



THE ADVOCATE

Making a Difference in the Workplace

Spring 2008

AVERILL PARK SCHOOL DISTRICT WORKERS Overwhelmingly Approve New Agreement

After being an independent association for the past ten years, numerous unit members decided it was time to change to an alternative union, one with proven results. The unit of approximately two hundred sixty employees, who work as clerical, custodial, maintenance, paraprofessionals, and transportation employees, were represented by CSEA, AFSCME for many years prior to decertifying them ten years ago.



AVERILL PARK NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

Front row L to R: Mark Premo with Labor Relations Representatives Jack Canty and Gary Favro Second row: Jill Teal, Michael Hicks, Keri Davis, Jody St. Pierre, Jan Liberty, Executive Vice President Gary M. Hickey Back row: Susan Radley, Lorna Otty and Lew Dobert

After voting for UPSEU in a April 2007 PERB election, we went right to work in bringing the fractured unit together. Significant divisive issues existed amongst various departments in the unit. UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Gary Favro worked to successfully bring the unit to a point where members understood the issues relevant to each sub group.

In addition to above average salary increases, the settlement included improvements in longevity, holidays, call back pay, uniform allowance, educational stipends, field trip bid system, snow

day language, new sick leave pool committee, separate bereavement leave benefit, new dental and optical plan, health insurance buy-outs, shoe allowance, summer work benefits and unused sick leave pay-outs, to name a few.

A great effort was put forth by the negotiating team and our shop stewards to create an excellent contract and resolve long standing labor management issues.

Chief Negotiator Executive Vice President Gary M. Hickey thanked the elected team of Keri

Davis, Michael Hicks, Jody St. Pierre, Lewis Dobert, Janice Liberty, Mark Premo, Jill Teal, Lorna Otty and Susan Radley.

Hickey stated, "The negotiating team truly provided valuable insight and guidance on behalf of their co-workers. Numerous thank you's were heard during the ratification process. I personally want to extend my thanks for their joint effort put forth to reach this great deal." Employees ratified the contract with a 90% affirmative vote.

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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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Kevin E. Boyle, Jr.

President

Gary M. Hickey

Executive Vice President

Kimberly Nowakowski

Vice President

Randy Tillman

Secretary/ Treasurer

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



UPSEU President
Kevin E. Boyle, Jr.

A few years back I wrote about a topic which needs to be revisited. Now I generally don't repeat topics for the President's Column, but this one, now more than ever, is quite timely. I mean that both figuratively and literally.

Although I believe every member should give a fair day's work for a fair day's pay, as the saying goes, I am not a proponent of members offering their services to their employers for free. Year after year I, as well as my staff, nag those members who feel that they must accomplish everything, even though they have not been given the proper tools or time to do so.

Take for example, the clerical member who receives an assignment, as usual, ten minutes before quitting time that "absolutely must get done as per the supervisor" and feels compelled out of loyalty to stay late an hour or two without getting paid because there's no money in the budget for overtime.

How about the food service worker who arrives an hour early because their work schedule doesn't include enough prep time to get ready for the first service? Or the cashier who stays late to be sure the count is right but doesn't put in for the time because she doesn't want to draw attention to herself?

Then there's the overzealous new entry level supervisor who wants to make an impression and practically lives at the job. What they all have in common isn't "a strong work ethic" but a work ethic which is injurious to themselves and others.

When someone is willing to work for free to get ten hours worth of work done in an eight hour day, it raises the standards for all to be expected to complete ten hours worth of work in a day. What happens when you're the one who isn't working for free? What happens to you when you can no longer achieve ten hours work in a day? Or better yet, the boss thinks you are so great why not pile on some more work. Soon you're doing eleven hours work for eight hours pay. I'll tell you what happens. Suddenly, you've lost your competency skills or the person next to you is considered incompetent because the standard you set for what gets done in an eight hour day is no longer getting done.

As well, the human body can only take so much stress. As you work with your "roller skates" on, are you increasing your likelihood of an injury? Are you putting a strain on your body that over time your body will give out like repetitive stress syndrome or a bad back? I've seen instances, not every time but still, how quickly the grateful boss turns against the employee because they only care that all their work isn't getting done. Suddenly all those years of free labor don't seem to buy you any sympathy or good will.

What about the injury that occurs when you're not on the clock? Does the employer argue that you weren't working at the time so it isn't workers' compensation? I have seen this happen more often than I care to count, particularly to food service workers or clericals.

If none of these "hard luck" stories happen to you or your co-workers, remember that when you work for free, you bring down the value of all work performed. Of recently, as members accomplish more with less, rather than be appreciated, their jobs are cut further still. If they can do more with less and still succeed, let's see what happens with a few more cuts, and a few more cuts, and further still a few more cuts.

If you aren't going to put your foot down and demand respect (and pay) for your work now, when the prices are soaring and you all could use a little extra, then at least remember that not only do members hurt themselves, but they hurt their co-workers as well, when they work for free.

