

NYSUT Communications Awards 2017

Class I

Local: Glen Falls Teachers Association
Category: Best Website
Publication/Website: Glens Falls Teachers
URL: <http://glensfallsteachers.weebly.com/>

Judges' Comments:

You have a presence, but the only resources I found were links to NYSUT. The potential is here, but members must volunteer to help you develop it into a resource they will use and love.

A good starting place would be a nice landing page connecting to NYSUT Resources for members or the district website. A local page that connects member and the teachers' mission for the schools and community would be a valuable tool for enhancing connection and appreciation for the role you and your members play.

Local: Schalmont Teachers' Association
Category: Best Website
Publication/Website: Schalmont Teachers' Association
URL: www.schalmontta.org

Judges' Comments:

This splash page promises a lot, but the entry is not a link so there's no way to probe it in depth.

A comprehensive set of resources for members. A fuller and more welcoming message on the landing page would help to reinforce the role that you play in the district and its importance and help members feel pride in their work and connection to the union.

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Class II

Local: Faculty Association Suffolk Community College

Category: Best Website

Publication/Website: Faculty Association Suffolk Community College

URL: <http://www.fascc.org>

Judges' Comments:

The screen representation of this entry is technically flawed, but a cell phone check of the site shows it to be lively, colorful and informative. Very strong home page presents a professional and dynamic perspective on the members of the local. This will work to instill pride among members and also put a positive face forward for the community.

Local: UUP Potsdam

Category: Best Website

Publication/Website: Potsdam Chapter of United University Professions

URL: <http://potsdamuup.wixsite.com/potsdam>

Judges' Comments:

Screen representation of this entry is wholly inadequate. But a cell phone check of the Word press version of this site shows it to be a substantial resource for members. A good starting place.

A strong, clean and professional looking home page with lots of great resource links. Presenting a clear perspective of who you are and highlighting the importance of members would help to instill pride in them as a welcoming message and would also send a good message to the community.

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Class II

Local: Wallkill Teachers' Association

Category: Best Website

Publication/Website: Wallkill Teachers' Association

URL: <http://walkillteachers.org/>

Judges' Comments:

The only things visibly featured on the entry representation of this page are the NYSUT statement on the confirmation of DeVos as U.S. education secretary, a Stronger Together logo and an ad for Union Plus. Highlighting the work of members and the local union on the home page would help to make it more inviting. Help recognize members for the important work they do and connect them to the local. It would also send a positive message to the community.

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Class III

Local: Half Hollow Hills TA
Category: Best Website
Publication/Website: HHHTA
URL: www.hhhta.com

Judges' Comments:

Wow, lots of good stuff here to keep members informed and on their toes. Sadly, no photos of members in action or otherwise to be seen in the screen representation of this 2016 landing page. The focus here appears to be on national issues, but there are hints that once you penetrate the landing page and start to move beyond it, members will find lots of useful local information.

A strong dynamic site filled with a lot of information and connection to resources. The home page would be enhanced by some streamlining and by putting information, news and features about the local people and issues more prominently. Connection to outside content via statewide and national unions and other sources can be accessible and connected where it makes the most sense for the local conversation. Members locally want to know about what matters most to them and their colleagues. There is a lot of that content but it could be presented more prominently for greater impact.

Local: Levittown United Teachers
Category: Best Website
Publication/Website: Levittown United Teachers
URL: <https://levittownteachers.org>

Judges' Comments:

This is a promising entry that suggests there is a lot more for members beyond the splash page. The landing zone has timely national news, and when you scroll down, you find lots of action photos of members.

Very strong site with excellent information presented in an engaging way that puts the focus on members and the local. Clean layout makes it easy to navigate and a clear message about the local people and their mission comes through effectively. A very good model for others to follow.

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Class III

Local: Nassau Community College Federation of Teachers - Local 3150
Category: Best Website
Publication/Website: Nassau Community College Federation of Teachers
URL: www.nccft.org

Judges' Comments:

This is a website to take seriously, but it has so little color and no photos to greet the visitor, it comes across as cold and uninviting. If boxes and columns of text promising interesting reading ahead don't snag your attention, it's unlikely this will be your go-to hangout online.

