



UNITED PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES UNION

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THE ADVOCATE

Making a Difference in the Workplace

Spring 2007

SACHEM CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOYEES VOTE TO JOIN UPSEU

After a long drawn out campaign between UPSEU, CSEA/AFSCME and the SSDEU, the Association that represented the employees for the past five years, the 370 member Custodial, Grounds and Maintenance, Security, Food Service and Transportation Unit voted overwhelmingly to join UPSEU.

The CSEA sent a large number of Albany based organizers five days a week to visit the home and workplaces of unit employees to convince them that CSEA/AFSCME could better represent the unit.

The Association leadership, made up of good people committed to helping their co-workers, campaigned aggressively for the Association.

In the end, UPSEU and its record of representation in the District and record of negotiating for other units previously in CSEA/AFSCME and in associations such as the SSDEU, won out.

By an overwhelmingly result of 158 UPSEU, 62 CSEA and 58 SSDEU the employees chose UPSEU. UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. stated, "We've talked with this unit for a number of years." Previously in the SEIU and dissatisfied with the SEIU representation, the unit had been nervous about being part of a union again.

In the end, they obviously felt they could no longer go it alone and chose UPSEU. "We are extremely happy with the result and look forward to serving the unit for many years to come," continued President Boyle.

Several of our new Sachem Members from Food Service, Transportation, Custodial, Grounds, Maintenance and Security.
WELCOME ABOARD, SACHEM SUPPORT STAFF!



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”***



Officers of UPSEU

Kevin E. Boyle, Jr.

President

Gary M. Hickey

Executive Vice President

Kimberly Nowakowski

Vice President

Randy Tillman

Secretary/ Treasurer

James Gangale

Recording Secretary/ Trustee

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



UPSEU President
Kevin E. Boyle, Jr.

It never ceases to amaze me the great lengths that other unions go to in an effort to beat us in organizing campaigns. On the one hand I want to laugh, but on the other I think how sad it is that they have to stoop so low in an act of utter desperation.

Take, for example, our recent victory over CSEA/AFSCME for the 370 member Custodial, Grounds and Maintenance, Security, Food Service and Transportation Unit of Sachem Central School District. During the campaign which began in the fall and brought about a secret ballot vote in the winter, the CSEA/AFSCME sent a large number of Albany based organizers 5 days a week to visit the homes and workplaces of these Long Island school employees to convince them that CSEA/AFSCME could better represent the unit. It wasn't so much the four plus hours drive from Albany to Long Island that surprised me, but their campaign material.

During these home visits, or as the Sachem employees referred to them, *home invasions*, the CSEA organizers boasted about what CSEA had to offer. They said they were highly visible in the workplace, returned phone calls the same day, and were involved in every aspect of the grievance procedure from questions to grievance filings, from stage one meetings to arbitration, and visited their members in the workplace on a regular basis. Needless to say, the Sachem employees were impressed, at least until they heard from CSEA's own members and former members that nothing could have been farther from the truth! CSEA/AFSCME with its representative to membership ratio ranging from 1:3000 to 1:7000 couldn't possibly provide that level of service. In fact, once the Sachem employees did their own research, they found that it was **UPSEU who actually promised and delivered** those services to its membership with our 1:500 representative to members ratio.

I also had to "LOL" (*laugh out loud, for those of you without teenagers*) when CSEA/AFSCME organizers started calling UPSEU "Boyle, Inc." They went on to tell the Sachem employees that UPSEU never had elections, and that the union was dominated and controlled by me. Although our staff got a kick out of mumbling *Boyle, Inc.* during staff meetings, nothing could be farther from the truth. United Public Service Employees Union is just that. A united group of public service employees who are working together to improve their terms and conditions of employment by forming, joining, and growing this union of ours: UPSEU.

In fact, what was really amazing about this tactic was that we were just coming up to another election process for UPSEU's officer positions. The nomination notice had been mailed to every member of UPSEU in the fall with the latest edition of the *ADVOCATE*. Yet, they went door to door, desk to desk, scaring the employees by telling them that UPSEU doesn't have membership elections. This Spring, the membership of UPSEU once again nominated and elected its officers to the leadership positions of President, Executive Vice President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, and Recording Secretary/Trustee as it does every three years. In an ironic twist, pro-CSEA Sachem employees were telling their co-workers that they were promised positions on the CSEA leadership board, even before CSEA became their representative!

CSEA organizers also told the Sachem employees that the clerical employees of the District represented by UPSEU were unhappy with UPSEU. Again, a lie used to frighten the employees. The Sachem Clerical employees' Unit Officers wrote letters of support; clerical employees spoke to their co-workers in each of their work locations; and UPSEU members in surrounding school districts shared their positive experiences of UPSEU. It's no wonder then that in the vote of 158 for UPSEU, 62 for CSEA and 58 for SSDEU, UPSEU beat CSEA by such a wide margin. (*You can read more about this newest group of public employees to join UPSEU on page one.*)

All in all, we're not bitter with CSEA about such tactics, but rather grateful that employees everywhere educate themselves about the issues, do their own research and see through the tactics. We are proud to campaign cleanly and with *just the facts!* Again and again, we win new members by campaigning fairly, by providing the facts with everything in writing, on letterhead, and backing up everything we say with verifiable sources.

