



UNITED PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES UNION

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THE ADVOCATE

Making a Difference in the Workplace

Fall 2008



*Happy Thanksgiving and Season's Greetings
to all our Members and their Families*



United Public Service Employees Union
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Our Mission

United Public Service Employees Union is committed to being the preeminent labor organization representing public sector employees by providing professional, on-site representation, superior negotiations, and adherence to democratic principles which maintain the integrity of the Union for the benefit of our members and their families.

"We are making a difference in the workplace"



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Executive Vice President

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



UPSEU President
Kevin E. Boyle, Jr.

Although I hesitate to use the word "perfect" in any way to describe the past weeks and months, in viewing today's times one can only categorize the economy as a "perfect" storm. Gluttonous greed on Wall Street and corporate America, coupled with a near total lack of regulation or oversight, has meant disaster to many.

It is no wonder the stress level of our UPSEU staff has risen commensurate with the anger of the general public (many of whom are our members) against the excess of the "haves" at the expense of the "have-nots." At a time when all funding is being stretched by increased costs and ever increasing unfunded mandates, and taxpayers are saying hold the line as they see their expenses increase while their wages remain stable or decline, negotiations and representation of public employees has never been more difficult or necessary! The staff of UPSEU has risen to the tasks at hand and continued our supremacy in the labor movement.

In fact, our phones have been very active lately, as associations realize that the days of going it alone are past, and members of other unions call us to dump their union for UPSEU. Through it all, we have added additional staff to meet these increased calls for help and we have, as always, maintained our leading service ratio.

It never ceases to amaze me when I see other unions so far flung from the day-to-day trenches with their membership. Many unions wouldn't recognize their own members if they fell over them in the street. And others choose to look the other way while they fill their time avoiding their membership's phone calls, letters, and membership meetings, in order to ease their workload burden. Many of those unions have representative to member ratios of 1:3,000 and even upwards of 1:10,000. This of course doesn't mean the whole labor movement, but more locals and unions than unfortunately I can count on two hands.

I am as proud today as ever of my staff. We don't shirk our responsibilities. We don't hide from returning phone calls, fail to respond to letters, or distance ourselves from membership meetings. As we always say in our organizing meetings, we are there when you need us, there when you don't, and there when you didn't even realize you should have called us. We are hands-on and pro-active. Does that mean we win every battle? No. Does that mean that 100% of the members are happy with the negotiations 100% of the time? No. What it does mean, is that you are represented by a caring union and its staff, who whenever possible, go above and beyond the call of duty. It means that you have representatives and negotiators who push and pull, and sometimes stand on our heads, to work for the goals you set for us. It means that whenever and wherever humanly possible, we achieve those goals. And most importantly, it means that as things get difficult, UPSEU and its staff will be there with you, every step of the way.

Lastly, thank you to the staff of UPSEU for its hard work and to our very dedicated Unit Officers and Stewards. As well, thank you for helping us to grow stronger through your referrals from the non-unions, associations, and disenfranchised, dissatisfied members of other unions.

Yes, these are tough times, but in the words of Martin Luther King, Jr.,
"We shall overcome."

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www.upseu.org

UPSEU VICTORIES

PERB CONFIRMS JUDGE'S DECISION "Cleaners in Facilities Must Have Their Hours Restored"

The Public Employment Relations Board confirmed the Administrative Judge's decision issued this summer that the cleaners in the Columbia County Facilities Division of DPW must be restored to their previous schedule. "It's been over two years since this entire nightmare started," stated Regional Coordinator Kathy Wright. "These folks were working eight hour day shifts starting anywhere from 7 a.m. to 8 a.m. Then, as a result of mean-spiritedness on the part of certain members of management, the employees were all told they had to work 4 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. It created chaos with their lives and had a devastating effect on morale," she continued.

Wright filed an improper practice charge regarding the imposition of the shift change and this summer received a decision from a PERB Administrative Law Judge agreeing with UPSEU and ordered that everyone be restored to their old shift and be made whole. "The County exercised their right to appeal the decision to the Board," offered Wright.

PERB met for the monthly meeting on September 24, 2008 at which time they issued the decision and the order siding with the UPSEU. "I was so pleased and excited for these members; they were finally vindicated after all this time," Wright concluded. Not only does the order require the return to the previous shifts, it also requires that the employees be made whole for any loss of wages and benefits. UPSEU is presently calculating the damages due the employees.



COLUMBIA COUNTY MEMBERS
Louise Sacco and Bart Hover

Congratulations to the cleaners affected by the decision: Bart Hover, Terry Guntert, and Louise Sacco. Kudos to Frank Wright, Building Maintenance Worker who got dragged into the mix as well and to Bill Hughes who has retired as a cleaner and is now a member of the Columbia County Board of Supervisors.



The Many Hats of a UPSEU Representative



Huntington Clerical Unit Member Adrienne Geller
in her new healthy office.

Recently one of our members from the Huntington School District clerical unit contacted UPSEU to express concern regarding her work location. Since the District was tight on space, it was using a boiler room as an office. The employee worked as a special education secretary and had a number of file cabinets, as well as special desk space needs. The district, short on space, saw the boiler room as a means of fitting the requirements needed.

