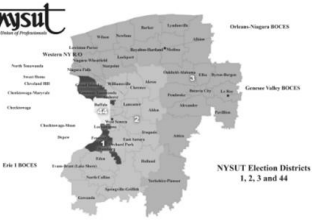


# Western N.Y. NEWS & Views

Spring 2026

Reaching out to Retirees in Western New York Retiree Council 1—We are over 6,000 strong.



**NYSUT Retirees of WNY  
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2<sup>nd</sup> - Eva Mroczka  
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## From the President's Desk by Kathy Brown

Dear Retirees,



Happy Spring to all members of Retiree Council #1! I hope this message finds you well and enjoying the sense of renewal that comes with the season. After a long winter, it's nice to look ahead to brighter days. There is encouraging news at the state level. With support from our Vote-COPE advocacy, efforts are underway to strengthen funding for K-12 education, expand Pre-K, maintain universal free school meals, support higher education, and restore Medicare IRMAA funding.

Locally, we could use your help. We currently have four open seats on our Board of Trustees and would especially welcome SRP members, who are not yet represented. Your voice and perspective are important in shaping our programs, policies, and future direction. All NYSUT members are eligible to serve. If you're interested, please consider joining us at our monthly meetings, held on the second Monday at the WNY Region NYSUT Office on Essjay Road in Williamsville. Contact: Kathy Brown, RC1 President, [kbrown681@gmail.com](mailto:kbrown681@gmail.com).

We'd love to have you involved. - Kathy

## A Message from Our Coalition President, Lynn Mele

Dear Retirees,

What a turnout for the Rally to Fix Tier 6!! Thank you to the over 15,000 who attended. Now, we must turn our attention to the Annual Statewide School Budget Vote on Tuesday, May 19, 2026.



Consider actively supporting a candidate in your school district. How, you ask? You could...attend School Board Meetings, write post cards, volunteer at a phone bank, go door-to-door with campaign materials, place a sign on your lawn.

With so many federal cuts and higher costs for fuel, utilities, and even cafeteria supplies, many districts are facing tough decisions.

Be a part of the solution, not the problem!

Yours in solidarity,  
Lynne Mele



For up-to-date information on RC's 1, 2 & 3,  
visit our website <http://rcwest.ny.aft.org>

SCAN the QR CODE to be taken to our Facebook Page!  
Make a friend request; we are a private group.

## Largest show of unified labor New York has seen in years....

From union presidents to frontline workers, our Fix Tier 6 rally brought together members from NYS AFL-CIO, NYSUT, UFT, UUP, PSC, PEF, NYSPFFA, NYSNA, CSEA and more. From educators, firefighters and nurses to mass transit and government workers, essential professionals who keep our communities running every day were in the house fighting for the same thing. “When our members go to a call ...



the fire doesn't know whether we're Tier 6 or Tier 2,” said New York State Professional Fire Fighters Association President Sam Fresina. “We face the same dangers ... and everyone on this job deserves to be treated the same.” Roughly 780,000 New Yorkers are trapped in Tier 6. And the inequity is fueling workforce shortages in critical fields. By standing together, workers from every corner of public service made it clear that *Fixing Tier 6* is about protecting New York's future.



Six NYSUT Members from our coalition in Western New York traveled by bus to the *Fix Tier 6* Rally. Pictured in the first row from front to back are members Sara Rohland, Eva Mroszka, Lisa Mangino, Kathy Brown, and Fred Floss.

Don't forget **BOOKS, BITES & BOOZE**, Monday, April 20, 2026 – 11 AM to 2 PM at the NYSUT Regional Office, 270 Essjay Road, Williamsville, NY. **Merit Badge Books** of Hamburg will be on-site with a curated selection of titles across various genres. Find your favorite read or a perfect gift! Also enjoy a delicious spread of food and a selection of beverages and special prizes and surprises throughout the event. No cost to attend—Open to all Retirees and their guests—But please register by April 17. Scan the QR code at the right.



