



# THE ADVOCATE

*Making a Difference in the Workplace*

Spring 2009

## Woodbury Members Unanimously Approve New 4 Year Contract

In a unanimous vote held in May, UPSEU Town of Woodbury members approved the terms of a new four year contract. In addition to providing above average wage increases, this agreement will provide part-time employees with increased paid time off, increased holiday pay and increased call-in pay.

Additional gains for unit employees were in areas such as increased uniform allotment, new vacation sell-back, codifying past practice benefits and clarifying contract language, among others.



**TOWN OF WOODBURY**

Woodbury Negotiating Team members: Kevin Dean, Teresa Strong, David De Grote and Maxine Saracino

UPSEU Executive Vice President/ Regional Director Gary M. Hickey, who headed up the negotiating team of Chief Steward Dave DeGrote, Kevin Dean, Maxine Saracino and Teresa Strong, commented on the negotiations, stating, "The committee held firm and successfully withstood the employer's attempt to decimate the contract. In the end, we achieved an excellent settlement for our members. The committee did a great job."

## Three More CSEA Units Vote to Join UPSEU

The Three Village School District Special Education Aides and Monitors, a unit of 199 paraprofessionals, voted overwhelmingly for UPSEU in a vote held on March 8, 2009. The vote was 127 to 12 in favor of UPSEU.

For many years the unit belonged to CSEA/AFSCME. Like so many others, the unit became tired of the CSEA/AFSCME's passive style of representation and lack of understanding to the needs of its members. "It's the same old story with AFSCME in every state in the country. They just don't get it," stated UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr.

These Three Village paraprofessionals join 84 Mahopac employees, who overwhelmingly voted to leave CSEA/AFSCME a week prior, along with Copiague School District employees who voted nearly unanimously the same month to join UPSEU after years of CSEA/AFSCME representation. UPSEU welcomes all our new members to the UPSEU family.

## Hoosick Falls Police Members Approve First Contract

In a unanimous vote, the police officers employed in Hoosick Falls Police Department approved their first contract. Previously non-union, the unit voted to join the rapidly growing UPSEU C.O.P.S. Division. As with any first contract, a complete agreement had to be negotiated. Strong contract language was a very important ingredient in this first contract for those officers, as were other terms and conditions of employment.

The unit's Chief Negotiator Executive Vice President/Regional Director Gary M. Hickey stated, "Annual wage increases far exceeded the average settlements in the area, new call-in pay, out of title pay, new benefits for part-time officers, binding arbitration and 207-C protections were just part of the numerous improvements."

Congratulations to the unit on their first agreement with special thanks to Officers Ken Colombraro, Gerry Geoghegan and Robert Murphy for their hard work on the negotiating team. "These guys have been great," Labor Relations Representative Jack Rogers said, "and their organizing leads have brought in additional units. Thanks again."

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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*

Visit Our Website at [www.upseu.org](http://www.upseu.org)

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Linda Pickwick, *Editor*

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



UPSEU President  
Kevin E. Boyle, Jr.

Those of you who know me, know that I have moved along with the computer age, kicking and screaming all the way. I have to say that with all the trepidation, I've actually moved up to the level of embracing the technology and especially all the information available at the touch of a button. By no stretch would I be considered a computer geek, but I found my way around the UPSEU website and most importantly to the wide array of discount programs available to our members. Although we mention our discount programs at our membership meetings and in newsletters, I really don't think that members have been taking full advantage of them. I thought, perhaps, you might be a little timid in accessing the website so I thought another nudge might do.

The UPSEU.org website is simple to use. The discount programs can be found rather easily too. Yes, it's so simple even a caveman (better known as Kevin Boyle) can do it. You just need to look at the tool bar on the left and choose member benefits. Then pick your area (Long Island, Albany, Utica, Connecticut, or New Jersey) to see the list of benefits available to you.

Some of the benefits include resources to help you with off-the-job concerns such as having attorneys who accept reduced fees for wills, adoptions, traffic matters, real estate transactions, divorce, etc. We also have information about our UPSEU Scholarships and a link to the application forms. Then, depending on your area, we have discount programs for auto and homeowners insurance, theme parks, cell phone service providers, and home heating oil, just to name a few.

In addition to the UPSEU discount programs, we also have available to you discount programs through our international union which can be found listed under IUJAT voluntary benefits. Once through this portal, you will find yourself at U-Benefit which has a tool bar with categories such as automobile, entertainment, health and fitness, finance, insurance, legal services, medical and vision, shopping, and technology. Now in each of these tool bar options there are drop down menus which lists what is available under each category. For example, Entertainment provides discounts and exclusive offers for Busch Gardens and related Anheuser-Busch Adventure Parks (Sea World, Busch Gardens, Adventure Island, Water Country USA, Sesame Place).

We also have Hit Show Club which provides discounts to live entertainment shows, restaurants, sightseeing attractions, parking and shopping throughout New York City. In addition, we have Plum Benefits which is also a collection of entertainment offers that provide access to otherwise difficult to get tickets and events. Unlike brokers, Plum Benefits services are provided at no additional charge.

Working Advantage is also listed under entertainment but it provides much more. In addition to entertainment (including sports events), it brings you excellent discounts on apparel and accessories, books and music, electronics, flowers, gourmet food, office supplies, and more! You also earn Advantage Points which can be redeemed for a variety of products including movie tickets and gift cards.

U-Benefit also has a shopping category on the toolbar. Clicking here will lead you to Big Brand Mall. The Big Brand Mall has a wide array of big name stores who they work with for discounts and promotional offers; but what makes it different is that you earn reward points which can be loaded onto a "load and spend" Mastercard anywhere that Mastercard is accepted. Just ten reward points equals ten dollars. How cool is that! Free money for shopping online with brand name stores plus save gas and money!

One quick reminder, visit UPSEU.org during non-work hours on a non-work computer to keep yourself out of trouble; otherwise we'll have some creative explaining to do.

Visit the [UPSEU.org](http://UPSEU.org) website  
for discounts and more....

