Back Row)* Dan Torpey, Robert Mateja, UPSEU Executive Vice President Gary M. Hickey, Matt McGarry and Steve Geurds. *Not Pictured:* Ken Anatriello, Joe Contois, Ryan Moore, and Paul Sugrue.

Town of Oppenheim Gains First UPSEU Contract

After difficult negotiations that went to impasse, the Town of Oppenheim highway employees have achieved their first agreement.

The contract established terms and conditions necessary to protect their rights and set a basis for future improvements. The town employees lead by Labor Relations Representative Phil Sedlock and Chief Steward Carl Youker included Alan Avery, Brian Miller, Walter Rumrill Jr., Lawrence Sanders Jr., and Brian Shafer. The team stayed united and fought hard to achieve this agreement. UPSEU is proud to have you as members!



Oneida Herkimer Madison BOCES Employees Overwhelmingly OK New 3 Year Deal

The OHM BOCES membership recently approved a new three year agreement by over 95%. The negotiating committee chaired by Executive Vice President/Regional Director Gary M. Hickey included Chief Steward Linda Kinsella, Sharon Graziano, Billie Harris, Don Leo, and Labor Relations Representative Robert Stephens. Thanks to all for a job well done.



Sachem Clerical Employees Ratify Agreement

Whitehall COPS Division Members Overwhelmingly Approve Contract



SACHEM CLERICAL UNIT NEGOTIATING TEAM

R to L: UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr., Vice President Kim Nowakowski, Eileen March, Unit President Barbara Bancke, Josephine Vasiento, Unit Vice President B.J. Wilken, and Laura Hollander. Not present was Unit Vice President Hedy DeLee.

The Sachem Central School District clerical unit, with the assistance of President Boyle, reached an agreement with the Board of Education which, in addition to annual wage increases, provided for an improved longevity schedule. "We knew what settlements were coming in from both within and outside of the District and we were able to use that information to fashion an agreement which was overwhelmingly ratified," stated President Boyle. "In addition to improved wages and longevity, the agreement also called for a leveling up of dental coverage and a leveling down on premium cost sharing to that of the instructional staff provisions," Boyle continued.

President Boyle was assisted by Regional Director Kim Nowakowski and the negotiating committee of Unit President Barbara Bancke, Unit Vice Presidents B.J. Wilken and Hedy DeLee, and bargaining unit members Josephine Vasiento, Laura Hollander and Eileen March. "Negotiations at Sachem are always difficult, but with the unity of the team and the support of the membership, we were able to put together an agreement which was overwhelmingly approved. The strong ratification was a testament by the membership to the hard work of the negotiating team," remarked Nowakowski.

President Boyle expressed appreciation for the negotiating team, especially Unit President Barbara Bancke and Unit Vice President B.J. Wilken. "B.J. stayed to see the negotiations through and then retired with peace of mind that she made a difference," Boyle said. "We wish her well in her retirement," Boyle added. With Ms. Wilken's retirement, Barbara Bancke took on the role of Vice President, thereby giving an opportunity for a new representative to take the lead position of Unit President. Special congratulations to Josephine Vasiento for her election to Unit President.

UPSEU Fairfield Town Hall Members Vote for New Contract

"By a vote of 63 to 11, Fairfield Town Hall members ratified a new three year agreement," stated UPSEU regional Director Ron Suraci. "By working together as a team, we were able to reach a fair agreement with the town," added Suraci. Wage increase in all three years of the contract, in addition to limited insurance costs were highlights of the agreement.

Congratulations Fairfield Town Hall members.

UPSEU COPS Division members in the Village of Whitehall approved a new two year contract by an overwhelming majority. Highlights of the agreement, which are retroactive to January 2010, include pay raises in each year of the contract, as well as shift differential improvements.

Special thanks to negotiating team member Jason Vandenburg and Labor Relations Representative Jack Rogers for a job well done. UPSEU currently represents both part time and full time police officers in the Village of Whitehall.



Berkeley Heights Members Secure New Agreement

UPSEU secured an agreement on behalf of its Berkeley Heights members who had been without a contract for over two years under its prior union, the Teamsters. The unit worked tirelessly to join UPSEU in a PERC election over the summer.

The agreement provides retroactive pay, wage increases, increased uniform allowance and other improvements. UPSEU's Jim Gangale together with Labor Relations Representative James Bush led the negotiating team of John Mineo and Paul Fiermonte.



