

NYSUT UNITED

A UNION OF PROFESSIONALS

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**Activists
fighting
for our
priorities**

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NYSUT UNITED [March/April 2019, Vol. 9, No. 4]

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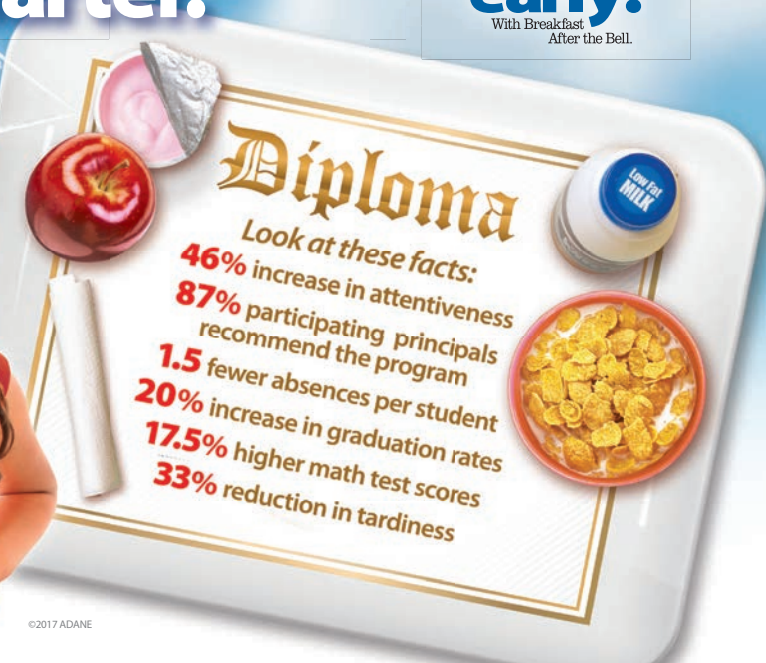
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APPR win separates tests from evaluations

Major first step leaves work to be done on state's obsession with testing

By Ned Hoskin

nhoskin@nysutmail.org

In a big win early in the legislative session, both houses of the state Legislature approved the NYSUT-backed APPR reform bill that scraps the mandated use of grades 3-8 state tests in teacher ratings.

The bill, which still must be signed by the governor, returns evaluation decisions to local control and ensures any teacher evaluation system is subject to collective bargaining.

NYSUT will continue its fight to reduce the standardized testing burden

on students.

"We applaud the Legislature for taking action to fix New York's broken teacher evaluation system," said President Andy Pallotta.

However, he said, the union's work on the issue of testing is not done. "We will continue to advocate for a meaningful assessment system for New York students that will measure student progress more accurately and address the concerns raised by teachers and parents alike," he said.

In addition to removing the required use of state tests in APPR, the bill eliminates the state growth model from the law. Growth scores will no

longer be calculated by the state.

It puts the decision about student performance at the bargaining table, meaning all APPR will be subject to collective bargaining and it will not be dictated by districts.

The bill ensures every local can continue their current APPR in transition. It also allows all teachers to be covered by group measures.

The bill does not give any new authority to the Commissioner of Education, including any authority to mandate a new test. Districts do not choose the performance measures; they will be bargained collectively.

... continued on page 4

COMING UP

March 4-5

NYSUT Committee of 100 legislative meetings, Albany

March 5

NYSUT Board Executive Committee meets, Latham

March 8-10

SOMOS Conference, Albany

March 21

World Poetry Day

April 1

State budget due

April 11

NYSUT Board Executive Committee meets, Latham

April 13

Professional Issues Forum on Health Care meets, Albany

May 2

NYSUT Board of Directors meets, Latham

May 3

Local & Retiree Council Presidents Conference, Albany

May 3-4

Representative Assembly, Albany



ON THE COVER

From left, Senate Education Chair Shelley Mayer speaks with a Southern Westchester BOCES delegation, including parent Martha Suarez and her daughter, Juliette; union president Melissa Barreto and teacher Ray Sulla.

Photo by Andrew Watson

A message to union busters

When second-grade teacher Angela M. came home and found an anti-union door hanger urging her to give herself "a raise," she was furious.

"It was upsetting to read the misleading information and blatant lies being placed on doors in my neighborhood," she said.

If she had been home, Angela would have told the \$25-an-hour New Choice NY representative why she believes so strongly in the union.

"The union protected me in my time of need," she said.

After her foster mother died in 2017, the longtime upstate teacher couldn't believe that her district superintendent denied her request to use bereavement days.

"In addition to dealing with the loss of the one person who took me in and in essence saved me, I had to fight for the use of days provided by our contract," she said.

Fortunately, Angela wasn't alone.

Working through her local union, NYSUT field staff filed and prosecuted a successful grievance.

"I only wish I could've been home when they came knocking to share the reality of what the union does," Angela said. "I don't believe any hard-working American would give up their right for protection and representation if they truly understood what our unions do for us."

In her note to NYSUT's union buster email (unionbusters@nysutmail.org), Angela thanked the union for posting "Union Household" and "#DoNotKnock" signs that members can print out and post to keep away union busters. To download a sign for your door, go to www.nysut.org/unionbusters.



FROM WAMC:
ANDY PALLOTTA

Despite its good intentions, the tax cap has not reduced the tax burden facing too many communities. What the tax cap has done is widen the gap in education funding between wealthy and poor school districts. It has denied our state's poorest school children the educational opportunities provided to those in wealthier districts.

We need real reform that would prevent people from being taxed out of the communities they love, while also funding the schools and public services that made them fall in love with that community in the first place.

Help move the budget debate in the statehouse

NYSUT staff and activists offer solutions for spending and revenue

By Ned Hoskin

nhoskin@nysutmail.org

Gov. Andrew Cuomo released his 2019-20 executive budget proposal in January. The proposal, which totals \$175.2 billion, is only the beginning point for negotiations.

NYSUT staffers and grassroots activists are working hard to help shape the final state budget, which must be enacted by the Legislature and governor's office by April 1.

You can help! Go to the Member Action Center at mac.nysut.org and send specific messages to lawmakers on many of the most important budget issues still on the table.

Here are just a few of the dozens of topics in the debate.

School aid

It's just not enough! The governor's plan proposes a \$956 million increase in school aid for the next year, but it is not enough to maintain current student academic programs and services — and the education experts know it. In December, NYSUT, the Board of Regents and the Educational Conference Board recommended a state aid increase of



NYSUT President Andy Pallotta testifies that the governor's school aid budget proposal is not enough. The union seeks \$2.1 billion to maintain current programs and services.

NED HOSKIN

more than \$2 billion for schools.

"We know that public schools remain the best investment our state can make," said NYSUT President Andy Pallotta.

The increased funding would provide significantly more foundation aid and help provide continuing support for struggling schools; make schools safer for all students; offer additional mental health services; meet the needs of English language learner (ELL) students; provide high-quality professional development; and expand access for college and

career pathways, among many other things.

With the tax cap set at 2 percent for the year, state support for schools will be critical, Pallotta said. The tax cap will continue to impede local school districts' ability to raise revenue, while school districts grapple with greater, more intense student needs and increased mandatory costs.

Higher education

The union is again lobbying to significantly increase funding to the core instructional budgets of SUNY

and CUNY. The governor's higher education spending plan would offer no increase for public colleges and universities.

The budget would also flatline the state base aid for SUNY and CUNY community colleges per full-time equivalent student. NYSUT seeks a boost of \$250 per FTE.

NYSUT is also battling to reverse the proposal to eliminate the state subsidy for the three SUNY hospitals.

Revenue

The governor sounded an alarm in February about an unexpected \$2.3 billion shortfall in state revenue. This will be manageable if the enacted budget includes two solutions long advocated by NYSUT. First, enact an enhanced millionaires' tax on incomes over \$5 million; second, close the carried interest loophole.

Other proposals

The Cuomo document seeks numerous legislative programs that are not budgetary items. Prominent among them are the APPR bill to end the test-and-punish era in New York, and legislation to protect union members from organizations that seek to undermine unions in the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court's *Janus* decision.

APPR win separates tests from evaluations

... continued from page 3

Work to do

According to Executive Vice President Jolene DiBrango, SED's grades 3-8 standardized testing — and the way it determines student proficiency — must change.

"The state tests are flawed and

invalid," she said. "They don't provide meaningful or timely information to parents and educators; and they continue to mislabel and harm students and their local schools."

Though the Board of Regents shortened the grades 3-8 ELA and math tests from three days to two, there are still too many questions.

Now that the tests are untimed, educators report excessively long periods of testing time for many students.

"It doesn't make sense for third- or fourth-graders to spend more time taking an ELA test than older students spend on a Regents Exam or the SAT for college," DiBrango said.

In some instances, the tests are

developmentally inappropriate: Many reading passages and questions require skills that are simply above students' developmental levels.

Computer-based testing remains problematic, as well. NYSUT continues to oppose computer-based testing for grades 3-5.

Higher ed activists educate lawmakers

By Ned Hoskin
nhoskin@nysutmail.org

Despite the arctic blast, snow and freezing rain, dozens of grassroots NYSUT activists stalked the halls and offices of lawmakers on Higher Education Lobby Day last month. It was a day to educate elected officials about key issues in the state budget negotiations.

The state must enact a budget by April 1.

“We’re here to urge lawmakers to make dramatic investments at SUNY and CUNY,” said United University Professions President Fred Kowal. “Growing funding gaps, staff shortages and limited course availability are becoming more common. And, it’s crucial to restore the state subsidy to SUNY hospitals that care for hundreds of thousands of patients

regardless of whether they can afford to pay,” he said.

“Higher ed has been deliberately underfunded for years,” said Barbara Bowen, president of the Professional Staff Congress. “CUNY runs on student tuition increases and exploited adjunct faculty. This has got to be fixed.”

As NYSUT testified in recent budget hearings, increased state investment at four-year colleges would help stave off difficult decisions about programs and student services.

Community colleges also need significant investment to ensure the state is meeting its statutory obligation to pay 40 percent of operating costs for these campuses. The state’s support is about 25 percent now, and going lower every year.

“Community colleges need the funding they deserve and were

promised in Education Law,” said Kevin Peterman, president of the Faculty Association of Suffolk Community College.

The higher ed activists pushed for the state to close the Tuition Assistance Program gap. A TAP award covers a student’s tuition, although it does not match the full tuition bill. Campuses must eat the difference — the “TAP gap” — which could total \$150 million for the City and State University of New York systems in 2019–20.



From left, UUP’s Fred Kowal, Andy Pallotta, PSC’s Barbara Bowen and UCE’s Roberta Elins with new Senate Higher Ed chair Toby Stavisky, D-Queens.

EL-WISE NOISSETTE

NYSUT President Andy Pallotta thanked Assembly Higher Education Committee chair Debra Glick, D-Manhattan, for recognizing the importance and the fiscal impact of this issue by introducing a bill (A.720) to require the state to reimburse campuses for the gap expense.

“It would go a long way to mitigate the current situation,” Pallotta said.

Legislative session starts with big wins

By Kara Smith
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With the state Senate now in Democratic hands, the 2019 legislative session is shaping up to be a promising one for NYSUT members — and a fast moving one as well. Before the end of January, a healthy roster of NYSUT-backed bills had already been signed into law.

In the opening weeks of session, the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act and the anti-conversion therapy bill won Senate and Assembly approval and received the governor’s signature soon thereafter. GENDA prohibits discrimination based on an individual’s or a group’s

perceived gender identity or expression. The new law encompasses the transgender population. The anti-conversion therapy bill prohibits mental health professionals from engaging in sexual-orientation change efforts for individuals under the age of 18.

“Passage of these two bills is a big step forward for our state, especially for members of the LGBTQ community and their families,” said NYSUT President Andy Pallotta, noting that unions, through collective bargaining, have traditionally offered the best protection for LGBTQ individuals in the workplace. “We’re happy to see New York State

extending these protections to all.”

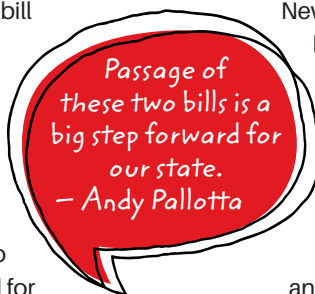
After years of delay, the Legislature also passed critical reforms to

New York State’s voting laws, making it easier for citizens to vote. The set of new laws will allow early voting up to 10 days before elections, will consolidate federal and state primary dates and allow 16 and 17 year olds to pre-register for the ballot, making them automatically registered to vote on their 18th birthday. The law also makes it easier for registered voters who move to different counties within the state to maintain their voter registration.