## Colchester Registered Nurses Ratify Contract

On May 28, 2009, the Colchester Board of Education Nurses unanimously voted to approve a contract negotiated by UPSEU representative Michael Lewis. The nurses were part of a Secretary/Paraprofessional group represented by AFSCME prior to joining UPSEU.

“Once the state budget numbers firmed up we had a clearer view of the Boards’ ability to pay and the contract was quickly wrapped up. The Board treated our members with respect, something that our members truly appreciated,” Lewis stated. Upon reaching a tentative agreement, Unit President Jean Stauning commented that they were very pleased with the new contract and that it was the best they ever had. “That’s nice to hear in good times,” Lewis said, “but considering the current economic conditions, it was especially nice.”

The nurses were represented on the negotiating committee by Unit President Jean Stauning, and Registered Nurses Eileen Kenny and Patricia Camp. “Having the nurses in their own bargaining unit allowed them to be able to negotiate items that were important to their needs; needs they couldn’t or wouldn’t get addressed when they were with AFSCME,” Lewis concluded.



**MARLBORO CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Secretarial Unit Executive Board and Negotiating Committee**  
UPSEU Executive Vice President/ Regional Director Gary M. Hickey, Unit President Janet Watrous, Susan Pesavento, Patricia Kemp and Margaret Bach.

## Two East Haven BOE Units Dump AFSCME

On February 25, 2009 the East Haven Board of Education Secretaries sent a loud message to AFSCME when they voted nearly unanimously to join UPSEU. After nearly two years, the stronghold of AFSCME was broken during this state held election. The thirty nine member unit was the second unit that week to join UPSEU.

Two years ago the members of the BOE were fed up with the lack of professionalism and total disregard AFSCME had for the interests of its members and said ‘enough is enough.’ The secretaries tried to leave AFSCME, but AFSCME stood in their way by raising several issues at the Connecticut State Labor Relations Board blocking the employees’ effort to participate in an election to choose who would best represent them. Most striking was AFSCME thereafter putting the unit into arbitration without notifying the unit officers or the negotiating team. AFSCME then withdrew all of the unit’s requests in arbitration, again without notification, resulting in a poor arbitration decision, negatively impacting the unit.

“Despite AFSCME’s attempts in 2007, which proved to be waste of time and energy, this conflict prolonged the unavoidable, another AFSCME unit joining UPSEU,” stated UPSEU Regional Director Ronald Suraci. The BOE Secretaries will now be able to have full participation in the decisions concerning future contracts and union issues.

Following in the steps of their Board of Education co-workers in the Secretarial Unit and Cafeteria Unit, the Custodial and Maintenance employees of the East Haven Board of Education voted to join UPSEU after years of AFSCME Council 4 representation.

The unit represents the sixth AFSCME Council 4 unit that has voted for UPSEU in 2009 and the thirtieth Council 4 unit to join UPSEU overall. Congratulations to each member of the East Haven Custodial/ Maintenance and Secretarial Units. We welcome you to UPSEU.

## Ansonia BOE Employees Vote to Join UPSEU

UPSEU is pleased to welcome another bargaining unit previously represented by AFSCME.

In a Connecticut state run election held on February 24, 2009, the unit represented by AFSCME Council 4 for many years, decided that they no longer wanted AFSCME as their union. 70% of those voting, cast their vote for UPSEU. We welcome Ansonia Board of Education employees to the UPSEU family.

## Sachem Support Staff Members Overwhelmingly Approve New Agreement

With over 91% of unit members voting to approve a new agreement, UPSEU members in the Operations, Maintenance, Grounds, Transportation, Food Service and Security unit will now be covered under a new agreement. The vote was 310 to 33. The unit joined UPSEU in 2008 after an election with the unit’s previous association and the CSEA/AFSCME.

Annual wage increases, improved longevity, a new personal day for food service employees eliminated from eligibility eighteen years ago, and a sick day for security personnel who previously joined the unit just prior to the unit voting for UPSEU, highlighted the pact.

“Negotiations were difficult with the District who demanded a wage freeze for one year of the contract, increased health contributions and no new benefits for employees in any of the sub groups,” stated UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. In the end, with the assistance of a New York State mediator and the resilience of the negotiating team, an agreement was reached that included no freeze, no health increases and new benefits for sub groups. “We have much to do for the unit, but this is a significant important step that we will build on,” Boyle concluded.

The team of Frank Morgan, Michael DeFontes, Lorraine Costantino, Lori Nicolazzi, Lorraine Long, Richard Hubbard, Wayne Wagner, Joe Borruso, Arlette Taborsky, Elizabeth Leonard, John Wyckoff, Jeffrey Patton, Michael Schimmoller, and Edward Barresi should be commended for their work which was reinforced by their co-workers overwhelming approval.



# SPOTLIGHT ON NEW YORK

## UPSEU Helps Northport School District Clerical Unit

When the Northport School District Clerical Association first talked with UPSEU, some were unsure about joining. “Most realized that they didn’t have such immediate access to their hired lawyer as they would to a UPSEU representative, so after investigating us they made the decision to join back in 2003,” remarked UPSEU Regional Director Kim Nowakowski.

“In the six years that UPSEU has represented us, Kim has been visiting our members at work and answering their questions often right on the spot. She has also made herself available in emergency situations sometimes with as little as thirty minutes notice,” commented Unit Vice President Katie Pyral. “We certainly could never have received that type of service from a lawyer on retainer!”

Recently, the former association went through a difficult situation in that a former officer allegedly improperly used over \$10,000 of their funds. “With the unit reeling, I knew that although it was not our responsibility to get involved in a matter involving the recovery of the former association’s funds, these members needed our expertise,” said Nowakowski.

UPSEU walked them through the recovery process, acting as intermediary between the former officer and her legal representation and the former association. “I can’t say enough about how impressed I was with all of the hours Kim put in to help us, many of which were on her own time,” commended Unit President Doreen Christ. “She enabled us to get the legal and accounting advice we needed, without having to ask our membership to come up with the money to pay for these types of services; and more importantly she negotiated and delivered the bank certified check for the missing money. Since UPSEU has been here, we have gotten more in our negotiations than we had as an association and I think the District respects us more when dealing with us in the day-to-day concerns,” concluded Doreen. “Although we can’t make everyone happy every time, with UPSEU we know they’ll keep trying.”