"I knew if I raised it as a comfort issue and sought other space in the building, we wouldn't get very far," remarked Regional Director Kim Nowakowski. "With space being unavailable, I conducted a full interview of the member to see if there were any medical conditions we could raise under the Americans with Disabilities Act." The member did have a medical condition and upon request, we were able to get a physicians note listing restrictions, including needing air conditioning and a clean work environment.

With this ammunition, we approached district personnel and asked for an accommodation. Given the limited spaces available, it took a lot of work on Kim's part to figure out the solution. Nowakowski stated, "Although the District was sympathetic, it didn't seem that it was given the highest priority status, given the lack of available space to move the member to. I actually had to come to the district to measure the floor space of the rooms available, and as well measure the space to hold all of the member's needs including desks, files, boxes, etc."

Before long Kim was ready to design an acceptable space. Ultimately, two interconnected rooms which had been used for storage were swapped for the boiler room. "It wasn't as simple as saying let's swap the space, since I had to come with measuring tape in hand and ensure the layout could be done in such a way without knocking down walls and fitting all of her things in a way that was workable for her," stated Nowakowski. "I had to laugh, as I was transformed from union representative to medical interviewer to interior designer to environmental inspector, but I'm glad that it worked out in the end," Kim concluded.

City of Amsterdam Members Ratify New Agreement

The City of Amsterdam professionals unit has ratified a three year contract that included substantial increases in longevity as well as an improved vacation schedule with increased carryover. The committee included Mike Ryba, Mike Chiara and Labor Relations Representative Phil Sedlock.



Town of Guilderland Paramedics Join UPSEU EMS Ranks

Members of the Town of Guilderland Paramedic Unit approached UPSEU to replace their existing Union Teamsters Local 294. Within a few weeks, the Teamsters disclaimed interest in the group and the Town recognized UPSEU.

Guilderland Paramedics, like other EMS agencies, have joined UPSEU to help their group progress in a very unique work force. The Guilderland Medics have completed their election of their Chief Shop Steward Nick Deso and Assistant Shop Steward Sean McGaughnea. They have also put in place their negotiating team adding Cory Nichols.

The team, with the help of UPSEU, is overhauling their existing contract to make it progressive regarding the special needs of the EMS worker. The Guilderland Paramedics are a seasoned respected EMS agency in NYS and with the help of Labor Relations Representative Gary Favro, UPSEU will make sure these medics are rewarded appropriately in their collective bargaining agreement.



Guilderland Paramedics Dick Hughes, Nick Deso and Jay Taylor

Rockland County Highway Department Overwhelmingly Approves Pact

A new four year agreement, nearly unanimously ratified by UPSEU's Rockland County members will provide unit members with annual wage increases, improved vision coverage and additional vacation splits. The most contentious issue in negotiations was a demand by the county that all employees pay a portion of health coverage throughout their career. This provision is county wide. All the county unions stood together and prevailed in maintaining this important benefit.

UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. thanked Labor Relations Representatives Jim Gangale and Brandon Nasierowski for their assistance. Boyle commended the leadership of Chief Shop Steward Nick Graziano, Assistant Steward Chris Mankiewicz and team members Peter Sohl, Ronald Lindberg, Peter Power, Vincent Pacella and Edward Hopper for their terrific efforts throughout the negotiation process.

Hauppauge School District Members Overwhelmingly Approve New Agreement

A new four agreement has been overwhelmingly approved by UPSEU's Hauppauge School District membership; the vote was 93 to 12. The long difficult negotiations had a breakthrough, when, with the assistance of a New York State PERB mediator, an agreement was forged. Annual wage increases, continuation of district paid health, dental and vision coverage, increased night differential, and a significant increase in longevity highlighted the agreement.

The Hauppauge School District is UPSEU's first unit, coming aboard in 1986.

President Boyle congratulated the negotiating team of Timothy Kuhl, Maureen Fery, Rose Sweeney, Steve Nelson, Michael Burke, Ed Gruber, Michael Enrico, Karen Abbondonelo, Michael Ruffini and Andrew Parrucci for their outstanding work throughout the process.

"For twenty two years I have been involved with the members of the Hauppauge unit who were there in the 1980's and it is always a pleasure working for them," stated UPSEU President Boyle.

Agreement Reached at West Hempstead Public Library

The West Hempstead Library negotiating team of Rosemary Sena, Betty Rusinek, and Barbara Dreher worked with UPSEU Negotiator/Vice President Kim Nowakowski and Labor Relations Representative Amanda Barker to bring back a package which was ratified nearly unanimously. Although the negotiations focused on the typical wage and benefit issues, it also addressed language issues and upgrades in benefit levels.

"Due to external events, in their last negotiations the team focused on quick negotiations which primarily included wages only increases," remarked Kim. "In these negotiations the unit was more than ready to focus on and tackle more."

The memorandum of agreement addressed a wide range of issues. "Kim spent the time reviewing each paragraph in the agreement, brought issues to our attention and gave suggestions," remarked Unit President Rosemary Sena. "This is the most comprehensive agreement reached on our behalf and the unit was pleased, as evidenced by the nearly unanimous ratification." The three year agreement included, in addition to annual wage increases, new additional base salary infusions based on years of service which were given each year of the agreement, numerous language issues, as well as an improved dental and retirement plan (75i and 41j).