Special thanks to the following members who assisted in this year's organizing campaigns: Virginia Gerber, Barbara Jackson, BJ Wilken, Carol Jensen, Bernadette Hurst, Diane McCloat, Joseph Whitney, Lisa Bonacci, Andrea Michielini, Fred Vetter, Dennis Martin, Vickie Halse and John Murnane.

UPSEU WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS!

Hawthorne Library
Ramsey Library
Town of Colonie EMTs and Paramedics
Plainfield Police
Marlboro School District
Hamden BOE Security
Mansfield Police
Plainfield Highway Department
Willimantic Police

Sachem Central School District
Averill Park School District
Darien BOE
Village of Mineola
Roosevelt School District
Hamden Town Hall Supervisors
City of Glen Cove School District
East Rockaway School District
Cumberland County Prosecutors

Town of Colonie EMTs and Paramedics Join UPSEU in PERB Election

In a PERB election conducted January 4, 2007, EMT and Paramedics employed by the Town of Colonie voted 39 to 6 to leave their union SEIU, CTW to join UPSEU.

UPSEU originally filed a petition to represent the then unrepresented EMTs in the town. After learning of UPSEU's efforts on the behalf of the EMTs, the Paramedics who were part of SEIU and who were dissatisfied with their representation, asked UPSEU to assist them as well. A PERB decision combined the unit for purposes of voting. In the end the newly combined unit voted overwhelmingly for UPSEU. SEIU represented employees were paying over \$50.00 a month in dues, had been without a contract for several years, and had little or no representation to speak of. UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Gary Favro, a long time advocate for workers employed in public safety stated, "For too long EMTs and Paramedics have been held down throughout the state. Someone needs to speak for these professionals and UPSEU looks forward to leading that fight on their behalf. EMS professionals will no longer be the forgotten American worker!"

UPSEU looks forward to building on its record of assisting public safety personnel throughout the state when it goes to the bargaining table on behalf of Colonie employees and in the implementation of its representation program on their behalf.

Welcome Town of Colonie EMTs and Paramedics!!!

Village of Mineola Employees Overwhelmingly Vote to Join UPSEU

In an election held January 8, 2007, Village of Mineola employees voted in favor of UPSEU in a PERB conducted election. The 85 member unit voted 55 to 7 to leave the Teamsters, in favor of UPSEU. The unit had become displeased with the Teamsters over the past few years due to a lack of representation and support in the day-to-day contract issues and their work at the bargaining table.

UPSEU's Jim Gangale who worked with the unit throughout the campaign stated, "This is a great group of workers whose union just failed them. After learning about our work in the Mineola School District with units that joined us a couple of years ago, the group wanted the same kind of representation and contacted us."

The Teamsters put forth a typical campaign of misrepresentations and threats concerning loss of benefits. The workers were very diligent in learning their rights to change unions, calling PERB and other organizations. They learned quickly that the Teamsters campaign was no different than the representation they received from the Teamsters, a bunch of lies! Meetings are currently being scheduled to prepare for bargaining.

870 New Unit Members Welcomed to UPSEU in March

As a result of five elections victories in the tri-state area during the week of March 17, 2007, 870 new members will now become part of UPSEU's growing family.

Employees in Sachem Central School District, Averill Park School District, East Rockaway School District, Roosevelt School District, and Connecticut's Darien BOE voted overwhelmingly to join UPSEU. We welcome our newest members!

Spring Cleaning Begins Early in Plainfield

UPSEU is clearly the choice for union representation in Plainfield. The United Public Service Employees Union (UPSEU) got an early start on spring cleaning in Plainfield Connecticut. UPSEU was victorious in two separate elections defeating MEUI and IBPD. Both unions are affiliated with the SEIU.

The unionized members of the Plainfield Highway Department were so sure of their choice that it took all of fifteen minutes to cast their votes for The United Public Service Employees Union (UPSEU) in an election held by The Connecticut State Labor Board.

"Thursday was a busy day in Plainfield for UPSEU, as we had two elections today, one for the Highway Department employees and the other for the Police Officers. Both were unanimous victories," stated UPSEU's Ronald Suraci.

The members of the highway department made it perfectly clear that they were not satisfied with MEUI/SEIU. UPSEU received 100% of the votes and will now be representing the Plainfield Highway employees. "One hundred percent, you can't ask for more than that," Suraci said.





Marlboro School District Members Overwhelmingly Vote To Leave CSEA/AFSCME

In a PERB election held on March 20, 2007, the fifty member unit of Marlboro School District voted to join their co-workers in the District in becoming part of UPSEU.

After seeing UPSEU's work on behalf of the Secretarial and Paraprofessional Units, the Custodial, Maintenance and Food Service unit decided they too needed better representation.

UPSEU Executive Vice President Gary Hickey, commenting on the election results stated, "This is a growing group of workers that want what every other unit wants, good representation and a union that will work for them at the bargaining table. CSEA/AFSCME never came around and did little for the unit at the bargaining table."

The vote was 35 to 9 in favor of UPSEU.

Poestenkill Unanimously Ratifies New Contract

Several years ago, Town of Poestenkill Highway Department employees approached UPSEU in the hopes of improving wages, working conditions and benefits. Though their first contract met their goals, with the execution of their third Agreement, Poestenkill workers are light years ahead of where they would be if they hadn't organized.

Negotiating team member Tim Sluus stated, "With each successive contract, the negotiating process has become smoother, and the parties have come to agreement quicker. This year, we significantly improved wages, longevity and health insurance. As a result, the contract was unanimously ratified."