UPSEU VICTORIES

Islip Clerical Employees Ratify 5 Year Pact

After twenty months of bargaining, with the resilience of UPSEU's Islip Clerical members, UPSEU and its negotiating team delivered an excellent agreement that was enthusiastically ratified by its membership.

"We came to the bargaining table to achieve one goal," stated UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr., "to significantly increase our members' salaries, bringing them to the median in Suffolk County."

To reach its objective, the Board of Education and the superintendent needed to recognize the recruitment and retention problems that the historically low salaries were causing. Dating back to the 1980's and early 1990's district settlements had been for total money, meaning that increments came off the top of the schedule. When UPSEU took over from CSEA in the mid 1990's, although we successfully changed the way settlements were calculated, the salaries were so far below everyone in Suffolk, that progress in escalating the salaries was difficult.

These negotiations were viewed by UPSEU and the unit, as one where something had to give. Armed with the data to support our position, and after losing some great employees, the superintendent and board recognized something had to be done. While UPSEU and the district differed on the significance of the problem, both agreed there was a problem. Clerical negotiations were ongoing at the same time as the custodial and operations unit who had a similar wage problem, so UPSEU was fighting the battle on two fronts. This ultimately proved to be helpful as we were able to make the case for significant adjustments each time we met for each unit. UPSEU and its team understood that the only way the district would provide the necessary funding was for them to be convinced that something needed to be done. In the end they were.

As a result, in addition to annual wages over a five year period, significant annual adjustments were achieved, that together with additional off step annual wage adjustments will bring the unit, during the term of the contract, to median in Suffolk County.

Gains in benefit fund contributions and increased sick accruals at retirement were also achieved amongst other gains. "We achieved our primary objective and that was to deliver significant adjustments to the salary schedule and to off step employees now and into the future," stated UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. who headed up both negotiations.

Carol Jensen, UPSEU's Unit President summed up the negotiations stating, "President Boyle guided us throughout the process and hammered home to the district's team, the need to address the wage problem. His leadership, the support of our membership and the negotiating team's unwavering commitment to delivering for its members, made the difference."

Special thanks to the negotiating team of Carol Jensen, Geraldine Burnell, Laura Lucas, Yolanda Alvarez and Robin Bauer for their outstanding commitment to bringing home an excellent contract, and to all UPSEU Islip members for their support and commitment to waiting as long as it had to take, to make it happen.

Mineola Library Employees Unanimously Vote to Join UPSEU

In a PERB election held on May 6, 2008, the employees of the Mineola Library decided that they no longer could endure the poor representation they received from their union, CSEA/ AFSCME. By a unanimous vote, the employees have now become part of UPSEU. UPSEU's Jim Gangale, who headed up the organizing campaign, will lead the unit in the upcoming negotiation process. The group is the fourth Mineola area unit to join UPSEU in just the past four years. Welcome aboard, Mineola Library employees!!

Islip Custodial, Grounds, and Maintenance Employees Unanimously Approve Contract

After a difficult twenty month negotiations that included mediation, UPSEU and its negotiating team scored a contract victory that will significantly increase the wages of all unit employees. Throughout the negotiations, UPSEU and its team had one significant objective: to bring wages into the median within Suffolk County. With historically low wages tied to a salary/increment total money scheme developed in the 1980's and early 1990's, the unit's wages were in a hole.

Recognizing that this was the negotiations where the district had to view the wages differently, UPSEU continually presented documents to support its position. The district could not dispute the issue and the problem, although the parties had a dispute as to how the matter needed to be fixed. A breakthrough developed when UPSEU's President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. and a sub-committee of the bargaining team met with the superintendent and the district's attorney. "We were able to directly convey to them the significance of the problem," stated Boyle. Rather than going to fact-finding, the negotiating team agreed to continue bargaining after the superintendent committed to work with the union to remedy the salary problem. After a series of additional bargaining sessions, a breakthrough developed.

At a February bargaining session, the district responded to the union's comprehensive proposal to increase the salaries. As a result, an agreement was reached that addressed the unit's objectives. The agreement, in addition to providing annual raises, will provide unit employees with significant annual adjustments throughout the agreement. An off step adjustment that had ended in the mid 1990's, and that only included a small number of unit employees, was expanded to include all employees who pass the top of the ten step salary schedule. Now all unit members will receive an annual off step adjustment to their pay in addition to raises and adjustments. Improvements to several areas of the contract were achieved including an increase in the maximum accrual of sick days and increases in benefit fund contributions, amongst other gains.

UPSEU's President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. commenting on the results of the negotiations stated, "The Superintendent and the Board of Education came through after seeing that the data provided by UPSEU truly demonstrated what we had been saying all along. A successful contract could not have been achieved without the unwavering commitment of the team to achieve its objective. They did an outstanding job." Congratulations to the negotiating team for a tremendous job. Led by UPSEU Chief Steward Tom O'Hare and Assistant Steward Edward Cramer, Jr., the team of Mitchell Miga, Nicola Carine, and Steven Saidler clearly delivered a great agreement for their co-workers.