"I was impressed that even an issue that affected a small number of us was handled with the same tenacity as issues which affected all of us," commented negotiating team member Betty Rusinek. "As someone who was a part of the small group affected by one of the issues, I am grateful that they didn't just focus on getting a majority to pass a contract, but worked to please as many members as possible."

Congratulations to the West Hempstead Library employees and special thanks to Rosemary Sena, Betty Rusinek, and Barbara Dreher.



Town of Colonie Employees Join UPSEU

Over two hundred Town of Colonie employees overwhelmingly voted to join UPSEU on September 4, 2008. "This is historical for the town employees because they have never been represented by a union before," said Kathy Wright, UPSEU Regional Coordinator.

UPSEU Labor Representative Gary Favro received inquiries late last year from a number of town employees because they were unhappy with the insecurity of their benefits and the uncertainty of future salary increases. "We met with a core group of employees and in a matter of a few weeks they had secured a majority of the designation signatures necessary to certify the union without an election," added Favro.

In addition to the new two hundred plus technical and administrative UPSEU members, a vast majority of the department heads also submitted representation designations as well. Their unit will be a separate bargaining unit and is presently being established to be represented as well.

"We are very excited about having their first membership meeting. We will be bringing them up to date on a number of issues we have been fighting on their behalf during the entire certification and election process and begin preparing for negotiation of their first contract," said Wright. Congratulations to the Town of Colonie employees for joining UPSEU.



Oneida Herkimer Solid Waste Authority Members Ratify 5 Year Agreement

OHSWA employees overwhelmingly ratified a new five year contract. Approved, with an almost 100% turnout, was a settlement that contained no givebacks and the highest salary increases in twelve years. Also included in the deal was increased unused sick day bonus premiums, increased clothing allowance and increased shoe allowance.



Oneida Chief Steward Steve Brockett is counting the ballots for the newly negotiated contract which will be effective January 9, 2009.

Chief Negotiator Executive Vice President /Regional Director Gary M. Hickey credited the UPSEU negotiating committee of Chief Steward Steve Brockett, Gene Bonomo, Tim Davis, Stacy Wilson and Labor Relations Representative Robert Stephens with staying focused on achieving improvements for all employees.

Hickey stated, "To ratify such a great new contract months before an expiration date is satisfying not only to the employer but also very rewarding to the employees. Thanks again to all involved!"

Commack Library Employees Approve Three Year Deal

A new three year agreement was reached with the Commack Public Library which provided a number of improvements in addition to annual wage increases. "The agreement addressed a wide range of issues which affected anywhere from a few members to the entire unit," remarked Vice President Kim Nowakowski.

The agreement built on the prior agreement where title adjustments were given to workers in an effort to close the pay gaps which existed in a number of the positions. "This group had been an association and had negotiated on its own for a few years before they came to UPSEU," stated Labor Relations Representative Amanda Barker. "We have been working to bring them to where they should be in relation to other libraries. These days when it is so difficult to escape givebacks, we were especially pleased that in addition to all of the improvements, there were no givebacks," Amanda continued.

In addition to above average increases and title adjustments, we also increased longevity payments. The agreement also improves paid time off provisions for employees in a number of areas, including a guaranteed early close the night before Thanksgiving. "This may seem minor, but to those members who are traveling or cooking, every little thing makes a big difference," remarked Nowakowski. The agreement also established a differential for the custodial supervisor. "Even though there is only one custodial supervisor, we wanted to ensure proper compensation for that new position," she continued. The negotiation team, lead by Negotiator Kim Nowakowski and Labor Relations Representative Amanda Barker, and included Hara Cohen, Helene Chaim, Judith Calderone, Suzanne McGuire, and Maureen Armstrong, deserves special recognition for a job well done.

Orange Ulster BOCES Clericals Approve Pact

In mid October, the clerical employees at Orange-Ulster BOCES approved a three year successor agreement by a 98% margin. For the fourteenth consecutive year, this group has battled and successfully secured the best settlement compared to their component school districts. Chief Negotiator Executive Vice President/Regional Director Gary M. Hickey said, "This group of women have long stood together with one goal in mind: do not be satisfied with just any contract settlement and do not settle for less than the best. Their strength and solidarity has proven once again that goals can be met." Highlights included increases in sick leave retirement sell-back, health insurance buyout amounts, longevity and vacation schedules together with a new longevity step, salary increases and greatly enhanced dental and vision benefits.

Executive Vice President/Regional Director Gary M. Hickey thanked the entire negotiating committee including Labor Relations Representative Don Lown for their efforts. He echoed Chief Unit Officer Barbara Abate's notice to the members, "A heartfelt thank you to Lorrie Borisewich, Michelle Danko and Jennifer Kirby who worked hard and gave up their own time to help negotiate this contract."



