

SRP NewsLink

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

SRP Member Organizing Institute grads ready to roll

The first School-Related Professionals Member Organizing Institute (MOI) was a great success, with two dozen SRPs from all over the state answering the call to help build the strongest union ever. The group trained for two-and-a-half days at NYSUT Headquarters, spending their weekend working with NYSUT organizing staff to understand and articulate the current and upcoming threats that continue to plague unions, as the relentless attacks by wealthy, special interests intensify.

The MOI was launched in the summer of 2017, and expanded this year to include an SRP training session.

Coming down the pike this summer is a \$10 million campaign, funded by the wealthy special interests to get union members to give up their membership.

Through one-to-one conversations, these unionists will reach out to other NYSUT members to build connection with the union and discuss members' rights and our fight for educational justice.

Members took the message to the streets, having one-to-one conversations with fellow SRPs, and documenting some of it on social media.

These NYSUT SRPs left the training energized and ready to go out and speak with other NYSUT members about the road ahead.



From left, Virginline Woodall, Syracuse TA; Jeffrey Thomas, Buffalo Educational Support Team; Lisa Rios-Bakari, Rochester Association of Paraprofessionals; and Kim McEvoy, Rondout Valley Federation of Teachers and SRPs.



"Spending the weekend training with my union sisters and brothers was such a rewarding experience," said Kim McEvoy, chairperson of NYSUT's SRP Advisory Committee. "Having those one-to-one conversations with other NYSUT SRPs continues to be so important. As part of those conversations I met some wonderful people and learned their union stories."

Look for the May/June edition of *NYSUT United* for coverage of this inaugural event.

If you missed the SRP MOI, don't

worry. NYSUT is offering additional MOI trainings around the state.

For more information about participating in the NYSUT MOI and for the upcoming calendar visit www.nysut.org/moi.

You can also make your voice heard by participating in **SRP Lobby Day on June 4**, visit www.nysut.org/srp for more information.



From left: Sandie Carner-Shafran, NYSUT SRP At-Large Director; Mary Beth Nardone, Port Washington Association of Educational Secretaries; Lori Levine, Half Hollow Hills TA; and Robert Motz, Depew Transportation Employees Association.

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SAVE THE DATES — OCT. 4-6, 2019



The 2019 SRP Leadership Conference is Oct. 4-6, in Saratoga Springs.

Join School-Related Professionals from around the state for an unforgettable weekend of fun, professional development and networking at the Hilton Hotel in Saratoga Springs.

Visit www.nysut.org/srp for more information.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Administrative Professionals Day

April 24

www.iaap-hq.org

AFT PSRP Conference

April 26–28, Las Vegas

www.aft.org

National School Lunch Hero Day

May 3

NYSUT Local & Retiree Council Presidents Conference

May 3, Albany

NYSUT RA

May 3–4, Albany

National Nurses Week

May 6–12

National School Nurse Day

May 8

School Budget Vote

May 21, Statewide

NYSUT SRP Lobby Day

June 4, Albany

NYSUT LAP Conference

July 15–19, Saratoga Springs

Administrative Professionals Day is April 24

Since 1952, the International Association of Administrative Professionals has honored office workers by sponsoring Administrative Professionals Week. Today, it is one of the largest workplace observances outside of employee birthdays and major holidays.

Originally known as Professional Secretaries Week/Day, IAAP renamed it Administrative Professionals Week/Day

to keep pace with changing job titles and expanding responsibilities of today's administrative workforce.

In 2019 Administrative Professionals Week is April 22–26 and Administrative Professionals Day is April 24. It is celebrated worldwide, by large and small business, and in private and public settings, recognizing the efforts and contributions of administrative support staff. Visit www.iaap-hq-org for more.

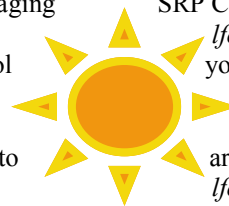
Coming up in the summer 2019 SRP NewsLink

The next *SRP NewsLink* will feature helpful hints for working during the summers months, and about engaging new employees and returning members at the start of the school year.