Another victory is passage of the

DREAM Act, which for the first time offers undocumented students access to state financial aid and scholarships. Pallotta praised the move, “the DREAM Act will unlock new opportunities for immigrant students who seek to continue their education and pursue their version of the American dream.”

Other important wins include passage of the Child Victims Act, which extends New York’s statute of limitations, giving child sex abuse victims more time to pursue criminal charges against their abusers; and the Red Flag Law, which makes available enhanced safety measures to teachers and other school officials when there is risk of a school shooting.



Passage of these two bills is a big step forward for our state.
— Andy Pallotta



Almost 2,000 delegates and alternates, representing NYSUT members throughout the state, have already registered for the 2019 NYSUT Representative Assembly, set for May 3-4 in Albany.

Delegates to the union's policymaking convention will consider nearly 50 resolutions directing the union's course on education, legislative priorities, health care and workplace safety, civil and human rights and retirement.

The annual RA also offers the union an opportunity to recognize the winners of the NYSUT constituency awards, including: 2019 NYS Teacher of the Year **Alhassan Susso**, UFT; School-Related Professionals Members of the Year **Priscilla Castro**, UFT, and **Colleen Condolora**, Capital Region BOCES; Retiree Members of the Year **Joyce Magnus**, UFT, and **Ken Ulric**, Retiree Council 17; Health Care Professionals Member of the Year **Raquel Webb-Geddes**, UFT; and Higher Education Member of the Year **Paul Clement**.

"Not for Ourselves Alone:" The Sandy Feldman Outstanding Leadership Award, will be presented to **Stacey Caruso-Sharpe**, Amsterdam TA, and **Evelyn DeJesus**, UFT.

Laura Franz, Albany Public School TA, will receive the Sandy Feldman Leadership Grant.

Visit www.nysut.org/ra for more information.

[FIGHTING FOR YOU]

Advocates put a face on the power of BOCES

By **Sylvia Saunders**
ssaunder@nysutmail.org

BOCES Lobby Day advocates gave state lawmakers an unsettling lesson in supply and demand: As employers clamor for more students trained in BOCES Career and Technical Education programs, the supply is simply not keeping up.

It's not that students don't want to enroll in popular BOCES programs in everything from the trades to manufacturing to health care. The problem is that a lack of state funding, combined with the state's onerous property tax cap, is forcing too many districts to limit how many students can attend the regional BOCES programs.

"We have employers literally begging us for kids," said David Shalke, an automotive and technology CTE teacher at Monroe 2 BOCES. "The kids want to come — but the districts are being forced to limit enrollment."

"You have a student who really wants to be a nurse, but her home district is saying, 'Sorry, we can only send three or four kids,'" said Sandie Carner-Shafran of Saratoga Adirondack BOCES Education Association. "For many kids, it's killing their dreams. If we can't provide this education for kids, where are they going to get it from?"

Shalke and Carner-Shafran were just two of more than 150 BOCES advocates who took part in a statewide lobby day in Albany. The BOCES Lobby Day is different from most because it includes students, educators, administrators and board members all advocating together, side by side.

"Tell your personal stories," NYSUT



Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner, D-Round Lake, center, speaks to, from left, Saratoga Adirondack BOCES EA members Michele Morris, Sandie Carner-Shafran, Ruth Shippee, Karen Monastero and district superintendent Jim Dexter.

ANDREW WATSON

President Andy Pallotta urged participants at an early morning briefing session. "That's what lawmakers will remember when they're making budget decisions."

Lawmakers heard from a wide variety of students who put a face on the incredible depth and breadth of BOCES programs. In a meeting with Assemblyman Billy Jones, D-Chateaugay, students poignantly told how they were bullied in their home districts and are now thriving in a smaller, more-personalized alternative high school program at an area BOCES. Other students talked about how BOCES opened their eyes to new career options and they were headed for good-paying jobs as electricians and HVAC technicians.

Juliette Suarez, who wants to be an exotic animal specialist, told lawmakers the veterinary science program at Southern Westchester BOCES has been a perfect fit for her.

"It's much smaller and more personalized than my huge high school," she said. "There's a tremendous sense of family because we love what we do and we're happy to be there."

Suarez, who was joined at the lobby day by her mom, is planning to continue her education at SUNY Stony Brook and eventually become a veterinarian.

Since he couldn't bring his incarcerated students, Southern Westchester BOCES counselor Kevin McAllister did the next best thing. He gave lawmakers a flash drive with a brief video featuring two jailed youths who are turning their lives around through BOCES programming.

"Sometimes you have to think outside the box to get the legislators' attention," McAllister said. "Some of the lawmakers popped it right in their laptops and watched the video right then and there. The response was really positive."

Border protest is inspirational — but heartbreaking

By Sylvia Saunders
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For Albany teacher Zeovadis Tavarez-Polanco, speaking out for refugee and immigrant children is a simple human rights issue — not a political one.

Tavarez-Polanco, a fifth-grade bilingual teacher, joined educators from across the country during February break for a “Teach-In for Freedom” in El Paso, Texas. The Teachers Against Child Detention group, led by 2018 National Teacher of the Year Mandy Manning, is calling for the immediate release of thousands of migrant children being held in U.S. detention centers.

“The emotional and mental damage for these children is irreparable,” Tavarez-Polanco said. “It’s nothing short of child abuse.”

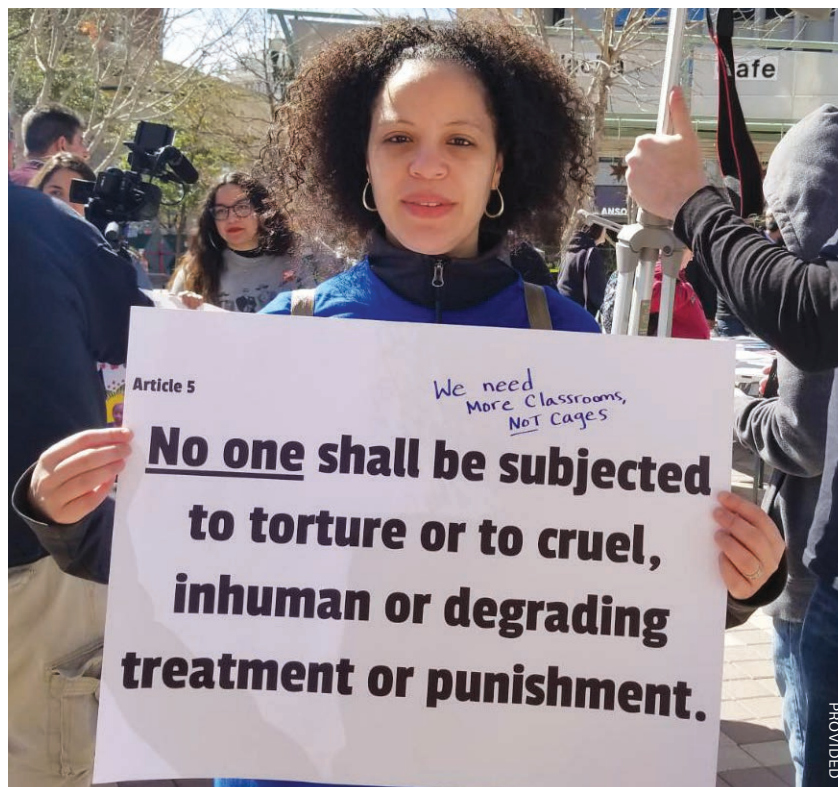
The federal government began enforcing a “zero-tolerance” immigration policy earlier last year, separating migrant children from their parents when they tried to cross the

U.S.-Mexico border and placing thousands of children in federal detention centers. The policy was reversed in June after public outcry and a federal judge ordered all separated children to be reunited with a parent. But the deadline for that order has long passed and many children still remain in federal custody.

Tavarez-Polanco called it unconscionable that the federal government did not keep better track of the children and their families.

“When you’re taking newborn babies from their mother, you should certainly have controls in place so you can reunite families,” she said. “The organization and safety controls are more efficient when you pick up your child at Chuck E. Cheese!”

The teach-in featured powerful protest speeches, lessons on the history of U.S. immigration and poignant letters written by immigrant students. They called for more support services for newcomer students, and changing the narrative on U.S. immigration. While the event was inspiring for



Albany PSTA member Zeovadis Tavarez-Polanco is a first-generation American citizen and bilingual teacher. She joined teachers from across the country during the February break for a teach-in to protest the U.S. government’s continued detention of migrant children.

Tavarez-Polanco, she also found it heartbreaking. Participants wore safety pins with children’s nametags attached and carried signs with pictures of children who were separated from their families.

The American Federation of Teachers sponsored Tavarez-Polanco’s trip after NYSUT recommended her due to her personal journey and ongoing work defending the rights of immigrant students and their families. A longtime teacher at Albany’s dual-language Delaware Community School, Tavarez-Polanco has many students whose families are new to the country. Aside from the daily support she provides as a teacher, Tavarez-Polanco has also served as a go-between for families navigating medical and legal difficulties.

The ongoing advocacy is personal.

Both her parents came to the U.S. from the Dominican Republic and she knows well how hard it can be for English language learners to succeed. She’s proud to say she and all five of her siblings became “successful and productive” citizens.

She intends to keep speaking out until the child detention centers are closed and children are no longer separated from their loved ones. “This never should have happened in the first place and we have to make sure it doesn’t happen again,” she said. “Kids should never be political pawns.”



Union delivers disaster relief aid



NYSUT Secretary-Treasurer Philippe Abraham, far right, joins a delegation from the American Federation of Teachers (including AFT President Randi Weingarten, third from left, and UFT President Michael Mulgrew, center) delivering school supplies to the U.S. Virgin Islands. Like Puerto Rico, the trio of islands — St. Thomas, St. Croix and St. John — were devastated by hurricanes in 2017 and are still struggling to recover.

Campaign builds on success

By **Ned Hoskin**
nhoskin@nysutmail.org

In November, NYSUT-endorsed candidates swept to victory.

We were able to elect the pro-union, pro-public school leadership in the state Senate who share our commitment to education and labor. And, we gained more seats to a supportive majority in the state Assembly.

These wins have already begun to bear fruit; union-backed legislation is making progress in the state house in ways we haven't seen in more than a decade.

The key to this progress? VOTE-COPE, the union's voluntary political action fund, spent more than \$4

million, raised through voluntary contributions from tens of thousands of individual members.

This month NYSUT launched its 2019 campaign, featuring the artwork shown at right.

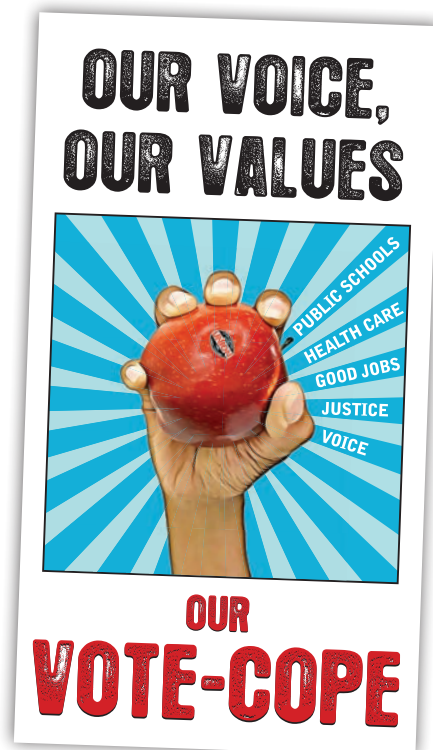
Our Voice, Our Values, Our VOTE-COPE evokes the collective ability to support candidates who have shown through their record and a thorough endorsement process that they share our core values:

- Great public schools.
- Good jobs.
- Accessible, high-quality health care.
- A vibrant democracy that embraces the voice of labor.
- A commitment to promoting justice, and fighting discrimination, hatred and bigotry.

"Our union is strongest when we raise our voices together to fight for our values," said President Andy Pallotta. "The best way to defend our voice, our values and our union is to contribute to VOTE-COPE."

No NYSUT dues dollars are used to support political parties, candidates or campaigns. Your voluntary contribution to VOTE-COPE is the only way to ensure the people in power hear our voices and understand what we need to succeed in our work and our lives. VOTE-COPE protects our rights, our professions and our communities. Please make a donation today at www.nysut.org/VOTECOPE.

