

SRP NewsLink

A NEWSLETTER FOR NYSUT'S SCHOOL-RELATED PROFESSIONALS LOCAL LEADERS

FALL 2008

www.nysut.org

VOL. 7, NO. 1

SRP Conference: 30 strong years

The 30th annual SRP conference was a great success. Participants learned more about their rights on the job, a stronger voice in politics and the growing role of SRPs in the union.

As is shown every year, SRPs are very generous union members. \$2,460 was donated to the NYSUT Disaster Relief Fund. SRPs donated 400 books to the Troy City School District and to the Two Together program, which provides tutoring and enrichment for Albany's school children. Finally, thinking of those away from the comforts of home, three large containers were filled with toiletries to send to troops overseas.

The conference was also an opportunity to reflect on where we've been and where we're going. Former NYSUT

President Tom Hobart gave a great history of SRP organizing. Kathleen Donahue thanked Margie Brumfield for her three years of committee leadership. We recognized Thelma Shaw, the outstanding 2008 SRP of the year. We heard the comments of three leaders who helped plan the original 1978 SRP conference — Shelvy Young Abrams, Florence Fidell and Arlene Hanley. The attendees warmly thanked them for their work, which has set the stage for a continued strong SRP presence.

The 2008 conference was a big success, 2009 promises to be another great opportunity for SRP leaders to help chart NYSUT's course.



SRP conference workshops were filled with animated discussions about the issues we face. Participants included (clockwise) Wency Chingcuangco from the Valhalla SRPs, Sheila Manning from the Newburgh TA, Duane Rush from the Transportation Aides of Buffalo and Christine Campana from the Williamsville AERP. Plan on attending the 2009 conference so you can strengthen our voice in the union.



Vice President Kathleen Donahue holds copy of NY Teacher with its cover story about the fight for living wages. She thanked SRP leaders for raising the issue inside NYSUT and said the union is in this fight "for the long haul."



Representing more than 600,000 professionals in education and health care
For more, see www.nysut.org.

INSIDE

Celebrate SRP Recognition Day on Nov. 18

Page 2

New Feature: SRP Questions Corner

Page 3

View from the New Chair, Nancy Juliano

Page 4

IMPORTANT DATES

Check the NYSUT Web site for details of these events.

NYS SRP Recognition Day

Nov. 18, 2008

National School Breakfast Week

March 2-6, 2009

Health & Safety Conference

March 6-7, 2009, Saratoga Springs

NEA ESP Conference

March 13-15, 2009, Orlando

AFT PSRP Conference

March 19-22, 2009, Baltimore

Committee of 100

March 23-24, 2009, Desmond, Albany

NYSUT Local Presidents Conference

April 1-2, 2009, Buffalo

NYSUT Representative Assembly

April 2-4, 2009, Buffalo

National Administrative Professionals Day

April 22, 2009

SRPNewsLink

SRP NewsLink is a newsletter published periodically for New York State United Teachers' School-Related Professionals leaders. NYSUT locals and staff have permission to reprint all NewsLink content.

President

Dick Iannuzzi

Executive Vice President

Alan Lubin

Vice President

Maria Neira

Vice President

Kathleen M. Donahue

Secretary-Treasurer

Lee Cutler

New York State United Teachers
800 Troy-Schenectady Road
Latham, NY 12110-2455
(518) 213-6000
(800) 342-9810

Contact: Margaret MacCartney
e-mail: mmaccart@nysutmail.org



SRP Recognition Day – November 18, 2008



Nov. 18, 2008, is the day to celebrate the contributions that our school support staffers make to the children in our schools. Be on the lookout for NYSUT's recognition day kit that was sent out to all locals with SRP members in mid-October. The kit includes promotional materials and "Proud" stickers to use on that day. Begin early to plan a celebration in your school. Be sure to let Margaret MacCartney, SRP coordinator, know how this was celebrated in your local. Send info and pictures to Margaret at mmaccart@nysutmail.org. We will be featuring several of these celebrations in the December issue of SRP NewsLink.

ELT workshops for SRPs



NYSUT's Education & Learning Trust is proud to offer their School-Related Professionals workshops for professional development at a low, low cost to locals:

- Disability Awareness
- Supporting Students with Autism
- Dealing with Difficult Students

These workshops are made possible through a partnership with NYSUT's Program Services and NY State Department of Labor.

Contact ELT to secure your SRP professional development today!
(800) 528-6208 or www.nysut.org/elt.

