

**United Public Service
Employees Union**



The Advocate

We Are Making a Difference in the Workplace

Fall 2015

UPSEU Welcomes Plymouth Police to COPS Division after Unanimous Victory Over AFSCME!



PLYMOUTH POLICE DEPARTMENT

Front left to right: Animal Control Police Officer Cesar Beiros, School Resource Police Officer Steven Binette, Sergeant John D'Aniello, K9 Officer Corey Somoskey, Officer Sean Heald, Officer Dean Cyr, Sergeant Jonathon Marino, and Officer Ronald Rogozinski.
Back left to right: Sergeant Randall Foster, Officer Michael Smegielski, Officer Kevin Sulek, and Officer Christopher Hawley.



**United Public
Service Employees
Union**

*Making a Difference
in the Workplace*

Our Mission

UPSEU is committed to being the preeminent 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.

UPSEU Officers

Kevin E. Boyle, Jr.
President

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Executive Vice President

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Vice President

Randy Tillman
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A Message from President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr.

As we approach the holiday season, I can't help but wish that we would consider the holidays to begin with Veterans Day rather than with Thanksgiving Day, as most people think. We spend Thanksgiving and Christmas, Hanukkah or Kwanza with family and friends thoroughly focused on the meaning of the days. Yet how many Americans "spend" Veterans Day shopping the sales, rather than spending the day truly appreciating the sacrifices made by our armed services men and women and the veterans who no longer serve?

Do most Americans even know the history of why Veterans Day is celebrated on November 11th? President Woodrow Wilson first proclaimed the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month as Armistice Day. It included parades and public gatherings, as well as a cessation of business at 11 a.m. Not only has the 11 a.m. cessation of business been long forgotten, conversely the day seems to focus on Veterans Day sales throughout the day and continuing through the following weekend!

In 1954, following the end of World War II and through the lobbying efforts made by veterans, the name was changed from Armistice Day to Veterans Day to recognize the sacrifices of veterans made to bring about peace. Between 1971 and 1978 the day was actually moved to the last Monday in October for purposes of improving tourism. It was President Gerald Ford who enacted the law to return Veterans Day to November 11th in an effort to bring it back to its initial solemnity.

Veterans Day may have been moved back to its original date, but have we kept the original purpose? I believe not only that we haven't, but that veterans deserve more than one day of celebration. When you think of those who serve in the armed forces and our veterans, remember they served to protect us 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. One day hardly seems enough in return.

So as we barrel to the holiday season, remember the many veterans who now need our help. It is sad that one out of three homeless people are in fact, veterans. Of those homeless veterans, 76% suffer from drug or alcohol abuse and/or mental illness. Many others suffer from post traumatic stress disorder, brain injury or other disabilities. Many have difficulty in transferring back to non-combat family and friend connections or in transferring their skills and experience to work, which prevent their successful return to society.

Flying our nation's flag with honor at your home or business, wearing it on clothing or displaying bumper stickers (yeah, showing my age), is not enough. Nor is only one day of appreciation sufficient for what these veterans have given of themselves and the continuous after effects that they and their families endure. There are many ways to make every day an opportunity for appreciation. Some examples of what volunteers can do include US Veterans Administration programs such as Welcome Home, Transportation Network, Homeless Veterans Program and/ or volunteering at VA National Cemeteries. You might also consider volunteering for non-governmental charities such as Habitat for Humanity Veterans Build, Wounded Warrior Project or the USO. You can donate gently used goods to programs that serve veterans, soldiers and their families. For a one-to-one experience, you can write to a soldier or send a care package. You might also consider donating your airline miles so that families can visit an injured service member abroad, or for a soldier to come home on leave. These are just a few examples of how you can show your appreciation, but make sure that the organization is legitimate and that help is going directly to veterans and not to those who run the charity.

Check our website for links to organizations that you can look into for volunteer or donation opportunities. Let's show our love of America in our actions throughout the year!

Congratulations 2015 Scholarship Winners!

Paul T. Burch \$1,000 Awards

Benjamin Winkler

Fire Protection Technology
Son of Russell
County of Herkimer

"As a volunteer fireman, I have found a passion for caring and helping others."