Northport Clerical Unit President Doreen Christ with UPSEU Vice President Kim Nowakowski

## UPSEU Recognized as Representative for 3 Village School District Security

The Three Village School District Security Unit became the fifth district unit to join UPSEU and comes on the heels of the 199 Three Village paraprofessional unit who recently voted to join UPSEU in an election held against CSEA/AFSCME. This security unit was the last unrepresented unit in the district.

UPSEU has begun the process of providing surveys, holdings meetings and preparing for bargaining on behalf of the unit.

UPSEU’s Labor Relation Representative Ron Cleary, who headed up the recent organizing activity in Three Village School District stated, “The unit came to the conclusion that with all the other non-teaching staff being part of UPSEU and seeing them being provided with excellent representation, that they too needed to protect their interests and begin the process of seeking the wages and benefits they deserve.”

UPSEU welcomes the Three Village School District Security Professionals Unit.

## Whitehall Police Oust AFSCME

By a 3 to 1 margin, Police Officers of the Village of Whitehall voted on February 17, 2009 to join United Public Service Employees Union. The unit was represented by AFSCME Council 82 for many years.

Sgt. Dick LaChapelle, summed up the unit’s decision to leave AFSCME for UPSEU stating, “With AFSCME we never had a representative in our workplace. They were an absentee union. The officers felt we needed a different level of representation, and after speaking to other UPSEU represented employees, we decided they provided what we needed.”

Executive Vice President/Regional Director Gary M. Hickey, who organized the unit, said “Not only did the full-time police officers join UPSEU, but now we await PERB certification of the part-time police officers also.” Hickey went on to thank all the officers for their tremendous support. Welcome aboard Village of Whitehall full-time police officers.

## Mahopac School District Employees Vote UPSEU

After many years of CSEA/AFSCME representation and after the unit first filed a petition to go non-union, the employees of Mahopac School District decided that they needed a strong union to serve the interests of the unit.

It is extremely uncommon for a unit to try to go non-union but that is exactly the step these employees were willing to take to leave CSEA/AFSCME. The unit learned of UPSEU through other United Public Service Employees Union represented groups and immediately sought our assistance.

By a vote of 57 to 11, the 80 member unit will now have a union they can count on. Welcome aboard Mahopac School District employees!



## Meriden Presents Advanced Steward Training Seminar



**Labor Relations Representative Roger Stolen, CSBLR Agent Kathy Foley and UPSEU Regional Director Wayne Gilbert were among the speakers at the Advanced Steward Training.**



**Town of Bloomfield Unit President Weining Wu, Hamden Nurses Steward Josephine Farley and Unit President Judith Mercer were among the participants at the seminar.**

On Wednesday, May 22, 2009, the UPSEU Meriden Office held an Advanced Steward Training Seminar at the Meriden Public Library for any Stewards or Officers wanting to become more familiar with the work of the Connecticut State Board of Labor Relations (CSBLR). Guest speaker, Agent Kathy Foley (CSBLR) discussed how to determine if an issue is an unfair labor practice, technically known as a Municipal Prohibited Practice (MPP). She cited many MPP's that were filed and heard before three panel members. Over 80 percent are resolved before they ever get to a formal hearing. Agent Foley gave many accounts of how MPPs were resolved under Connecticut state laws.

Attorneys David and Andy Morrissey were also guest speakers. David Morrissey is an expert attorney in the area of Workers Compensation and shared many details of eligibility and filing a case for those who must be out of work for a period of time due to an on-the-job injury. Andy Morrissey shared his expertise in the area of grievance arbitration and the information required to build a solid case. Regional Director Wayne Gilbert provided information on various topics drawing on his thirty years of experience. Labor Relations Representative Roger Stolen spoke about the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and shared some little known facts regarding Americans Disabilities Act (ADA).

Rick Vanski, UPSEU Unit President of Wallingford Supervisors commented, "No matter how many times I take these classes, I always learn something new and it gives me a chance to refresh my knowledge to recognize and quickly act on issues as they arise."



**Not only is East Haddam home to our newest UPSEU/ COPS Division members, the East Haddam Police Officers, it also is famous for the Good Speed Opera House, pictured above.**

## East Haddam Police Officers Become Unionized

On May 19, 2009, the Officers of the East Haddam Police Department voted unanimously to join UPSEU/COPS and become part of the UPSEU family. This is the first time the police officers participated in a state held election seeking to become a unionized bargaining unit.

"In these tough economic times of today, the officers felt they needed to protect the interests of themselves and their families and sought to become unionized employees. They did their homework and after speaking to several other unions they chose UPSEU/COPS as their representative," stated Director Ronald Suraci. We met with the officers and addressed their concerns. They also reached out to several other police departments in Connecticut and gathered information about the representation that the other departments received from their unions. After presentations by both AFSCME and UPSEU/COPS, the choice was easy.

We look forward to working with the officers of the East Haddam Police Department for many years to come.

## East Haven BOE Clerical Employees Join UPSEU

On February 25, 2009, the East Haven Board of Education Clerical Unit sent a loud message to AFSCME Council 4 when they voted nearly unanimously to join UPSEU. The thirty nine member unit is among the many Units who left AFSCME after years of representation. UPSEU looks forward to working for this unit.

# UPSEU Reaches 20,000 Members

## Here's What Our Members Have to Say



*L to R front:* Sgt. Patrick Daley, Officer Carl Dye, Officer Ken Nieves, Detective Trevor Robinson, Sgt. Chris Ferace, Unit President Officer James Curtis, Officer Steve Lamantini. *Back:* Lt. Stephany Bakoulis, Officer Anthony Gomes, Sgt. Chris Ladd and Captain Peter Menard

### **JAMES CURTIS** Norwich Police Department

As the President of my local unit, I can tell you first hand the importance of choosing the right union representation. Our former national union, International Brotherhood of Police Officers, did not unite our local, but instead, drove us apart. In the fall of 2005, the officers of the Norwich Police Department became aware of UPSEU/ COPS Division. Local meetings were held with UPSEU/COPS staff and the CT State Board of Labor Relations ordered a vote for the election of a new union affiliation in February of 2006.

