

# SRP NewsLink

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

WINTER 2013

[www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org)

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## 2012 NYSUT SRP Conference a huge success!

Saratoga was the place to be on Oct. 26-28 for the annual SRP Leadership Conference where 240 participants spent the weekend taking workshops, gathering important information to take back to their locals, making friends and networking. This year, we had 72 first time participants who were happy for the opportunity to learn to be stronger activists and future leaders.

In her address to leaders, NYSUT Vice President Kathleen Donahue spoke of the challenging times that face members: "School-Related Professionals are the backbone of the public education system. Yet, at a time when ever-increasing standards are being implemented in schools across our state, the system's backbone is continually being dismantled."

Citing other legislative challenges ahead — such as keeping the Affordable Health Care Act intact and protecting earned benefits — Donahue charged leaders with the important task of activating their membership as she

said: "If we are to succeed, our members must be engaged — not only at the state and federal levels, but at the grassroots level, too." She encouraged local presidents to apply to NYSUT's Local Action Project, a program designed to enhance member involvement and build community support.

Members of the SRP Advisory Committee took an active role in working with the participants and helping run activities. Despite the challenging economic times, SRP generosity was overwhelming.

Through raffle ticket sales and the generous donations of basket items from participating locals, the SRPs raised \$2,186 for NYSUT's Disaster Relief Fund.

Participating locals also donated nearly 700 new elementary and middle school level books to be distributed to individual students at the Liberty Central School District. A letter from the district's Board of Education offered sincere

*SRP leaders gather around the nearly 700 books they collected for donation to the Liberty Central School District.*



thanks for the books and said, since many of their students have never received a book of their own, the district planned to distribute them during the holidays. Members of the Liberty Teaching Assistants, Monitors and Aides Association and Liberty Central High School seniors will wrap the books.

SRPs also collected six boxes of personal care items — two boxes were donated to the Schenectady YWCA and four to Unity House, an organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for people living in poverty, adults with mental illness, victims of domestic violence and others in need. What a difference those toiletries will make for all those people. Unity House sent a letter of gratitude to the SRPs who donated.



Representing more than 600,000 professionals in education and health care  
For more, see [www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org).

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## IMPORTANT DATES

### **NYSUT Health & Safety Conference**

March 1-2 Saratoga Springs  
[www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org)

### **Committee of 100**

March 4-5 Albany  
[www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org)

### **NEA ESP Conference**

March 8-10 Louisville, Ky.  
[www.nea.org/esp](http://www.nea.org/esp)

### **AFT PSRP Conference**

March 21-24 Minneapolis  
[www.aft.org/psrp](http://www.aft.org/psrp)

### **NYSUT Local and Retiree Council Presidents Conference**

April 10-11 Washington, D.C.  
[www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org)

### **NYSUT Representative Assembly**

April 11-13 Washington, D.C.  
[www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org)

### **NYSUT Professional Issues Forum on Health Care**

April 27 Saratoga Springs  
[www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org)

#### **RA Deadlines:**

Resolutions	Jan. 14
SRP of the Year nominations	Jan. 14
Proposed Amendments to Constitution and Bylaws	Feb. 8

*Forms are available at the [www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org) Leader Access site*

## Tell it like it is: Your voice, your future

NYSUT Vice President Kathleen Donahue urges NYSUT members to log on to [nysut.org](http://nysut.org) and take part in a new campaign. "Tell it like it is" tells SED to stop the fixation on standardized testing and urges more investment in education.

At the recent SRP Leadership Conference, Donahue said, "I urge you to add your voice to this important conversation by going to our home page, where you will see, very prominently displayed, the link for 'Tell it like it is'."

Visit [nysut.org](http://nysut.org) and click the "Tell it like it is" logo. You'll be able to create and send an email to Commissioner

John King and the Board of Regents. Let them know how current testing practices negatively impact students, and what needs to be done to get student assessment and teacher evaluations right.