Contract success on Long Island

One determined SRP local on Long Island recently set a good example with an aggressive effort that produced good results.

Westbury School-Related Professionals, with 130 teaching assistants and teacher aides, won a contract that will make members' lives better and give the local a stronger voice on the job.

For the first time in more than 20 years, salary schedules will be in place, so workers can see the benefits of seniority. Raises for all the members average about 7 percent per year.

Counseling in times of stress

From time to time, major changes in our lives tax our ability to cope. Newly diagnosed medical conditions, caregiving responsibilities, divorce, a child leaving home, a change in job responsibilities or living on a reduced income in retirement are but a few examples of transitional problems which precipitate stress.

Embarking upon even a short course of counseling with an objective and empathetic professional can be most helpful in reinforcing your strengths and facilitating adaptation to change. If you conclude that counseling may be helpful to you in accepting and adapting to stressful life changes, then give us a call. We will assist you in getting the help that you need.

NYSUT Social Services: (800) 342-9810, ext. 6206.

UFT Retirees please call (212) 598-6880.

UFT In-service members please call (212) 539-0500.

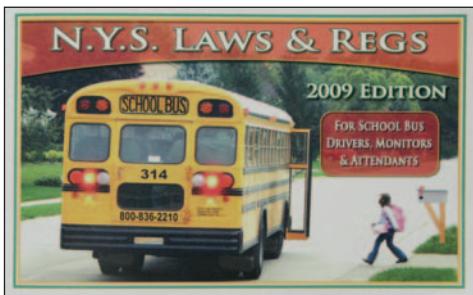
SRP Questions Corner

This new section of *SRP NewsLink* is for you to get answers to your SRP-related questions. Email your questions to mmaccart@nysutmail.org and you could see yours in print soon.

Our first question comes from a member who asks:

How do I find out about the SRP Advisory Committee and what they do?

The SRP Advisory Committee is a group of SRPs from all regions in NYS and represents all our support staff job titles. The members and committee chair are appointed by the NYSUT president and serve a 3-year term. They work on SRP issues and initiatives, help plan and implement the fall SRP leadership conference, and make recommendations to NYSUT on ways to better serve its SRP members. The new 2008-11 committee has been appointed this fall and their names and region will be posted on the SRP page at www.nysut.org. Your voice, along with the other 94,000 School-Related Professionals members of NYSUT, is heard through this active and important committee. For more specific information, contact Margaret MacCartney at mmaccart@nysutmail.org.



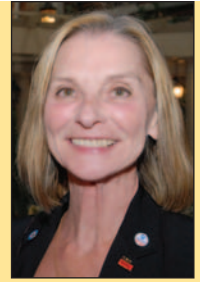
2009 PTSI booklet available

The Pupil Transportation Safety Institute 2009 NYS Laws and regulations for school bus drivers, monitors and attendants is available for our membership. If you would like an individual copy or enough for the transportation workers in your local, please call Linda Watkins at (800) 342-9810 or e-mail her at lwatkins@nysutmail.org with your order.

A VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

Nancy Juliano

SRP Advisory Committee chair



At the May 2008 meeting of the NYSUT School-Related Professionals Advisory Committee, I was appointed to a three-year term as chair of the committee. It is my distinct pleasure to tell you a little bit about myself. This year is my twenty-first year as a teaching assistant in the Syracuse City School District. It is my 10th year as president of my bargaining unit of approximately 1200 members and my eighth year as fourth vice president of my 3400-member umbrella local, the Syracuse Teachers Association. Members of my unit include bus attendants, refugee translators, school monitors, school sentries and teaching assistants. My local also represents food service workers and health care providers. In the capacity of fourth vice president of STA I have had the unique experience of being released from the classroom full-time for the past six years, which has provided the opportunity for me to focus on the many issues SRP members face on a daily basis. I enjoy and welcome the challenge of my position as chair of the SRP Advisory Committee and look forward to the opportunity to serve and represent all of the School-Related Professionals across New York state.

I have always known that School-Related Professionals are the unseen, unsung heroes in our schools — the backbone of the educational system; a system that could not survive without us. We are a loving, supportive, dedicated and committed group of individuals. Over 330 people attended the 30th NYSUT SRP Leadership Conference on Sept. 26-28, at the Desmond Hotel and Conference Center in Albany. The conference schedule was packed with meetings and workshops for SRPs — something for everyone. I was rejuvenated by the tremendous energy and love that were generated by the participants. I am always amazed by SRPs' desire to learn and share that are evident throughout our SRP conferences. Our creativity, enthusiasm and ability to have fun were very obvious at the celebration on Saturday night, which commemorated the conference's 30th anniversary with a '70's theme. I loved being on the dance floor looking at all of the smiling, energetic, enthusiastic, friendly and fun-loving fellow SRPs dancing and enjoying being together. We were funky, groovy, far out, to the max and totally cool!