UPSEU MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

George Jerolman and John “Jack” Jenson Retire from the Town of Hamden, Connecticut



L to R: Jack Jenson, UPSEU Regional Director Wayne Gilbert and George Jerolman.

Last month on October first, two of Hamden’s finest retired from the Town of Hamden, Connecticut. George Jerolman and Jack Jenson left as masters at their trade. They were both members of UPSEU Hamden Supervisors Unit in which George served as the president of the unit for the past four years.

George Jerolman had a twenty year history with the Town of Hamden where he worked his way up through the ranks. He started as a maintainer, while also serving as president of UPSEU Hamden DPW. He later became a heavy equipment operator until his promotion four years ago to the Assistant Public Works Director. George had served as president of the UPSEU DPW Unit since UPSEU first became the units’s representative in 2004. The new presiding president for the Supervisors, Patti Riccitelli worked on the executive board with George Jerolman when he was president. She said, “I couldn’t have had a better person to learn from; George has an extensive knowledge of labor issues from his many years of experience in union business.” Notably, the DPW unit was the first unit that UPSEU Meriden brought on board in 2004, with Jerolman playing a significant part. When George was promoted and became an employee of the Supervisors, he was instrumental in bringing their unit on board as well in 2007. “George is an exceptional individual with the kind of knowledge and persistence that it takes to fight tough labor issues and bring them to fruition,” stated Regional Director Wayne Gilbert.

“George was a significant part of UPSEU’s initial efforts in the state of Connecticut, not only leading his then DPW co-workers to become UPSEU’s first unit, but assisting UPSEU in several organizing efforts throughout the state. George has consistently demonstrated tremendous leadership skills with a steadfast commitment for helping his co-workers and public employees in general.

George will be missed by me, our staff and his co-workers, and all those who benefitted by working with him in delivering service to UPSEU members. We look forward to George continuing to be an advocate for public employees in his retirement years.”

UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr.

Jack Jenson spent twenty nine years working for the Town of Hamden as a mechanic. In the last ten years he was the foreman of the Town Garage. Patti Riccitelli said, “Jack is always a gentlemen,” which speaks volumes about his character. Although he did not serve as an officer of the union, in the nearly three decades he served the people of Hamden, Jack proved to be a model of true professionalism and fine leadership on every level. The union is proud to endorse such a man as Jack Jenson. While the Town of Hamden has lost two great employees, UPSEU has lost two great leaders.



BEST WISHES JOHN

The Executive Board of UPSEU extends their best wishes for a healthy and happy retirement to Oceanside Unit President John Pisarri. Your dedication and commitment to serving the interests of UPSEU, and your Oceanside School District co-workers will always be remembered. Pictured L to R: Health and Welfare Committeeman Jack Cohen, Retiring Unit President John Pisarri and new Unit President Mike Nathan.



Borough of Naugatuck member Sheryl Kimiecik and teammates recently won the Connecticut State Championships for the American Pool Players Association, which earned her a free trip to the APA \$600,000 National Team Championships in Las Vegas. Way to go, Sheryl!



WHOSA ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

L to R: UPSEU Members Renee Macchio from George Washington Elementary, Marisa DiMartino from West Hempstead High School, Anna Maria Fortanasce from Chestnut Street School and Jo Ellen Bromberg from West Hempstead Middle School, were honored at the 2010 PTA Installation Dinner in May with Achievement Awards for their dedication and hard work to the children, parents and teachers of West Hempstead Union Free School District.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The Value of School Nurses



UPSEU member Katherine Trieller, school nurse for the Oyster Bay/ East Norwich School District

UPSEU member Katherine Trieller, a school nurse in the Oyster Bay/East Norwich School District, recently saved the life of a school district employee. The staff member was experiencing cardiac difficulties and Nurse Trieller brought the employee into her office to check vitals. She quickly determined that the person needed to be transferred to the emergency room immediately. "The fact that the employee was admitted to the hospital for a brief stay, and is now back at work, is a testament to the value of school nurses," remarked UPSEU Vice President Kim Nowakowski.