Throughout this difficult process, the UPSEU/COPS staff maintained a high degree of professionalism: leading by example, promoting unity, and guaranteeing benefits, rather than negatively campaigning against our current union, the IBPO. The votes were tallied with over 60% of the membership favoring the change to UPSEU/COPS as the union for Norwich Police Officers.

The leadership of UPSEU/COPS has been impeccable in forging forward with organizing the local executive board and identifying pertinent labor issues. Labor grievances and complaints including those regarding insurance benefits, overtime benefits and clarification of contract language have been filed and settled overwhelmingly in favor of the membership. This dramatically changed the dynamic of UPSEU/COPS Local Unit 104 and the department, as there now exists an atmosphere of excitement and confidence as opposed to fear of retribution for labor participation and a "sell out" attitude of local leadership. With the leadership of UPSEU President Kevin Boyle, the guidance of Regional Director Ronnie Suraci, the legal representation of Attorney Mark Ciarciello, Representative Mike Lewis, and the full support of the entire UPSEU staff, the Norwich Police Union is now recognized by the management of the Norwich Police Department and the managers of the City of Norwich, as a viable and professional labor organization.



### **CINDY LUCAS** Town of Trumbull

When our contract was set to expire June 30, 2009 it created a window of opportunity to change unions this past January. AFSCME campaigned hard for our support. They even came to many of our homes on weekends trying to get us to sign cards. These tactics frightened some of our members. AFSCME was just wasting their time, as we are quite satisfied with the service UPSEU continues to provide us.

I must admit, when I first took over for Graham Bisset as president of our local this past January, I was a little apprehensive of my new role because of our outstanding issues and our upcoming negotiations. However, I am pleased to report, the UPSEU staff has made my transition a smooth one. UPSEU has already provided myself and our vice president with excellent steward training classes and other hands-on labor relations education. They are ever available to answer any of my questions and have been exceedingly supportive. I am confident that Wayne Gilbert, Regional Director for the Meriden office, will get us the best contract possible in these difficult economic times.



### **DORIS SQUIRES** Roosevelt School District

I have been President of the Roosevelt School District Clerical Association since May 2002. Our unit unanimously voted to leave CSEA and join UPSEU on April 1, 2007 due to CSEA's lack of representation and failure to handle our workplace grievances. It was the best decision we ever made. With CSEA/ AFSCME we were just throwing our dues money down the drain.



### **DAN YOXALL** Oneida County

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate UPSEU for their 20,000 membership achievement. It only stands to reason that membership will grow when union officials go out of their way to provide excellent service and benefits as UPSEU has done for us for many years now. I would also like to thank UPSEU for securing us fair contracts over the years and addressing many issues in a professional and timely manner. You have always been more than willing to help at a moment's notice.

My hat goes off to Linda Kirnan, Bob Stephens and Executive Vice President Gary Hickey for all their continuous hard work, help and support. I would like to also thank President Boyle for his excellent leadership. I do believe we are in a better position today because of the good work all of you do on our behalf. Keep up the great work and thank you for fighting our battles.

# UPSEU Reaches 20,000 Members



**SAL TUMMINELLO**  
Town of Teaneck

Changing unions to UPSEU was the best decision our unit could have made. We now have immediate access to UPSEU representatives who promptly handle all of our work related problems. They are always there for us. I call them all hours of the day and night and weekends and they are always available or promptly return our calls.

**JAMES E. KINNEY**  
Mohawk Valley Community College

In the eleven years that I have been involved with UPSEU as a Steward, I have always encountered an open line of communication, with a positive and quick response to all of our needs here at Mohawk Valley Community College, as well as a great rapport with all of their staff.



**VICKIE HALSE**  
Rensselaer County

In 1993 I was the CSEA Unit President when UPSEU (424) filed the petition for an election to change unions. I fought vehemently to keep CSEA because I believed everything they told me. UPSEU wasn't a union and they wouldn't fulfill any of their campaign promises such as democratic negotiations, professional representation, etc. were just some of CSEA's statements. My heart sank when the employees overwhelmingly voted for UPSEU because I thought we were going to go backwards.

What I hadn't realized, however, was that all those years with CSEA we were going backwards; since we got rid of them, we have gone forward, everyday and every contract. For the first time in my career with Rensselaer County I can honestly say we are represented by a *REAL* union that genuinely cares about us and listens to us.

## In the Beginning by Kevin E. Boyle, Jr., UPSEU President

Wow. It's hard to believe that we now have 20,000 members. And yet I still remember way back when UPSEU was born. I started working for UIW, Local 424 in the 1980's. Back then we represented private sector food service workers in the school districts, as well as other types of private sector workers. One public sector unit, Hauppauge School District was part of the union since 1986.

We knew our private sector members were pleased with the level of representation we provided and our tenacity at the bargaining table; but little did we realize how much the public sector needed what we had to offer.

It all began with the Hauppauge School District where the custodial, grounds, and maintenance, transportation, security and monitor unit workers first reached out to us. They had been advised by their then union, SEIU that they could have to start paying \$136.00 per month for their health coverage. This was at a time when cost-sharing of premiums wasn't yet a common practice. The first thing we did was negotiate the elimination of the \$136.00 per month. When their open period arrived there was little doubt they were willing to "take a chance" on us. From our first contract, we worked to correct some wrongs of their past and make strides for their future. Time and time again they not only kept us busy but they also talked to others in nearby Suffolk County districts. Soon we represented East Islip custodial/grounds/maintenance workers too. They too have kept us busy over the years and have recommended us to other districts.

Our big break came when BOCES 2 employees contacted us. They had met our members from East Islip and Hauppauge over the years and had heard good things. BOCES 2, like Hauppauge and East Islip, reacted to us as if they had spent years in a hot, dry desert and we were the oasis they had searched for. Unlike Hauppauge and East Islip who were previously represented by SEIU, BOCES 2 had been represented by CSEA (an affiliate of AFSCME). They told us of employees who were fired without union representative, bargaining sessions where CSEA had dinner with management instead of with their own members on the team, and how they never saw anyone from CSEA in their workplaces. At about the same time, Three Village CGM and Clerical Units with West Islip CGM, Food Service and Transportation units reached out to us. Soon upstate public sector employees were also contacting UPSEU. That was all in the beginning; now here we are with 20,000 members throughout New York, New Jersey and Connecticut and the word continues to spread.