UPSEU Regional Coordinator Kevin Reilly added, "The Town of Poestenkill has been developing rapidly, while the Highway Department workforce has remained the same. The Town Board recognized the productivity of its Highway Department, and responded accordingly at negotiations. Tim Sluus and Bruce Moody did a terrific job showing the Board just how productive their crew is."

UPSEU Proactive Approach Brings Oneida Positive Changes

At the end of April 2006, the Oneida County caseworkers, along with UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Linda Kirnan, banded together to work on making changes necessary to enable County Caseworkers to work more efficiently and effectively within the community and with client service needs.

The Oneida County Caseworkers and Representative Linda Kirnan lobbied the County Board of Legislators, and met as well with both the Legislative Committee and the Department of Social Services Administration.

As a result of their hard work and diligent efforts, many positive changes have been made, many future plans are being developed with worker input, and most importantly, staffing levels have begun to stabilize.

One of the many changes that directly impacted staff stabilization is the method by which new workers are trained at the local level. New York State requires that caseworkers go through a state training program; however, in addition to the state's program, Oneida County DSS initiated a pilot training program involving one-on-one training with a Senior Caseworker.

The Senior Caseworker walks the new worker through the necessary paperwork, including the filing of petitions, and takes them out into the field to expose them to the environment they will be working in, as well as introducing them to what will be required in court. This process has allowed the new workers access to someone who can guide them and offer advice which, in turn, has built confidence in their ability to perform their job, thus making them a meaningful part of the staff in less time than it had in the past.

In addition to the pilot training program, two paralegal assistants have been brought into the caseworker areas to assist them with legal paperwork, and vacancies are being filled for the necessary support staff.

As a direct result of the joint efforts between UPSEU Members and the Union, positive changes have been made, morale has improved and the Caseworkers are well on their way to the meaningful relief they so desperately needed.

Oceanside School District Negotiating Team

CUSTODIAL, GROUNDS, MAINTENANCE, AND SECURITY UNIT

Seated: Assistant Day Steward Wayne Miller, Chief Night Steward Steve Polidoro, Jack Cohen and Chief Day Steward John Pissari. *Standing:* James Fahey and Edgardo Silva. Missing from photo are Carl Beyer and Charles Desano.





Averill Park SD Votes Overwhelmingly for UPSEU

After a number of years as an independent association formed after leaving CSEA/AFSCME, the majority of the group felt they needed the support of a union. After meeting with UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Gary Favro and other UPSEU staff, the unit determined that UPSEU was the union for them.

With the bad taste of their previous representation by CSEA/AFSCME still fresh, a number of employees campaigned heavily for the Association. Like many associations, divisions developed between the various classifications. Some classes felt they were left out of the process, with certain individuals dominating the Association.

UPSEU's Gary Favro commenting on the election stated, "With the two hundred fifty member unit now being part of UPSEU, the first order of business will be to unite the unit to work as a team. We have our work cut out for us but we are up to the task," Favro added.

UPSEU is confident that after implementation of our representation and negotiation program all unit members will come together as one putting their differences behind them for the betterment of all unit employees.

Special thanks to the UPSEU organizing committee that worked extremely hard to deliver this UPSEU victory.

Town of Gardiner Highway Department Approves Pact

With the cost of living surging in the lower Hudson River Valley, it was imperative that Town of Gardiner Highway Department employees gained a significant increase in wages. The unanimous ratification of their latest contract reflects the success the Gardiner negotiating team had in achieving this goal.

"At the start of these negotiations," stated UPSEU Regional Coordinator Kevin Reilly, "we set out to be the top paid highway workers in Ulster County. We made it clear that we required wages that allowed our members to continue to live in the community in which they worked. Thanks to negotiating team members Matt Aube and Brian Stiscia, Gardiner workers were pleased with the results."



UPSEU Vice President Kimberly Nowakowski (seated center) with the Women on the Job Task Force.

Police in Greene County Choose UPSEU

Good news travels fast! When the Hoosick Falls Village Police Department recently organized with UPSEU, word spread across the Hudson River into the Catskill Mountains, where police in the towns of Cairo and Windham decided to do the same.

UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Don Lown said, "As a former police officer, I've seen more and more police units recognize the limitations of Council 82, and as a result, they are looking beyond the traditional police unions. These officers know that CSEA and PEF could never meet their needs, so they contact UPSEU. We're proud to include them in the UPSEU family."

Hoosick Falls Police Officer Bob Ashe added, "Police officers are strong supporters of unions. Many of us have lacked however, a strong union to go to. UPSEU has solved that problem."

Town of Hurley Dumps AFSCME

As UPSEU has steadily increased its presence in Ulster County, more and more units there are seeking to change representation. As the Town of Hurley Highway Department workers learned, we're ready when they are.

UPSEU Regional Director Gary Hickey stated, "For years, AFSCME was happy to collect the dues of Hurley members, but were not so happy to give them any reasonable representation. As far as AFSCME was concerned, Hurley Highway Department employees were on their own. In the past three months, UPSEU staff has spent more time working with Hurley members than AFSCME did in three years!"

Currently in Ulster County, UPSEU is negotiating contracts for several new units. Gardiner recently ratified an agreement.

Hickey concluded, "These public sector workers have a right to organize, and they have a right to expect after they've organized, that their union won't let them down. When a union fails to return phone calls, when it fails to regularly visit work sites, when it is content to negotiate substandard contracts ... it has let down its members."

