

SRP NewsLink

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

FALL 2011

www.nysut.org

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Plan ahead for SRP Recognition Day and celebrate Nov. 15

School-Related Professionals are special people. They maintain our schools, manage school offices, educate, feed, nurture and organize our students, and keep them healthy and safe.



NYSUT V.P.
Kathleen Donahue

"School-Related Professionals are the backbone of our schools and deserve to be recognized for the work they do every day for our students," said NYSUT Vice President Kathleen Donahue. "Be sure that your local celebrates on Nov. 15."

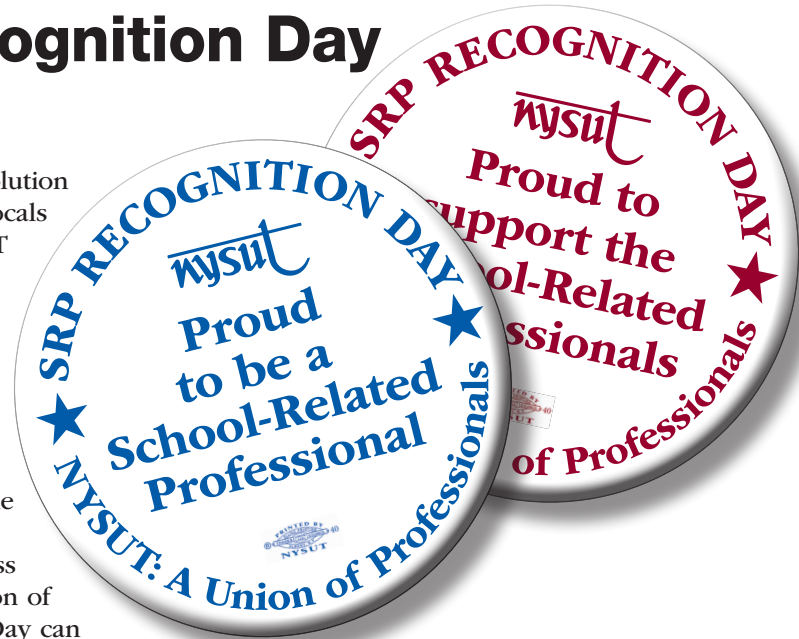
The annual celebration of SRP Recognition Day in New York state

grew out of a resolution submitted by 13 locals at the 2002 NYSUT Representative Assembly.

Plan ahead to create a memorable day. In October, speak to your colleagues, supervisors and the president of your PTA/PTO to discuss how the celebration of SRP Recognition Day can be incorporated into activities planned for American Education Week, which is Nov. 13–19.

In mid-October, NYSUT will send out celebration packets, including "Proud to be" and "Proud to support" stickers to

locals containing SRP members. If you do not receive materials by Nov. 1 or you need more stickers, please contact Margaret MacCartney at mmaccart@nysutmail.org or 800-342-9810 ext. 6318.



Welcome new members

NYSUT would like to welcome the SRP members in the newly organized Katonah Food Service Association, the Fairport Transportation Association, the Keshequa Maintenance Association and the Geneseo Bus Drivers Association. Welcome also to the Brighton School Nurses and the Glen Cove Nurses.

Your Social Security statement

Due to budgetary constraints, the Social Security Administration (SSA) will no longer be mailing annual statements. You can estimate your Social Security benefit by using SSA's Retirement Estimator. Please keep in mind that you will no longer receive a Social Security statement as you are preparing to retire.

To see your Social Security statement:
www.socialsecurity.gov/mystatement/



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

IMPORTANT DATES

Save the Date

NEA ESP Conference

March 9–11
Memphis, TN
www.nea.org/esp

Committee of 100

March 19–20
Desmond, Albany

AFT PSRP Conference

April 19–22
Washington, DC
www.aft.org/prsp

NYSUT Representative Assembly

April 26–28
Buffalo, NY

SRPNewsLink

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NYSUT SRP and former pro basketball player honored by NEA

Willie Worsley, a Spring Valley High School hall monitor, basketball coach and community leader, received one of the nation's most prestigious labor awards this summer.