Tell SED and the Regents to stop the obsession with standardized testing and start investing in student learning.

## SRPs bring comfort to troop in Afghanistan

Soldiers of the New York Army National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 108 Infantry Regiment hold up care packages they received as part of an effort led by teaching assistant Elma Sprague, a member of the Guilderland Central Teachers Association. Sprague's son-in-law is in this unit, which was stationed in Afghanistan.



Students at Pine Bush Elementary School donated much needed personal care items and heartfelt cards and drawings for the soldiers. NYSUT donated candy, bottles of hand sanitizer and red stress hearts. NYSUT staff donated money to defray shipping cost.

## SRP NewsLink

*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.

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# SRP Recognition Day celebration news

Nov. 20 was a proud day for our SRP members. NYSUT provided SRP Recognition Day celebration guides, posters and buttons to local presidents who requested packets for their members.

Several SRPs shared the ways they were recognized by their colleagues.

The Endicott Teachers Association recognized SRPs with individual thank you notes and buttons. The Sewanhake Federation of Teachers hung posters and flyers and celebrated with sheet cakes decorated in the school colors with a big "Thank You!" written on top. Several SRP locals celebrated their own members with donuts and coffee, buttons and stickers. The Harborfields Teaching Assistants Association gave their members Fair Trade chocolate and their teachers association provided a bountiful breakfast. The Rush Henrietta EA designed new shirts for their members that say, "We are the Community — These are our Children."

If you would like to share how your SRP members were celebrated, please email details and photos if available to NYSUT SRP Coordinator Margaret MacCartney at [mmac-cart@nysutmail.org](mailto:mmac-cart@nysutmail.org).



*Valley Central Teachers Association honors food service workers on SRP Recognition Day.*



*At NYSUT headquarters, a kiosk promotes ways to celebrate School-Related Professionals, as part of the "SRPs Make a Difference" campaign.*

## A VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

**Karen Lee Arthmann**  
*SRP Advisory Committee chair*



The SRP Leadership Conference in Saratoga Springs was great. Tish Olshefski, who moved up through the ranks of the labor movement to become senior assistant to the secretary-treasurer of the AFT, was truly motivational on Sunday morning; not an easy task. A special thank-you to those of you who did such a wonderful job of putting it all together for its fabulous outcome and to all of you who gave freely of your time to attend and participate. Without you there would be no conference. Your input, feedback and engagement are invaluable.

Throughout the conference, the relentless approach of Superstorm Sandy stayed on our minds as she traveled up the eastern coast. Tragically, many of our own members were later impacted by Sandy, along with so many others. Our raffle basket raised \$2,186 that has been put to good use for the NYSUT Disaster Relief Fund. Your support and generosity make me so proud to be one of your leaders.

NYSUT Vice President, Kathleen Donahue calls SRPs "the backbone of the public education system." I agree and would go one step further; we are the backbone and the heart of our communities. Our neighbors and our fellow union members look to us for leadership and strength, and we have shown time and again that we are willing and able to provide those things, and do so unhesitatingly.

Please remember to get your resolutions written and in to President Iannuzzi's office by the deadline of Jan. 14, 2013, so that they can be part of our Representative Assembly April 11-13, 2013, at the Marriott Wardman in Washington, D.C. Also on Jan. 14, applications for the NYSUT SRP of the Year are due! I know there are people out there, probably sitting right next to you, who have been instrumental in making and keeping our union strong and who deserve your nomination. Please take a look around and recognize them for all they have done.

I hope to see a large New York delegation at the NEA Conference in Louisville, Ky., March 9-10, and also at the AFT Convention in Minneapolis, March 21-24. We must pay attention to what is going on within our own state and in the states of our brother and sister unionists. Proactive is better than reactive and awareness of crucial situations can help prevent another Wisconsin from happening. None of us can afford that.

We have a lot to be thankful for: healthy families, good friends, jobs to go to, and a strong union that helps us maintain those things. I am very thankful for all of this and for all of you. Have a wonderful holiday season and be safe.