Northport East Northport Clericals Ratify Agreement



NORTHPORT NEGOTIATING TEAM MEMBERS
Seated l to r: Unit Vice President Katie Pryal, Unit President Doreen Christ, Bernice Holmstrom. Standing: Christl Olsen, Mary Ann Bloom

The eighty two member bargaining unit of clerical employees of the Northport - East Northport School District overwhelmingly ratified a three year agreement in February. The agreement, in addition to annual wage increases included level movement and longevity increases. In addition, increases in longevity were adjusted to assist those who were already at the salary level top.

“The unit gave up annual step movement many years ago when they were their own association,” remarked Negotiator Kim Nowakowski. “I was pleased that we brought level movement to members who had been stuck anywhere from four years to twelve years.”

In addition to the difficult issue of level movement, was the District’s desire to increase health insurance cost sharing. “The teachers and others, had already agreed to their demand, so it made for a difficult battle.” Ultimately, the bargaining team was able to push off the health insurance cost sharing increases and successfully argued for lower costs than the instructional unit.

The bargaining team of Unit President Doreen Christ, Vice President Katie Pryal, Mary Ann Bloom, Christl Olsen, and Bernice Holmstrom worked hard for their co-workers both at the table and behind the scenes.

Huntington School District Security Employees Vote to Approve New Agreement

With negotiations focused on two significant issues, members’ wages and longevity, and the district’s unwillingness to maintain all current provisions of the contract, negotiations got right down to business.

While the district had different ideas on how the issues should be resolved, UPSEU’s Randy Tillman and the negotiating team representatives stood steadfast in their decision to achieve a fair wage and longevity settlement. When the district finally proposed wage and longevity increases at each step, an agreement was finalized that the members voted nearly unanimously to approve.

Special thanks to Tom Burns and Sylvia Belanger for their work on the negotiating team.

97% of UPSEU’s South Huntington School District Members Approve Pact

A new four year agreement covering UPSEU’s unit of custodial, grounds, maintenance, transportation and technicians will increase wages annually, improve night differentials, and increase life insurance over the term. The agreement was reached prior to the expiration of the existing agreement.

A significant improvement was made in the unit’s longevity. A new ten year longevity step was added in the first year of the agreement and increases of 30 to 50% were added to the fifteen and twenty year longevity steps as well. Members voted 104 to 4 to approve the new agreement.

“The District’s willingness to address the wages and longevity concerns of the unit, while not seeking any benefit contribution changes, proved to be the difference in getting the negotiations resolved quickly,” stated UPSEU President, Kevin E. Boyle.

Hewlett-Woodmere Members Ratify Pact

With more than 90% of members voting, over 75% of the UPSEU Hewlett-Woodmere members voted to approve a new five year pact in February.

The unit of custodial, grounds, maintenance, technical and food service workers will receive annual wage increases, increases to longevity steps, increased employer benefit plan contributions, improved bereavement leave, additional pay adjustments at each step in two of the four years. Other improvements included additional pay adjustments for certain titles including maintenance personnel, cooks, assistant cooks, and food service annual employees, certification pay and new call-in pay for computer technicians.

“While negotiations were difficult, the district certainly recognized the work of these valued employees and in the end agreed to address the issues important to our members,” stated UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. The negotiating team, led by Chief Steward Fred Vetter, and which included Donovan Berthoud, David Greco, Howard Hewson, Luciano Morello, Eric Scott, Helenna Perno and Robert Zimmerman did a great job in delivering an outstanding agreement for their co-workers.



**COLD SPRING HARBOR
NEGOTIATING TEAM**

L to R: Susan Frey, UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr., Chief Unit Officer Jean Gallagher, and Annette Di Pietro

Cold Spring Harbor Clerical Members Approve New 5 Year Agreement

A five year agreement retroactive to July 1, 2007 will provide Clerical Unit members with above average annual increases, increased starting pay, annual increases in longevity, improved dental and increased employer vision contributions during the term of the agreement. Part time employees as well receive an additional holiday in the second year of the agreement.

“A significant issue in the negotiations, a district demand for increased employee health contributions, was withdrawn by the district after UPSEU and the team made it clear no agreement could be reached with increased employee contributions. This enabled the agreement to be finalized,” stated UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr.

President Boyle commended the bargaining team led by UPSEU Chief Unit Officer Jean Gallagher, and which included Susan Frey and Annette Di Pietro. UPSEU’s Amanda Barker also provided assistance throughout the negotiations.

Harborfields Food Service Workers Unanimously Approve New Contract

As a result of a new three year contract which was unanimously approved by UPSEU Food Service Workers, in addition to increased annual wages, members will receive newly added sick and personal days, an increase to longevity and several other improvements.

UPSEU’s Randy Tillman, who headed up the negotiating team, commended the team’s work in delivering the new agreement. Special thanks to Margaret Lombardo.