**Don't forget our June Bus Trip—THE SPIRITS AND SPIRITS TOUR—to *Lilydale*, the popular *White Inn* in Fredonia and *21 Brix Winery* in Chautauqua - June 24, 2026 - \$149 per person. Contact Frank Marchese (716) 698-8434. Also, you can refer our Facebook Page and Website for more descriptions and information.**

### MINI-GRANT DONATION FORM FOR 2025-2026

NYSUT Retirees of WNY awards mini-grants up to \$500 to in-service teachers to supplement special projects. Grant monies are funded by our “*Share the Wealth*” drawings and retiree donations. This past year we were able to award five more mini-grants to local teachers for a total of \$7,000. Information on our mini-grants has been sent to the Union Presidents of each district in our Coalition. Check with your active teachers to see if they have been informed of this opportunity to apply. Our mini-grants help make a difference! Please consider donating to this worthwhile activity.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

DONATION AMOUNT \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please send your donation payable to: **NYSUT Retirees of WNY** and mail to: ATTN: Mark Shanahan, 270 Essjay Road, Williamsville, NY 14221

# ***Empower 2026 – The Knowledge Advantage Retiree Regional Conference***



**Buffalo Niagara Marriott  
1340 Millersport Highway  
Amherst, NY 14221**



***May 19, 2026 – 8:30 AM–2:30 PM***

We have an impressive list of presenters and speakers including:

- Ron Gross, NYSUT 2nd Vice-President
- Joe Cantafio, NYSUT Regional Staff Director
- Keynote Speaker: Steven Kramer, Esq. from Feldman, Kramer & Monaco, P.C. - *“Elder Law and Asset Protection”*

Session Speakers:

- Lauren Kausner from the Buffalo History Museum - *“The Artifact Detective”*
- Tiffany Erhard & Aaron Snyder from the Senior Action Council - *“Medicare Fraud”*
- Stefanie Simonetta, a Certified Yoga Instructor - *“Chair Yoga”*
- Steve Banko, Author, Press Secretary, Speechwriter, Viet Nam Vet - *“The Sword vs The Pen”*
- Jackie Davis from NYSUT Member Benefits
- Rachael Webb, Ph.D. from University at Buffalo - *Artificial Intelligence in Education*

Wonderful workshop choices, continental breakfast & a deluxe lunch buffet all for the low cost of \$40.00 per participant.

This promises to be a fun-filled day packed with new information, good food  
And great friends.

<https://nysut.cc/rc123and44-2026>

Scan the QR Code at the right for Registration Information



## **PARTICIPATION FEE FORM (2025-2026)**

If you have not already sent in your Participation Fee Form, we urge you to support our Retiree Councils by sending in your \$10 participation fee and by encouraging others to support the work we do for all of us. Thank you.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ District you retired from \_\_\_\_\_