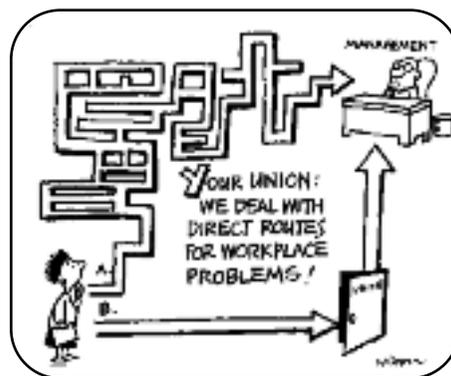
Nurse Trieller has worked for the school district for twenty years, and along with her fellow nurses, Eileen McCartney and Sandi Kerrigan, dedicate themselves on a daily basis to caring for the children and staff of the Oyster Bay/East Norwich School District. They, and all school nurses, remind us of the importance of professional medical personnel working in educational environments everywhere.

5 Years of Retro Pay Awarded to Rensselaer Employee

UPSEU secured almost five years of retroactive, personal, vacation, and sick leave accruals for a Rensselaer County employee.

"During one of my work site visits, I was approached by an employee who had transferred to another department and was being treated as a brand new employee," said UPSEU Regional Coordinator Kathy Wright. The employee had actually worked for the County in another department for a number of years and for some unknown reason she had not been credited with any leave accruals.

"When I looked into the issue, it turned out she should have been accruing leave accruals for almost five years," Wright continued. When a calculation was done, it turned out the employee was due at total of 441 accrual hours. "The Grievance Committee issued a settlement and we were thrilled to give her the news," Wright concluded. The Grievance Committee consists of Wright, Chief Unit Officer Mark Burton, Assistant Chief Unit Officers Jamison Facticeau, Vickie Halse and Susan McAvoy.



UPSEU Employees Recoup Compensatory Time

Two employees in the Rensselaer County Social Services Department were finally credited with four hours of compensatory time for participating in the county sponsored blood drive.

"The county sponsors a blood drive for their employees approximately every quarter and those employees who participate in the drive are awarded four hours of compensatory time," said Kathy Wright, UPSEU Regional Coordinator. Wright continued, "These two employees were told they were not eligible to receive the compensatory time even though they participated."

Through tireless efforts of the Grievance Review Committee, the two employees were finally awarded the time.

Rensselaer County Father Given FMLA Rights

In preparation of the impending birth of his child, a Rensselaer County employee inquired as to his rights under the Family Medical Leave Act. He was initially told he could not break up his FMLA entitlement and had to use it all at once and could not use part at the birth and part six months later.

"UPSEU Assistant Chief Unit Officer Sue McAvoy came to me with the problem," said Kathy Wright, UPSEU Regional Coordinator. She continued, "When we did the research we found that the employee was eligible to take his full entitlement of twelve weeks at the birth and, with the timing of the birth, he could also take another twelve weeks in the spring."

The FMLA provides twelve weeks for not only the birth of the child but there is also a provision which allows for another twelve weeks for "newborn care" which is defined as care during the first year of life.

"Sue was pleased to let the employee know that he could take the time he needed and not to have to worry about anything other than getting sleep once the baby was born," concluded Wright.

UPSEU Secures Arbitration Victory for Paterson Fire Dispatchers

Congratulations to our City of Paterson Fire Dispatchers! After the City of Paterson violated the contract and failed to pay the fire dispatchers 120 hours of holiday pay, members brought the issue to their Labor Relations Representative Jim Bush, who after meeting with members and management, filed the case for arbitration. UPSEU and management then went to arbitration before Arbitrator Howard Edelman. Present for union were Tom Rubertone Esq., Labor Relations Representative James Bush and UPSEU members Letitia Howe, Yvette Hill, General McFadden, Joyce Pierce, Joann Stevenson and Keisha Wesley. Present for management was Steve Glickman, Esq.

After two full days of arbitration, the arbitrator ruled in favor of the UPSEU and ordered the City to pay our fire employees 120 hours in back holiday pay for the year 2007!

UPSEU 2010 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Paul T. Burch \$1,000 Awards



Chelsea Poretti

Daughter of Joseph Porettti, Jr.
Seaford School District
Early Childhood Education Major

"I would like to be an educator for young children with special needs. I hope that I can improve the lives of young children just like Paul T. Burch improved the lives of working men and women."



UPSEU extends congratulations to all our Scholarship Award Winners and their families. Sincere thanks to the 2010 Scholarship Committee:

Vice President Kim Nowakowski
Regional Coordinator Kathy Wright
Labor Relations Representative Linda Kirnan

Barbara Banke
Kristen Kristel
Mike Kutski
Bill Larkin
Laura Lucas
Kathy O'Brien
Jean Seifert



Erin Brockway

Daughter of James Brockway
Town of Waverly
Psychology Major

"My love for children had led me to want to become a school psychologist. The thing that matters most to me is being able to see a child smile or laugh and knowing that in some way I helped to bring that about."