VOTE-COPE is NYSUT's political fund-raising arm. VOTE-COPE funds are used in federal, state and local elections. Contributing to VOTE-COPE is voluntary and is not a condition of membership. NYSUT members and their immediate family members may refuse to contribute without reprisal. Unauthorized contributions will be returned. Contributions to VOTE-COPE are not tax deductible.



The world would be a better place if you ran for office

By **Ned Hoskin**
nhoskin@nysutmail.org

One of the clearest lessons of the 2018 elections: When more good people run for office, more good people are elected.

Simple as that!

That's the idea behind the NYSUT Candidate Pipeline for our members.

"It has never been more clear that educators are needed in public service," said President Andy Pallotta. "If we are ever to achieve true representation for our communities and our profession, we need NYSUT members to take on the challenge of running for office."

The 2018 election results demonstrate the power of the Pipeline. One

NYSUT Pipeline candidate won as an underdog in a key state Senate district, helping create a decisive pro-education majority in the Senate! Two other Pipeline candidates (one a challenger and the other an incumbent), won in the state Assembly.

Here are some of our successes from last November:

Monica Martinez, a former Brentwood educator, elected to the state Senate.

Pat Burke, United University Professions, elected to the Assembly.

Monica Wallace, UUP, re-elected to the Assembly.

Michelle Roman, a graduate of NYSUT's Member Organizing Institute, elected Lockport mayor.

Nicole Terminelli, Massena Federation of Teachers, elected to the St. Lawrence County Legislature.

Francesca Hagadus, retired Chappaqua teacher, elected to the Mount Pleasant Town Board.

Brian LaVine, Retiree Council 12, elected to the Cobleskill Town Council.

"From your local school board to city hall to Albany and beyond, you can make a difference by running for office," Pallotta said.

NYSUT is currently offering a comprehensive six-week training program for prospective candidates that teaches everything you need to know about running for office, from developing a message to targeting voters and from fundraising to building the right team. If you are interested in future trainings, contact your regional political organizer, www.nysut.org/RPO.



PROVIDED

A room full of NYSUT members interested in running for office attend the union's Pipeline training.

Union protects education, fights retaliation

NYSUT Office of General Counsel

A recent battle in Buffalo dramatically shows the impact of teacher unions on students and educational excellence. Litigation brought by the Buffalo Teachers Federation stopped the city school district from inflicting severe damage to the educational program at City Honors, a magnet school with students in grades five through 12.

For years, City Honors teachers were not assigned some non-instructional and student supervisory duties so that they could concentrate on academic counseling and coursework. When the Buffalo City School District suddenly reversed this practice, and violated a Memorandum of Agreement signed in 1999, the BTF filed a grievance and ultimately won an arbitration that directed the district to stop the assigning of these duties. The district then lost an attempt to vacate the arbitration decision in court.

Still, the district refused to comply with the now court-ordered arbitration award. The union moved to have the district held in contempt of court. Finally, the district proceeded to re-assign some non-instructional duties from City Honors teachers, but not before taking its revenge on the teachers, and, as collateral damage, the students.

To “pay” for the new teacher aides that it claimed it had to now hire, the district announced in February of 2018 it was eliminating 5.5 teaching positions. Only BTF positions were to be eliminated. Cuts were made only at City Honors School. To make sure the message was clear, the principal had a faculty meeting and told everyone that the cuts were because of the grievance; he sent out a letter to all parents saying the positions were being eliminated to pay for the new costs.

In the middle of the school year, the district was going to eliminate a math teacher, an English teacher,

two music teachers, an instructional coach, and a halftime guidance counselor. Among other things, classes were to be re-shuffled, schedules changed, class sizes increased, teachers would suddenly be getting new students and students getting new teachers, and the band and orchestral program were to be eliminated. Students and parents were outraged, but they were not angry with the union; they were furious at the district.

The union went to court and obtained a temporary restraining order against the district’s action. Ten parents and two students provided affidavits in support of BTF’s action. The temporary restraining order remained in effect for the rest of the school year. The union thus stopped this action in its tracks. The mid-year changes did not happen and educational excellence was preserved.

The union filed a grievance alleging improper retaliation and improper diminishment of the educational

program at City Honors. The arbitrator in that case subsequently found that the district did improperly retaliate against BTF teachers and he directed the district to cease and desist from all such future conduct. And, significantly, the arbitrator held that the district violated the collective bargaining agreement by attempting to diminish the educational program at City Honors by the manner in which it acted. This arbitration award was recently confirmed by a court that rejected yet another district attempt to vacate one of the union’s arbitration awards.

By defending its members, the union protected the interests of students and parents in this fight.

“We must and will continue to fight the district’s retaliatory attacks on us and our students,” said BTF President Phil Rumore, who praised NYSUT Legal. “We cannot and will never be broken. Not now, not ever.”

Unionists fight to save the home team

By Matt Smith

msmith@nysutmail.org

On a brutal winter’s day in late January, a group of unionists led by NYSUT braved the elements and stood in a barren parking lot at New Era Stadium to save the jobs of some 200 workers.

“Shame on New Era (Cap Corp.),” said Rev. Kirk Laubenstein, executive director for the Coalition of Economic Justice, referring to the company’s decision to lay off 219 workers at its Derby plant just south of the city. “They should change the name of this stadium to ‘Union Busting Field.’”

What started that day as a local effort by a small group of Western New

York labor activists to decry New Era’s decision — which involves relocating its U.S. manufacturing arm to Florida where non-union labor would replace the quality work of Derby employees represented by the Communications Workers of America — has now fanned into a nationwide movement.

“The Derby (workers) have been part of our game, making the iconic on-field hats for over 50 years. They deserve better,” said Washington Nationals pitcher Sean Doolittle, a member of the Major League Baseball Players Association.

The plight of the Derby workers also has reached the halls of Congress, with Sen. Sharrod Brown of Ohio — a possible 2020 Democratic

presidential contender — urging MLB Commissioner Robert Manfred to intervene. New Era holds an exclusive contract to on-field hats for every MLB team.

“Opening day is not far off,” Brown wrote in a letter to Manfred. “The optimism of opening day — not the loss of good-paying union jobs — should be what is on the mind of baseball fans across America.”

Perhaps most troubling for those in Derby is that unless the local plant is somehow saved, Chris Koch — the New Era CEO whose portrait hangs on the Wall of Fame in the Lake Shore Central School District — is putting people out of work in the very community in which he grew up.



New Era Cap may be a global brand, but those hats “are homemade,” says Michele Amoia of the Lake Shore Central School Teachers Association.

And if that happens, said Democratic Assemblyman Sean Ryan of Buffalo, “then you better take his photo off that wall.”

Visit <https://newerahatsoff.com/> for more information.



PROVIDED

NYSUT Second Vice President Paul Pecorale, right, walks the picket line with members of Inspire Staff United, from left, Eileen Kelly, day care coordinator, and Lauren Lappe, teacher aide. The union has been negotiating for a first contract since January 2016.

Preschool educators stand up for students

Members of Inspire Staff United went on a one-day strike last month — with the support of many parents — seeking fair contract provisions that would provide for a better learning environment for the preschool children they serve.

Inspire staffers, who serve children with developmental disabilities from across Orange County, organized in 2015 to seek better working conditions at the organization's schools. The union's concerns include short staffing due to high staff turnover; high caseloads; insufficient pay and poor communication from the administration to staff.

"It is shameful that the

administration is not putting the needs of children first and has instead resorted to castigating employees who simply want to create a better learning environment that will better serve these kids," said Eileen Kelly, day care coordinator for Inspire.

NYSUT Second Vice President Paul Pecorale walked the picket line with the staffers. "Many Inspire members gave up a day's pay to stand up for simple asks like a higher-than-minimum wage," he said. "These members work with preschoolers who are most at-risk and are fighting to make sure these students receive the services necessary for success."

For more information, visit www.nysut.org.

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NOTICE OF VACANCY, SPECIAL ELECTION, BOARD OF DIRECTORS NYSUT AT-LARGE DIRECTOR, ELECTION DISTRICT 28 & 29

A vacancy exists on the NYSUT Board of Directors for the position of At-Large Director for ED 28 & 29, which was created by the resignation of Carmen Alvarez, effective Dec. 17, 2018.

Pursuant to NYSUT Constitution, Article IX §6(o), the NYSUT Board of Directors is empowered to fill all At-Large Director vacancies that may occur between election year Representative Assemblies.

Notice is hereby given that a special election to fill the At-Large ED 28 & 29 Director vacancy will be conducted by the NYSUT Board of Directors on May 2, 2019.

The election will be by roll call vote of the members of the NYSUT Board of Directors. A majority vote is required for election. Should a second balloting be necessary to determine the results of an election, the two nominees with the highest number of votes in the first election will be nominees.

In the event that there is a tie for the second highest number of votes, the candidate with the highest number of votes and all candidates tied for second shall be placed on the second ballot. The meeting must remain in session until there are no more than two

candidates on the ballot, and one candidate is elected by the Board.

Nominations to fill this vacancy will be accepted in accordance with the Campaign and Election Procedures approved by the NYSUT Board of Directors for the 2017 Representative Assembly. In order to qualify for the special election, a Nominating Petition must be fully completed and then signed by at least eight (8) NYSUT members.

The completed and signed Nominating Petition must then be received by the NYSUT Elections Committee by the close of business (5 p.m.) on Wednesday, March 27, 2019. Any NYSUT member in good standing from the Election Districts 28 & 29 may be a candidate. Nominating Petitions are available by contacting the NYSUT Elections Committee at elections@nysutmail.org or by contacting the NYSUT Office of the President at 518-213-6000, ext. 6662.

The candidate elected will serve as successor At-Large Director immediately upon being elected and continue to serve as successor At-Large Director to the conclusion of the 2020 Representative Assembly.

Download a free women's history poster

NYSUT celebrates Women's History Month — March — with a free poster highlighting Mary McLeod Bethune (1875–1955), an American educator and champion of gender and racial equality. In 1904, Bethune founded the Daytona Normal and Industrial Institute for Negro Girls, which later became Bethune-Cookman College. She became the first African-American woman to head a federal agency when President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed her director of the Division of Negro Affairs of



the National Youth Administration in 1936. In 1945, she was the only woman of color at the United Nations' founding conference.

Bethune was founding president of the National Council of Negro Women. She became vice president of the NAACP in 1940, a

position she held until her death. In 1973, Bethune was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame. The U.S. Postal Service issued a stamp in her honor in 1985.

For print and downloadable PDF versions of this, and other posters, visit www.nysut.org/posters.

State, federal tax reminders



Thanks to recent union victories, the educator expense tax deduction has been renewed for 2018 returns — and there's a new state deduction for your union dues, too.

As a result of legislation championed by NYSUT, the state AFL-CIO and unions across the state, union members in New York can deduct their union dues from their state income taxes if they itemize.

While not a dollar for dollar reduction for your overall union dues, this deduction will offset your taxable income if you itemize your New York State income taxes.

Eligible educators can also deduct up to \$250 of qualified expenses paid in 2018. An eligible educator is

a K-12 teacher, instructor, counselor, principal, or aide who worked at least 900 hours in a school that provides elementary or secondary education as determined by state law.

For more information, consult your personal tax preparer.

Free AP Stylebooks



AP has limited copies of the 2017 AP Stylebook to donate to organizations that cannot afford to buy them, such as journalism camps, conferences for minority journalists and high schools with little or no school newspaper budget. Shipping costs are not included.

For more information and to complete a donation request, visit www.apstylebook.com/donations.

NOTICE OF SPECIAL ELECTION MEETING, NYSUT BOARD OF DIRECTORS, VACANCY ELECTION, ELECTION DISTRICT 39

A vacancy will exist on the NYSUT Board of Directors for Election District 39. The vacancy will be created by the resignation of Kevin Peterman, effective May 3, 2019.

In accordance with the NYSUT Constitution, Article IX, §§4(a) and 4(b): "Directors representing Election Districts shall be elected on a roll call vote by a majority of ballots cast by the representatives from their respective constituencies ... [and in] ... the event of a vacancy in the position of Election District Director, the President shall call a special election to elect a successor who shall serve for the remainder of the unexpired term."

The delegates and alternates of Election District 39 are hereby notified that this vacancy will be filled by a special election meeting to be held as follows:

Date: May 3, 2019

Time: 8:45 p.m.