We know we have a lot to be proud of when we look back over the years. Through it all we have continuously grown without ever spending a dime on advertising. Where other unions have lost their way and lost members by the thousands, we have been a light leading the way for the labor movement (though not enough have followed our example) and we're growing by the thousands.

"Each time we met a new group, particularly when they came from a new area or field of employment, we couldn't help but notice how surprised they were with the level of service we provided," remarked Regional Director/Vice President Kim Nowakowski. "For twenty years I have worked for our members and met folks who belonged to unions who clearly have no memory as to why they first began representing members. UPSEU has never lost its vision, which is what makes it so easy coming to work day after day, despite the stress we encounter on a daily basis," she continued. "Everyone on staff believes in what we're doing. We motivate and energize each other. The proof is not only in our growth, but in the longevity of our staff members."

As we celebrate our success with the achievement of the 20,000 member mark, we thank our members for seeking us out, spreading the word, and always pushing us to be the best.

THANK YOU to Hauppauge, East Islip, BOCES 2 (now known as Eastern Suffolk BOCES), Three Village, and West Islip School District members for believing in us before we were a known entity. THANK YOU to all of our members who have helped us to grow by their positive recommendations.

THANK YOU to our resources including our legal firms, accountants, insurance specialists, and others who have helped us and our members, through the years. And THANK YOU to our hard-working staff for their continuous strives for excellence on behalf of our membership.

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

## UPSEU Takes on Bureaucracy and Wins

When Regional Director Kim Nowakowski stopped in for an ordinary service visit recently at Huntington U.F.S.D. High School, one desk stop became more than the usual stop. Although member Linda Abner was interested in news regarding negotiations, she also was upset that she had hurt her shoulder at work and her request for different equipment which would help protect from further injury, was going nowhere.



**HUNTINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT  
CLERICAL UNIT MEMBER**  
Linda Abner

Linda Abner, a secretary in the career counseling department, had been using an old fashioned official seal stamp machine. Because of its age, this machine was very heavy and difficult to use. It required her to apply all of her body weight to get it to work. In bringing the issue to the High School administration, it first seemed hopeful that it could be replaced with a newer, easier to use, and lighter machine. Unfortunately, with budget woes in New York State, the Administration and Board of Education were reluctant to replace it with a new machine. Instead they sent it to be repaired and they gave her a cart to push it from the safe to her desk when needed. Although it was an improvement from carrying it and it was a little easier to use, in her most recent medical appointment her doctor expressed continued concern. "As soon as I walked in, I could see Linda was upset," remarked Kim. "Although she listened intently to the update, I noticed she was rubbing her shoulder and she didn't look as calm as she usually does." Kim asked her if anything was wrong and Linda poured out her frustration. She showed Kim the old equipment she was using and said she was not getting the help she needed from the district. "Usually Linda is a very serene, quiet person, but when I saw her stress level, I knew this was a high priority. Once Linda mentioned her shoulder injury, I also knew the Americans with Disabilities Act was the way to approach this problem and to use the law to her advantage," continued Kim.

Kim then proceeded to send a letter to the district to inform them of her "request for reasonable accommodation" for a newer, lighter model. "I knew that with a cost of only \$200, even with budget difficulties, a district this size would be considered capable of accommodating her request, given her disability." The district knew that too; and quickly acted to replace the equipment. "Although they wanted a doctor's note, which they are entitled to under law, they began the ordering process without delay."

"I was really impressed with how quickly the situation turned around once the union got involved. The new seal is hand held, easy to use and lightweight," said Linda. She continued, "I was grateful for Kim's visit and help."

Although many unions never visit their members in their workplace, UPSEU is one of the only unions to visit its members on a regular basis - month after month, year after year. "This is exactly why we visit; since many members are so busy with their normal day-to-day routines that they don't realize they should call the union; or they have lost hope that the situation can be changed," President Boyle remarked. "We are all about not only helping members but also about giving members a reason to feel hopeful. Good work Kim!"

**RECENT MEMBERSHIP MEETING OF THE FAIRFIELD DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**  
Included in this photo are recently retired members Robert Horvath, Storrs Dutko and John Sakacs



## Town of Constable Attains First Union Contract

Highway Department employees in the Town of Constable have recently agreed to a three year contract covering all aspects of employment. The Town had previously been non-union, however when benefits started to disappear, they contacted UPSEU. The union was able to negotiate a three year agreement that provided important basic protections such as a guaranteed work week, a grievance procedure and union rights. The agreement also included many improvements, such as the largest pay increase ever received, a new longevity clause, an allowance for work boots, and an increase in retirement contributions. UPSEU held the line on having to contribute for medical insurance, as well.

Negotiations were led by UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Phil Sedlock and team members Rick LaPage and Bob Hammond. UPSEU is glad to welcome the Town of Constable to the union movement.

## Franklin County Sheriffs Unit Ratify Contract

After many long and difficult negotiation sessions, the Franklin County Sheriffs Unit has reached a multi-year agreement. Negotiations began in early 2008 after the unit of deputy sheriffs and corrections officers switched from AFSCME Council 82 to UPSEU. Many bargaining sessions led to an extensive rewrite of their agreement with many improvements throughout. These improvements included an increase in travel allowance, the ability to use sick time to pay for benefits in retirement, a new bereavement benefit, the start of shoe and laundry allowances, an increase in shift differential and a substantial increase in longevity.

The committee was led by Executive Vice President/ Regional Director Gary M. Hickey and Labor Relations Representative Phil Sedlock. A special thank you to the negotiating committee who worked tirelessly: Chief Steward Marty Wright, Barry Cartier, Kari Brooks, Scott Hudson and Deborah Parnapy.



## Triple Play for Roosevelt School District

Three long term contracts were ratified in Roosevelt School District for UPSEU members in the Clerical, Security, and Custodial, Grounds and Maintenance Units this May.