A lot of good information and connection to resources via this site. A warmer, more inviting home page focused on members and their connection to the union's mission would make it stronger. A more central focus that highlights the work and aspirations of local members throughout the content would be welcome and help strengthen relationships and a sense of purpose.

Local: Patchogue-Medford Congress of Teachers
Category: Best Website
Publication/Website: patmedteachers.org
URL: patmedteachers.org

Judges' Comments:

If you are a member of this union and you don't see your face on this landing page, you just haven't scrolled down far enough yet, because it surely is there! Faces are not the first things to greet you; that would be news. However, the typeface is so thin, light and pale blue that the tendency may be to blow right past it for all of the bright red-for-ed in the members' solidarity photos. Ideally, a bolder typeface for news would balance a few photos with links to take you to more pictures or more details of the news and information. Stringing so many large (but lovely) posed group shots becomes a barrier to visitor mobility, rather than an inviting gateway.

A functional home page with a lot of information and easy navigation to resources. A warmer invitation to engage with the site by a clearer focus on the members and their dedication to mission would help to enhance the home page's effectiveness by drawing in the audience and helping them to feel connected. Some nice photos of members at the bottom of the page could be used more purposefully as part of the invitation to participate.

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Class III

Local: Smithtown Teachers' Association

Category: Best Website

Publication/Website: Smithtown Teachers' Association Website

URL: <http://www.smithtownta.com>

Judges' Comments:

The screen representation for this entry was mainly a lot of blank space with a small column of text to the left. Scrolling down revealed a photo of members and some useful benefits information. When I scrolled to the very bottom, I finally struck gold in the nice graphic and text explaining why some teachers have decided to opt their own children out of standardized testing. If this were right at the top to grab visitors' attention and get their heart rates up, you'd have stronger engagement.

Local: UCATS

Category: Best Website

Publication/Website: UCATS

URL: <http://ucats3882.org/>

Judges' Comments:

You need it? They've got it on this website. A wonderful photo of members rallying at the Empire State Plaza greets you and is followed by numerous invitations and links to just about any information you could want. The effect is that of a resource, more than an up-to-the-minute blog, but there's a link for that. A dynamic, functional home page that has a lot of strong elements.

The images of members engaged in activism helps deliver a message about a vibrant local...but include more than demonstration photos. The union is about more than that. Offer more images of members engaged and advancing the union mission through their commitment to excellence in their work and helping students and the community. It will make the page more welcoming and engaging.

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Class III

Local: Valley Central Teachers' Association

Category: Best Website

Publication/Website: Valley Central Teachers' Association

URL: <http://www.vcta.net/>

Judges' Comments:

Lots of boxes all competing for your attention greet you when you land here. At first they all look like ads, but then you see they are a grouping of options for finding information. A cartoon is front and center, and it is the link to the newsletter. What this very stimulating site needs is design and layout that focuses attention on one dominant feature and then offers lots of other options, rather than having them all talking to you at once and demanding your attention in levels of equal volume.

A functional home page with a LOT of information and connection to resources. Tremendous potential here that would benefit from some streamlining. Use a home page to be an inviting and engaging gateway - less is often more. Feature members on the homepage to communicate a connection between the member and the union mission to serve and help - it will be more appealing to the individual member and draw the audience in.

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Class IV

Local: PSC/CUNY
Category: Best Website
Publication/Website: PSC-CUNY
URL: www.psc-cuny.org

Judges' Comments:

Love the right-to-the-point style of this site that respects your time and your intellect. Still, I would love to see a photo of members in action. Ultimately, it must be about the people.

A strong and dynamic home page with a lot of information. Consider streamlining it for stronger impact and make it more manageable for the audience. A focus on the member and the connection to the union mission to serve and help might make the homepage more appealing. Engage the member and make them feel connected before hitting them with the call to action.