Before a crowd of thousands at the National Education Association's annual Human and Civil Rights Dinner, Worsley received NEA's H. Council Trenholm Award, for his role in one of the important sporting events in American history.

Worsley started for Texas Western College (now U Texas-El Paso) in the 1966 NCAA basketball final — the first team to start five African-American players in the title game. Worsley and his teammates led Texas Western to a 72-65 win over the fabled University of Kentucky, an all-white team.

Schenectady native Pat Riley, who played for Kentucky and went on to have an NBA Hall of Fame career, called the game "the Emancipation Proclamation of 1966." The 2006 Disney movie, "Glory Road," celebrated Worsley and his team.

"Willie Worsley personifies the type of commitment displayed every day by NYSUT school-related professionals," said NYSUT Vice President Kathleen Donahue. "Because of his work in the school and community, many youngsters have gained from the skills and experience that are part of Willie's personality."

After college and a year with the New York Nets, Worsley returned to the Bronx where he began working with troubled boys. He has been coaching at Spring Valley HS in Rockland County for more than 25 years, a respected fixture in his community.

Worsley is a member of the Maintenance, Transportation, Special Services and Security Employees Union in the East Ramapo school district.

"As long as I have breath in me," Worsley said, "I'll be an educator — money comes and money goes, but love stays in your heart."



Willie Worsley with the Spring Valley High School basketball team

PTSI 2012 NYS Laws & Regs for School Bus Drivers, Monitors & Attendants

The Pupil Transportation Safety Institute's 2012 New York State Laws and Regulations for School Bus Drivers, Monitors and Attendants booklet is available through NYSUT at no charge.

For an individual copy or enough for the transportation workers in your local, contact Linda Watkins at 800-342-9810, ext. 6029 or email lwatkins@nysutmail.org with your order.



Bills introduced to honor education support professionals

U.S. Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) and Representative Lynn Woolsey (D-CA) have introduced the National Classified School Employee of the Year Award Act (S. 547/H.R. 1704). This important legislation will provide long overdue recognition for education support professionals/school-related professionals — including paraeducators, clerical assistants, school bus drivers, custodians, food service workers, technicians, custodians, school nurses and security professionals — for their outstanding contributions to our nation's schools and the students they serve. As an integral part of the public education system, classified school employees promote student achievement, ensure student safety, and contribute to the establishment and promotion of a positive instructional environment.

Take action today. Contact your congressional representatives and encourage them to support the National Classified School Employee of the Year Award Act.

SRP Leaders attend the NYSUT Leadership Institute

The NYSUT Leadership Institute is a statewide program designed to strengthen leadership skills at the local level and teach leaders how to effectively and strategically tackle the tough challenges facing NYSUT locals in today's environment

Participants are immersed in an intensive training program that draws on the experience, expertise and energy of leading labor leaders, academic experts and NYSUT staff. The Institute is held in a one-week summer session on the campus of the National Labor College in Silver Spring, MD, and a three-day winter session at NYSUT headquarters in Latham.

Three SRP leaders were selected for the last session of the Institute. "The Leadership Institute was a wonderful experience for me," said Hilda Monfredo, a teacher aide and chapter president of the SRP unit of Western Sullivan UT. "It has taught me many things but

the most important thing I learned was to let others do some of the work (to let go). I cannot do it all. Delegating is a skill that all leaders need to learn and utilize. All union leaders should go through this fun, learning experience."

Candidates are chosen through a competitive application process. SRP presidents and SRP chapter leaders (with permission of the local president) are encouraged to apply for this unique experience. Applications will be sent out to local presidents at the end of October. Application deadline is Jan. 13, 2012. For questions and information, call Tom Anapolis, director of program services, at NYSUT at 800-342-9810 ext. 6310.

A VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

Karen Lee Arthmann
SRP Advisory Committee chair



Dear SRPs,

I am extremely honored to have been asked to be the next chair of the NYSUT SRP Advisory Committee. I have some big shoes to fill, and I will do so to the best of my ability in order to represent and serve you, the backbone of our school districts.

I would like to welcome all of you to a brand new school year. I hope that you will find it exciting and rewarding. Remember that in the end, all that matters is taking care of those students entrusted to us and doing the very best we can every day.