Town of Marbletown Secures First Contract

The new members of UPSEU in the Town of Marbletown recently unanimously ratified their first contract. As part of a wave of new organizing by UPSEU in Ulster County, the highway workers originally heard of the unequalled representation and excellent negotiation results from neighboring towns represented by UPSEU.

Executive Vice President/Regional Director Gary M. Hickey and Labor Relations Representative Don Lown, together with negotiating members Chris Newkirk and Roger Buley, worked tirelessly for almost one year to forge this initial agreement; it was well worth the wait.

Major wage adjustments, new longevity, increased call-in pay and vacation leave, Article 41-J of the NYSERS, increased sick leave accumulation, new fire call release time, increased bereavement leave, new Labor/Management committee, new work boot allowance and a new binding arbitration provision highlight the settlement.

“Good news travels fast. We heard about UPSEU, signed up and are now rewarded. I highly recommend them!” voiced Union Steward Newkirk. Hickey added, “The guys stuck together to achieve their goal and I commend their will to stay united for the greater good of the group and individuals.”

Oyster Bay School Nurses Join UPSEU



OYSTER BAY SCHOOL NURSES
Seated: Katherine Trieller, Eileen Mc Cartney
Standing: Labor Relations Representative Amanda Barker

After speaking with other nurses in UPSEU represented school districts, registered nurses in the Oyster Bay School District decided they needed strong representation to address pay inequities they have endured for years in their district. The unit was previously unrepresented.

UPSEU sought and received recognition from the district after the unit unanimously supported UPSEU representation.

Negotiations have begun and will be headed up by UPSEU’s Kim Nowakowski, with the assistance of Labor Relations Representative Amanda Barker.

Westbury Clerical Employees Unanimously Approve New Agreement

Long difficult negotiations came to a successful conclusion with the Westbury clerical membership overwhelmingly ratifying a three year agreement. The agreement will provide unit employees with annual increases, additional adjustments to the top step of the salary schedule and increased longevity.

UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. who headed up the committee’s negotiating team of Catherine Arena, Diane Cohen, Nanci Volino, Reeda Grinnard, and Jean Pietrusiewicz (who retired a few weeks before the settlement) complimented the team on their hard work and unity. UPSEU’s Kim Nowakowski and Amanda Barker worked with President Boyle throughout the negotiations.



Madison Police Vote UPSEU

Police Officers in the Town of Madison, Connecticut, voted to join UPSEU in a state election that was held in February.

After thirty five years of representation by IBPO-SEIU, the officers have decided to join a union that can provide the kind of representation needed to protect the rights of police officers.

“In speaking with the officers of the department, they expressed concerns about the lack of IBPO-SEIU staff in Connecticut,” stated UPSEU’s Ron Suraci.

Officers were concerned with the level of representation they were getting from IBPO and knew it was time for a change. In recent years the IBPO-SEIU Massachusetts-based union lost several police and town units throughout Connecticut and Massachusetts that have resulted in a steady decline in their members. UPSEU’s reputation of top notch representation played heavy on the decision to make the change to UPSEU/COPS.

“This year we won seventeen elections on behalf of hundreds of dissatisfied union members in Connecticut, and they have now become part of the UPSEU family,” continued UPSEU’s Director Ronald Suraci.

UPSEU COPS Division welcomes the Officers of Madison.

UPSEU Scores Overwhelming Victory Over MEIU

By an 8 to 1 margin, the thirty-five member Custodial Unit for the Mansfield Board of Education voted to join UPSEU in a CSLRB election held on March 21, 2008.

After many years of MEIU-SEIU representation, the unit felt it needed stronger representation in the workplace. After meeting with UPSEU representatives, the employees determined that UPSEU was the union for them.

Welcome to UPSEU Mansfield Board of Education Custodial Employees!

First Female Sergeant



CONGRATULATIONS TO UPSEU MEMBER KRIS HORMUTH

Kris is the first female to be appointed Sergeant for the Branford Police Department.

Town of Plainfield Police Dispatchers Vote All in Favor to Join UPSEU

On March 25, 2008 the members of the Plainfield Police Dispatchers unit voted unanimously to leave AFSCME, Council 4.

UPSEU received 100% of the votes and was the clear choice of the employees. UPSEU continues to be the dominate choice for unionized employees in the tri-state area.

UPSEU, Once Again, Victorious in Connecticut

UPSEU received 100% of the votes in two separate elections, and will now be representing both the Winchester Police Department and the Town Hall employees.

In two separate state elections, UPSEU successfully defeated NAGE/IBPO-SEIU.

“NAGE/IBPO-SEIU was given the cold shoulder to match the freezing temperatures outside when it received zero votes, ending two long term relationships with the members of both the police department and town hall units,” stated Regional Director Ronald Suraci.

“One hundred percent; you can’t ask for more than that,” Suraci said.

UPSEU is ready to hit the ground running, working for its new members in Winchester.