Place: Empire State Plaza, Meeting Room 7 Albany, NY 12210

Pursuant to NYSUT Constitution, Article IX, §4(b) and the approved NYSUT Campaign and Election Procedures, NYSUT members who were reported as elected delegates to the 2019 Representative Assembly representing the members of ED 39 will be eligible to vote in this special election. A reported alternate delegate may vote in the absence of the delegate.

Nominations to fill this vacancy will be accepted in accordance with the Campaign and Election Procedures approved by the NYSUT Board of Directors adopted for the 2017 Representative Assembly. In order to qualify as a candidate for this

special election, a Nominating Petition must be fully completed and then signed by at least two (2) in-service members from ED 39.

The completed and signed Nominating Petition must then be received by the NYSUT Elections Committee by the close of business (5 p.m.) on Monday, April 1, 2019. Any member in good standing from a NYSUT local within ED 39 may be a candidate. Only in-service members in good standing from ED 39 may sign a candidate's Nominating Petition. Nominating Petitions are available by contacting the NYSUT Elections Committee at elections@nysutmail.org or by contacting the NYSUT Office of the President at 518-213-6000, ext. 6662.

At the special election meeting, each candidate shall be given an opportunity to address the meeting for a period not to exceed three (3) minutes at a candidates' forum scheduled for 8:45 p.m. on May 3, at the above location. The special election meeting will remain in session until a successor director is elected. The number of votes to which a local is entitled will be evenly distributed among that local's delegates present and voting.

The candidate elected will serve as successor Election District Director immediately upon being elected at the May 3, 2019, special election meeting and continue to serve as the successor director to the conclusion of the 2020 Representative Assembly.

All elected delegates or their alternates reported for the 2019 NYSUT RA from ED 39 are requested to be present for this election.

NOTICE OF SPECIAL ELECTION MEETING, NYSUT BOARD OF DIRECTORS, VACANCY ELECTION, ELECTION DISTRICT 46

A vacancy exists on the NYSUT Board of Directors for Election District 46. The vacancy was created by the resignation of Matthew Hill, effective Jan. 21, 2019.

In accordance with the NYSUT Constitution, Article IX, §§4(a) and 4(b): "Directors representing Election Districts shall be elected on a roll call vote by a majority of ballots cast by the representatives from their respective constituencies ... [and in] ... the event of a vacancy in the position of Election District Director, the President shall call a special election to elect a successor who shall serve for the remainder of the unexpired term."

The delegates and alternates of Election District 46 are hereby notified that this vacancy will be filled by a special election meeting to be held as follows:

Date: April 10, 2019

Time: 5 p.m.

**Place: NYSUT Regional Office
100 West Church St., Suite 200
Elmira, NY 14901**

Pursuant to NYSUT Constitution, Article IX, §4(b) and the approved NYSUT Campaign and Election Procedures, NYSUT members who were reported as elected delegates to the 2018 Representative Assembly representing the members of ED 46 will be eligible to vote in this special election. A reported alternate delegate may vote in the absence of the delegate.

Nominations to fill this vacancy will be accepted in accordance with the Campaign and Election Procedures approved by the NYSUT Board of Directors adopted for the 2017 Representative

Assembly. In order to qualify as a candidate for this special election, a Nominating Petition must be fully completed and then signed by at least two (2) in-service members from ED 46.

The completed and signed Nominating Petition must then be received by the NYSUT Elections Committee by the close of business (5 p.m.) on Wednesday, March 27, 2019. Any member in good standing from a NYSUT local within ED 46 may be a candidate. Only in-service members in good standing from ED 46 may sign a candidate's Nominating Petition. Nominating Petitions are available by contacting the NYSUT Elections Committee at elections@nysutmail.org or by contacting the NYSUT Office of the President at 518-213-6000, ext. 6662.

At the special election meeting, each candidate shall be given an opportunity to address the meeting for a period not to exceed three (3) minutes at a candidates' forum scheduled for 5 p.m. on April 10, at the above location. The special election meeting will remain in session until a successor director is elected. The number of votes to which a local is entitled will be evenly distributed among that local's delegates present and voting.

The candidate elected will serve as successor Election District Director immediately upon being elected at the April 10, 2019, special election meeting and continue to serve as the successor director to the conclusion of the 2020 Representative Assembly.

All elected delegates or their alternates reported for the 2018 NYSUT RA from ED 46 are requested to be present for this election.

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Trailblazing unionist encouraged by renewed activism

By Liza Frenette
lfrenett@nysutmail.org

As teacher strikes continue to sweep the country, union maverick Sylvia Matousek revisited the roots of her own daring 10-day strike that landed her and colleagues in jail for seven days.

This North Syracuse Education Association firebrand started teaching in 1964.

"We had what we call collective begging, rather than collective bargaining," she said. School boards

could take away benefits — there were no written contracts. Teachers had no say in materials used in the classroom, and there was no such thing as professional development.

"Women especially were very intimidated in those days," Matousek said. When she tried to approach some of her female colleagues about taking action, some said they had to go home and ask their husbands first.

Pregnant teachers were a no-no.

"As soon as they started to show they were ushered out of the building," Matousek said.



Sylvia Matousek

In 1969, the Taylor Law gave public employees the right to organize and elect union representatives. Matousek was elected union president in 1973. Three years later, the second-grade teacher led her local union in a 10-day strike after the school board tried to remove class-size clauses and gut other protections from the contract. Teachers marched in front of school buildings and outside the homes of the superintendent and school board president.

It is the only school union strike in Onondaga County's history, and it landed Matousek and five other union leaders in jail for breaking the state law prohibiting teachers from walking off the job.

Five hundred teachers were also put on probation for a year, and they were penalized two days pay for every day off the job. The union was also fined \$15,000.

Looking at the 2018 strikes in West Virginia, Kentucky, Oklahoma and Arizona, Matousek noted they were all strikes in right-to-work states. In Arizona, she had friends on the picket line who met teachers who had to get groceries from food banks because they didn't make enough money to

feed their families.

"It's reprehensible," she said, recalling that when she first began teaching, the pay was so low that some teachers were eligible for food stamps.

"Unionism in general has raised people up, it has saved the lives of families and provided public education," she said. "I think the union philosophy and the union presence in the Northeast states is something people value."

Unions, Matousek added, are "the underpinning to the middle class, which is very much under threat."

But she has been encouraged by what's happening across the nation.

Educators are rising up and calling for better funding for schools, more services for students and better pay, with recent strikes in California, West Virginia and Colorado.

Looking back on her decades of activism, Matousek's guiding philosophy has been quite simple: "Did we leave our students and colleagues in a better place than when we came in?"

For those who know Sylvia Matousek, the answer is a sonorous "yes!"



Sylvia Matousek, center, is interviewed by members of the Syracuse press. She and five other members from the North Syracuse Education Association were sentenced to a week in the Jamestown penitentiary for staging a 10-day strike against their school district.

NYSUT Subject Area Committees help set the union's agenda

By **Sylvia Saunders**
ssaunder@nysutmail.org

There was no shortage of front-burner items for NYSUT Subject Area Committee members to discuss this winter.

The World Languages Committee examined the state's shortage of foreign language teachers and brainstormed possible solutions. The Educational Technology Committee is working on NYSUT's position paper on virtual learning. And special education teachers talked about how to improve access, support and employability for students with disabilities in Career and Technical Education programs.

That's just a sampling of the work underway by NYSUT's 13 Subject Area Committees. The groups came

together one weekend in December and another in February to identify priorities for their specialty areas.

"We look to you to help us shape our educational issues advocacy agenda," NYSUT Executive Vice President Jolene DiBrango told the groups gathering in February. "Your

work serves as an 'early warning system' for NYSUT — to let us know what is happening in your subject, school, or your region of the state, so we can be proactive."

DiBrango noted this was the first meeting for a new committee for school librarians. They talked about

the role of librarians in the school community and worked on a 2019 Representative Assembly resolution calling for a certified school librarian in every school. The group also identified book and material budget issues, elementary school librarian regulations and news literacy as topics to work on at future meetings.

NYSUT's Subject Area Committees include — Arts: Music, Dance, Theater, Visual and Media Arts; Career and Technical Education; Early Childhood Education; Educational Technology; English Language Arts; English Language Learners; Health Education, Physical Education and Family & Consumer Sciences; World Languages; Math, Science & Technology; School Librarians; Social Studies; Special Education; and Teacher Centers.



Librarians on NYSUT's new committee, from left, include Oswego County BOCES TA's Tammy Cummings; West Seneca TA's Rosalia Carraba; Maine-Endwell TA's Carrie Randall and Lyncourt TA's Jackie Derouchie.

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Long Island coalition brings attention to state's special schools

By Matt Smith
msmith@nysutmail.org

A coalition on Long Island is bringing together NYSUT members who work in special schools to raise awareness of the challenges confronting these institutions. The goal is to persuade state lawmakers to provide the resources necessary to ensure students with physical and emotional disabilities have the same opportunity to succeed as students in traditional schools.

"Albany needs to be aware of the financial difficulties that schools like mine face," said Vinell Saunders, a social worker at Woodridge Children's Center in Freeport, which works with emotionally disturbed students whose needs are too great to be served in regular school districts. "If we have the financial resources we need, we can do so much more."

New York's special schools are funded through a state-government mechanism that typically lags two years behind, often forcing them to grapple with severe budget shortfalls. Because these institutions have no taxing authority, they are often forced to pursue loans just to make payroll and keep up with escalating costs.

The endless financial constraints often leave special schools

contending with buildings falling into disrepair, a lack of equipment and resources necessary to meet students needs, and significantly lower pay for teachers than in traditional schools, resulting in widespread turnover.

Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf on Long Island, for example,

has gone more than a year without a principal, and high teacher turnover has stretched remaining staff thin, making it difficult to provide students with the attention and services they need.

"We have not had any salary increase

in eight years," said

Diane Diculescu, a speech therapist. "We love our jobs, and we stay because we love our students. It is a career that not everyone can do. But we really need a (budget) increase."

By bringing together NYSUT members who not only work in the same field, but face the same challenges, the Long Island coalition — made possible by a solidarity grant from NYSUT's Board of

Directors — aims to identify challenges and work collaboratively to find solutions.

At a recent meeting in Melville, coalition members received guidance on the rules and laws that they live by as private sector employees. And they were urged to use their voice

at events such as NYSUT's recent Special Schools Lobby Day at the state Capitol.

Kate O'Hara, a preschool special education teacher at the Children's Learning Center, Cerebral Palsy Association of Nassau County, said without the appropriate level of staff, her school falls short of the required teacher-to-student ratio, often leaving no one to teach core classes. "Right now we don't even have a physical education teacher," she said.

Judith Thompson — a rehabilitation specialist for United Cerebral Palsy of Long Island and president of the United Center Employees Association — said the persistent funding shortfalls make it difficult for

schools like hers to meet the individualized needs of students — many of whom cannot be cared for by their own families.

"They need residential homes, they need a place for them to be safe," Thompson said. "They need education and staff, like me, who stand for them and help them to be as productive as possible."



KATE O'HARA



VINELL SAUNDERS



JUDITH THOMPSON



DIANE DICULESCU

PHOTOS: BECKY MILLER

Faithful Elephants: A True Story of Animals, People and War

Written by Yukio Tsuchiya
Illustrated by Ted Lewin



Recommended by: Jackie Derouchie, School Library/Media Specialist, Lyncourt Teachers Association

Suitable For: Grades 5 and up

Why I Chose It: This is a true story about the effects of war on people and animals. The watercolor illustrations are expressive and show the emotion of the characters in the book. It is a sad story that shows the reality of war and its impact on the city zoo. The book is read aloud on Japanese radio every year to mark the anniversary of Japan's surrender in World War II. This book was written in 1951, but is just as relevant in today's time.

What I Like Best: I love the illustrations and the heartfelt emotion they portray. I can almost feel what the elephants felt — confusion, shock, hunger, fear. The book evokes empathy for the zookeeper and trainer and the helplessness they feel. Readers can experience anger and resentment toward the "powers that be" for getting to the state of war, and witness firsthand the horrible effects it has on every living thing.

How Teachers Can Use This Book:

Picture books are a great way to introduce a topic to higher grade levels, as well as to use with younger students. This is also a great book to help teach empathy for others. Art teachers can use the watercolor illustrations to show how various emotions can be expressed through painting.

About the Author and Illustrator: Yukio Tsuchiya has written more than 150 children's stories, songs and poems, including a collection of haiku poems. He has received several awards, including the Juvenile Cultural Merits Award. Ted Lewin has illustrated more than 100 books for children.