Entering into negotiations, the units were well aware of the financial difficulties in the district. Most important to our members was the desire to hold down the cost of health insurance, while achieving fair wage increases, both of which were achieved. Special thanks to the negotiating team members from each of the units for their extraordinary work: Sherron Eaddy, Linda Williams, Carol Downtin, Gail Wheaton, Etrulla Morris and Doris Squires of the Clerical Unit; Kevin Adams, Burt Cunningham and Doreen Sulkow of the Custodial, Grounds and Maintenance Unit; and Brea Woodall of the Security Unit.

## Mineola Library Ratifies First Contract



**MINEOLA LIBRARY NEGOTIATING TEAM**  
Cathy Gagevick and Kathleen D'Antonio

Mineola Memorial Library members recently ratified their first UPSEU negotiated contract.

Previously with another union, the group left CSEA after many years due to the lack of representation. Highlights of the new five year agreement include substantially improved dental and optical benefits, above average wage increases and increased longevity. UPSEU's Labor Relations Representative James Gangale, who headed up the negotiations, together with Labor Relations Representative Amanda Barker, thanked the team of Kathleen D'Antonio and Cathy Sagevick for all their hard work in achieving a great contract for their co-workers.

## Marlboro CSD Paraprofessionals Ratify Unanimously



By a 54 to 0 vote, UPSEU's Marlboro Central School District paraprofessional unit approved a new four agreement. The agreement provides for annual wage increases and numerous other improvements including a substantially increased longevity, increased holidays, increased bereavement leave, new labor-management committee, new interview committee and, for the most senior employees, a new top step differential.

UPSEU Executive Vice President Gary M. Hickey, who headed up the negotiations, praised the negotiating team of Unit President Lynn Martinez, Barbara Carofano, Linda Morales and Labor Relations Representative Bill Sullivan for their outstanding efforts, "The team's commitment to improvements for all members was impressive. The unit echoed my endorsement of the committee's performance by its unanimous approval."



**ROME CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT SECURITY UNIT**  
Labor Relations Representative Bob Stephens, Negotiating Team Members Lori De Marco and Robert Matyi with UPSEU Executive Vice President Gary M. Hickey

## UPSEU Columbia County Members Overwhelmingly Approve Pact

UPSEU's Columbia County members voted 87.5% to approve the terms of a new agreement. Annual wage increases, longevity increases, increased evening/night and weekend differentials and other improvement, highlighted the agreement. A contentious issue, health coverage was favorably resolved for the unit by limiting, and in some cases, reducing the cost to members.

UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. commended the nineteen member negotiating team for their terrific work, stating, "Negotiations are always difficult in Columbia County, with every negotiation having to go through the mediation process. But UPSEU and the unit pushed and prodded to get a fair agreement through the mediation process and once again, we did. PERB mediator Kevin Flanagan, in his third successful mediation for Columbia, once again was instrumental in helping the parties achieve an agreement."

The negotiating team included Michael Kutski, Donna Griffin, Gary Gumprecht, Christopher DeGraff, Dorothy March, Eileen Batycki, John Delaney, Phyllis Higgins, Lisa George, Barton Hover, Guy Hughes, Mary Ellen Madison, Kelly McDonald, Pat Moskaluk, Barbara Stedje, Donald Novak, Ann Delaney, Cindy Tipple, and Edward Godfroy.

# UPSEU MEMBER MILESTONES

## UPSEU Activist Claudette Bianco Retires



**CLAUDETTE BIANCO**  
Three Village Clerical

UPSEU's Unit President for its Three Village School District Clerical Unit, Claudette Bianco announced her retirement at a unit membership meeting on April 27, 2009. She will retire at the end of June. Claudette has led the unit for fifteen years and has been an activist for the rights of her co-workers and all UPSEU members," stated UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr.

In a tribute to Claudette's efforts, UPSEU President Boyle spoke of Claudette's tremendous work over the years including her developing an eye glass program for her members and their dependents, the only such program in the district. He commended her efforts a number of years ago in achieving pay equity for the clerical unit, which increased starting rates of pay, which many new members of the unit have benefitted from. President Boyle spoke of her tireless efforts and his

hundreds of conversations with Claudette day and night, on weekends and holidays in their work on behalf of the unit.

"You could not ask for a more dedicated leader," commented Boyle. "Claudette has always gone above the call of duty. She will be greatly missed by me and all of her co-workers. I know our great friendship that we have developed over the years will endure and that she will always be there for us," concluded Boyle.

## Colonie EMS Member Charles Rapazzo Honored

Charles Rapazzo, a UPSEU member from the Colonie EMS Unit was recently honored at the Sixth Annual Law and Order Awards Ceremony. Charles has received many commendations for saving lives and meritorious service to the community. One high point in his career was a commendation from Governor Pataki and the Superintendent of the New York State Police for saving the lives of three children who were critically injured in a plane crash and marooned on a mountain in bitter cold weather. Had it not been for the heroic actions of Charlie and the NYSP/Colonie EMS team, three children would not be alive today.

Charlie has saved countless lives, relieved the suffering of many people and has been a friend to all in the EMS community. He is widely regarded by his peers as an excellent paramedic and an example of the professionals that make up the Colonie EMS. Charlie is also a member of the UPSEU negotiating team and will retire this summer with thirty five years of service to the community. Congratulations and best wishes, Charlie.