UPSEU’s Meriden Office Celebrates Successful Organizing Season

Regional Director Wayne Gilbert, reflecting on the 2008 organizing season stated, “Our Meriden staff is pleased to welcome several hundred new members to the UPSEU family” Labor Relations Representative Roger Stolen, commenting on the victories, stated, “The vocational diversity among the units is truly amazing, from police departments to food service to public works to clerical to custodial members.”

UPSEU’s Meriden office would like to extend their warmest welcome to these new units:

- Windsor Locks BOE Food Service
- Ansonia Public Works
- Bloomfield Police Officers
- Tolland BOE Custodians
- Tolland BOE Clerical Staff
- Wallingford BOE Clerical Staff
- Wallingford BOE Food Service
- South Central Regional
- Water Authority Police

Cromwell Town Hall Employees Vote UPSEU as Their Choice of the Future

In a landslide victory, once again UPSEU defeated CILU/UE in a state held election, when the unionized Town Hall employees of Cromwell voted 20 to 4 to join UPSEU.

“We welcome the opportunity to represent our new members and negotiations are now ongoing,” stated Regional Director Ronald Suraci.

Westbrook Police Constables Vote Unanimously to Join UPSEU

After receiving 100% of the votes, UPSEU was the clear choice for representation for the employees of Westbrook. On Election Day the officers voted to leave AFSCME Council 15 to become part of the UPSEU family.

“The Constables felt that too much time had gone by without proper representation. They wanted a strong commitment of representation and with UPSEU they will get it,” stated UPSEU Regional Director Ronald Suraci.

Madison Dispatchers And Clerical Unit Become Part of UPSEU Family

On February 11, 2008 the Madison Police Department Dispatchers and Clerical members voted to join the UPSEU family which resulted in another loss for Massachusetts based NAGE/IBPO SEIU.

“We are excited to begin working with our new members of Madison and we look forward to a long lasting relationship,” stated UPSEU’s Ron Suraci.

UPSEU, now certified by the Connecticut State Labor Review Board, has already commenced bargaining for the unit.

Welcome to UPSEU, Madison employees!



East Haven BOE Cafeteria Workers VOTE UPSEU

Cafeteria workers in the Town of East Haven, Connecticut, voted to join UPSEU in a state election that was held on March 5, 2008.

After many years of representation by the Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union, UNITE, the unit overwhelmingly decided to join a union that can provide the kind of representation needed to protect their rights. By a vote of 17 to 4, the members have taken a step in the right direction.

“Clearly the members were concerned about the lack of representation they were getting from HERE-UNITE and knew it was time for a change. They did their homework and contacted several other units that we represent here in Connecticut and were more than satisfied with what they heard. Word of mouth is the best advertisement you can get,” stated Director Ronald Suraci.

The UPSEU family continues to grow! UPSEU welcomes the members of the East Haven Board of Education Cafeteria Unit.

UPSEU’s Fairfield DPW Members Overwhelmingly Approve New Agreement

As a result of an overwhelming vote, UPSEU Fairfield members will be covered under a new four year agreement. UPSEU’s Ronald Suraci led the negotiating team and was assisted by UPSEU’s Mark Ciarciello along with the negotiations committee. In addition to annual raises and a pension enhancement, the new agreement will provide unit members with possible upgrades, out of classification pay and health insurance premiums locked in at a flat amount for the duration of the agreement, along with several language clarifications.

“It took a while but with the help from our team we secured an agreement our members can be proud of,” stated Ronald Suraci.

Plainfield BOE Custodians Vote UPSEU

The members of the Plainfield BOE joined their fellow employees when they cast their vote for UPSEU.

In just the last year, we have had the Plainfield Police Officers, Emergency Dispatchers, Highway Department Employees and now the Board of Education Custodians all vote for and become part of the UPSEU family.

The members of the custodians unit had a choice and overwhelmingly they voted for UPSEU. AFSCME who also participated in the election process received just two votes and the Massachusetts based SEIU/NAGE union didn’t receive a single vote. “Time and time again the unionized members of Connecticut are making an informed decision and preparing for their families future by joining a strong independent union that can protect their rights,” stated Regional Director Ronald Suraci.

Windsor Locks Food Service



WINDSOR LOCKS BOE

Members celebrate the February 27th UPSEU victory over Teamsters and CILU-UE. Pictured L to R: Food Service Unit Vice President Patricia Rulnick, Barbara Egan, Kathy Hussex, Kim Chmara and Unit President Ellen Welch

UPSEU Welcomes Tolland Clericals

UPSEU welcomes yet another Connecticut Board of Education unit to the ranks of UPSEU. After many years of CSEA, SEIU representation, the clerical unit wanted a change. With over 80% of the unit voting for UPSEU, the unit and UPSEU will now go to work preparing for negotiations. Welcome aboard Tolland Board of Education Clericals.

City of Ansonia Public Works Unit Votes for UPSEU

The City of Ansonia Public Works, Water Pollution Control, Custodial Unit voted to join United Public Service Employees Union in a March 3rd Connecticut State Labor Relations Board election. This twenty eight member unit was previously represented by AFSCME Council 4. Welcome to the UPSEU family, City of Ansonia!