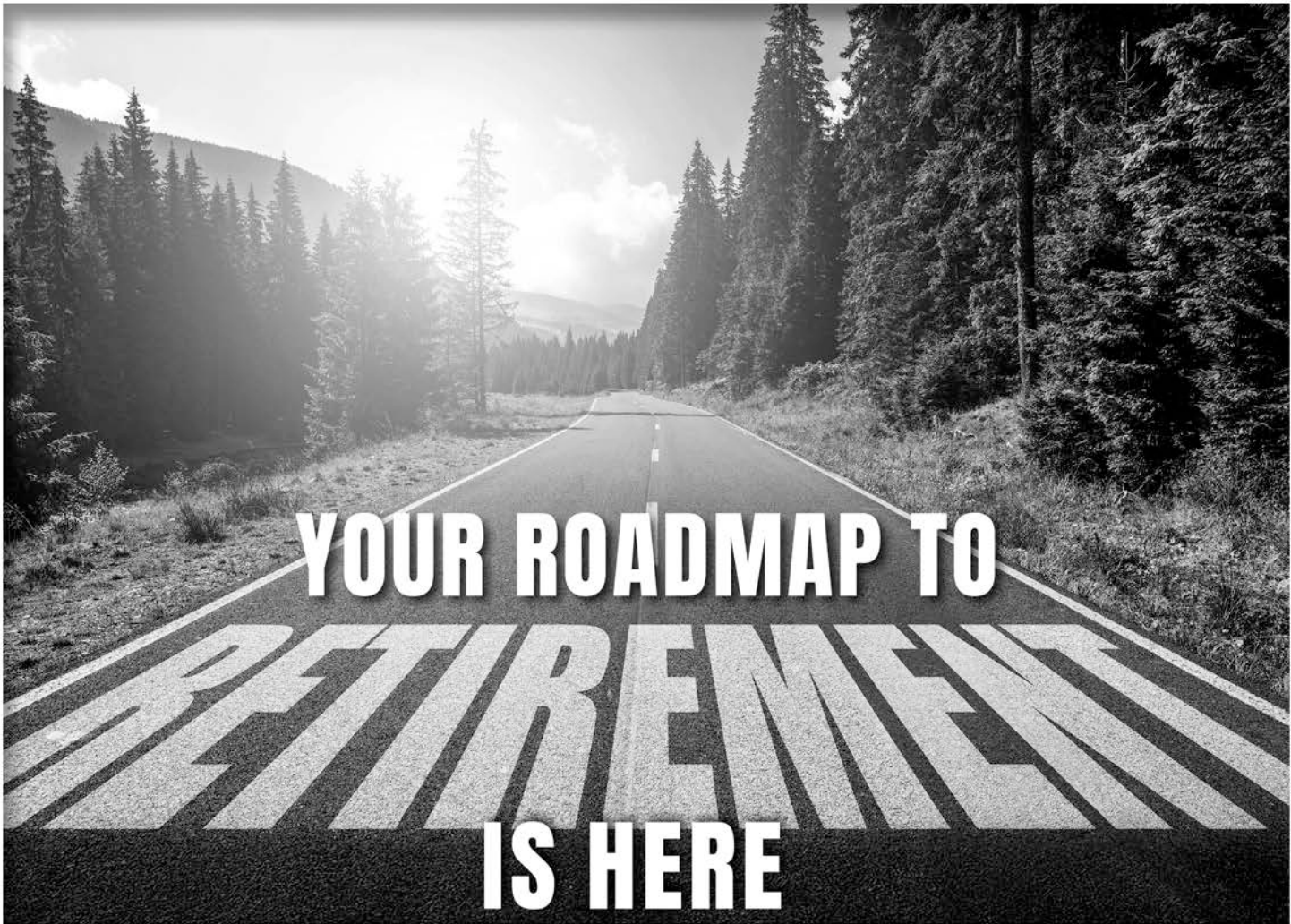
Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ Year of Retirement \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Make your \$10 contribution payable to: **NYSUT Retirees of WNY.**

Mail this form to: Eva Mroczka, c/o NYSUT Retirees of WNY, 270 Essjay Rd., Williamsville, NY 14221



*Retirement doesn't mean entering a world of unlimited tee times and champagne coolies. It's important to be properly prepared for the transition from in-service employment to retiree status.*

Please note the following information if you are currently enrolled in one or more NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed program(s) or would like to do so in retirement:

- **If Your Local has a Retiree Chapter:**  
You are encouraged to maintain membership and pay chapter dues to that local (if necessary) to continue membership in NYSUT and our national affiliates, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and National Education Association (NEA).
- **If Your Local does NOT have a Retiree Chapter:**  
You will continue your membership with NYSUT, AFT, and NEA through the Retiree Council in your geographic area.

Member Benefits endorses a number of programs that can be purchased through the convenience of payroll or pension deduction – offering reduced premiums or the elimination of service fees in many instances. Approximately 88% of NYSUT members have payroll or pension deduction available to them.

You must have an active NYSUT membership to participate in payroll or pension deduction. If you're currently participating in one or more of our endorsed programs, you will want to look into switching to pension deduction after you enter retirement.

**LEARN MORE**

Learn more about continuing Member Benefits-endorsed programs by scanning the QR code, visiting [mb-nysut.org/retireemembership](http://mb-nysut.org/retireemembership), or calling 800-626-8101.

**SCAN ME**