I would encourage all leaders to attend our annual October SRP Conference, which this year is being held in beautiful Saratoga Springs. I know that you will find it informative and a great way of networking with other SRP leaders within your own job categories.

Also, be sure that all SRPs are celebrated in some way on SRP Recognition Day on Nov. 15. We love to hear about the clever ways that appreciation is shown. Be sure to let Margaret MacCartney at mmaccart@nysut-mail.org know so she can share the information with all in the next newsletter.

A new SRP Advisory Committee has been seated for 2011-14, and they will be busy with SRP initiatives and activities. The new committee list will be posted on the website on our SRP page. Please become and stay involved in the activities of your local unions. It is our numbers and our dedication that give us our strength.

I look forward to seeing you in Saratoga Springs and working with you toward our common goals.

In solidarity,
Karen Lee Arthmann



Taking a break from the workshops at the NYSUT Leadership Institute: Annie McClintock of United Teaching Assistants of Harborfields, Frank Pigeon of Greenville Paraprofessional Federation and Hilda Monfredo of Western Sullivan United Teachers and School-Related Personnel.

Taking on a new challenge

by Annie McClintock, president,
United Teaching Assistants of
Harborfields



Like most NYSUT members, I take care of students in a classroom. Working with special education students is a wonderful and constant challenge.

Then I come home to take care of my family. As a local president, I also take care of members in my union.

Two years ago, I added another set of responsibilities. I decided to go back to school to get an associate degree. That was a huge step because school was so difficult for me that I dropped

out of high school. My learning disability is dyslexia. It has not been easy. Job, family, union and taking courses takes a lot of juggling.

Several things have made it easier. First, I applied for every scholarship I could and was selected for several. Second, taking courses through NYSUT's ELT program and SUNY Empire State College is convenient for a full-time working mother.

The more I learn, the more I realize how important it is for union members to become involved. The need to stand up for ourselves and our rights is greater than ever. We are School-Related Professionals and we are used to making things work. We need to make the system work for us, so I urge members to keep informed about what their union can do for them, as well as what they can do for their union.

Annie McClintock wins AFT Scholarship

The Robert G. Porter Scholars Program is named in honor of the late AFT secretary-treasurer, who served for more than 30 years. Porter was known for his commitment to improving the quality of public education and for his public service.

In addition to awarding student scholarships, the program awards \$1,000 to AFT members to further their careers and advance the goals of the union.

Annie McClintock, a teaching assistant and president of the United Teaching Assistants of Harborfields, was among the 2011 New York recipients. This award helped McClintock attain her associate degree.

The NEA Foundation awards grants to education support professionals (ESPs) and educators three times a year. The deadline for the next review period is Oct. 15, 2011. There are two categories of grants: Student Achievement Grants for initiatives to improve academic achievement and Learning & Leadership Grants for high-quality professional development activities. Application tips, forms, and an instructional video that walks you through the process, can be found at www.neafoundation.org. For descriptions of recently funded projects, visit the searchable grantee database. The NEA Foundation has awarded more than \$7 million in grants like these over the past decade to educators and education support professionals in every state in the country.

National School Lunch Week Oct. 10-14

Helping children understand the connections between agriculture, meals and health is a critical goal of farm-to-school programs — and also of school nutrition professionals. “School Lunch — Let’s Grow Healthy” will help students understand where food comes from while



highlighting the overall benefit that school lunch helps kids grow strong and healthy. The upcoming National School Lunch Week 2011 theme, “Let’s Grow Healthy,” is a perfect opportunity to celebrate both. Check out www.asfsa.org for more information.

National School Bus Safety Week Oct. 17-21

The yellow school bus is an American icon. It represents safety and the traditions of our schools and education system. School buses are, by far, the safest vehicles on the road, with a safety record that government authorities confirm is better than any other form of transportation. In New York state, more than 2.3 million children ride a yellow school bus to and from school each day. School buses are designed and constructed with more safety features than any other vehicle, and the school transportation industry works continually to incorporate the latest technology, training and testing to keep school buses safe. Riding in a school bus is much safer than walking to school, riding a bicycle, riding public transit, or driving or riding in a car.