We want your feedback. How do you welcome members to the start of the new year? Does your local have an opportunity to meet as a group at the beginning of the school

year? How do you make members feel welcome all year long? Email NYSUT SRP Coordinator Leslie Fottrell at lfottrel@nysutmail.org to share how you engage your local all year long.

The SRP Advisory Committee continues to seek input from SRPs around the state. Email Leslie at lfottrel@nysutmail.org to share news or issues you would like to bring to the committee's attention.



Where NYSUT members learn from NYSUT members

NYSUT's Education & Learning Trust offers affordable seminars for School-Related Professionals, both in person and online. Visit www.nysut.org/elt to view the current offerings and see how affordable professional learning can be. Earn CTLE credit by taking ELT seminars.

NYSUT ELT, celebrating 40 years of providing NYSUT members with high-quality professional development. Call 800-528-6208.

Delegates should stay until final gavel; SRP resolutions considered

The **Local and Retiree Council Presidents Conference**, the pre-Representative Assembly event, kicks off the morning of May 3 at the Empire State Plaza in downtown Albany.

This year's SRP breakout session contains two offerings. First up is a **Legal Update for SRPs** presented by Matt Bergeron, senior associate counsel, NYSUT Office of General Counsel. Bergeron will discuss what the Office of General Counsel has been doing to protect SRPs on the job and provide a primer on some of the more fundamental aspects of labor, civil service and education law that SRP leaders deal with on a regular basis. Next up is **Forming an SRP Council** presented by Leslie Fottrell, NYSUT SRP coordinator, who will discuss how SRP councils tap into the strength of coalition building, and detail how to form an SRP council.

Later that day and through May 4 several thousand delegates to the **47th Annual NYSUT RA** will converge upon the Empire State Plaza and the Albany Convention Center.



NYSUT Second Vice President Paul Pecorale

The RA is NYSUT's highest policy making body and delegates are entrusted with the duty of representing their local unions' interests.

Delegates do much important work at the RA. Did you know that leaving early may impact the meeting's quorum, and may result in unfinished business? NYSUT Second Vice President Paul Pecorale said: "I urge all delegates to stay

until the meeting is adjourned. If delegates leave early, they may endanger the quorum, which would mean some union business, such as voting on resolutions, would remain unfinished."



SRP union value news around the state



Using job diversity as a catalyst for problem solving at CDRO's SRP Leadership Conference, from left: Lisa Relyea, Bethlehem Central United EA; Ken Lancto, Schalmont SRP; Roseanne Bruno, Guilderland Office Workers Association; and Helen Mary DeSimone, Albany Public Schools United Employees.



UFT's Paraprofessionals Festival and Luncheon, from left: SRP Advisory Committee member Reggie Colvin, former committee member Hector Ruiz, and NYSUT SRP At-Large Director Shelvy Young Abrams. (Photo: Jonathan Fickies/UFT)

The **Plattsburgh Regional SRP Night** was hosted by the NYSUT **Plattsburgh Regional Office** on Dec. 19. SRP members enjoyed workshops focusing on professional development resources of NYSUT's ELT and an Employees Retirement System presentation.

The **Western NY RO** held its **SRP Union Tools Workshop** Feb. 8-9 at the Millennium Hotel in Cheektowaga. SRP unionists participated in workshops such as union finance, negotiations and engaging members.

The **NYSUT Nassau RO** held its **SRP Leadership Conference** on Feb. 9 at the Huntington Hilton Hotel.

The **Capital District RO** held its **SRP Leadership Conference** March 9-10 at the Fort William Henry Hotel in Lake George, with 200 SRP members attending.

The **NEA ESP conference** at the Bally's Hotel in Las Vegas, March 22-24, provided professional development and the opportunity to engage in meaningful conversation with SRP unionists from all over the country.

The **United Federation of Teachers** celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the local's paraprofessionals chapter with 1,000 members attending the **Paraprofessionals Festival and Awards Luncheon** on March 23 at the New York Hilton in Manhattan.

NYSUT's first **SRP Member Organizing Institute** was held March 29-31 at NYSUT Headquarters in Latham (see story page 1).