South Huntington Food Service Workers Ink New Agreement

A new four year agreement was unanimously approved by UPSEU Food Service members in the South Huntington School District. The agreement provides Cooks and Food Service Workers with significant wage increases over the term of the contract. Each step of the longevity increased in the first year of the agreement. Sincere thanks to the Negotiating Team of Ella Bruns, Candida Caparatta, Teresa Nyman, and Marianne Armstrong for their outstanding efforts.



Watertown Emergency Dispatchers



WATERTOWN NEGOTIATING TEAM MEMBERS
/ to r: Ann Eckert, Patricia Bessette, Lawrence Lafferty

The members of the Watertown Emergency Dispatcher negotiations are working with UPSEU's Regional Director Ronald Suraci to reach an agreement with the Town of Watertown. "The members of our team have put a lot of time and energy into these negotiations and I am proud to have worked with each one of them," Suraci stated.

UPSEU/COPS Welcomes Mansfield Police Officers



The Mansfield Police Department became the first police union to join UPSEU/COPS in 2007 and have since been joined by several others. A petition was filed on behalf of the Officers in Mansfield by UPSEU/COPS that would result in a state held election.

CSEA Local 2001/SEIU who had represented the officers, agreed to voluntarily give up representation of the full time police officers of the Town of Mansfield to UPSEU/COPS. The State Labor Board was present and declared UPSEU/COPS as the exclusive bargaining representatives for the Mansfield Police Officers.

"The members of the Police Department were excited that they did not have to go through the entire election process. The end result was the same and were all happy it was over quickly," stated UPSEU/COPS Director Ronald Suraci.

The decision to forgo the election process allowed the members to immediately enjoy the representation given by UPSEU/COPS. "We have now moved ahead with the negotiations and have begun to establish a new relationship between the Town and the Union," Suraci added.

Welcome to UPSEU/COPS, Mansfield Officers!



Willimantic Police Department Joins UPSEU

By a vote of 23 to 2, the Willimantic Police Department members voted to join the UPSEU/COPS family, which resulted in the second loss for the Massachusetts based International Brotherhood of Police Officers (IBPO) SEIU in just five days. IBPO has been virtually non-existent in Willimantic as far as representation is concerned. This marked the eighth victory for UPSEU in Connecticut so far this year adding hundreds of new members to the UPSEU family.

It was a case of too little too late for the IBPO. Both unions involved in the election had the opportunity to speak with the members of the Willimantic Police Department at a union meeting. In an attempt to persuade the Officers not to leave, IBPO brought seven representatives to the meeting.

"I spoke with some of the members of the police department after the meeting and they were not impressed by IBPO at all. They told me that most had never before seen an IBPO representative, let alone seven IBPO representatives, in the twenty-nine years of IBPO representation," stated UPSEU/COPS Executive Director Ronald Suraci.

The IBPO was a no show at the election, "Not one representative had the decency to show up. You would think after twenty-nine years it would be the least they could do," Suraci added.

Due to IBPO's lack of representation, UPSEU/COPS representatives will be working from the ground up with the members to insure that their rights will be protected in the future. Welcome aboard Willimantic Police Officers!

Fairfield Public Works



The turn out for the unit's monthly meeting continues to grow for the members of the Fairfield Department of Public Works. UPSEU would like to thank Ed Demayo for all of his hard work over the past year; Ed recently stepped down as the unit president to pursue a career change in the private sector. "With Ed leaving we needed to fill his position and Bob Horvath has stepped up to the plate and will now be the new president of the DPW unit. Bob is a good man and we are looking forward to working with him," stated Regional Director Ronald Suraci.



Bloomfield Celebrates New Contract



On April 4th, Unit Officers for UPSEU's Bloomfield Unit signed a new contract for improved benefits, language and wages. In the new contract covering a five year period until June 30, 2011, employees will now get paid for working in a higher classification after four hours and personal time may be taken in increments of one hour. The contract also implements automatic annual increases in the longevity schedule which is equal to the annual general wage increase rounded to the highest five dollars. Wages will be increased in each year of the contract. Insurance co-shares remained unchanged throughout the duration. The contract was ratified with 95% of the membership voting yes.

Unit President Laura James stated, "We are very appreciative of the great job done by UPSEU in securing an excellent contract for all of our members. The professionalism and expertise of our chief negotiator helped with getting the best contract in Bloomfield and one of the best in the area."

Meriden Welcomes Two Locals

UPSEU is happy to welcome two new units that will be serviced out of our Meriden, Connecticut Regional Office. They are The Hamden Town Supervisors and the Hamden Board of Education Security Personnel.

The Hamden Supervisor election was held on March 2nd. The supervisors had been extremely upset with the backroom meetings occurring with management without their local union officials even knowing when the meetings occurred. When asked, the AFSCME representative said, "he could do what he wanted to, whenever he wanted to."

The supervisors have just elected their officers and installed George Jerolman as Unit President and Patti Ricitelli as their Vice-President. Unit President George Jerolman said, "We are very happy to join UPSEU and restore democracy to our bargaining unit. UPSEU has already hit the ground running by helping our members with a critical situation with the Town's pension fund. Their professionalism and expertise are quite evident."

The other new unit is made up of Hamden Board of Education Security and the Residency Officer. UPSEU was voted in with over 70% of the vote in an election conducted by the Connecticut State Labor Relations Board on March 23rd.