On Sunday morning we treated to the extraordinary humor of comedian Brett Leake. His hysterically funny routine had us constantly laughing out loud. His message of the healing power of humor and the connection between laughing and learning was poignant, motivating and inspiring.

Like many of you, when I was hired all those years ago, I never anticipated that I would be in the job for years or that being an SRP would be my career! Yet, I am still here and I love what I do. It is so important to love what you do and do what you love; and to be respected, acknowledged and appreciated for who you are!

SRP Recognition Day this year is Nov. 18. Plan something special to celebrate with your fellow school-related professionals.

I encourage you to exercise your right to vote; to be involved in our country's politics and the future of our education system. Our jobs are always the first to be eliminated in difficult financial climates. Do your homework, weigh the issues and make your vote count!

I am honored and humbled to be appointed as chair of the SRP Advisory Committee and will serve to the best of my ability. I look forward to seeing you on the dance floor at the Desmond in October 2009!

New DOT drug/ alcohol testing regs

The AFL-CIO is commenting on the new federal Department of Transportation rules on drug and alcohol testing of transportation workers. The effective date was extended to allow additional time for public comment. The rule goes into effect Nov. 1, 2008. The rules cover members who hold a commercial driver's license, including school bus drivers, driving instructors, mechanics and drivers who work for state and local governments, but also apply to anyone else subject to the DOT drug and alcohol testing regulations. Starting Nov. 1, 2008, the new rules significantly change the procedures for "observed collections" of urine samples, which will provide even less privacy to workers. The final rules will no longer allow "easy-to-follow tables and charts" to thwart anyone trying to beat the testing process. NYSUT is currently looking at these new regulations and will share further informational materials with local leaders following the effective date of the regulations.

Welcome to our new SRP locals and members

Welcome to Monroe BOCES 1, a transportation and custodial unit, to Manhattan Marymount College, a local of non-faculty professionals and clerical/technical employees, and also to Owen D. Young CSD Service Unit in the Utica area.



NYSUT Executive Vice President Alan Lubin thanks local leaders James Jones and Denise Crawford-Lighty for the contributions made by Mt. Vernon SRPs to the union's effort to give educators a stronger voice in Albany and Washington.

National C.L.E.A.N. awards program



This fall, custodians across the country will be invited to participate in the inaugural National C.L.E.A.N. Awards Program, recognizing the contributions custodians make to public health in their schools and communities, and to their profession. You could earn an all-expense-paid trip to the March 2009 NEA National ESP Conference in Orlando, FL!

The award will be presented to a school custodian who demonstrates outstanding leadership in school cleanliness, and reflects the contributions that education support professionals (ESP) can make to public health.

Go to www.neabin.org/programs/cleanaward.html for the application guidelines, a promotional flyer, and a list of frequently asked questions. Completed application packages and accompanying materials must be submitted by U.S. mail and postmarked on or before December 10, 2008.

Our two national affiliates use different terms for our job titles: NEA calls us "Education Support Professionals (ESP)"; AFT says "School-Related Professionals (SRP)." Both organizations combined give us a strong voice on the issues that matter to us, our families and our futures.

Bullying advice from the feds

At www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov, learn more about the reasons kids bully others, some of the effects and what to do if you are being bullied. The campaign was created by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). Its kid-friendly navigation allows visitors of all ages to enjoy the site and educate themselves on the multiple layers of bullying. You can also view short animated webisodes about characters like Milton the pig and Brick, a bull who constantly picks on him.

AFT tackles SRP issues

Several resolutions of particular importance to PSRPs were passed at the July AFT convention. "Fundamental Support Services in Education" calls on government at all levels to collect adequate data that truly reflect what PSRPs do and how their role may change in the future. "A Living Wage" and "Access to Affordable Healthcare for SRPs" directs the AFT to join other groups in strategizing and training advocates to fight for a living wage and access to affordable healthcare for SRPs. The Green Schools and Colleges resolution urges state federations to advocate for "statewide" green school legislation.

Go to www.unionvoice.org/ct/rp1JN151_qGx/ to see all three resolutions.