"Check it Out" features books recommended to teachers and parents by school librarians and other educators. Have a recommendation? Send suggestions, along with your name and local union, to lfrenett@nysutmail.org.

Congratulations to NY's 98 new National Board Certified Teachers

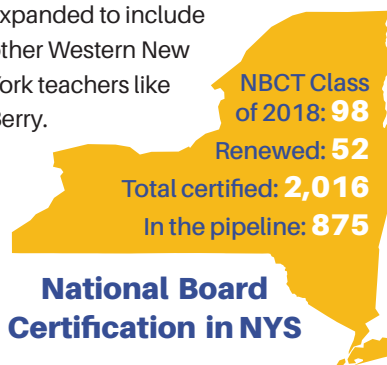
By Sylvia Saunders
ssaunder@nysutmail.org

The best teachers know how to use their resources.

For Silver Creek first-grade teacher Melissa Berry, she used every support system available to help earn National Board Certification — from a union-backed state grant covering the application fee to release time. She also joined three — yes, three! — candidate support groups, even driving nearly an hour for a popular program offered by the Kenmore Staff Development Center.

"It was a whirlwind, but networking with so many people really helped — and made it possible for me to finish in a year," said Berry, who also joined collegial support groups in the Southern Tier and Hamburg. In addition, Berry worked closely with fellow teacher Shannon Matson, the only other NBCT in their rural Chautauqua County district.

The Kenmore teacher center program began as a cohort for Kenmore-Tonawanda School District candidates but has since expanded to include other Western New York teachers like Berry.



In a lesson about self control, Silver Creek's Melissa Berry, inset, challenges her first-graders not to pop any of the bubbles floating around them.

PROVIDED

"As word gets out, it's growing increasingly popular," said facilitator Kathleen Reiser, an NBCT herself. "We meet on a monthly basis from September through May, with mini-lessons, critique sessions and Saturday writing workshops."

Berry, who credits the support groups with helping her stay on track and motivated, is one of 98 teachers statewide who earned National Board Certification in December 2018. New York State now has 2,016 NBCT's, more than any other state in the Northeast. Hundreds of districts offer board certified teachers a salary step increase, release time or a stipend for earning the achievement.

Created by teachers, for teachers, National Board Certification is the nation's highest credential for the teaching profession. It is a voluntary, rigorous process that

includes a content knowledge exam, a portfolio, student work samples, reflections demonstrating student and professional growth and videos of classroom teaching.

Berry said she decided to take the national board plunge as she made the shift from teaching kindergarten to first grade. "I thought, if I'm already going through the work of changing curriculum, why not go for my National Board Certification, too?"

She found working on the two challenges in tandem turned out to be a good idea.

"The national board process is a personalized professional development that you design to meet your class's needs," Berry said. "You begin to think more critically about your teaching."

NYSUT Executive Vice President Jolene DiBrango said many

candidates describe the national board process as exceptional professional development. The union strongly supports candidates by offering awareness programs, support and advice through online discussion forums, writing retreats and professional development through its Education & Learning Trust. Through ELT and Empire State College, candidates can earn three graduate credits for each completed component for a total of 12 graduate credits. Each national board component will be one three-credit graduate course, costing only \$300 for members.

An increasing number of teacher centers are offering programs similar to Kenmore's.

In addition, NYSUT advocates annually for continued funding for the state's Albert Shanker Grant which covers costs for National Board Certification.

"National Board Certified Teachers raise up our profession and our schools each and every day," DiBrango said. "They exemplify the best in education by dedicating themselves to the art and science of teaching."

WANT TO KNOW MORE?



Teachers interested in pursuing National Board Certification can find resources online, including support programs, tips and a list of districts that offer incentives. Visit www.nbcny.org or www.nysut.org.

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Mathematics/EA

ALEXANDRIA CENTRAL FA

Hayley Ascough
Literacy: Reading-Language Arts/EMC

ARLINGTON TA

Cindy Binnie
Science/AYA
Sara Jernigan
Exceptional Needs Specialist/ECYA

AVERILL PARK TA

Christopher Anderson
Social Studies-History/EA

BELLMORE-MERRICK UST, INC.

Linu Chacko
English Language Arts/AYA
Jessica Metkiff
English Language Arts/AYA
William Morris
English Language Arts/AYA

BERNE-KNOX-WESTERLO TA

Tamara Fisher
Generalist/EC

BLOOMFIELD PROFESSIONAL EA

Katrina Smith
Social Studies-History/AYA

BREWSTER TA

Nancy Pratley
Generalist/MC

BROADALBIN-PERTH TA

Kelly DiNatale
Science/EA

BRONXVILLE UFSD

Chris Yi, Mathematics/EA

CHITTENANGO TA

Maya Payton
Science/AY

CLINTON TA

Darcey Cross
Physical Education/EAYA
Mary Anne Murray
Generalist/MC

COBLESKILL RICHMONDVILLE TA

Kathryn Elder
Generalist/MC
Katie Sill
Generalist/MC

CROTON TA

Gregory Bradley
Mathematics/AYA
Erica Camilo
Generalist/MC
Lisa Dwyer
Music/EAYA
Stephen Palencsar
Exceptional Needs Specialist/ECYA
Kerri Tracy
Health Education/Early AYA

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Stephanie Cimino
World Languages/EAYA

FONDA FULTONVILLE TA

Tanya Chmura
Literacy: Reading-Language Arts/EMC
Shelly Shaffer
Literacy: Reading-Language Arts/EMC

GLEN COVE TA

Rebecca Carfora
English Language Arts/EA

GREAT NECK TA

Rosemary Sloggatt
Art/EMC

Savannah (Puca) Ahearn

Exceptional Needs Specialist/ECYA

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Science/AYA
Thomas Manera
Science/AYA

HADLEY LUZERNE TA

Barbara Winnek
Literacy: Reading-Language Arts/EMC

HASTINGS TA

Jocelyn Perez
School Counseling/ECYA

INDIAN RIVER EA

Jillian Folino
Mathematics/AYA

KENMORE TA

Robyn Brydalski
Generalist/MC

Larissa Gramza

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Michael Ihde
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MANHASSET EA

Candyce Kannengieser
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Dominique Godat, Generalist/EC

John Hansan, Mathematics/AYA

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Laurie Koncan, Social Studies-History/EA

John Oakey, English Language Arts/EA

Joseph Papa, English Language Arts/AYA

Rachel Renick, English Language Arts/AYA

Christopher Rhodenbaugh, Social Studies-History/AYA

NEWBURGH TA

Sharon Kennedy
Generalist/MC

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English Language Arts/AYA

NORTH COLONIE TA

Nicole French
English Language Arts/EA
Amory Lawler
Literacy: Reading-Language Arts/EMC

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Kerry Knox
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Kim Zybczynski
Science/EA

WHITE PLAINS TA

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English Language Arts/AYA

YONKERS FT

Julie Cupertino
Exceptional Needs Specialist/ECYA

~~~~~

**AYA:** Adolescence and Young Adulthood  
**EA:** Early Adolescence

**EAYA:** Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood

**EC:** Early Childhood

**ECYA:** Early Childhood through Young Adulthood

**EMC:** Early and Middle Childhood

**MC:** Middle Childhood

~~~~~

Legislative panel focuses on teacher diversity

By Kara Smith
ksmith@nysutmail.org

A panel discussion at the 2019 conference of the NYS Association of Black and Puerto Rican Legislators in Albany in February highlighted efforts across the state to increase teacher recruitment. “Seizing the Opportunity to Diversify New York’s Teacher Workforce,” was one of several panels on education at the 48th annual conference. Participants stressed the importance of having diverse classroom teachers, something that all agreed inspires students of color to greater achievement.

“A diverse teaching force enhances both our community and our students,” said Assemblymember Alicia Hyndman, who moderated the forum.

“We’re talking about a power structure,” said high school social studies

teacher Jessica Elliott, a member of the Syracuse Teachers Association. She noted that as a student, she only had one teacher of color throughout her school career. She entered the field to change that.

“Young people need to see a reflection of power that looks like them,” she said.

Richard Haynes, director of school support for the New York City Department of Education, agreed. Male teachers of color, in particular, he said, could have a significant impact on student success, sometimes being the difference between a student who decides to graduate rather than drop out.

Strong pipeline programs are also important, said Sterling Roberson, United Federation of Teachers vice president for Career and Technical Education. He entered teaching in the 1980s through a five-year,

UFT-backed internship program.

“They knew there was a looming crisis so they created a pathway for young candidates to enter the field,” he said, adding that the program provided pay and mentoring support.

All the panelists considered teacher mentoring important not only to recruit diverse candidates into the field, but to keep them in the classroom. Elliott said that simply having another educator of color to talk to can make a difference.

Competitive pay and loan forgiveness are also essential to recruitment and retention. Kaweeda Adams, Albany City School District superintendent, noted that some educators leave the field because they can’t afford to live in the community they



Syracuse TA’s Jessica Elliot stresses the importance of diversity in the teaching profession.

EL-WISE NOISETTE

teach in, or are lured away by higher paying jobs. “Starting people out with a competitive salary is a big challenge,” she said.

Despite the hurdles, Elliott remains committed to the teaching profession.

“It’s bigger than me,” she said. “It’s the idea of pulling those along with you as you climb. It’s a difficult profession, but when you love what you do, it’s easy.”

WNY shines a light on ‘what’s great about teaching’

Since she was a child, Denise Grandits wanted to be a teacher. But then life happened: marriage, kids and before she knew it, she was 20 years deep into her career working for a large healthcare organization in Western New York.

After a boss encouraged her to pursue her master’s (in business administration) she instead decided to follow her passion. And at age 43, Grandits graduated with a master’s in teaching English Education.

Now a 10-year classroom veteran and English language arts teacher at Franklin Middle School in Kenmore, Grandits

has never looked back.

“It was scary as heck to leave a career in which I knew there was always going to be a paycheck,” said the Kenmore Teachers Association member. “But now, when I look at my students, there’s not a question in my

mind whether I made the right decision. I’d do it again in a heart beat.”

Grandits talked about her non-traditional path to the classroom during NYSUT’s January Take a Look at Teaching summit. And, though perhaps not intentionally, she served as

Exhibit A for the type of professional career changer the union-led initiative hopes to attract into the profession at a time when the state and nation confronts a looming teacher shortage.

“There are no simple solutions. That’s why we started this,” NYSUT

Executive Vice President Jolene DiBrango said. The Kenmore summit was the union’s second in a series of planned meetings.

Read more about the Kenmore summit, the Take a Look at Teaching initiative and NYSUT’s upcoming summits across the state at www.nysut.org/takealookateaching.



Classroom teachers, higher education professionals, school administrators and students attend NYSUT’s January Take a Look at Teaching summit held in Western New York.

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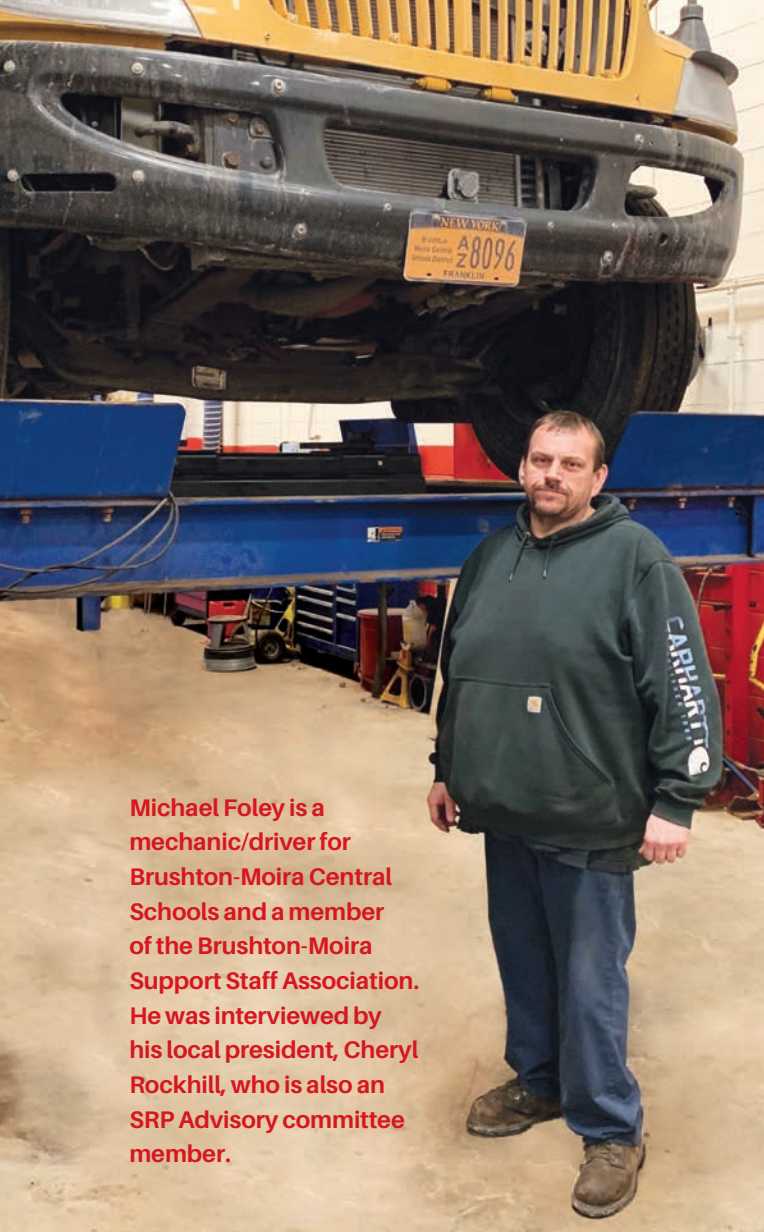
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Getting to know ... Michael Foley



Michael Foley is a mechanic/driver for Brushton-Moira Central Schools and a member of the Brushton-Moira Support Staff Association. He was interviewed by his local president, Cheryl Rockhill, who is also an SRP Advisory committee member.