UPSEU had already been involved representing a member who was not properly represented by AFSCME in a discipline case. The previous union rep was willing to accept a last chance agreement without any investigation or real discussion with the grievant. When UPSEU Regional Director Wayne Gilbert reviewed the case and met with the parties it was clear the grievant had no discipline in over two years in his record and the claimed incident was not as major as originally claimed by management.

Steward Reggie Higgins reported, "My unit is overwhelmed with the difference in union representation. UPSEU jumped right in immediately and saved our member from extreme discipline. We never got that kind of representation from AFSCME. We can't wait to get to the bargaining table with a real union like UPSEU!!!!!!"

Darien BOE Votes Overwhelmingly in CSBLR Election

Led by UPSEU's Regional Director Ronald Suraci, along with UPSEU's Labor Relations Representatives Craig Manemeit and Mark Ciarciello, the 145 member Darien BOE unit voted overwhelmingly by a vote of 63 to 29 to leave AFSCME for UPSEU. The election marked the fourth victory by UPSEU over AFSCME in Connecticut this year.

"Year after year AFSCME continues to lose election after election to UPSEU, as their lack of professionalism and dedication to their members continues, members will exercise their right to vote and join UPSEU," stated UPSEU's Ron Suraci. "We will continue to be the avenue for workers throughout Connecticut who want and deserve a strong and committed union to protect their rights. Over the last few years unions such as CSEA, IBPO, SIEU, AFSCME and UE-CILU have all fallen asleep at the wheel when it comes to union representation throughout Connecticut. It's time they woke up!" Ron concluded. UPSEU looks forward to serving the employees of Darien BOE.

Plainfield Police Unanimously Join UPSEU/COPS family

On March 29, 2007 the Plainfield Police Department members voted unanimously to join the UPSEU/COPS family, which resulted in another loss for Massachusetts based International Brotherhood of Police Officers (IBPO) SEIU. The dissatisfaction with IBPO was clearly stated by the results of the election.

"It's very satisfying to know we have the full support of the entire police force behind us. We are excited to begin working with the officers of Plainfield and we look forward to a long lasting relationship. Our Labor Relations Representatives Attorney Craig Manemeit and Attorney Mark Ciarciello have been meeting to develop proposals and elect unit officers," stated Regional Director Ron Suraci.



Cumberland County Employees Join UPSEU

Prosecutors Unit Employees working in the County of Cumberland, after years of representation by the United Auto Workers, (UAW) have joined UPSEU.

Dissatisfied with UAW representation, the unit contacted our members in the Bergen County Prosecutors Unit, asking about UPSEU. After a series of meetings between UPSEU representatives and employees, the unit unanimously decided that UPSEU was the union for them. On the eve of an election conference at PERC, the UAW recognizing they had no support, disclaimed interest in the unit. UPSEU is now awaiting final PERC certification. Welcome aboard Cumberland County Prosecutors!

Welcome Ramsey and Hawthorne Libraries

In a recent election, employees of the Ramsey Free Public Library voted nearly unanimously to join UPSEU after their former union CWA had let them down. UPSEU is presently in the process of formulating contract proposals with the Ramsey Library Negotiating Committee.

Previously unrepresented, Hawthorne Library employees have now been recognized by PERC, naming United Public Service Employees Union as the official bargaining representative. The negotiating team is currently hard at work, putting together their first collective bargaining agreement.

UPSEU looks forward to serving our newest library members!



VILLAGE OF RIDGEWOOD MEMBERS

Madeline Esola, Shop Steward Sharon DeMarco, Jordan Ferraro and Lynn Engel display Pay Equity Cake in an effort to reach a contract settlement. At press time, they had nearly unanimously approved a new contract.

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City of Paterson Dispatchers Gain New Contract



CITY OF PATERSON DISPATCHERS

Front l to r: Francine Warren, Letitia Howe. *Second row:* Marilyn Watkins, Marybeth Vargas, Joyce Pierce. *Back row:* UPSEU Regional Director James Gangale, Denisa Russell and Labor Relations Representative Jim Bush.

UPSEU and the committee have been working hard to bring back to the members a collective bargaining agreement that improves both wages and working conditions for all of the Public Safety, Fire and Police Communication Operators in the City of Paterson. After many years of AFSCME representation and being without a contract for over two years, the seventy two member unit voted to join UPSEU. At press time an agreement was reached for a new contract that will substantially increase the wages of unit members. Ratification is pending.

Faced with Possible Layoffs UPSEU Teaneck Members Attend Council Meeting

On February 1, 2007, UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr and Labor Relations Representative Jim Bush, along with 90% of UPSEU's Teaneck DPW membership attended a Council meeting to send a message to the Council that layoffs were not the answer. UPSEU was joined by unit employees of the police, fire, and support staff who were as well concerned with potential layoffs.

UPSEU's President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. spoke before the Council urging the Council to "look elsewhere" for cuts, arguing that "services will suffer with a cut of DPW staff."

Boyle also requested the same guarantee provided to police and firemen the week before by the Council, "that there would be no layoffs of fire and police personnel." In his presentation, Boyle stated, "No different than other public safety personnel, the DPW is in fact of equal importance, and with that importance should come the same commitment made last week to police and fire when the Council guaranteed that no cuts would be made in those departments."

After the speeches and discussion amongst the Council members, a resolution was brought to the floor by a Council member asking the Council to support a no layoff guarantee to all township employees. The resolution passed on a split vote.