**CHARLES RAPAZZO**  
Colonie EMS

*Dear Kevin,*

*As President of the clerical unit in Three Village School District for 15 years, it has been wonderful to have been represented by you and your incredible staff.*

*Our unit has made great strides since you began representing us more than 17 years ago. Our contracts, salaries, and working conditions have not just improved – they have skyrocketed, thanks to your expertise and devotion to representation. The change we made [from CSEA] to your organization was the best thing we ever did! Your management and policies truly serve your constituents in every aspect. You are always there for us, whether it is a discipline issue, advice or just pointing us in the right direction. Your organization has made it possible for many people to feel that they are protected against management and public opinion. You fight hard for each of us, every single day. You have more than lived up to the pledge you made so many years ago to be visible, vocal and available. Working along side of you, Ron, Marilyn, Kim and the rest of your staff has been a source of great pride for me personally. I know I can speak for my whole unit, when I say "thank you" is not enough.*

*Representing my unit has been my great passion, but it was easy with you by my side. As I look toward my retirement in June, I leave with many memories of the terrific job you have done for us. I also leave knowing they are still represented by the best union that ever existed. The years have flown by, but only because UPSEU made Three Village a better place to work. I will miss our frequent conversations, and our friendship. I thank you, not only as my union President, but also as my friend.*

*With pride and appreciation,  
Claudette Bianco, Clerical Unit President  
Three Village School District*

## UPSEU Losing Islip Clerical Unit President Carol Jensen to Retirement Incentive



**CAROL JENSEN**  
Islip Clerical

"When we negotiated for a retirement incentive for the members of Islip Public School's clerical unit, we knew that with members interested, it would ultimately save others from layoff and ultimately the unemployment line," remarked Regional Director Kim Nowakowski. "Little did we know that we also negotiated our way to the loss of an outstanding Unit President, Carol Jensen."

Carol Jensen, in addition to serving the Islip Public Schools, has served as president for the forty three member clerical unit. "In my early years with Islip Public Schools we were represented, or shall we say misrepresented, by the Civil Service Employees Union (CSEA/AFSCME)," recalled Jensen. "We never saw anyone from CSEA, our calls went unanswered, and our negotiations often left us disappointed. They may have been one of the largest unions in the state but they seemed to care very little about making a positive difference in our lives. CSEA tried to scare us into staying with them by telling us we would lose our pension and health insurance. We lost nothing, and what we gained was a union that cared about us and put their energies into fighting for us."

"She's been a friend and we will all certainly miss her," said President Kevin Boyle. "She has been instrumental in helping a number of her co-workers through some difficult situations and she certainly was key to the success at the bargaining table." Best wishes to Carol in her retirement!



Dear Mr. Boyle,

I have had the pleasure of working closely with my union representative, Kimberly Nowakowski, during the past year. She assisted me with a re-classification issue regarding my position. I am happy to say that, through our combined efforts, my job title has been upgraded from Clerk Typist to Senior Clerk Typist.

Although people are often quick to criticize, they seldom take the time to compliment someone for a job well done. Although I have thanked Kim for her support, I feel it is important to write this letter to let you know that Kim was a tremendous help to me. She was at all times, a true professional. Besides being very knowledgeable about the issues at hand, Kim was always attentive, courteous and responsive. She answered my phone calls in a timely manner and responded to my emails promptly. If Kim said she would get back to me with a piece of information, she was true to her word. There were times when she called me or emailed me from her home after regular business hours.

Whenever I voiced my frustrations to Kim at how long the re-classification process was taking, she would listen intently and then calmly offer suggestions as to what could be done to move things along. When the personnel staff at the Office of Human Resources failed to contact me in response to my inquiries, Kim was always willing to place a call on my behalf.

I am very happy that my persistence has paid off, but I could not have done it without Kim's help. I have greatly benefitted from her experience. I have also seen her interact with other employees in my office, extending to them the same kind of respect, courtesy and professionalism that was shown to me. Kim takes her job very seriously and she performs it very well.

Rosalie A. Lucia

Northport/ East Northport Clerical Unit

On behalf of myself and my mother Diana, I would like to thank UPSEU for the scholarship I was awarded. It is being put to the worthwhile use of paying my student loans. Again, thank you for your very gracious award.

Tim Gozaloff

Sayville Clerical Unit

Dear Kevin,

It is with regret that I must hereby submit my resignation as Ridgewood W C Shop Steward and as a member of UPSEU effective immediately. As you know, I have been promoted to Supervisor of Billing & Collections in the Ridgewood Water Department and as such, I will now join the ranks of USW.

For the most part, I have enjoyed the challenge of being Shop Steward for the past eight years, a duty that I took very seriously. I believe the crowning glory of my tenure was bringing UPSEU into Ridgewood. I further feel that the white and blue collar employees of the Village of Ridgewood are in a much better position due to the representation of UPSEU.

Furthermore, my affiliation with both you and James Gangale was informative, enlightening, fun (sometimes) and frustrating (sometimes). I thank you both for assisting me and educating me. And, I also wish to thank your staff for all of their help as well. I know my replacement will appreciate all the support you provide. I will offer my assistance, if needed, to ease the transition for the new steward.

Thank you all again from the bottom of my heart. This is a very bittersweet time for me, I'm looking forward to the challenge of becoming a supervisor and joining the ranks of USW, but I'm going to miss my interaction with you.

Sharon DeMarco

Village of Ridgewood

To Kevin and Brandon,

Just wanted to say thank you for helping to fix the problem at The Pines. All seems well now. I'm glad Brandon is on our team. Thanks again.

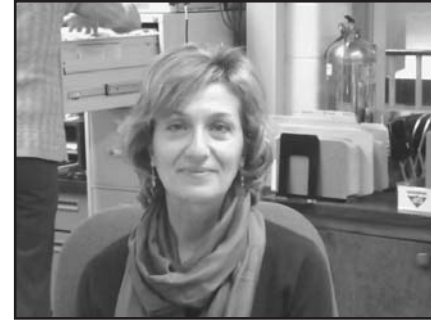
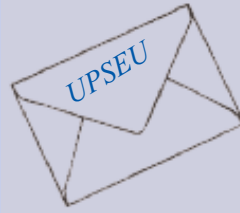
Diana Gonzalez

Hauppauge School District

Thank you to Kim and Amanda for being there last night and to Kim for opening up the floor. Thank you to Amanda for her support. It helps knowing you are there watching our back and also shielding us.