Call your NYSUT regional office to find out about upcoming SRP events.

Communication, political action essential for SRPs

By Andre Mathis

Each SRP Advisory Committee member belongs to one of five subcommittees – Communications, Health and Safety, Member Engagement, Political Action, and Professional Development. This article features the Communications Subcommittee members Cheryl Rockhill, president of the Brushton-Moira Support Staff Association in Franklin County, and Andre Mathis, co-president of the Union-Endicott School District Office Personnel Association, in Broome and Tioga counties. Rockhill and Mathis work on the *SRP NewsLink*, the *NYSUT United* “Meet an SRP” feature and strategize other ways to communicate important messages to SRPs around the state. Both are also members of NYSUT’s Committee of 100.

Rockhill is a monitor and transportation clerk for the Brushton-Moira Central School District. She has been on the advisory committee since 2014 and was a powerful voice for change in NYSUT’s fight to raise the minimum wage, when she testified before the New York State Wage Board about the adverse effects of wage inequity. She is a graduate of the NYSUT Member Organizing Institute and a NYSUT Education & Learning Trust (ELT) instructor.

Mathis has been a school records specialist for the Union-Endicott Central



At NYSUT C-100, front row, from left: Gayle Cameron, Rochester Association of Paraprofessionals; and SRP At-Large Directors Angie Rivera and Sandie Carner-Shafran. Back row, from left: SRP Advisory Committee members Paula Thomas, Charlie Jones, Cheryl Rockhill, and Kim McEvoy; SRP At-Large Director Shelvy Young Abrams, and committee members Reggie Colvin and Andre Mathis.

School District for four years. He joined the committee in 2017. After school, Mathis is an advisor for the Student Government and Mock State Senate clubs in the high school. In the Mock Senate students simulate the New York state legislative process and introduce legislation, elect party leaders, serve on committees, and hold a Mock Senate session. Students travel to Albany to meet and speak with Legislators about their experience and the legislation they have introduced.

As part of NYSUT’s Committee of 100, Rockhill, Mathis and other SRP AC members were joined by many other SRP members at the Capitol, where they met with the State Legislators from their respective areas to advocate for NYSUT

initiatives essential to the benefits of public education for all students and all staff.

It is important for SRPs to participate in Committee of 100 and the in-district meetings to ensure SRPs have a seat at the table. While many state regulations and requirements affecting education may seem to be directed toward our teacher colleagues, the impacts are often felt and shared by SRPs as well. SRPs are proud to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with all our sisters and brothers who work in the classroom advocating for the changes that matter most to them.

In much the same way it takes a village to raise a child, it takes all school staff to educate a student.

Listening to each other: How others interpret what we say

By Ani Shahinian, NYSUT Social Services specialist

Do you ever wonder why no one is listening to what you say? Technology has redefined communication in our lives. We can now talk to anyone, anytime, about anything from anywhere. The Internet makes it possible for us to learn about anything we want to — including where our long lost classmates, lovers and family may be living and how to contact them. The question still remains, however: Is whether our capacity to communicate and establish meaningful relationships really better? Are people really listening to each other or simply talking at each other?

Albert Merabian, professor emeritus of psychology at UCLA, has done experiments with verbal and non-verbal communication. He describes communication

as having three elements: Verbal (the words we speak), vocal (the tone of voice we use), and visual (body language). Merabian found that when it comes to communicating thoughts and feelings, the words we speak are the least significant part of what we say. Tone of voice and body language make up the majority of how we effectively communicate.

This chart shows the specifics:

How communication is understood

7% from the literal content of message.

38% from the tone, intonation and volume of voice.

55% from speaker’s body language.

So the next time you assume your text message or email will effectively communicate what you intend, think twice and call or speak to someone in person, especially if you are trying to be understood regarding the way you feel about a topic.

NYSUT Social Services is available to NYSUT members and their families when dealing with personal issues and concerns. Contact us by phone at 800-342-9810 x 6206 or by email socsvcs@nysutmail.org.

The *SRP NewsLink* is published periodically by NYSUT Program Services.

Visit: www.nysut.org/srp