Meriden Steward Training



OCTOBER STEWARD TRAINING IN MERIDEN

front row: Bloomfield Town Hall Unit President Weining Wu and Naugatuck Unit Vice President Diane Dutton were among the participants in the Meriden Steward Training. Topics covered at the seminar included contracts, grievances, unfair labor practices and procedures for appealing a grievance. Director of the Connecticut State Board of Mediation Catherine Serino was available to answer questions and provided members with copies of MERA and CSBMA regulations.

Just Say Goodbye, AFSCME!

In May, two units of the Wallingford Board of Education voted in an election conducted by the Connecticut State Labor Relations Board to get rid of AFSCME as their Union representative. The Food Service Employees voted by 97% for UPSEU and the Secretarial/Clerical unit also voted for UPSEU by a 90% margin!

On June 5th, the CSBLR certified that UPSEU was the union of record to represent both units. Unfortunately, AFSCME doesn't get it! Even after such a lopsided loss and being decertified by the CSBLR, AFSCME Director Kevin Murphy wrote a letter to the employer demanding that the Wallingford Board of Education, "continue to remit dues to AFSCME from the employees in the two units."

"If anyone ever had any doubt, Kevin Murphy's letter clearly shows that AFSCME cares more about dues than it does about providing good representation," said UPSEU Regional Director Wayne Gilbert.

These two bargaining units clearly wanted AFSCME to leave them alone and their respective votes demonstrated that fact. UPSEU attorney, Eric LaRuffa, in his brief to the CSBLR stated, "AFSCME has attempted to deprive UPSEU of its lawful rights under the MERA. It has demanded that the employer continue to recognize and deal with AFSCME as the exclusive bargaining representative of the employees, regardless of any Board certification to the contrary, through the durations of the two respective contracts. Such activity constitutes a deliberate violation of MERA Sec 7-740(b)(1). The Board's continued tolerance of such activity by AFSCME would result in rendering Board certifications nullities and effectively render the Board's statutory authority meaningless."

A decision by the CSBLR in October frees the Food Service and Secretaries/Clerical Staff from AFSCME's dues mongering once and for all.

UPSEU and City of Danbury Agree to 4 Day Work Week!

In an effort to find "energy savings" for the city and a longer weekend for union members, the City of Danbury and UPSEU recently entered into a four day work week. The agreement for a four day work week was first suggested by Danbury Mayor Mark Boughton who then came and listened to the members' concerns at a union meeting held in August. After several items were addressed, the membership voted overwhelmingly by secret ballot to implement the new work schedule.

With few exceptions the workweek will be Monday through Thursday comprised of eight hours one day and nine hours for the three other days. Both the city and union members will be able to "test drive" this new schedule for twenty six weeks from mid-September through mid-March. Any extension of the schedule must be agreed upon by both parties.

"This trial period will give both the city and the union the opportunity to work out any kinks that may develop. This program is a tremendous WIN-WIN for all. "We are grateful to Mayor Boughton and his team for reaching out to us with this new program," stated Wayne Gilbert, UPSEU Regional Director.

Winchester Police Reach Agreement



WINCHESTER POLICE NEGOTIATING TEAM
Officers Michael Roy, Philip Bialowy and Scott Twombly

The United Public Service Employees Union has reached a tentative agreement with the assistance of Officers Philip Bialoglowy, Michael Roy and Scott Twombly of the Winchester Police Department.

"We were happy to reach a new agreement that will benefit everyone involved. With a tentative agreement now reached a ratification meeting with the membership will be scheduled," said UPSEU Director Ronald Suraci. At press time, the meeting had not been scheduled.



Plainfield BOE Custodians



PLAINFIELD BOE CUSTODIANS

Members Lou Fontaine, Steve Kennett, David Hinds, and Todd Wilcox.

The members of the Plainfield Board of Education Custodians shown above are anxious to begin the process of negotiating a new collective bargaining agreement.

This will be the first agreement negotiated by UPSEU for the members after joining the organization.

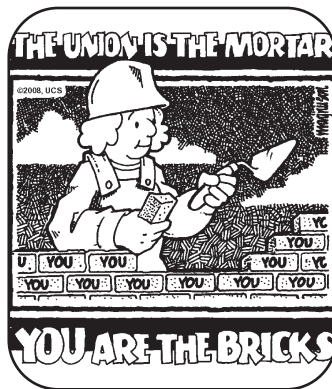
“The members of our team are very dedicated when it comes to giving the time and effort needed to secure a strong collective bargaining agreement,” stated UPSEU’s Director Ronald Suraci who will be leading the team.

Colchester Nurses Vote Unanimously for UPSEU

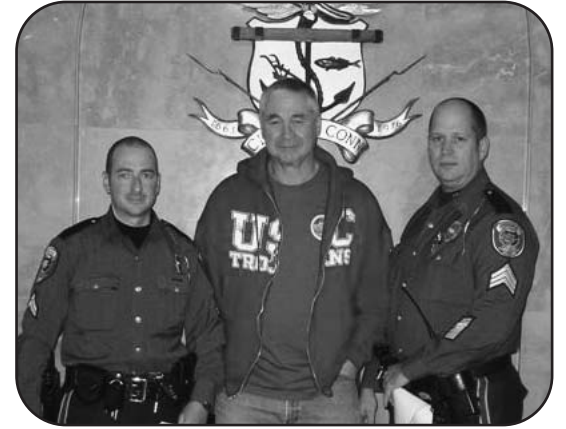
On October 29, 2008, the Nurses of the Colchester Board of Education voted unanimously to become part of the United Public Service Employees Union family in a Connecticut State held election.