Eileen Mc Cartney, RN

Oyster Bay East Norwich RN Unit



**Rosalie Lucia**

Northport/ East Northport Clerical Unit

UPSEU member Rosalie Lucia is happy with her upgraded job re-classification

## CONGRATULATIONS GRANDMA!

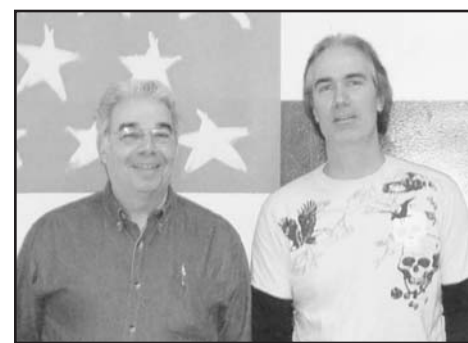


**Jean "Grandma" Raccioppi**

Selden Middle School Monitors

Congratulations to UPSEU member Jean Raccioppi on her distinguished service award at the recent SPARC Awards Presentation at Centereach High School. (Special Performance Achievement Recognition and Commendation)

Jean has been a caring, conscientious and devoted employee for close to twenty four years. She greets students with a warm welcome as they enter the cafeteria, engages students in positive conversations and strives to ensure each and every child is recognized and assisted. Way to go, Jean!



**Jerry Mangone and Jim Moran**

West Islip Shop Stewards

# UPSEU Update

## ANTI UNION LEGISLATION DEFEATED IN NEW YORK

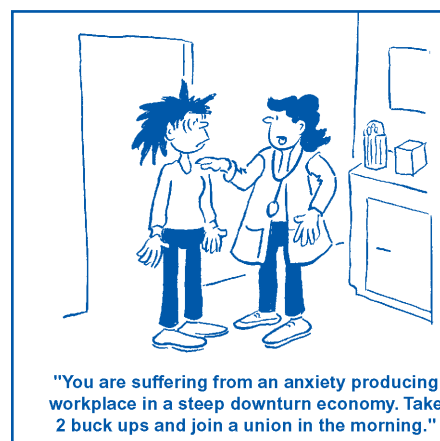
UPSEU is pleased to advise you that through its affiliation with the Public Employees Conference ("PEC") bills that would have had a negative impact on our members and all public employees throughout the state were defeated. The first bill would have placed a \$1.00 per claim tax on all insurance companies including union benefit plans. This could have drastically increased claim processing costs, impacting the ability to maintain benefit levels. The second bill would have contained a Tier V in the retirement system. All unions stood up against this change, leading state leaders to withdraw this demand. Both are issues that unions anticipate fighting against in the future; we will continue to advocate for our members' interests in this regard.

Unfortunately, with regard to the Tier V plan issue, the future was almost immediate in that the state of NY successfully convinced CSEA and PEF (two unions who are not members of PEC), to agree to a Tier V plan. At press time, it appears that all new local government employees will be forced to have this Tier V thrust upon them, with nothing in return for them or existing local government employees.

## UPSEU Scholarships Available

Every year UPSEU has scholarships available to UPSEU members and their dependent children under the age of 23. For eligibility requirements and an application, go to our website at [www.upseu.org](http://www.upseu.org) under Member Benefits or call UPSEU to request one.

**Annual Application Deadline is July 1st.**



Savings for Members of UPSEU

**Compare Sprint with Verizon or AT&T and save with Sprint.**

With AT&T and Verizon plans, you pay more than comparable family plans from Sprint.

Compare for yourself:

Members of UPSEU receive a percentage off the rates below

Sprint	Verizon	AT&T
Everything Messaging Family 1500	FamilyShare Select 1400	FamilyTalk Talk & Text 1400
<b>\$99<sup>99</sup>/mo</b>	<b>\$119<sup>99</sup>/mo</b>	<b>\$119<sup>99</sup>/mo</b>
with 2-year agreement.		



These plans include 1400-1500 shared anytime minutes and unlimited messaging for two phones.

Other monthly charges apply. See below.\*\* Existing Sprint customers can switch Sprint plans without a contract extension.

### Start saving today!

Sprint Nextel offers exciting discounts to UPSEU MEMBERS please visit [storelocator.sprint.com](http://storelocator.sprint.com) for more details. For more information, please visit UPSEU benefits page.

Please carefully review the Service Plans & Rates guide for more information on important terms & conditions for service plans and features. \*\*Monthly charges exclude taxes, Sprint Surcharges (incl. USF charge of up to 9.5% (varies quarterly), Administrative Charge (up to \$1.99/line/mo.), Regulatory Charge (\$0.26/line/mo.) & state/local fees by area). Sprint Surcharges are not taxes or gov't required charges and are subject to change. Details: [Sprint.com/taxesandfees](http://Sprint.com/taxesandfees). Comparisons based on publicly-available information as of 02/05/09 comparing base monthly rates, excluding taxes, surcharges and fees. May require up to a \$36 activation fee/line, credit approval, deposit. Up to \$200 early termination fee/line applies. Individual-Liable Offer: Applies to individual-liable lines eligible for a discount under their employer's services agreement. Sprint Service Plans offer ends 07/11/09. Add'l Anytime Min.: Up to \$0.45/min. Nights: Mon-Thurs: 7pm - 7am; Weeks: Fri: 7pm - Mon: 7am. Partial rates charged as full min. Mobile-to-Mobile: Applies to calls placed between Sprint & Nextel phones (not available while roaming). Messaging: Includes text, picture and video for domestic messages sent or received. International messages are \$0.45 sent or received. SMS voice messages may incur an additional dist charge of \$0.45. Usage Limitation: Sprint may terminate service if (1) more than 800 minutes, (2) a majority of minutes or (3) a majority of kilobytes in a given month are used while roaming. NVP Empl. Discount: Discount available to eligible employees of the company participating in the NVP program. Subject to change according to the company's agreement with Sprint. Available on select plans only. Discount applies to monthly service charges only. Discount excludes Simply Everything individual and family plans. Other Terms: Coverage: not available everywhere. Nationwide Sprint and Nextel National Networks reach over 275 and 274 million people, respectively. The Sprint Mobile Broadband Network reaches over 262 million people. Offers & service plan features not available in all markets/retail locations or for all phones/networks. Other restrictions apply. See store representative, in-store material or [Sprint.com](http://Sprint.com) for details. ©2009 Sprint. Sprint and the logo are trademarks of Sprint. Other marks are the properties of their respective owners.

General Membership Meetings are held the Third Monday of March and October at our Headquarters at 3555 Veterans Highway, Suite H, Ronkonkoma