Safety is the priority when transporting our students to and from school and celebrating National School Bus Safety Week is a great way to bring awareness to the importance of following the basic bus safety rules by students and other drivers. The theme for 2011 is “Be Aware — Know the Danger Zone!” Go to www.napt.org for information about their annual poster contest.

Real savings... big smiles

Are you looking to save some hard-earned cash during these challenging economic times? Let NYSUT Member Benefits help!

Being a NYSUT member brings with it a number of benefits such as the opportunity to take part in our endorsed discount programs. Member Benefits offers a variety of discount

programs designed to save you money on your everyday activities as well as those special purchases.

NYSUT Member Benefits also endorses a number of quality, competitive insurance plans and benefit programs — such as homeowners insurance, car insurance, life insurance, disability insurance, and finan-

cial and legal services — designed to help provide you with peace of mind. Many of these programs are also available for spouses/domestic partners of members, dependent

children, dependent parents and grandparents.

Member Benefits is here to serve the hardworking members of NYSUT and their families by offering real value and working diligently to act as your advocate if you have any issues or concerns with our endorsed programs and services. Visit memberbenefits.nysut.org for a complete listing of available opportunities.

For information about this program or about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits at 800-626-8101 or visit memberbenefits.nysut.org.

Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.

The following is just a sampling of some of the discount programs available to NYSUT members:

Working Advantage • Motivano SmartSavings Online Discount Marketplace • Buyer's Edge, Inc. • Six Flags Discounts • Defensive Driving • EPIC Hearing Service Plan • Philips Lifeline Medical Alert Service • Powell's Book • *TripMark.travel* • Wyndham Hotels and Vacation Rentals • Car Rental Discounts.

Elections matter: Go to www.aft.org/election2012

Because elected officials have a direct effect on your job, your rights, and on the well-being of your family and community, it is critical that you get involved in the 2012 elections. Next year, you will vote to elect the president of the United States. As we look at what is happening now across the country, that election takes on even greater significance. Every day, in state after state, public employees and the services our communities depend upon are under assault. And while we continue to push back against those assaults, the surest recourse is the ballot box.

Go to the Elections Matter website at www.aft.org/election2012/ and drop an ad into your publications to engage members in the site as well. Ads are at http://leadernet.aft.org/communicating/banner_ads/other/

NYSUT's ERS consultant program in action

By: *Kathy Hine, NYSUT ERS consultant, Rochester region*

For the past several years, it has been my privilege to be one of NYSUT's Employees Retirement System (ERS) consultants. I have found this to be a very rewarding job.

The decision to retire is a huge one and often our members find the whole process intimidating and confusing. My main job is to provide our members with the information they need to make wise decisions regarding their retirement. I do this by having one-to-one consultations either by phone, meeting in person or by providing retirement workshops.

When I talk to members I review the retirement process. I explain the retirement paperwork that members will need to fill out. Often I send members booklets and pamphlets to help them understand their options. Sometimes a talk on the phone will be enough to help members understand the process. Many times members feel more comfortable meeting with me in person. We can do this at the Rochester Regional office, or I can meet them at a library or a restaurant closer to their home.

One big issue that comes up again and again is how to buy back service time. If members didn't join the ERS when they first started working for their employer, they can buy back that time; I can help members with this process.

Members are often surprised at how easy this process is.

The New York State Employees Retirement System has consultation sites across the state where members can meet with a consultant who can tell them exactly how much their retirement pension will be depending on which option they choose. Many times our members have asked me to accompany them when they meet with an ERS consultant and I am glad to do so. My role is to listen and make sure all their questions are answered. I have either met with or talked to the member on the phone so I am very aware of their concerns. Many members find it comforting to have a third party present to make sure they haven't overlooked anything. This is especially true for members for whom English is a second language.

Several NYSUT Regional offices offer the services of a NYSUT ERS consultant. These consultants give general information about ERS benefits and plans, give in-person or phone consultations and provide workshops for groups of 10 or more. They do not do calculations or make recommendations regarding a member's choice of options. For further information, contact Margaret MacCartney at NYSUT headquarters at mmaccart@nysutmail.org.