Nicole Kloppenborg

Criminology
Daughter of Richard
Town of Islip

"I will work to make my community and the world a safer place to live."



Dependent Child \$500 Awards

Anthony Ashline's dependent Erin
Danielle Brendese's dependent Nolan
Daniel Callahan's dependent Brittany
Xiu Chen's dependent Wesley Zhang
Scott Ciccarella's dependent Jessica
Jacqueline Cormier's dependent Jaimie
Robert S. Denhardt's dependent Robert M.
Michele Deshler's dependent Keith Hackett
Kathleen DeStasio's dependent Brandon
Debra DeThomasis' dependent Lauren
Timothy Dimick's dependent Alexis
Pamela Ferber's dependent Max Wordon
Karla Gagnon's dependent Peter
Cynthia Gehlbach's dependent Thomas
Gary Goldstein's dependent Iliza
Tracey Gutelius' dependent David
Oleg Huhko's dependent Anna

Celeste Kriebick's dependent Benjamin Natelson
Laura Kurash's dependent Heather
Paula Laferreire's dependent Jacob
Shari Meshulam's dependent Jesse
Laura Morrissey's dependent Steven
Margaret Oettinger's dependent Michael Kelly
Susan O'Neill's dependent Colleen
Nancy Rapp's dependent Cassandra
Leslie Roth's dependent Geri
Michael Roy's dependent Devan
Hector Salcedo's dependent Korina
Carol Schott's dependent Maureen
Robert Talerico's dependent Robert J.
Debra Virga's dependent Amy
Diane Vitagliano's dependent Kate
Laura Washburn's dependent Kimberly
John Weber's dependent Colleen

Member \$500 Awards

Cristina Ayala
Carla Boeree
Jacinta Bowman

Laurence Cerretani
Pam D'Agostino
Jennifer Hart

Mary Obanhein
Josip Peperni
Tamra Robinson

UPSEU is Helping our Members and Families Meet their Educational Goals!

Special thanks to the Scholarship Committee of Vice President Kim Nowakowski, Regional Director Kathy Wright-Muzio, Labor Relations Representatives Linda Kirnan and Michael Wilson, and members Yolanda Alvarez, Jamison Facteau, Sue McAvoy, Erin Messina, Debra Strange, and Steve Jeffers.

New Members

Greene County Public Health and Correction Nurses Join UPSEU

The Greene County Public Health and Correction Nurses overwhelmingly selected UPSEU to replace their current representative. “We were contacted by several Greene County nurses in the fall of last year,” said UPSEU Regional Coordinator Kathy A. Wright-Muzio. She went on to explain, “Our Columbia County nurses had recommended they give us a call when they reached their fourth year of not having a contract.” It also just so happened that two of the nurses had also worked previously in UPSEU represented units, knew Wright-Muzio personally and were familiar with UPSEU’s commitment to personalized, professional representation.

In speaking with the nurses, not only were they frustrated over the lack of an agreement but, they were paying extremely high union dues and receiving very little in return. A petition to decertify their representative, the New York State Nurses Association (NYSNA), was filed and on the date the ballots were mailed, NYSNA notified UPSEU and the County they were disclaiming interest in representing the nurses and would not be participating in the election. PERB then cancelled the election and immediately certified UPSEU as their representative.

“There is a lot of ground to cover in the coming months and we are anxious to get moving towards a new contract that our new members will be pleased with,” stated Wright-Muzio.



Norwalk BOE Unit Dumps AFSCME



Norwalk BOE Custodial, Maintenance & Security
Rob Bartlett, Carmelo Somma and Unit President Charlie Wyatt

Voting nearly unanimously for UPSEU, the Norwalk BOE Custodial, Security and Maintenance Unit is yet another AFSCME unit to join the UPSEU ranks. The unit of 112 did extensive research to determine their options, due to their constant frustration with the lack of AFSCME representation. After learning of UPSEU through units we represent, the group reached out to learn more about what happened when they changed unions and what their experience had been with UPSEU as their representative.