President Boyle commenting on the participation of UPSEU member stated, "I was extremely proud to see nearly every DPW member come out to support their co-workers. UPSEU Unit President Sal Tuminello, Unit Officer Steve Grater and Steward Bob Wood did a great job getting the troops out. It made the difference because if there were not 100 plus township employees in the room, and the Council and Mayor had not heard from the speakers, the resolution would not have been brought to a vote."

Great job UPSEU Teaneck DPW Membership!



Freeport Clerical Unit Ratifies New Contract



FREEPORT NEGOTIATING TEAM

Seated: Unit President Lisa Bonacci, UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Amanda Barker and Jill Metzler. *Standing:* Unit Vice President Janice Falco, Anne Marie McKeown and Bonnie Seaman

After struggling as an independent union, the 85 clerical employees of the Freeport Union Free School District voted to affiliate their association (FEOSA) with UPSEU this past spring. "At the time, their negotiations were being handled by an attorney that their association had hired, and their efforts to negotiate a contract with their District were pretty much at a standstill," remarked Vice President Kim Nowakowski. "They heard about us through a neighboring District and decided to bring us into their negotiations and to handle their day-to-day concerns."

"Almost immediately we saw the huge difference between being our stand alone association and being with UPSEU," said Lisa Bonacci, FEOSA President. "From having help with some very difficult personnel issues to having immediate or near immediate assistance with our questions, our members felt the difference; but for the negotiating team the difference was night and day."

After nearly 18 months without a contract, Vice President Nowakowski worked with Labor Relations Representative Amanda Barker and the FEOSA negotiating team to bring back a package which included annual wage increases, improvements to longevity, and an improved step adjustment over the five year term. As well, the agreement brought a first time vision plan for members and their families, an expanded definition of family members for bereavement, and a new life insurance policy at no cost to the employees. The agreement, which also included lessening of employee dental contributions, was overwhelmingly ratified.

"The District wanted to bring this group of employees on the same level as all the other bargaining units in the District on the medical contributions, but hold them back in other areas," Nowakowski explained. "But the unit wanted equity with their co-workers in other units for entitlements, while maintaining their cap on the medical contributions. Ultimately, with a lot of hard work the unit prevailed in gaining equality on our issues while still paying less than other units and surrounding Districts, in medical contributions."

"No one ever wants to pay more for medical benefits, but with this package, the committee and membership agreed that the gains made went a long way towards balancing that out, especially with the delay until the end years of the contract for the medical changes," said Amanda Barker, Labor Relations Representative. "At the ratification, members came up to Kim and myself, and remarked that they appreciated our hard work, and even one was overheard saying on her way out that we were worth every cent paid in dues and more. That really made all the late nights at the bargaining table and strategy meetings all worthwhile."

Kim Nowakowski commended the team of Lisa Bonacci, Janice Falco, Bonnie Seaman, Anne Marie McKeown, and Jill Metzler.

ES BOCES Members Overwhelmingly Approve 5 Year Contract

82% of UPSEU's Eastern Suffolk BOCES members voted to approve a new five year agreement that in addition to raising wages annually, will improve longevity and stipends annually. The 475 member District Unit includes Custodial, Grounds and Maintenance, Clerical, Registered Nurses and Occupational and Physical Therapists.

"Throughout the negotiations, UPSEU and the negotiating team sought to address the needs of all unit members, while at the same time working to address the issues important to each of the sub units within the bargaining unit," stated UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. "We successfully reached our goals," he added.

Other improvements included: increased uniform allowance, increased vision contributions, new prep periods, new CEU education pay, bachelor and master degree differential increases, improved out of classification pay, improved RN fill in pay, and other improvements.

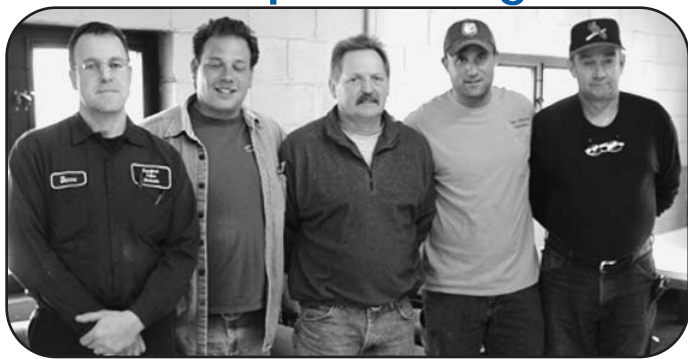
The areas of health coverage, employer contributions and retiree coverage were significant issues in negotiations and were resolved favorably for employees. The agency had demanded that all employees pay health coverage, paying a percentage immediately for active service, as well as into retirement.

An agreement was reached that will phase in contributions for active employees, while ensuring that as retirees they receive fully paid coverage into retirement (for those that were receiving family and individual into retirement at no cost). A supplemental agreement was provided to long term temporary employees, further protecting them against any future changes in retiree health care. "Additional adjustments were provided in wages in the first two years to buffer employee contributions," stated Boyle.

President Boyle commenting on the team stated, "The members had a great team. They worked tirelessly and held the line on issues important to their co-workers." Thanks to negotiating team members Nancy Muro, James Baranello, Lynn Bergman, Thomas Bilka, Tina Fisher, Cynthia Koch, Mary Ann Power, Mary Ann Metz and Susan Mikulas.