\$500 Dependent Child Awards

James Anderson's daughter Cynthia
Margaret Bach's daughter Amelia
Nancy Baker's daughter Stacey
Michael Bromm's son Timothy
Joseph Capozzoli's son Anthony
Maureen Carroll's daughter Elizabeth
Virginia DeMatteo's daughter Kristen
Marjory DiPaolo's son Ryan
Marie DiVincenzo's daughter Gabrielle
Lewis Dobert's son Christopher
Charles D'Onofro's daughter Danielle
Kathy Hilton's daughter Ellen
Denise Lavin's son Eric
Linda Lettieri's daughter Lynn

Phyllis Lionetti's son John
Deborah Martineau's daughter Jaimie
Holly Matthews' son Alexander
Gabriella Meyer's daughter Andrea
Lisa Montalto's son Joseph
Michele North's daughter Samantha
Michael Perlman's daughter Jennifer
Jean Peterson's son Kristopher
Angela Piscitella's daughter Joanna
William Pollards' son Jared
Ellen Rafferty's daughter Kathleen
Roque Rodriguez's daughter Rosalie
Antonio Seara's son Daniel
Florence Taylor's son Mark

\$500 Member Awards

Francesco DeVivo
Marisa DiMartino
Michael Fink
Shawn Fournier

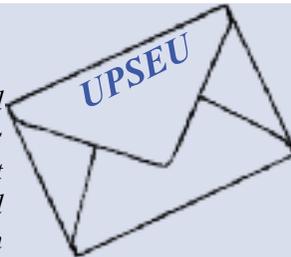
Chantel McClellan
Shannon McKeon
Samantha Montanaro
Gregory Muhs

Stephen Pugner
Ruth Santiago
Lisa Theopheles
William True

UPSEU MAILBAG/UPDATE

Dear Kim,

I want to take this time to say thank you, Kim for all your help. Working at the Middle School all these years has had its ups and downs, but overall it has been fruitful. As my union rep, you always returned my calls and was there when I needed your counsel, be it union representation, general advice, or just plain old fashioned moral support. There were many times over the years, I called upon you to advocate for me. You did just that, and always with great success. Due to your support, I was able to submit my papers for retirement. I want you to know that I always felt I had your support (someone in my corner), never standing alone. Yes, there were times when I questioned things or the way we handled matters, but when all was said and done, we were always successful.



"It's not the businesses or corporations that gets things done, but the people within those businesses who make a difference." Kim, thank you for all your help. THANK YOU UPSEU.

Linda Farino-Bokitko
Westbury School District

Dear Amanda and Kim,

I am so very grateful for all that you were able to accomplish for us. It is a great sense of validation for what we do and you helped us to achieve that. Sincere thanks.

Eileen McCartney
Oyster Bay/East Norwich RN

To Whom It May Concern,

I am honored to be a recipient of the United Public Service Employees Union Children's Scholarship. I thank you for your generous support of this award and for helping children of UPSEU with financial need afford college. I have just begun my freshman year at SUNY New Paltz, where I plan on pursuing a degree in Media Communications. One day I hope to work in a television studio, learning how to operate microphones, recording equipment, and other devices and could go on to edit and produce. Once again, I want to thank you for making this scholarship possible and for your generosity towards UPSEU members. I hope to represent the scholarship in a positive manner and give back to my community as you have.

Rosalie A. Rodriguez

Dear Kathy,

I want to thank you for everything you have done for me throughout the years. Thanks especially for the support when I went to worker's compensation. I wasn't too scared. Thanks for being a friend. It has been so much more of an easy ride with you on board. THANK YOU.

Sue Eddy
Rensselaer County

Dear Gail and Wayne,

As you know, we have had many ups and downs over the past few years. I learned a lot during my year as co-president of our local unit. The important lesson that I learned was how to help my fellow union sisters when they needed my help the most and to appreciate the entire process as well.

I have to thank both of you for coming to my aid when I found myself in the position of needing help. Injustice comes out of nowhere sometimes and can strike when you least expect it and from the places that you never thought they would. It just goes to show that any one of us can find ourselves in a unique situation that needs the union's attention. People complain about having to pay union dues, but I feel that it is money well spent! Because of the kindness and the help that you have given me, I have a much deeper respect for the job that both of you do, not only because it is your job, but because you really care about each and every one of us who are part of this unit. Thank you again for everything you have done for our unit and for me personally.