The Colchester Nurses were part of a wall to wall unit in another union and had a difficult time trying to obtain the benefits they needed and deserved.

“Now that the election is behind us, we will meet with our new members and start preparing to negotiate a new collective bargaining agreement with the town. We are excited to be involved with the first negotiations that will address the special concerns of these nurses,” stated Labor Representative Mike Lewis who guided the members throughout the election process.



Clinton Police Department



CLINTON POLICE OFFICERS

UPSEU Unit President Phil Confer, Sargeant Thomas Lucas and Corporal James DePietro

Representatives from The United Public Service Employees Union/COPS Division, along with Officers Phil Confer, Sergeant Thomas Lucas, and newly appointed Corporal James De Pietro have been working diligently to come to an agreement on enhancing the pension benefits for the members of the Clinton Police department.

“It has taken some time, but I believe we have made progress and hope to have the pension issue settled in the near future,” said UPSEU Director Ronald Suraci. In January, the Town and the union will start negotiations for a new collective bargaining agreement.

Town of Wallingford Wins Water Employees Contract Settlement

In a recent decision, the Connecticut State Board of Mediation and Arbitration issued a binding arbitration award for employees in UPSEU’s Town of Wallingford Water Division. Regional Director Wayne Gilbert, commenting on the decision stated, “It was a long, drawn out affair that cost the Town of Wallingford tens of thousands of dollars, for a result we could have negotiated way back in 2006! We are very happy that our members got a favorable contract.”

The town’s negotiators had attempted to roll back two issues, one for vacancy preference and the other for on-pay call. The town lost both issues. UPSEU was also seeking a 457 deferred compensation that only required employee contributions. Throughout negotiations, the town adamantly refused to offer the same plan currently in effect for the town’s supervisors. As a last best offer, the town finally offered the same plan and UPSEU agreed to the offer.

The last issue concerned an employee who had signed a “last chance agreement” over seven years ago. Since that time the employee sustained exemplary work performance and UPSEU felt it was time he was treated like all other employees. In the binding arbitration, the panel stated that the last chance agreement had done what it was meant to do and was no longer necessary.

Local Unit President Joseph “Woody” Mrozowski said, “UPSEU did a fantastic job for all our members. We are so pleased with our representation and the outcome in this case.”



WALLINGFORD WATER

Unit President Joseph “Woody” Mrozowski and Shop Steward Joseph Crisco

Borough of Two Bridge Sewer and Water Authority Employees Join UPSEU

After indictment of their Local 911 union leadership and the union ultimately becoming defunct, the employees of the Borough of Two Bridge Sewer and Water Authority sought to protect their future by joining UPSEU. The unit, after hearing about UPSEU from other municipal workers, contacted us to secure representation.

UPSEU's Jim Gangale, who met with the group after seeing an overwhelming response of the workers, filed for recognition as the bargaining representative. Local 911 did not protest, therefore UPSEU was certified.

UPSEU has hit the ground running and is now representing the unit until their current contract expires.

Borough of Oradell Members Ratify 4 Year Agreement

UPSEU Borough of Oradell White Collar and Blue Collar members recently ratified a new four year agreement. In addition to increased annual wages in each year of the agreement, the new contract provided increased salary steps from eight to twelve, increased standby pay, shoe allowance, additional holidays and summer hours for clerical members.

UPSEU Regional Director Jim Gangale, who headed up the negotiations, thanked the negotiating team members Annette Hartman, Matthew Slodyczka, Rosemarie Florio, Daniel Nyewing and Antonio Meo for their hard work and perseverance. Gangale summed it up stating, "Although negotiations were drawn out, the team should be commended for their patience. In the end, we are proud to have achieved a great contract for our Oradell members."

Teaneck Members Overwhelmingly Agree to New Contract



TOWN OF TEANECK TEAM
Teaneck Unit Secretary/Treasurer Steve Grater, President Sal Tumminello with negotiating team members Richard Muller and Rob Wood

A new four year agreement will provide Teaneck unit members with wage increases above the norm, increased longevity, increased weekend and weekly on-call pay, increased uniform allowance, improved benefits and an adjustment for employees that were hired prior to 1994 under a two tier provision.

This was UPSEU's first negotiation on behalf of the unit. The Teaneck unit felt their previous union was not doing the job for them and joined UPSEU a couple of years ago.

UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr., who headed up the negotiations, commended the team led by Unit President Sal Tumminello for their efforts. The team also included Steve Grater, Rob Wood and Richard Muller.

Ridgewood White Collar Employees Vote 36 to 0 for New Agreement

Increased wages and adjustments for employees whose wages were statistically out of sync with others, headlined a new four year pact for Ridgewood White Collar employees.

Led by Unit President Sharon DeMarco, the team of Vickie Bombace, Patti Herman, Regina Kowalski and Susan Maurer was commended by UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. for their excellent effort.