UPSEU IN ACTION



AMITYVILLE FOOD SERVICE
UPSEU member Shirley Nettles



AMITYVILLE MAINTENANCE
Front L to R: Anthony Lefko, George Williams,
Standing: Bernard Ricks, Arthur Donochod, Anthony
Tollivar, and George Williams



AMITYVILLE SCHOOL DISTRICT
Chief Shop Steward Nora Walker



COMMACK LIBRARY NEGOTIATING TEAM
L to R: Unit Co-President Hara Cohen, Labor Relations Representative Amanda Barker, Co-President Helene Chaim, Judy Calderone, Suzanne McGuire, Maureen Armstrong

Judge Orders Columbia County to Restore Employees' Work Hours

A judge at the New York State Public Employment Relations Board has ordered the County of Columbia to restore the work hours of Building Cleaners and a Building Maintenance Mechanic in the Facilities Division of DPW and to make any bargaining unit member whole for wages and benefits lost as a result of the County's illegal actions.

"We are very pleased with the judge's decision," UPSEU Regional Coordinator Kathy Wright stated. "This has been a long time coming for all of these employees," she continued. Over two years ago, the County's Facilities Division unilaterally assigned all cleaners assigned to county buildings, with the exception of the nursing home and highway department, to work hours of 4:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. "These new hours wreaked havoc on the private lives of our members because their old shifts had ranged either from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. or from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.," said Wright.

Also hung up in this mess were the employees at the jail whose cleaner (laborer) position was vacant and which the County chose not to fill. "The County decided to unilaterally assign the cleaning duties to the most senior skilled Building Maintenance position," she went on. "It was clear this was unfair and illegal, so we fought it."

The judge issued her decision in favor of UPSEU on April 24, 2008. Under the Taylor Law, the County had the right to file an appeal within fifteen working days of the decision for the Board to review. "This entire shift change issue has been a source of contention and extensive litigation between the union and the County. Perhaps with the new administration, however, the County will show some compassion and understanding when making decisions that severely alter employees' lives outside of work," Wright commented. The County has appealed the decision.



"Making a Difference in the Workplace"



UPSEU Huntington School District AMA Teacher Assistant Unit Nearly Unanimously Ratifies Pact

A new agreement will provide unit members with increased wages and will as well provide adjustments for those in steps beginning at seven years. A new adjustment for teacher assistants as well, will become effective as of July 2007.

UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, commenting on the negotiations stated, "The committee chose to focus on a shorter term agreement that provided significant salary adjustments and an adjustment for our teachers assistant members, with the ability to return to the bargaining table in short order to address the other needs of the unit." The unit approved the agreement 99 to 1.

First Contract for Valley Stream

Congratulations to the Valley Stream School District teacher aides and monitors unit on their first union contract. In addition to bargaining full contract language, the agreement included a number of first time benefits. Wage increases which were once sporadic, were included for each year of the agreement, as well as a new provision for longevity.

"When we met the group it was clear that there were a number of constituencies in the unit which included those in and out of the step schedule, part time, and full time employees," stated Negotiator and UPSEU Vice President Kim Nowakowski. "Although it may be difficult, it is not impossible to work with a unit which has such varied needs."

The agreement addressed the needs of the full time employees to receive first time paid holidays, while meeting the needs of the part time employees to receive first time paid sick days and full pay for early releases/late openings. Both groups also received a first time paid bereavement benefit.

"One of the most important issues wasn't economic but security," UPSEU Representative Amanda Barker remarked. The agreement secured a layoff and recall procedure which was specific so that the most senior employees were protected from favoritism. "With this type of unit, layoffs unfortunately happen with some frequency as the needs of the District change, so this was essential to a settlement."

The hard work of the negotiating team of Angela Failla, Helen Lynch, Marijo Sensale, and Peggy Sommella was appreciated by our members as evidenced by the unanimous ratification.

Westbury Food Service Employees Overwhelmingly Accept New Deal Terms

A new three year contract for Westbury Food Service Employees will increase wages annually and will as well provide longevity and salary differential increases. We would like to thank both Joyce Dickerson and Susan Dalessandro for their hard work and time in these negotiations.

Franklin County Sheriff's Association

Last November the Franklin County Sheriff's Association of AFSCME Council 82 voted overwhelmingly to join United Public Service Employees Union. Members of the negotiating team are currently working on a successor agreement lead by Chief Negotiator and Executive Vice President/ Regional Director Gary M. Hickey.



FRANKLIN COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

Front L to R: Martin Wright, Deborah J. Parnappy, Barry J. Cartier
Back: UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Philip Sedlock, Kari E. Brooks, Scott A. Hudson

Westbury Registered Nurses Ratify Agreement

The Westbury Union Free School District Registered Nurses ratified a new four year agreement by a 3 to 1 margin. The agreement, in addition to annual wage increases, included compensation adjustments for longer term employees and increases to longevity. Current members as well, received a personal retiree healthcare agreement which guarantees fully paid healthcare into retirement for each member for life; and in the case of death of the member, for the life of their un-remarried spouse. As well, the definition of what was covered under the uniform allowance was expanded to include other professional materials and tools.