“The fact that so many employees made it a point to vote and have their voices heard is a huge step in the right direction in achieving the common goal of a stronger, more professional level of representation in the workplace,” stated UPSEU Regional Director Ronald Suraci.

North Haven DPW Ditches CILU for UPSEU

When North Haven DPW employees made the decision to seek out a change in union representation, they reached out to neighboring towns to determine which union option would be best. Over and over, UPSEU came back as the union that those units felt was the best union for them. As a result, several members contacted UPSEU in an effort to have that desire become a reality.

The unit comprised of 33 employees, was previously represented by CILU (UE) and became tired of the same song and dance approach from them. The members reached out to current UPSEU members in the Town of North Haven for the final stamp of approval. In speaking with the North Haven BOE employees and the North Haven police officers, they heard nothing but the highest praise for UPSEU, which helped to reconfirm the members’ initial belief that they needed to join UPSEU.

This past August, the North Haven DPW employees cast their official secret ballots in favor of UPSEU. We welcome North Haven DPW to the growing UPSEU family!

Guilford Paraeducators and Administrative Assistants Vote for UPSEU

As an independent association, the Guilford Association of Educational Support Services determined that they needed much more support. They reviewed their options including speaking with other units in Guilford that UPSEU represents and decided UPSEU was the right fit for them.

After notifying the membership of their support of an affiliation with UPSEU, the Executive Board conducted a secret ballot vote with 95% of the participating unit members voting to approve the affiliation. The unit of 116 members is now formally affiliated with UPSEU.

“UPSEU welcomes the GAESS membership to the UPSEU family and we look forward to going to work for the unit,” stated UPSEU Regional Coordinator Matt Geer. “We especially want to thank GAESS Unit President Sharon Johnson and the Executive Board for their diligent work on behalf of the unit, as well as the entire GAESS membership for the confidence they showed in UPSEU,” Geer went on to say.

Employers and employees alike have learned that in union there is strength.
Franklin D. Roosevelt

Hadley Police and Blandford Highway Employees Join UPSEU

The Massachusetts Labor Board recently counted secret ballots for two separate units which UPSEU had filed petitions for. UPSEU was seeking to represent the Hadley Police Officers and the Blandford Highway bargaining unit members.

The Hadley Police Officers, comprised of approximately 17 members, who were previously represented by the Teamsters voted nearly unanimously to join UPSEU. The Hadley Police Officers became tired of the lackluster representation provided to them over the years by the Teamsters and sought a more suitable union with vast experience representing police officers.

In addition, the Blandford Highway employees also voted nearly unanimously to join UPSEU. The Blandford Highway employees were unrepresented and desired a strong union to represent their interests. After researching several options, the membership agreed that UPSEU was the best choice!



Rockland County DPW Members

Putnam Municipal Employees Vote to Leave SEIU

Employees of the Town of Putnam, consisting of Town Hall, WPCA, and Public Works employees voted nearly unanimously to leave NAGE-SEIU and join UPSEU. This is the second unit in the Town of Putnam to join UPSEU this year. The Putnam Police Officers voted in February to leave IBPO/SEIU and join UPSEU COPS Division.



Plymouth Police Officers

John D'Aniello, Randall Foster, Steven Binette, Cesar Beiros

North Haven Dispatchers Vote Unanimously to Join UPSEU

The North Haven Emergency Dispatchers made a statement by unanimously voting to leave AFSCME and become part of the UPSEU/COPS family.

UPSEU COPS Division now represents the Police Officers, Department of Public Works and the Emergency Dispatchers in the Town of North Haven, Connecticut. UPSEU Regional Director Ron Suraci, commenting on the victory stated, "This is the third unit to join UPSEU from North Haven this year. UPSEU has been growing substantially in each town where we represent numerous unionized employees from the various towns, all due to the hard work of our employees who are dedicated to help the members we represent."

West Haven Police Vote UPSEU in Landslide Election

In a state run election, the officers of the 125 person West Haven Police Department, clearly chose UPSEU COPS Division for their future representation. AFSCME only received 4 votes from the membership. "I know that they will enjoy the benefits that we provide to our membership," stated Regional Director Ronald Suraci.