In Peace and Solidarity,  
Karen

# AFT and NEA conferences offer two-for-one incentives

March is the big month for these two national conferences. First is the NEA ESP conference on March 8-10 in Louisville, Ky., then the AFT PSRP conference on March 21-24 in Minneapolis. These are wonderful opportunities for SRP leaders and activists to learn about new topics and critical issues, attend workshops and make new networks and connections with leaders around the nation.

NYSUT will once again be offering a two-for-one incentive program to make it more affordable for locals to send

participants. The size of your local will determine the amount that NYSUT will cover. An explanation letter from Kathleen Donahue and reimbursement form will be sent to leaders of SRP locals and will also be posted on the SRP Leader page of [www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org) after the first of the year.

Check the national websites for conference

details, registration, hotel and travel information after the holidays. Their web addresses are [www.nea.org/esp](http://www.nea.org/esp) and [www.aft.org/psrp](http://www.aft.org/psrp), respectively. Hope to see you there!

## SRPs' generosity will benefit NYSUT members impacted by Sandy



Shortly before the closing moments of the SRP Leadership Conference, with Superstorm Sandy making her way up the east coast, SRP Advisory Committee Chair Karen Arthmann presented NYSUT Vice President Kathleen Donahue with a \$2,186 donation for the NYSUT Disaster Relief Fund.

Donahue accepted the check on behalf of all the NYSUT officers and thanked the SRPs for their continued generosity. With a nod toward the advancing storm Donahue said, "Unfortunately it looks like we will be using this donation sooner, rather than later."

## Welcome to new SRP locals

We welcome the Mohawk Valley Community College Adjunct and Part-Time Association's more than 380 new members. NYSUT already represented the full-time faculty and professional staff at MVCC who played a key role in the campaign to organize.

Despite having more than 70 percent of the unit sign authorization cards, the MVCC administration and the county would not recognize the unit.

However, in mid-November the college lost its fight to keep this large group of educators unorganized when the Public Employment Relations Board ordered MVCC to recognize and bargain with them.

Aside from adjuncts, the new unit encompasses about 25 part-time job titles including advisors, coaches, tutors, technical assistants and librarians. Like so many others who work part-time at colleges and universities across the country, they have been treated as second-class citizens with no voice at work and no seat at the bargaining table. They look forward to building their union and beginning the hard work of winning their first contract.

We are also pleased to welcome the new SRPs who were accreted into Cortland-Onondaga-Madison BOCES Organization in the Syracuse region. The new titles brought into COMBO are: safety officer, public health educator, CSHN training specialist, education aide, cook manager, cook I, dietician and food service helper I. Welcome to the NYSUT family!

## Have you secured your family's future?

Have you reviewed your current life insurance policy recently to determine if you need more of it? Or, perhaps you don't even have a life insurance policy because you think you can't afford one? If so, ask yourself this ... can you really afford not to have life insurance?

What would happen to your family if you were to suddenly pass away? Would they be able to handle all of your daily expenses and other bills? Consider all of the expenses that life insurance may be used for, such as paying for:

- Daily living expenses like rent, food, gas and utilities
- Mortgage and property taxes
- College tuition and/or childcare expenses for children
- Outstanding debts, including credit cards or loans
- Any final medical, burial or funeral expenses

Don't just assume that you can't afford life insurance; a term life policy may be more affordable than you think. The

NYSUT Member Benefits Trust-endorsed Term Life Insurance Plan is available for members and their spouses/domestic partners under age 85.

And, the helpful folks at the plan administrator — Marsh U.S. Consumer, a service of Seabury & Smith, Inc. — are available toll-free at 888-386-9788 to answer any questions that you may have about whether a term life policy could be in your budget.

Feel free to also contact Member Benefits with any questions at 800-626-8101 or visit [memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://memberbenefits.nysut.org).

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

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