CHERYL ROCKHILL

Tell us about your job and why you love what you do?

I repair and maintain the school's buses, passenger vehicles, lawn equipment and snow removal equipment. I also maintain the records for all vehicles used by the district and aid the Department of Transportation's inspector when our fleet is due for inspections. There are times, when needed, I drive routes to help get our students home or to school.

I love what I do because I was brought up around it. My father, Norman Foley Sr., was the mechanic at BMC from 1973 to 1991. I guess you could say it is in my blood.

How did you get involved in your union?

I sit on the negotiations team. We fight to keep our contract fair for all members. We spend many hours negotiating different parts of the contract. Our goal is to keep or build on what our predecessors have fought so hard for. I also sit on the Sick Pool Committee.

I've always wanted to be an active member and when the opportunity to sit on these committees came up I took advantage, with a little persistence from Cheryl, my union president.

How do you make a difference?

I make a difference because I keep our fleet safe for the transportation of our most precious cargo, students.

Unionwise, I make a difference because I choose to "stick with my union" and fight for our members.

What about community engagement? Any hobbies?

Locally I spearhead a club for collecting vintage tractors. I enjoy collecting and restoring them and participate in many shows throughout the community. I am president of the Head Mechanics Association. I am also president of Heavy Haulers Garden Tractor Pulls.

Three cheers to SRP Recognition Day contest winners

Congratulations to the Ossining Support Staff Association and the Rondout Valley Federation of Teachers and SRPs. Both local unions were recognized for their celebrations honoring School-Related Professionals.

"We received so many entries for this year's contest," said NYSUT Vice President Paul Pecorale. "The creativity and planning involved show that SRPs throughout the state are valued — and made the selection very difficult."

The two winners will receive a two-for-one admission to the Oct. 4–6, 2019 SRP Leadership Conference in Saratoga Springs, valued at more than \$300.

The Ossining Support Staff Association, led by Rhonda Harrell, delivered Mylar balloon-festooned goodie baskets to eight different buildings. There were other edible treats and decorations at each location, including sidewalk chalk greetings and a thank you video from district administrators.

The Rondout Valley Federation

of Teachers and SRPs, led by Sheryl Baker-Delano, created personalized "RVF SRP Essential to Education" umbrellas along with a sticker and a note to let each SRP know the union "always has you covered."

The Onteora Teachers Association, led by Michael Via, received an honorable mention for celebrating the Onteora Non-Teaching Employees Association members with breakfast trays and student-written thank you cards delivered to SRPs in seven buildings.



PROVIDED

From left, Elizabeth O'Connor, Marianne Hawryluk and Lori Quinn, all members of the Rondout Valley Federation of Teachers and SRPs, sport their personalized umbrellas — gifts from their local.

[CLASSIFIEDS]

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[PASSINGS]

Roger V. Burton | Nov. 30, 2018
United University Professions — Buffalo Center

M. Isabelle Duerksen | Nov. 27, 2018
Wappingers Congress of Retired Teachers

Ruth Foster | Nov. 20, 2018
Wappingers Congress of Retired Teachers

Sally Hurley | Oct. 25, 2018
Kenmore Teachers Association

Eleanor MacFarland | Oct. 10, 2018
Wappingers Congress of Retired Teachers

Julie A. Neville | Oct. 16, 2018
Grand Island Teachers Association

Kenneth J. Rogan | Nov. 5, 2018
Retiree Council 2

Reynold N. Scott | June 23, 2018
United University Professions — Buffalo Center

Ralph Vanacore | May 24, 2018
Yonkers Federation of Teachers

Robert A. Widger | Nov. 8, 2018
Orchard Park Teachers Association

Obituary submissions must include decedent's full name, union affiliation, date of death, and contact information for the person submitting the notice. Fax notices to 518-213-6415; send to Julie Malec, NYSUT United, 800 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, NY 12110-2455; or email jmalec@nysutmail.org.

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NYSUT audit

NYSUT continues its practice of providing members with access to the union's certified audit for their review. The annual audit for the fiscal year ending Aug. 31, 2018, is available and can be found on the NYSUT Member Center at www.nysut.org/audit. Members may request a hard copy by contacting the NYSUT Accounting Department at 518-213-6000, ext. 6252, or by sending an email to finance@nysutmail.org.



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Union pushes to include schools in violence prevention bill



ANDREW WATSON

NYSUT Executive Vice President Jolene DiBrango speaks with Syracuse Teachers Association member Mark Warner at an ELT instructor training workshop.

By Liza Frenette
lfrenett@nysutmail.org

Syracuse teaching assistant Mark Warner has been hit enough. He's had three concussions, a fractured nose, damage requiring two surgeries on each shoulder, and enough injury to his elbows to require operations on each.

Some of his injuries were caused when he was restraining students from fighting or from self harming. Most of the assaults happened after students with special needs were triggered by something or acting out, and Warner was unfortunately called in only after a situation had already escalated.

"The ones where I had to go in and protect someone else could have been prevented with training and a better understanding of trauma," said Warner, a member of the Syracuse Teachers Association.

That is precisely why NYSUT is advocating for school districts to be added to the list of employers

required to develop and implement programs to prevent workplace violence as addressed in the 2006 Workplace Violence Prevention Act.

Colleen Condolora, a special education teaching assistant and member of the union at Capital Region BOCES, knows Warner's pain. She has sustained three concussions, a fractured hand, broken toes and a broken finger.

"The majority of the injuries I sustained were not specifically directed toward me — but the end result was the same," said Condolora, a member of NYSUT's Health and Safety Committee, which has been pushing for inclusion in the legislative act.

"It was a major oversight not to include K-12 in this bill. Year after year, legislators were told that the SAVE (Safe Schools Against Violence in Education) legislation did not go far enough," said Condolora, who is also a trauma trainer.

SAVE has no enforcement or risk assessment and requires only a one-time, two-hour training for staff.

Safety requirements are much more intensive under the Workplace Violence Prevention Act.

The bill to include school employees has a sponsor in each house of the Legislature, Sen. James Skoufis, D-Woodbury, and Assemblywoman Michele Titus, D-Queens. In January, it moved out of the Senate labor committee.

Under the act, employers would have to work with unions to evaluate the workplace and identify risks of violence, then come up with a strategy to reduce or eliminate those risks. The act would require schools to conduct risk assessment and provide accountability, record keeping, employee involvement and review.

Significantly, school staff would receive annual training. Based on the workplace evaluations, additional training may be warranted.

In Syracuse, Warner is called the "autism whisperer" for his ability to help students in need and prevent problems from escalating. "Every single piece of training I got, I attribute to the union," he said. He is a member of NYSUT's School-Related Professionals Advisory Committee and is now an instructor with NYSUT's Education and Learning Trust.

Training and prevention are also sorely needed at the state's BOCES, where the "solution" has been to open a workers compensation reserve fund.

"BOCES are serving more students with severe special needs," NYSUT President Andy Pallotta said. "Accordingly, BOCES staff require continued and increased support."

The union is urging the Legislature to establish a dedicated pool of resources as part of the state budget.

Member honored for dedication to safe, healthy workplace

Donna McStay, Brentwood Teachers Association vice president, was honored as NYSUT's "Unsung Hero" at the biennial Health and Safety Conference March 1-2 for her persistence and dedication in improving the health of the workplace.

McStay spent six years documenting and communicating about a mold and mildew issue in the high school media room until the air quality was improved. She has advocated to make sure educators with medical conditions were provided with doctor-requested ventilation/air conditioning accommodations. McStay has also taken on heating issues, meeting with members of the district buildings and grounds department on a monthly basis to discuss air filtration and "green" methods for resolving heating and air quality issues in older buildings with troublesome vents, blowers and heating units in need of replacement and refurbishing.

McStay has been an activist for building safety and security as well, taking on the campaign of having swipe readers and identification cards for more than 20 buildings.

Resources to help schools combat opioid epidemic

Professionals from the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services joined teachers and health care practitioners at NYSUT's Health and Safety Conference March 1 to delve into resources to help combat the opioid epidemic.

Examining the impact on K-12 and higher education, workshop leaders shared alarming data; noted how schools and colleges have responded and provided details on available resources for students and for professionals in schools and hospitals. For more information, visit www.nysut.org.

“Quotable”



Nicholas Azzarella

@Nwta_Union @nysut Sign making is a skill I learned while attending LAP. MY UNION is always pushing to make me better to make us better. That's why I fight anywhere any time to keep WNY UNION. #NewEra HatsOff #Supernova2019 (@Nazzarella1)

Sean Doolittle

I want to give a shout out to @nysut and @cejbuffalo who have been in this fight since the beginning. The workers' contract prevented them from speaking out directly so it took a long time for this story to gain traction. Your #solidarity is inspiring (@whatwouldDOOdo)

— See page 9 for more info

Christina Eannuzzi

Spent my 3-day weekend with some incredible educators learning how to Activate a Motivated & Engaged Brain! An incredible course offered through NYSUT ELT @NYSUTSRO @nysutEVP @nysut (@CEannuzzi)

Ann Guish

I've been a mental health nurse for over thirty years. I became a union rep to give my colleagues and those in my care a voice. Silence does not achieve change. #unionthug #unionproud #unionvoice (@ann_guish)

Gloria Winograd

All my life we've been waiting for our fair share \$ for NYC Public Schools. When?? #ItsJustNotEnough (@oceanmusicii)



QUESTIONS FOR...

Kellee Mosseau Bonenfant

Troy Teachers Association

1. You've been teaching more than 30 years; how did you know this was your profession?

I knew from a very young age that I wanted to be in a field where I could help people. When I was in fourth grade, I went to a summer camp and chose to buddy up with campers with special needs. After years of "playing school" with my siblings and neighborhood friends, I knew that I wanted to be a teacher.

Currently, I am a sixth-grade special education teacher at Troy Middle School. I love teaching sixth graders because they are so eager to learn ... and are excited about entering middle school and challenging themselves with the middle school curriculum.

2. There is a statewide shortage of students going into teaching. What would you tell students considering a career in education?

Teaching is a tough profession; however, it is also the most rewarding. Even many years after having students they always reach out to you and let you know how well they are doing in life or how they remember something you did for them. The best part about teaching special education is seeing the growth in students who once perhaps thought that

they weren't going to be successful in school. In this profession you are always reflecting, growing and learning. Each day, month and year is different. Every challenge provides a new opportunity to grow.

3. What are some of the challenges facing schools and educators?

Providing resources for students who are struggling with mental health and social emotional issues is a challenge. I believe we need to provide a curriculum that explicitly teaches students how to deal with their feelings. We need to teach children how to reflect on their emotional well-being and how this impacts all areas of their life. This is especially critical for our students who struggle academically.

It is very difficult to teach students who have much greater emotional needs that impact their school day. We need to not only

teach students how to be academically successful, we need to also give them lifelong tools to handle the challenges of everyday life.

4. You volunteer with an after-school program that seems to help bridge that gap. What is Girls on the Run?

Girls on the Run is a non-profit organization that works with local schools and volunteers who meet twice a week to motivate and inspire young girls in grades 3-8. We encourage lifelong health and fitness and build confidence through fun activities, while setting personal goals. At the conclusion of each season the girls complete a 5K with a running

partner from the community.