Ridgewood Blue Collar Employees Nearly Unanimously Approve Pact

A new four year agreement for Ridgewood Blue Collar employees will improve wages annually, increase uniform allowance, and add new improvements to snow and ice call for parks. The new agreement will also add license stipends and improvements in a number of areas of the contract.

The one hundred member unit approved the agreement with only one unit member voting against its terms.

Special thanks to the leadership of Chief Shop Steward Joseph Capozzoli and negotiating team members James Castner, Sean Hamlin, Richard Tarleton, Declan Madden, Thomas O'Neill and Kenneth Junta for their extraordinary work.

Ringwood Members Unanimously Approve New 4 Year Agreement

By a unanimous vote, UPSEU's Borough of Ringwood members approved a new agreement that will provide annual raises, improved vision and dental coverage, increased employer contribution toward retiree health coverage, increased sick leave payout upon retirement, improved bereavement, and significantly improved longevity, including a first time longevity for crossing guards, in addition to other gains.

UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. commended the work of the negotiating team in securing an excellent agreement. Led by Chief Shop Steward Mike Hirschman, the team included Peggy Conway, Chris Chapman and Helen Forsa.



Town of Catskill Ambulance Service



CATSKILL EMS MEMBERS

Jake Finnegan, John Holt, Wayne Smith, Jason Dixon, Aidan O'Connor

The Catskill EMS Unit is negotiating their second UPSEU contract. According to UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Gary Favro, we made significant progress establishing the first contract. EMS workers have very different contractual and workplace needs. Our Catskill Negotiating Team has crafted an extensive proposal with which we can build onto our first contract. The 2008 Negotiating Team consists of John Holt, Leo Hengstler, Ric Vanderbeck, alternate Jake Finnegan and UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Gary M. Favro. In the past year the Catskill Medics have moved into a new ambulance station with much improved working conditions. The Unit continues to be a premier EMS agency in the region that services a large geographic area and has a growing 911 call volume.

The Town is now under a different administration with a new Town Supervisor Mr. Peter Markou. UPSEU is optimistic that we will be able to move forward and negotiate a successor contract that addresses the current and future needs of our Catskill EMS life savers.

Orange-Ulster BOCES Custodial Maintenance Unit Secures 3 Year Deal

With an overwhelming "YES" vote, custodial and maintenance employees in Orange-Ulster BOCES approved a pact that once again calls for numerous improvements. In addition to vastly improved dental and vision benefits, employees saw increased call-in pay, new time and one-half snow days, new early release comp time, improved vacation schedules, new twenty five year longevity level, increased longevity amounts, increased stipends, increased health insurance buyout amounts and increased sick leave retirement sell back. Salary increases again were the highest of the component school districts.

Chief Negotiator Executive Vice President/Regional Director Gary M. Hickey said that "it has been a pleasure to work with such a great group of people. Their hard work year in and year out again produced a settlement that is second to none." Hickey credited his committee Chief Steward Christine Drake, Andy Bartlett, Aldo Velasquez and Labor Relations Representative Don Lown with securing a deal as great as this one in these very difficult economic times.

Franklin County Solid Waste Agrees to New Contract

The County of Franklin Solid Waste Management Authority overwhelmingly agreed to a new three year contract. The negotiating committee, led by Labor Relations Representative Phil Sedlock along with members Doug LaMondie and Ronald Goyea, worked out an agreement that included a sick leave pay-out in retirement, a health insurance buyout, a new bereavement policy, increases in longevity, boot allowance and vacation, and most importantly, no givebacks.

Colonie EMS Update

The Colonie EMS Unit joined UPSEU in 2007, and at the time had been without a (SEIU) contract for three years. Within several months after taking over as their union, UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Gary Favro, along with a hard working Colonie EMS Negotiating Team, negotiated and implemented a contract for our Colonie EMT's and Paramedics.

The contract included three years retro pay, a new home rule providing a twenty five year NYS Retirement Plan for the medics and three years of raises going forward. The team also addressed some unsettled language issues.

During the past six months the EMS Unit also had to fight to save the Colonie EMS Helicopter Life Guard Program. The new Town Board Administration, made an attempt to abolish the fifteen year old program against the wishes of the EMS Department, the Medical Director, the community and surrounding communities. The move to abolish the Lifeguard Program created heated public debate, extensive media coverage and a groundswell of community support for our UPSEU medics. The program actually generates revenue for the town and provides a higher level of medical care for the Town of Colonie residents. The move by the town has been labeled unfounded and politically motivated. The medics, together with the resources of UPSEU held public rallies and a petition drive and showed tremendous solidarity.



TOWN OF COLONIE EMS MEMBERS

Tom Amsynski, Erin Kelly, Eric Sperber, Dan Murdock

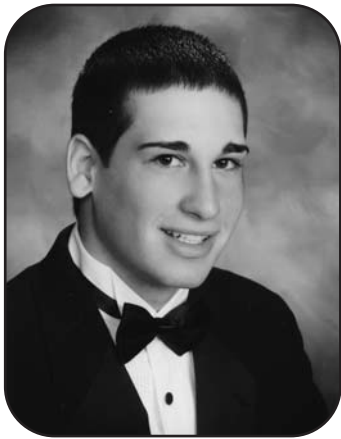
The efforts by union members, the community and UPSEU forced the Town Board to extend the program to December 2008 when it can be reevaluated. The battle is not over and UPSEU is continuing to pursue the issue every way that we can. "The Colonie EMT's and Paramedics showed true grit regarding this issue and they should be commended," remarked Favro.