"The individual healthcare agreements in today's times provide for peace of mind in such an unstable public sector environment," remarked registered nurse negotiating team member Robbin Brenker. UPSEU Negotiator and Vice President Kim Nowakowski echoed, "Retiree healthcare will become more and more a target due to GASB-45 and taxpayer concerns. Wherever and whenever we can get individual healthcare agreements that are enforceable in a court of law, we'll strongly recommend taking them."

President Boyle remarked, "Many members are confused when it comes to past practice, contract language, and individual personalized agreements. By and large, the individual personalized agreement is best because it cannot be changed without permission of the individual member, and is without question fully enforceable in a court of law."

Congratulations to the Westbury Registered Nurse unit and special thanks to negotiating team members Robbin Brenker and Diane Musso.

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

UPSEU Advocate Marie Rogan Retires



MARIE ROGAN
Huntington AMA

A long time UPSEU advocate and leader of her two hundred member unit, Marie Rogan retired on June 30, 2008. Prior to her unit joining UPSEU, Marie was a leader of her independent association. She led the unit in several negotiations throughout her twenty years of leadership in the unit.

Since the unit became part of UPSEU over ten years ago, Marie has been front and center in the representation of the unit.

UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr., stated, "Few individuals have spent the time and energy that Marie has spent representing her members. She is a fighter and has demonstrated such strength in overcoming every obstacle put before her," Boyle stated.

Marie will be sorely missed. Linda Guido, the recently elected successor to Marie, has tremendous shoes to fill, but we know with the years of groundwork Marie has laid, Linda will have great success. "Best of luck in your retirement, Marie and thank you for your years of tireless work on behalf of your members and for your years of friendship," concluded Boyle.

Rockland County Members Take a Stand "Whatever It Takes"

On April 7, 2008 UPSEU members from the Rockland County Department of Public Works, along with unions representing other county units, staged a unified protest at a recent meeting of the County Legislature. The protest addressed the impasse between UPSEU and the County due to the unwillingness of the County to address the members interests. Shortly after the protest the union received a settlement offer from the County which was far better than what had been offered at the bargaining table. This offer provided a framework for a mediation session at which the union hopes to reach an agreement worthy of our members' consideration.



ROCKLAND COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

UPSEU Rockland County Department of Public Works members: Eric Molders, Peter Power, Ronald Lindberg, Michael Rivera, Jose Castro, Wayne Evans, Gaetano Maniscalco, Vincent Pacella, Brian Prescott, James Palazzo, UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Brandon Nasierowski, Richard Calderoni, Sony Stanislas, Nicholas Graziano, Joel Compas, Steven Walter, Leland Parkinson, George Beisgen, John Knieriem, Marceau Point Dujour (*Not pictured*) Edward Beatty, Frank Voce, Stanley Tyrell

West Hempstead Custodial and Maintenance Unit Unanimously Approves 4 Year Agreement

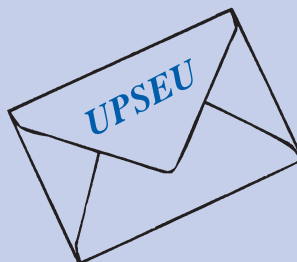
A four year agreement that will provide above average wage increases, longevity improvements and increased employee benefit fund contributions, was unanimously approved by UPSEU's West Hempstead School District members in a union ratification vote. UPSEU's Jim Gangale who headed up the negotiations commended the tremendous work of the committee, led by Chief Shop Steward Mike Napoli and committee members James Soumakis, Robert Locastro, James Albert and Pedro Rodriguez.





Dear Kevin,

Recently I had the support of John Calabrese on an issue concerning my affiliation as a Board Member with the NYS Association of Incarcerated Programs, Inc. I had been elected to this position in 2004 and then again in 2006. It was acceptable that I attend board meetings as Secretary of the Association four times a year and the annual conference on my agency's time and with all expenses paid by my department. Recently and for no apparent reason, the director of my division decided not to allow my attendance at these board meetings as well as my attending the annual conference. If I decided to attend, I would have to use my time (vacation/ personal days) for my attendance. Through Mr. Calabrese's efforts, the outcome was in my favor. I just received a written memo from the assistant superintendent of human resources allowing my attendance at these meetings. The ride wasn't easy but Mr. Calabrese achieved another victory for us as a whole. Again, thank you John for your tireless efforts in negotiating and achieving this outcome.



Susan Troy
ES BOCES

Dear Jim,

I wanted to thank you very much for all your hard work and all the time you devoted to resolving my desk audit/ promotion situation. I appreciate all of your efforts and I'm sorry for all of the aggravation that you went through. I am satisfied with the outcome and I believe that you negotiated the best deal that I could get. Once again, all my heartfelt thanks!