The running buddies are also an integral part of the program. They encourage the girls to work toward their goals. To watch the young ladies grow both physically and socially in a different atmosphere outside of the classroom is so rewarding.

5. Are you able to bring any of those skills back into the classroom?

Definitely! My volunteering for Girls on the Run has inspired me to run and work on my "whole self," setting goals and understanding that sometimes you need to rely on physical, emotional and your spirit to overcome.



NOTICE — PENDING OPEN SEAT ON THE NEW YORK STATE TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES

NYSUT anticipates an opening for a teacher-member on the New York State Teachers' Retirement System (NYSTRS) Board of Trustees on or about June 30, 2019. The statewide union is accepting applications, from members who are actively teaching, for consideration for an appointment to fill this open seat by the New York State Commissioner of Education. The selected candidate will then seek election this November to fill the remainder of the unexpired term.

Applicants should submit a letter of intent and a resume no later than March 20, 2019, outlining how their credentials and background align with the candidate guidelines as outlined in the NYSUT Policy Manual.

Pursuant to the NYSUT Policy Manual, all candidates must possess the following qualifications:

- A working knowledge of, and experience with, the New York State Teachers' Retirement System;
- A demonstrated, long-standing interest in retirement matters, such as

serving as a retirement delegate to the annual NYSTRS Delegates Meeting;

- A willingness to run for election to this position in November of 2019 to fill the unexpired term, then to run for this seat in November of 2020, for a new term of office on the NYSTRS Board; and

- A willingness to commit to NYSUT's retirement education program and work with the other NYSTRS Trustees.

Candidates who meet these qualifications will be contacted for interview by a screening committee. Interviews will be conducted on April 17, at NYSUT Headquarters in Latham.

Interested candidates should email a resume and letter of intent to cferrara@nysutmail.org or mail the requested documents to:

**NYSUT President's Office
Re: NYSTRS Trustee Position
800 Troy-Schenectady Road
Latham, NY 12110-2455**

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Contact New York Long-Term Care Brokers
888-884-0077 | memberbenefits.nysut.org

The New York Long-Term Care Brokers Insurance Program is a NYSUT Member Benefits Trust (Member Benefits)-endorsed program. Member Benefits has an endorsement arrangement of 2.5% of first-year premium and 1% of renewal premium received in years 2-10. All such payments to Member Benefits are used solely to defray the costs of administering its various programs and, where appropriate, to enhance them. Member Benefits acts as your advocate; please contact Member Benefits at 800-626-8101 if you experience a problem with any endorsed program.

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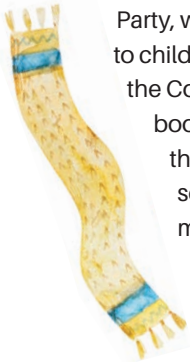
Arlington Teachers Association

The Arlington Teachers Association, led by Bob Maier, raised more than \$2,000 to benefit the Children's Home of Poughkeepsie, an organization that strives to improve the lives of at-risk children. Members participated in a dress-down day and collected hats, scarves and gloves to give to the residents of the children's home.

Carthage Teachers Association



The Carthage Teachers Association, led by Pat Sheehan, warmed hearts, hands and heads this winter. Members participated in the Elks Shoe Party, which supplies hundreds of pairs of sneakers to children in need throughout the community, and the Coats for Kids Project, which supplies coats, boots and mittens. The CTA also delivered more than 400 poinsettias and holiday cards to senior citizens throughout the Carthage community and, working with Home and Careers classes and the VFW Auxiliary, helped deliver more than 175 dozen cookies and baked goods to soldiers stationed at Fort Drum.



Pembroke Teachers Federation



PROVIDED

Pembroke TF members helped raise money for cancer research at the annual Shooting for a Cure event. From left, Vice President Ann Fenik, Arron K. Brown, Jodi Stoldt and Mike Madge.

Members of the Pembroke Teachers Federation volunteered at the eighth Shooting for a Cure! basketball game at Pembroke High School, helping to raise more than \$29,000. The annual event has raised awareness and, since it began, more than \$117,000 for cancer research in conjunction with the Roswell Park Cancer Institute in Buffalo. The local is led by Greg Kinal.

Share news about your local's union or community events at united@nysutmail.org; include LIA in the subject line.



PROVIDED

Schalmont Teachers Association goes #RedForEd

Above, members of the Schalmont Teachers Association, led by Mary Beth Flatley, go #RedForEd to show their support for educators on strike from the United Teachers Los Angeles. Educators across New

York are showing support for their colleagues and standing up for the funds schools, students and educators need and deserve. To see other members sporting #RedforEd, visit twitter.com/nysut/moments.



KUDOS!

It's an honor

M. Dolores Cimini, United University Professions SUNY Albany chapter, received the United States Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring. Cimini is director of the Center for Behavioral Health Promotion and Applied Research.

Deborah Payton-Jones, assistant treasurer of the United College Employees at the Fashion Institute of Technology, was honored by the Town of Islip NAACP for trailblazing milestones, professional pursuits and bettering the lives of others.

In print

Serena Nanda, a retired City University of New York cultural anthropology professor, has published *Love and Marriage: Cultural Diversity in a Changing World*. Nanda, a member of Professional Staff Congress, focuses on romantic love as the basis for marriage, described in 10 different cultures around the world. The book is available from the publisher at www.waveland.com.

Ed Ciaccio, Syosett TA retiree, has written *Red Pills: Political Poems and Parodies 1968-2018*. The book, available at Barnes and Noble, is a compilation of political poems, songs and song parodies.

Lorraine Findlay, Nassau Community College Federation of Teachers; **Laina Kathikeyan**, PSC; and Steven Lipson have written *Cheating in Academia: Innovative Tactics, Insidious Ploys, and Defensive Rationale*. The e-book, available at Amazon.com, is written as an expose on the topic of academic deceit in the college/university setting and shares the authors' first-hand experiences and reviews of relevant literature.

"Kudos!" recognizes the accomplishments of NYSUT members. Have good news you'd like to share? Email united@nysutmail.org; include "Kudos!" in the subject line.



DID YOU KNOW?

NYSUT Retiree Services consultants are resources for retired members, retiree councils and in-service locals on NYSUT retiree matters.

Tracy Beatty, RC 1, 2, 3, 44
716-634-7132

Louise Ortman, RC 4, 46
716-664-7425

Peter Randazzo, RC 5, 6
585-454-5550

Anne Marie Voutsinas, RC 7, 8
315-431-4040

Jeanette Stapley, RC 9, 10
518-783-7977

Mark Padgett, RC 11, 45
607-786-5742

Jennifer Shaad-Derby, RC 12, 13
518-783-7977

Ellen Pincus, RC 14, 15-16
914-592-4411

Claire Zatorski, RC 17, 18, 19
516-496-2035

Joan Perrini, RC 20, 21, 22, 23
631-273-8822

Judy D. Kalb, RC 43
561-994-4929, ext. 129

NYSUT retirees learn to effectively share their union stories at a December workshop on Long Island.



PROVIDED



PROVIDED

Janice Sylvester, president of the RC 43 Orlando TRIF chapter, presented RC 43 conference attendees with handmade NYSUT Retiree bookmarks. Front row, from left, RC 43 President Deb Peterson; Janice Sylvester; Thelma Robinson. Back row from left, ED 52 Director Rosemary Catanzariti and NYSUT ED 51-53 At-Large Director Florence McCue.

Below, RC 20 President Mel Stern and family join striking United Teachers Los Angeles members on the picket line in LA in January.



PROVIDED

REGIONAL CONFERENCES

RC 10, May 7, NYSUT HQ
RSC: Jeanette Stapley

RC 4 & 46, May 13, Radisson Inn, Corning
RSC: Louise Ortman

RC 1, 2, 3 & 44, May 14, Millenium Buffalo, Cheektowaga
RSC: Tracy Beatty

RC 12, May 16, Glen Sanders Mansion
RSC: Jennifer Shaad-Derby

RC 9, May 20, Butcher Block, Plattsburgh
RSC: Jeanette Stapley

RC 11 & 45, May 22, Tinellis Hathaway House, Solon
RSC: Mark Padgett

RC 7 & 8, May 29, Doubletree East Syracuse
RSC: Anne Marie Voutsinas

2019 Summary of Material Modifications

**NYSUT Member Benefits Trust
Summary of Material Modifications
And**

Notice to Participants

(Plan No: 503; I.D. No.: 22-2480854)
Dated: March 2019

The following is a summary of important changes made to endorsed benefit programs since the publication of the New York State United Teachers Member Benefits Trust Summary Plan Description in March 2016 and the subsequent NYSUT Member Benefits Trust Summaries of Material Modifications and Notices to Participants dated March 2017 and March 2018. It is important that you retain this information until a new Summary Plan Description is issued to you.

Trustees News

The Trustees appointed Jeffrey Hartnett as Plan Administrator of the Trust in January 2019, following the retirement of Lynette Metz after more than 30 years of service to NYSUT.

Disability Insurance Plan

The 2018 Member Benefits Trust Summary of

Material Modifications noted that Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (MetLife) had become the new Plan Underwriter for the endorsed Disability Insurance Plan as of Jan. 1, 2018, and that coverage terms, benefit amounts and rates would not change as a result.

This information has been corrected as follows, and Plan Participants were notified of the following change:

As of Jan. 1, 2018, Metropolitan Life Insurance Company became the new Plan Underwriter for the endorsed Disability Insurance Plan; this Plan had previously been underwritten by Unimerica Life Insurance Company of New York.

Benefit amounts and rates did not change as a result. However, the coverage terms differ from the previous Plan such that the Unimerica Disability Insurance Plan had a Hospital Confinement Benefit (which is not being provided under the MetLife Plan).

Please note the MetLife Plan does offer several additional value-added benefits, including

rehabilitation services and incentives, family care incentives and Accidental Death & Dismemberment (AD&D) coverage (including a Travel Assistance Benefit).

In addition, eligibility for the program has been updated to In-Service Members of NYSUT who are age 65 or under and work 20 or more hours weekly. Previously, members had to be age 64 or under to be eligible for this program. Retiree Members and Associate Members of NYSUT are not eligible to apply.

Agency Fee Payer Language

All references to "Agency Fee Payer" in the NYSUT Member Benefits Trust Summary Plan Description will be replaced with "Service Fee Payer" where appropriate.

A "Service Fee Payer" refers to an individual in private sector employment who pays the equivalent of membership dues for collective bargaining-related services and who may receive a refund of the part of the fee that the Union uses for political and ideological purposes only incidentally related to the terms and conditions of employment.

Financial Arrangements

Financial arrangements between the NYSUT Member Benefits Trust and the providers of the following endorsed programs have changed:

The Group Vision Care Plan, which is provided and administered by Davis Vision, is self-insured by Member Benefits for groups with guaranteed rate contracts, meaning total premiums collected and claims paid are pooled annually. At the end of the plan year, any surplus funds revert to Member Benefits. For the last 10-year period, a surplus equaling 12.38% of paid premiums has resulted.

Member Benefits has an endorsement arrangement of \$0.20 per participant per month with an additional \$0.05 for each participant in an additional endorsed program with The Preferred Group Plans, Inc. and \$0.10 per participant per month with P & A Administrative Services, Inc.

Sincerely,

Board of Trustees
NYSUT Member Benefits Trust

NYSUT members enjoy the power of the Union



Whether participating in a shopping/entertainment/travel offering; auto, homeowners or life insurance plan; or financial or legal service, NYSUT members have the *power of the union* behind them. What does this mean? For starters, it is the power of knowing NYSUT Member Benefits serves as your advocate for any endorsed program in which you participate.

Unlike purchasing products available to the general public, there's no need to go it alone when Member Benefits has your back. So before you make any upcoming travel or entertainment plans, take the time to explore your union-endorsed benefits.

NYSUT members have access to dozens of endorsed shopping, travel and entertainment programs available through NYSUT Member Benefits, including discounts on hotels and vacations; car and truck rentals; international tours and cruises; sporting events and concert tickets; theme parks and attractions; and more.

With the Abenity Discounts

program, NYSUT members have access to thousands of discounts available across 10,000 U.S. cities, including discounted tickets for entertainment and sporting events, a variety of travel opportunities through a dedicated travel center and numerous local deals throughout the nation.