UPSEU 2008-09 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

United Public Service Employees Union extends congratulations
to all our scholarship award winners and their families.

We would also like to thank the 2008-09 Scholarship Committee Members: Debra Strange, Tim Dittfield, John Murnane, Daniel Yoxall, Beth Landrie, Kathy O'Brien, Carol Jensen and Labor Relations Representative Linda Kirnan. The Scholarship Committee is chaired by Vice President Kim Nowakowski and Regional Coordinator Kathy Wright.

Paul T. Burch \$1,000 Award Winners



Nicholas Garen
Biology Major
Son of Carol Garen
Town of Woodbury

"My goal of being a doctor will be a profession that I feel will allow me to help others and save lives. I hope to make a difference in this world and by being a doctor, I will be able to help people on a day to day basis."



Matthew DiGirolamo
Biomedical Engineer Major
Son of Eileen DiGirolamo
Northport/East Northport School District

"I want to be able to be part of the research and discoveries that could change the way the world cures disease and suffering. My goal is to become a biomedical engineer, who will be able to help others by using technology and knowledge of the human body."

\$500 Dependent Children Awards

Sheila Baummer's son Andrew
Angela Bouchard's daughter Stephanie
Michael Brown's son Timothy
Kelly Cox's son James
Donna Cummings son Kyle
James Davis' daughter Jillian
Cathy Fleury's son Chad
Alvin Fuller's daughter Abigail
Christine Giordano's Elizabeth
Diana Gozaloff's son Timothy
Gail Halstead's son Eric
Crystal Hill Saylor's daughter Candace
Michael Hirschman's daughter Amanda
Bart Hover's son Chris

David Kieras' son Bryan
Diana Knox's daughter Cassandra
Debra Kon's daughter Jenna
Leslie Ann Lajoie's daughter Kelsey
Gabriella Meyer's daughter Erica
Clare Nickel's son Shawn
Lorraine Pace's son Michael
Susan Pesavento's daughter Joselyn
Janis Powers' daughter Allison
Jeffrey Rein's son Patrick
Ramona Scaramuzzino's son Michael
Linda Schreiber's son Peter
Frank Sbiroli's daughter Caitlin
Gary Tamburro's son Thomas

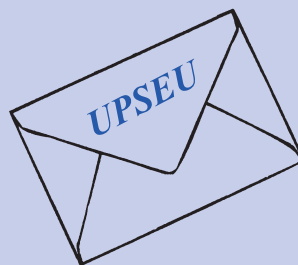
\$500 Member Awards

Lisa Balado
George Bryce, Jr.
Nina Edgerton
Kristin Falzon
Kelly McDonald
Tammy Merhige
Tammie Murphy
Matthew Paccione
Ramona Scaramuzzino
Lisa Theopheles
Kristin Vitulli

UPSEU is helping our members and their families to meet their educational goals



Dear Kim,
Thanks again for always answering my questions so quickly.
Diane Toscano
Lynbrook School District



Dear Kevin,
On behalf of the Harborfields Professional Office Personnel, we feel compelled to share with you our gratitude for the wonderful support both Kim and Amanda were to us this past school year. As an example of their diligence, as you know the district was issued subpoenas. Both Kim and Amanda not only came to Harborfields to guide and advise our member, but Kim actually went to the courthouse on the day she testified, and stayed there until the end to insure that everything went smoothly. No words can express the comfort our member felt knowing someone was there just for her. In addition, there were numerous situations which arose during the course of the year in which Amanda not only was articulate and knowledgeable, but she was at our side, given very little notice. The commitment that these two women have is undeniable. Therefore, we again would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation for all the guidance and support that we receive.
Dale Lerner and Paula Francis
Harborfields Professional Office Personnel

Dear Gary,
Thanks so much for joining in my retirement celebration. Many years have passed since the start of the clerical union and you were always a pleasure to work with. Maybe we'll see each other again if you ever pass through my neck of North Carolina.
Janice and Fred Papst
Orange Ulster BOCES

Dear Kevin,
I would like to thank you for your assistance during the past few months in securing a more suitable workplace. I recently saw Kim Nowakowski and had the opportunity to personally thank her for her efforts as well.
Adrienne Geller
Huntington School District

Dear Amanda and Kim,
Thank you both for your steadiness this week. Your calm demeanor was definitely helpful.
Eileen McCartney, R.N.
Oyster Bay-East Norwich School District

Hi Kim,
Everyone seems really pleased with the gist of the contract. Thank you again for all the work you did for us. I doubt if we could have reached a conclusion as easily without your creativity and calm demeanor. I know Laurie told me she really enjoyed working with you. This was Maureen's first time on the negotiating team and she made a point of telling people that you and Amanda definitely "earn your money" working for us. There are always people who complain about dues and ask what the union does, so it's great to have someone new on the team who can tell them how hard you worked for our staff.
Hara Cohen
Commack Public Library