Branford Preps for Negotiations



BRANFORD PUBLIC WORKS NEGOTIATING TEAM

l to r: Unit Vice President David Comeau, Unit President Pasquale Montana, Bill Deloughey, Otto Berger, and Roy Williams

Recently the members of the Branford Public Works Department negotiating team met with UPSEU's Labor Relations Representative/Attorney Craig Manemeit to start the negotiation process. Working hand and hand with the members to achieve a strong collective bargaining agreement is our number one goal. "Over the next several weeks we will identify and prioritize our issues and will be ready to sit down with the Town of Branford to start the process," stated Craig.

New Contract Approved for Southhampton School District

By a unanimous vote of 62 to 0, UPSEU membership in the Operations, Maintenance and Transportation Unit approved a new four year agreement. Negotiations were long and frustrating and as well, were difficult with all District units. A mediator assisted the parties participating in five bargaining sessions. In UPSEU's negotiations the District sought to cut many of the transportation unit's provisions that provided extra pay when runs are modified. UPSEU and its negotiating team fought successfully to maintain these provisions. In addition to annual raises, other improvements were made in a number of contract areas including longevity. Gains were also made for bus matrons, a group that entered the unit over the past two years, including five new sick days and bereavement eligibility.

UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. commended the negotiating team stating, "The team was unified in preserving the economic gains of the transportation department and protecting other provisions that the District sought to have changed for operations and maintenance employees. The team did a great job and they were a pleasure to work with." The team included Mary Ellen McMahon, Christopher McKay, Gary Smith, Charles Smith II, Joseph Begy, Polis Walker III, Terri Foster, Douglas Gilbakian, Otis Riddick, Richard Hite, and Yolanda Johnson.

(UPSEU extends sincere condolences to the family of Mary Ellen McMahon on her untimely passing)

UPSEU Sayville Clerical Unit Overwhelmingly Approves New Five Year Agreement

With 92% of the votes cast voting for approval, the Sayville School District Clerical Unit approved a new agreement that will provide above the norm annual wage increases with possible additional increases, which rise dependent upon the annual consumer price index.

The agreement will as well provide annual increases in longevities, improved payout of unused sick leave at retirement (increased value for unused days along with increased maximum accruals) and a new 403B contribution provision which will provide tax savings at retirement. "This three-prong approach to retirement compensation will have a significant impact for our members," remarked Kim Nowakowski, UPSEU Regional Director/Vice President. Other gains included increased District contributions toward dental and vision, as well as the ability for members to seek and secure voluntary benefits through payroll deduction.

Employees' health coverage contributions will increase but the increases were more than offset by the new steps negotiated. Regional Director Kim Nowakowski who headed up the negotiations stated, "The negotiating team stood strong for a comprehensive agreement which addressed issues that affected both many of the members and those which affected only a few; in the end we achieved an excellent contract that was overwhelmingly embraced by the membership." In particular, the agreement addressed concerns for a part of the unit which had previously been pushed aside as a minority. Under their previous representative, CSEA/AFSCME, the part time attendance aides and health aides were added to the larger bargaining unit and only received the basic wage increases and didn't see any additional gains during the prior negotiations.

"We were especially proud to bring an agreement back to our membership that included special wage increases, over and above the general increases, to our part time attendance aides and health aides along with additional paid time off," remarked Unit President Beth Laundrie. "Although there are only a few members in these titles, the negotiating team and membership under the leadership of Regional Director Kim Nowakowski, hung together for them and got them what they have waited for a long time," remarked President Boyle. He continued, "Everyone wants some respect and recognition, whether you are part of the majority or the minority of a unit, and with UPSEU they got it."

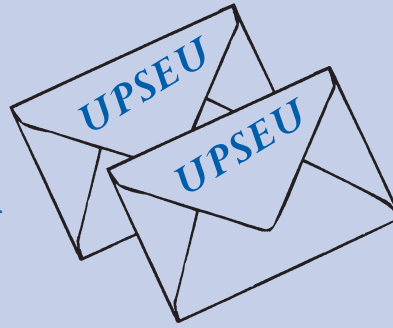
Special thanks to the negotiating team of Unit President Beth Laundrie, Unit Vice President Kathy O'Brien, Maureen Grace, Bernadette Hurst and June Zegel for their dedication and countless hours of service to their fellow co-workers.

Westhampton Beach Aides and Monitors Unanimously Ratify 5 Year Contract

In a difficult negotiation that was finally resolved in mediation, (narrowly avoiding fact-finding) UPSEU's Labor Relations Representative Ron Cleary and the negotiating team were able to secure a five year agreement with retroactive pay and benefit enhancements for the District Aides and Monitors. Representative Cleary stated, "Getting an agreement in Westhampton School District has historically been difficult. This negotiation was no different." With the assistance of the state mediator, Cleary and the team were able to secure increases in longevity, holidays and personal day benefits, modification of the grievance language and the securing of a flex spending benefit for all unit members.