Save on tickets to the most amazing theme parks, museums and attractions, movies and theater events, concert and sporting events, zoos and aquariums, restaurants and much more. In addition, the Abenity app for your iPhone or Android smartphone puts these exclusive discounts right in the palm of your hand.

The Orlando Employee Discounts program offers NYSUT members savings of 30 percent on tickets to Disney World, Universal Studios, Sea World, Discovery Bay, Aquatica and other Orlando area attractions; up to 60 percent off at select Orlando hotels; and a variety of hotel and theme park ticket travel packages designed to provide your loved ones with wonderful lasting memories.

Meanwhile, if international travel is on your wish list, the Grand Circle

Travel program offers NYSUT members travel deals on international river cruises and other unbelievable excursions throughout Europe, Asia, North America and South America. Each of Grand Circle's small ship cruise tours, river cruises and land tours include full-service accommodations featuring tours, exclusive discovery series events and more.

Grand Circle Travel regularly provides special savings opportunities on numerous travel opportunities; in addition, NYSUT members save an additional \$100 per person on published tours and receive discounted rates on certain trips if acting as a group organizer. This program has been specifically designed for travelers over 50 years old.

Visit the Member Benefits website at memberbenefits.nysut.org or call 800-626-8101 to learn more about these endorsed programs along with many other savings opportunities.

For information about this program or about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits.

PRIVACY NOTICE:

NYSUT Member Benefits
800 Troy-Schenectady Road
Latham, NY 12110-2455
800-626-8101
Plan No.: 503; EIN: 22-2480854

Notification of Availability of Privacy Notice

[As required by 45 Code of Federal Regulations Part 160.520(c)(1)(ii)]

In the course of providing you with access to health benefits, Member

Benefits has access to information about you, which may be considered protected health information (PHI) under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) regulations. As a participant of Member Benefits, you were previously provided, either through publication in the *NYSUT United* publication or USPS mail, with a Privacy Notice describing our privacy practices, legal duties and rights concerning your PHI.

If you would like to receive another copy of our Privacy Notice, you can download a copy from our website at memberbenefits.nysut.org, or you can contact Member Benefits' Privacy Official Betsy Porter at 800-626-8101 or by submitting to the above address a written request for a copy.

Sincerely,
Board of Trustees
NYSUT Member Benefits Trust

IT'S WHAT WE DO

Christopher Ellis, United University Professions

By day, Christopher Ellis works in downtown Albany where he oversees adult learning centers for New York's state and city colleges. By night, he directs Collegiate Scholars of Tomorrow, a new program that starts NY 529 college savings accounts for third graders across the city.

While many organizations provide scholarships to graduating seniors, the goal of this nascent program is to "start the college conversation younger," Ellis said.

A member of United University Professions, the union for State University of New York faculty and staff, Ellis is immersed in higher education every day and witnesses its value for countless students taking steps to get to college or into a trade at Educational Opportunity Centers.

He is one of many engaged community leaders who wants those steps to start earlier. The Collegiate Scholars of Tomorrow program, sponsored by the George Biddle Kelly Education Foundation, the charitable arm of the Beta Pi Lambda chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., aims to kickstart that goal.

"We don't just give money to kids," said Ellis, a member of Alpha Phi Alpha. "That's not enough. There are children of different ethnicities in the scholarship program, and it's important for them to meet successful professional men of color."

The young participants start out with an educational account of \$100 to \$150. Even a modest contribution set aside in an account for a child makes it more likely they will attend college, Ellis said.

To read more about Ellis's story, visit www.nysut.org/itswhatwedo.

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Earning service credit

Your employer participates in the New York State and Local Employees' Retirement System (ERS). So, whether your employer is a school district, Board of Cooperative Educational Services, school for the deaf and blind, college, developmental center or prison, you earn service credit for the paid time that you work there. Service credit is one of three main components that determine your ERS pension, along with your retirement plan and final average salary (www.osc.state.ny.us/retire/members/final_average_salary.php).

Employees who work full-time for the entire academic year receive one year of service credit per academic year worked. Service credit for part-time school employees is prorated. The basic formula for calculating your service credit is: number of days worked ÷ number of days in a full-time school year.

The length of your full-time school year depends on your employer:

- Colleges — 170 days
- BOCES, school districts, New York State schools for the deaf and blind — 180 days
- Developmental centers, prisons — 200 days

Use Retirement Online to check your service credit total. Retirement Online will have the most recent

In every issue, State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli, administrative head of the New York State and Local Employees' Retirement System (ERS) and trustee of the Common Retirement Fund, provides information on the System, which delivers retirement benefits to many NYSUT School-Related Professionals and other support staff. If you are an ERS member with a question of general interest, email united@nysutmail.org.

For immediate assistance, call the ERS Contact Center toll-free at 866-805-0990 or 518-474-7736 in the Capital District.

information about your account. In addition to checking your service credit, you can view or update your address, contact information and beneficiaries. Go to www.osc.state.ny.us/retire/index.php and click Sign In.

You can also check your Member Annual Statement at www.osc.state.ny.us/retire/members/mas_index.php. We send them out beginning in mid-May. In most cases, your statement shows how much service credit you've earned over the past fiscal year. (The most recent statement details April 1, 2017, through March 31, 2018.) If you need a reprint of your statement, you can request one by emailing our customer service representatives using our secure email form at www.emailnyslrs.com.

For more information about service credit, please read *Service Credit for Tiers 2 through 6*, available at www.osc.state.ny.us/retire/publications/vo1854.php, or find your specific retirement plan information on our Publications page, www.osc.state.ny.us/retire/publications/index.php.

NYSUT ERS consultants

Most NYSUT School-Related Professionals* belong to the New York State and Local Employees' Retirement System (ERS). NYSUT ERS consultants are available to help SRP members navigate the retirement system. Consultants can answer questions, provide forms and help members contact the ERS. Contact any one of our consultants for assistance.

Trudi Davis • 914-592-4411
troers@nysutmail.org

Kathy Hine • 585-454-5550, ext. 144
rochers@nysutmail.org

Patti Lennon • 516-496-2035, ext. 324
nroers@nysutmail.org

*Note: Certified teaching assistants belong to the state Teachers' Retirement System (TRS).

The when, and how, of vesting



Your tier membership determines when you become vested. Tier 5 and 6 members vest with 10 years of state service credit; all other tiers vest with five years of service credit.

Q: I have seven years of membership with NYSTRS as a Tier 5 member and I teach full-time. What would happen to my membership if I left my position before I became vested?

Q: I'm a Tier 6 member. How many years of membership in the New York State Teachers' Retirement System must I have before I become vested?

A: First a brief definition of vesting. Vested members accrue non-forfeitable rights over their employer's contributions to their NYSTRS retirement plan and are eligible for a future retirement benefit through NYSTRS — provided they haven't transferred or withdrawn their NYSTRS membership. Prior to becoming vested, members have ownership of their personal system contributions, but aren't entitled to employer contributions.

A: If you plan to stay in the teaching profession, you can keep your NYSTRS membership active by working the equivalent of 20 full-time days in a school year for a participating NYSTRS employer every seven years.

However, if you plan to leave the teaching profession, you should probably withdraw your member contributions — and any interest earned — and cancel your membership; remember, members who transfer or withdraw their NYSTRS membership prior to vesting aren't eligible to receive any portion of their employers' contributions.

If you return to teaching at a later date, you do have the option of reinstating your former membership under your former tier. As always, err on the side of caution. Before withdrawing your membership, contact NYSTRS to discuss the implications of doing so, 800-348-7298, ext. 6090.

NYSUT TRS consultants

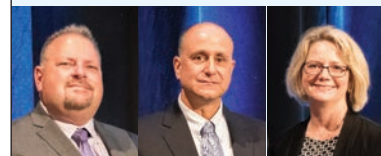
TRS members with questions may call your teacher-members on the New York State Teachers' Retirement System Board of Directors:

David Keefe • 516-741-1241
(Retiree Representative)

Paul Farfaglia • 315-431-4040
pfarfagl@nysutmail.org

Sheila Sullivan Buck 585-454-5550
sbuck@nysutmail.org

Ronald Gross • 631-273-8822
rgross@nysutmail.org



DID YOU KNOW?



The three teacher-members on the 10-member New York State Teachers' Retirement System Board serve staggered three-year terms and are elected by delegates representing districts statewide at the NYSTRS annual fall meeting.

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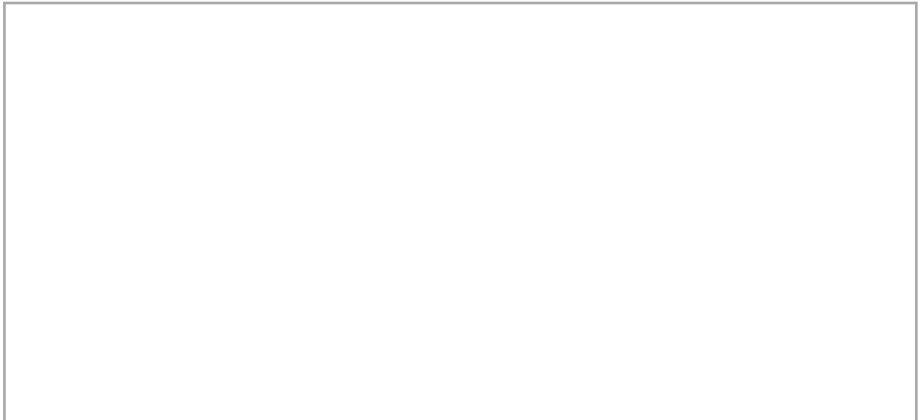
NYSUT members receive a 33% discount off of tuition for graduate courses. ELT is now a CTLE provider and many courses are applicable for NYSED Certification.



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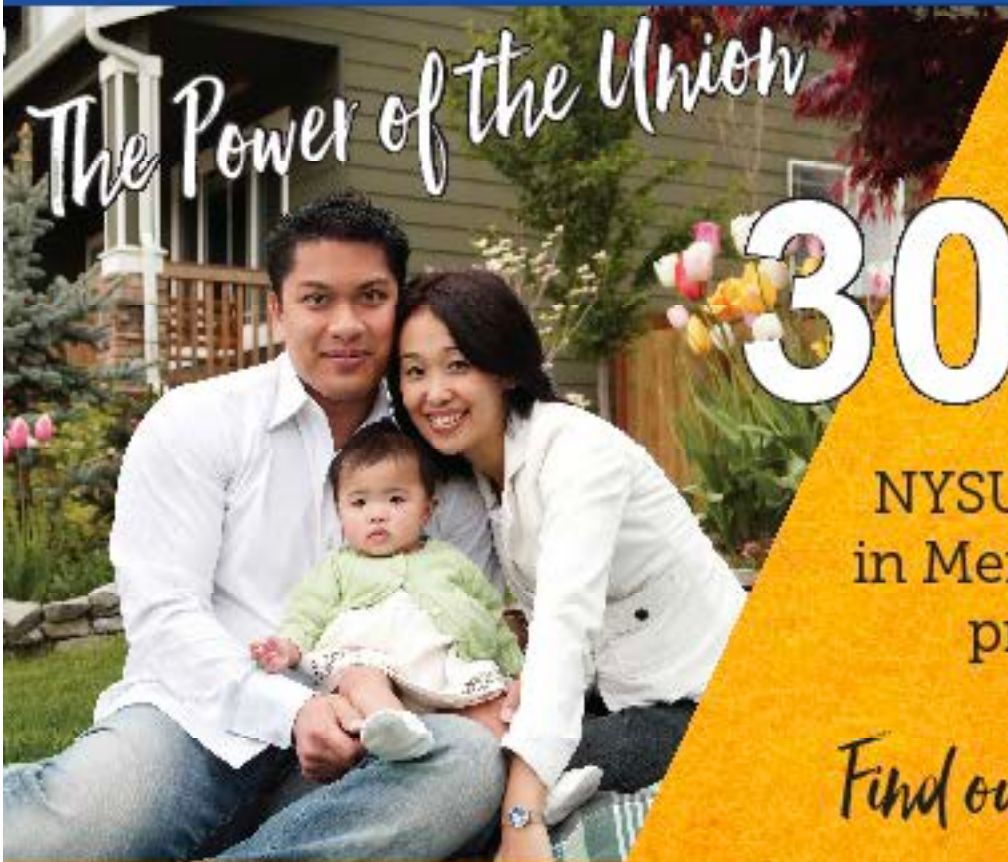
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NYSUT represents teachers, school-related professionals, higher education faculty, professionals in education, human services and health care, and retirees.



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