Jordan Marisa Ferraro
Village of Ridgewood

Dear Kevin and Kim,

The Islip Board of Education approved both custodial and clerical contracts at the Board Meeting last night. Therefore, everything is official! Thank you very much for all your hard work, dedication and devotion to our members. Obviously everyone was happy with the results, as evidenced with the voting. You are both fantastic leaders and negotiators. It is truly a pleasure working with both of you. I always feel that you are striving to achieve the most you can for our members and you genuinely care about the results. UPSEU is an outstanding union, thanks to dedicated people such as yourselves. Thank you so very much.

Carol Jensen
Islip Clerical Unit

Dear Ms Nowakowski,

I know I speak for my client, the nurses and their attorney, when I say that it was heartening to read your letter to the editor in today's Newsday. I write to thank you for your support and your clear and eloquent summary of the main issues in this case: it simply cannot be a crime to resign from your job and it was the fault of the nursing home owners that the nurses were left with no other choice than to leave their employment. Once again, I thank you on behalf of all of us involved in this dangerous prosecution for your public display of support.

Very truly yours,
Oscar Michelen, Esq.

Gary Favro,

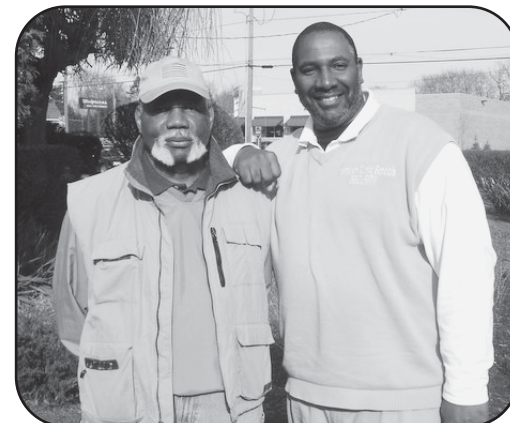
I would like to thank you and UPSEU for acknowledging my retirement. It was great working with you.

Linda Luby
Averill Park

Dear Kim,

Thank you for responding to the Newsday article about "Schools Made Do in the 50's." I was so tempted to write myself but did not want to show any poor reflection on our school district. It was so nice to see your response. We secretaries, who are beat at the end of every day, appreciate the letter so much!

Thanks again,
Anonymous Suffolk County member



HAMDEN BOE SECURITY

L to R: Unit Vice President Reggie Higgins and President Marvin White-Mink



WEST HEMPSTEAD LIBRARY

L to R: Betty Rusinek, Barbara Dreher and Unit Vice President Rosemary Sena



BAY SHORE NURSES

L to R: Unit Co-Presidents Rita Molloy and Carol Phelan with Jackie Mason, working hard at the negotiating table.

UPSEU Update

UPSEU Mourns the Passing of Long Time Advocate

A member of UPSEU's Hauppauge School District Membership, John Bonacchi died recently after a long health battle. John was one of UPSEU's first members, when back in 1986 he and his co-workers joined us.

"A steward and negotiating team member for almost the entire twenty-two year period, John was not only a great advocate for UPSEU and his co-workers, he was a friend," stated UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr.

"Having had hundreds of conversations with John over the years, I was always struck by his sense of fairness and in the way he was respected by both his co-workers and the administration. He was a wealth of knowledge when it came to the history of the unit and all that has been accomplished. He could cite the date, time and particulars of nearly every meeting ever held. That can't be replaced," Boyle continued.

We will all miss John a great deal.

Election Day, November 4, 2008
will soon be upon us.

Are you ready to make a difference?

This year's election, with the many difficult issues facing us, as workers, taxpayers, and as a nation, will determine all of our futures.



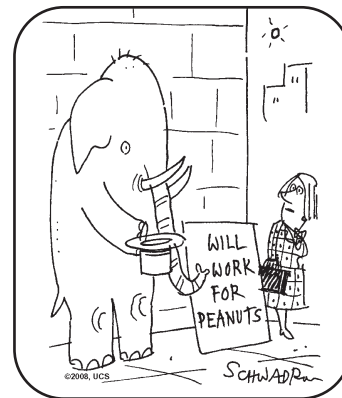
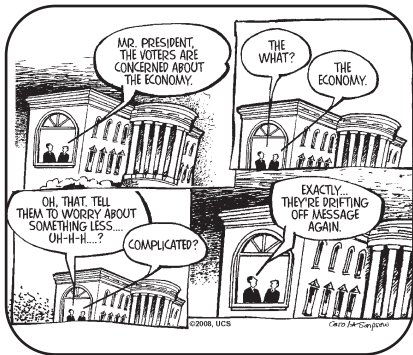
Remember:
REGISTER to Vote



and

VOTE for the candidate

that you believe will make a difference.



BEST WISHES

from your UPSEU staff and officers
for a Happy and Safe 4th of July and Summer
to all our members and their families!