Dear Kevin,
Serving in the union has been an education unto itself, and I am sincerely grateful for your and John's mentoring, support, and friendship. Kim and Ron, likewise, have been available to help me whenever I needed their assistance. Of course, all good service derives from the example "at the top" and, with your leadership, UPSEU is a union like no other! I started my career as a physical therapist and I'll end my career as a physical therapist. But the majority of that career turned out to be in union service, and I wouldn't have missed that for the world. Be assured, I will remain a loyal UPSEU advocate and member.
Nancy Muro
ES BOCES



HERE'S JOHNNY

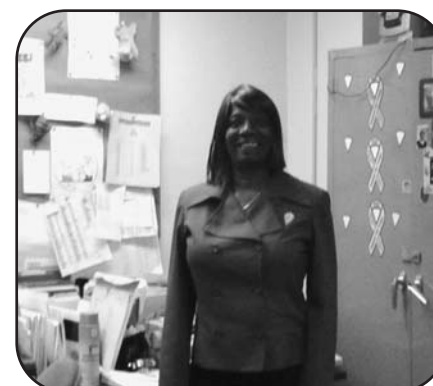
Did you know that UPSEU member Johnny Davis, a recent retiree from the Hempstead School District was a professional boxer?

As an amateur, Johnny fought both Leon Spinks and Jerry Cooney. Professionally he fought Dwight Kawee and Yaki Lopez. In 1983 he also fought Michael Spinks for the Light Heavyweight Championship of the World. Good luck in your retirement, Johnny; you'll always be a champ in our eyes!



**THANKS TO ALL
FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS**

Mohawk Valley Community College employees Dan Yoxall, Union Stewards Gloria Slade and Rich Fyfe, and Director of Building and Maintenance John Zigarelli are pictured at a benefit for UPSEU member Rich Fyfe, whose home was destroyed by fire.



ROOSEVELT SCHOOL DISTRICT
Clerical Unit President Doris Squires

UPSEU Update

In Memoriam

On August 15, 2008 employees of Oneida County's Department of Social Services gathered to dedicate plaques for two workers who passed away unexpectedly last year. Oneida County Caseworker Alphonso Washington passed away on August 15, 2007 and Caseworker Charlene Wysluzlay passed away two days later on August 17, 2007.

A luncheon was sponsored by the Department of Social Service Administration, and Commissioner Lucille Soldato thanked the staff for their hard work, perseverance and dedication during that difficult time. Co-workers Amy Swisher and Susan Ellis remembered Alphonso and Charlene, "When you work in as highly an emotional position as we do, we depend and lean on each other for emotional support and inevitably develop a second family at work."

Both Alphonso and Charlene were exemplary workers who always put the children of Oneida County first and foremost. Not only did they touch the lives of people in Oneida County, but in other counties as well. Friends from around the state and the country extended their sympathies to the Oneida County DSS family. However brief, we all had the honor and privilege to work and share our lives with Alphonso and Charlene who will be greatly missed.

By Labor Relations Representative Linda Kirnan and Shop Steward Mark Swire



Memorial plaques in honor of Oneida County members Alphonso Washington and Charlene Wysluzlay

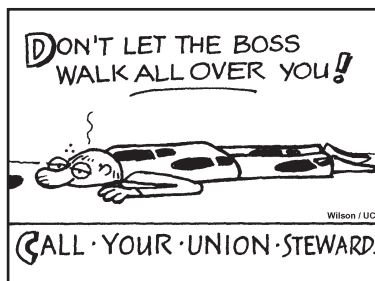
Paid Cancer Screening Leave Extended to More Public Employees

New York State Governor Paterson recently signed into law the amended bill regarding excused leave for breast and prostate cancer screening. The most recent version of the bill stated explicitly that this leave was to be paid leave – something that the original 2007 bill did not do and which therefore allowed some public employers to claim that they did not have to pay for this leave.

All employers must now pay employees for up to four hours leave annually for those screenings. As before, this leave cannot be charged to sick or personal leave.

The 2008 bill also expands the group of employees covered by this leave provision. As of now, virtually all public employees are now covered, including any employee who works for a participating employer in the New York State and Local Employees' Retirement System.

This means that library employees are also now covered if the library is a part of the retirement system.



Labor History

The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire of 1911 still remains one of the most vivid tragedies that changed American labor unions and labor laws. The horror of the 146 deaths led to numerous changes in occupational safety standards that currently ensure the safety of workers today. At the time of the fire the only safety measures available for the workers were 27 buckets of water and a fire escape that would collapse when people tried to use them. Most of the doors were locked and those that were not locked only opened inwards and were effectively held shut by the onrush of workers escaping the fire. Unfortunately, they were non-union and without a voice.

The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire remains as a turning point in US history. Countless state and federal laws were enacted because of this incident.

Please remember that should you have any concerns regarding workplace safety issues, contact your UPSEU Labor Relations Representative immediately.

UPSEU also provides referrals of Workers Compensation attorneys for our members.