UPSEU Mailbag



Dear Mr. Boyle,
Thank you very much for the scholarship. It is greatly appreciated and will help me further my life in the field of education. It is because of your generosity that I will be able to teach the future of America.
Sincerely,
Thomas Alcabes

Dear Kim,
Thanks for going above and beyond! Since you won't allow us to treat you to dinner, we found an alternative way to express our appreciation for all your hard work and time put in during our transition and negotiation process.
Kathy O'Brien and Beth Laundrie
Sayville Clerical Unit

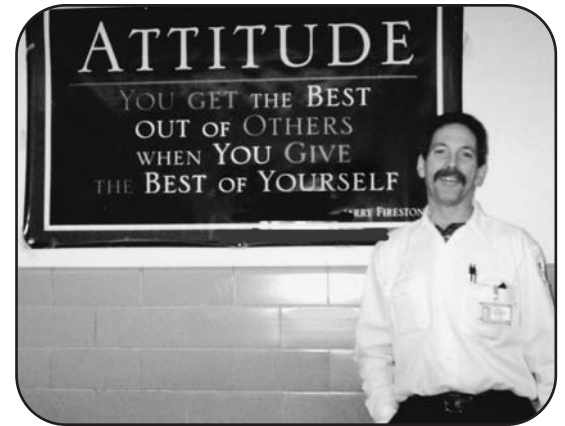
Dear Mr. Morse,
Thank you so much for representation at the recent meeting at VRM. Your positive outlook is very contagious and welcome at a very difficult time. I am very grateful that the meeting had such a positive outcome. Good health and much happiness in the future.
Sincerely,
Darlene Rafferty
Rensselaer County

Dear Kim,
Thanks again for taking the time to educate me on how things work with BOCES and with Civil Service.
Denise Schwenger
ES BOCES

Dear Kevin E. Boyle, Jr.,
My name is Jennifer Anné and I am one of your UPSEU Children's Scholarship Award recipients. I would like to thank you for selecting me for this award. This fall I will be presenting a poster at the Geological Society for America National Conference in Philadelphia. After graduation I plan to attend graduate school at either the University of Alberta or Drexel University where I will work towards my PhD in vertebrate paleontology. Once again, thank you for your support.
Sincerely,
Jennifer Anné

Dear Kathy,
I just wanted to thank you for helping me out for my job. Everything is all set and I didn't get a chance to thank you a few weeks ago when you were in the office. I get to just finish my probation for the account clerk job and then I'll be permanent.
Thanks again,
S. F.

Dear Kim,
Just wanted to thank you for all the effort put into the retirement seminar held on Saturday. It was great to include the spouses. This was my second time attending (the first for Ken) and once again, I came away learning things I didn't know about retirement. Both speakers were excellent. It was truly time well spent! Thanks to everyone who had a part in its success.
Joan Sheedy
Huntington School District



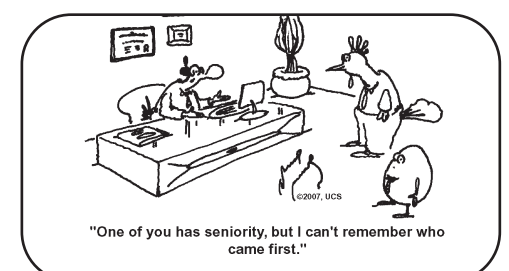
ABOVE AND BEYOND
Hewlett Custodian Joe Mattson, whose quick actions helped evacuate tenants from a massive fire at an apartment complex behind Hewlett High School.



CONGRATULATIONS TO
UPSEU member Rita I. Molloy, a registered nurse in the Bay Shore School District, who was recently named president of the NY State Association of School Nurses.



HEWLETT-WOODMERE AMA NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE
L to R seated: Unit President Diane McCloat, UPSEU Vice President Kim Nowakowski, Unit Vice President Ellen Moreo. Standing: Joe Whitney, Barbara Bishop, Labor Relations Representative Brian Honahan



UPSEU UPDATE

Congratulations

to UPSEU Elected Officers:

President
Kevin E. Boyle, Jr.

Executive Vice President
Gary M. Hickey

Vice President
Kimberly Nowakowski

Secretary/ Treasurer
Randy Tillman

Recording Secretary/ Trustee
James Gangale

Need Money



for School?

Each year UPSEU has scholarships that are available to UPSEU members and their dependent children under the age of 23.

For details on eligibility and an application go to our website at: www.upseu.org and click on Member Benefits. You may also call your nearest UPSEU office and we will mail an application to you.

The Deadline for Scholarship Applications is July 1, 2007.



"Making a Difference in the Workplace"

GOING GREEN?

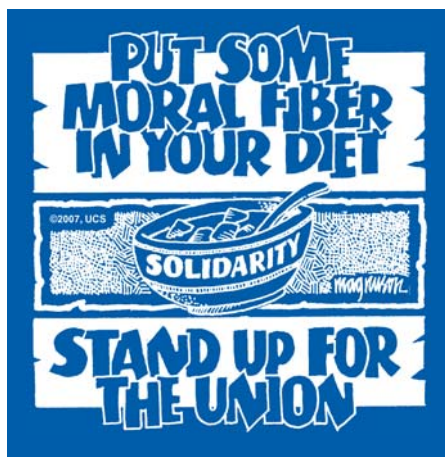


For those interested in helping the environment, the newsletter and meeting notices can be e-mailed to you.

Every little bit helps, so please contact us by e-mail at upseu@aol.com or by phone at 631-738-8773 to be put on the E-MAIL LIST.

REMINDER

Don't forget to periodically update your beneficiary information with UPSEU, your pension, and other life insurance plans you may have.



This Memorial Day and always...

UPSEU remembers our Veterans

who lost their lives for our freedom.



General Membership Meetings are held the Third Monday of March and October at our Headquarters at 3555 Veterans Highway, Suite H, Ronkonkoma and the Third Wednesday of March and October at our Capital Region Office at 1707 Central Avenue, Suite 202, Albany.