Stacy Noga
Hamden BOE Clerical

Dear Linda,

I just saw you on WKTV and thought you should know that I thought you did an great job. It's a difficult time for all but I thought you handled the situation well.

Bob Scalise
Oneida County

Health Insurance Premium Assistance Program Available For Eligible Individuals

In 2007, the New York State Social Services Law was amended to provide a reimbursement/ payment assistance benefit for certain employees who are eligible for Family Health Plus but have access to more cost-effective employer-sponsored health insurance plans.

The amendment requires that employees who are Family Health Plus eligible and who have access to employer-provided health insurance that is deemed cost effective under the requirements of the law, must enroll in the employer-sponsored health insurance.

The Assistance Program will provide a certain level of reimbursement for costs the employee must bear by enrolling in the plan including but not limited to co-insurance, deductibles, co-pays and any obligations for the individual's employer-sponsored health insurance that exceed the amount of the person's FH Plus co-payment obligations.

The individual will also receive services and supplies otherwise covered by the FH Plus program, but only to the extent that such services and supplies are not covered by the person's employer sponsored health insurance.

For more information regarding this program and to see if you qualify, contact your local County Social Services Department.



UPSEU UPDATE

*Season's Greetings to all of our Members and their Families
and Best Wishes for a Happy New Year!*



from your UPSEU Officers and Staff



For New York State Drivers

LEGAL TIP # 1 Underinsurance Coverage



LEGAL TIP # 2 Review No Fault Insurance Coverage Limits

A number of years ago, legislation was passed in New York State allowing drivers to elect to obtain additional coverage under their automobile liability insurance policies called "underinsurance". Insurance companies didn't want to offer coverage so legislation was required to implement it. Such coverage is very valuable and all drivers should elect to have it to protect themselves and their families. Unfortunately, not enough drivers have even heard that it exists.

"Underinsurance" coverage provides protection when a driver is involved in an accident where the other driver is at fault and is responsible for causing them injury and has an insurance policy. However, the maximum limits of the insurance policy may not be sufficient to pay the amount of damages you or your family sustained. The minimum coverage in New York State is only \$25,000, a paltry sum that hasn't been raised in decades because the insurance industry fights very hard to keep it so low. "Underinsurance" permits the injured party to turn to their own insurance company to pay any damages in excess of the guilty driver's insurance limits.

For example, if you are involved in a motor vehicle accident as a result of the negligence of another vehicle and sustain a serious injury, you could be entitled to a monetary award of \$250,000. Assuming the other driver has only \$25,000 in coverage, you could collect \$25,000 from his insurance company and claim the additional \$225,000 from your own company. You only can do that if you elect such coverage. It involves a slightly higher premium, but it is well worth it. Everyone is urged to immediately call your brokers or insurance companies to make certain you have this very valuable coverage. If you don't already have it—get it.

While you're on the phone with your broker, you may also ask to have your no fault insurance coverage limits reviewed. If you only have the basic \$50,000 policy limits that have been in effect since 1974, you need to get excess coverage immediately. No Fault is the coverage in your auto policy which pays your basic medical expenses and lost wages after an accident (regardless of whether you or the other driver was at fault). It is coverage you pay for to protect you and your passengers. A \$50,000 no fault limit is an amount which is wholly inadequate in any significant accident. The \$50,000 can be exhausted before a person even gets out of the hospital, thereby leaving no funds for lost wages or additional medical expenses. The solution is to increase your no-fault coverage to the maximum. There is a cost attached to this, but it is negligible and well worth it. You already spend considerable money to protect others from any possible injury you may have inflict upon them as a result of an accident, spend some money to protect yourself.

Richard Brandenstein is a partner with the law firm of Fusco, Brandenstein & Rada, P.C., with offices throughout Long Island and New York City. They specialize in Workers' Compensation, Social Security Disability, Municipal Pension and Accident cases.

Editor's Note: Since state laws may vary, UPSEU members residing in New Jersey, Massachusetts and Connecticut should verify coverage with their individual insurance brokers.



www.letssaythanks.com

This Web site gives you an opportunity to send a free printed postcard to U.S. military personnel stationed overseas showing your support and appreciation for their service to our country.