Essex Police Make the Switch to UPSEU

The members of the Essex Police Union voted unanimously to leave IBPO/NAGE and join UPSEU/COPS Division. Essex was one of the many police unions to join UPSEU/COPS in 2015 due to the work that our representatives provide on behalf of our members. UPSEU COPS Division's record is spreading fast across the state and as a result we have been getting calls from police unions all over the state wanting to join UPSEU/COPS. "We welcome the officers and look forward to a productive future," stated UPSEU/COPS Regional Director Ronald Suraci.

East Haven Police Join UPSEU

With the continued debacle facing Council 15 of AFSCME and the members forced merger into Council 4, who don't represent police officers, the police units of Council 15 are fleeing as fast as they can. In an election conducted by the State Labor Relations Board, 120 police officers employed by East Haven voted to join UPSEU. "Nearly 2,400 police officers have voted to leave Council 15 AFSCME in just the past eighteen months," stated UPSEU COPS Division Regional Director Ron Suraci. UPSEU COPS Division has become the leading police union throughout the State of Connecticut.

Woodbridge Police Join COPS Division

UPSEU/COPS Division continues to grow as the members of the Woodbridge Police Union voted unanimously to leave IBPO/NAGE and join UPSEU/COPS Division. The officers were among many of the police unions to join UPSEU/COPS in 2015. IBPO/NAGE is quickly becoming a thing of the past and simply cannot keep up with the needs of officers in Connecticut. We welcome the Woodbridge Officers and look forward to a long and prosperous future for our new members.

Monroe Nurses Secure Above Average Wage Increases

Just two weeks following the expiration of their old contract, in early July, Monroe BOE Nurses overwhelmingly approved a new collective bargaining agreement which grants unit members above average wage increases with step movement in each year of a three year deal. Additionally, with UPSEU attorney Brooke Sherer serving as chief negotiator, members will now benefit from new contract language, the utilization of seniority in the event of layoffs, and the creation of a new bargaining unit position which maintains the hours and rate of pay for up to two years for any member should they be transferred if the position becomes vacant.

“The Monroe Nurses bargaining unit was very pleased we could reach a deal with the Monroe Board of Education. We are grateful for the assistance of UPSEU’s Brooke Sherer and our Labor Representative Cory Garfman,” said Unit Co-President Patty Severson.

Town of Islip Blue and White Collar Members Approve New Pacts by over 90% Margin

On the heels of a settlement of a longstanding court case victory and ultimate settlement of the “take home car case” matter, UPSEU and the Town of Islip reached an agreement on a new contract prior to the expiration of the existing contract. Included in the agreements are annual wage increases and a first time recognition of service time with negotiated increases. Also included is the return of personal and sick days for post 2010 hires, which were lost in givebacks granted by the previous union, Teamsters City Union Local 237. Individual pay level adjustments were achieved for some unit members as well. Unlike the Teamsters who still represent two other groups of town employees, and who agreed to a penalty in retiree health coverage if an employee doesn’t retire during the first year of eligibility, UPSEU’s agreements contain no such changes. In fact, the UPSEU contracts do not include a single concession.

In its two negotiated agreements since becoming the unit’s bargaining representative, UPSEU has secured annual wage increases and pay level adjustments for a number of unit members. The City Union never negotiated pay level adjustments in the negotiations for over 40 years and as well, agreed to 10 wage freezes with other givebacks in the 18 years prior to UPSEU taking over.

UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. commended the team of Frank Correira, James Jennison, Steve Aloia, John A. Mattia, Bernard Dennis, Kevin Horrmann and Thomas Keane for their outstanding efforts as well as UPSEU’s Peter Pollak and Pat DeFelice for their assistance with the Blue Collar Unit. Boyle as well commended the negotiating team representing the White Collar Unit which included Anna Christina Pollizato, Barbara Maltese, Alicia Toturo, Lisa Pfafe and Theresa Baio for their terrific work on behalf of the unit. He also thanked White Collar liaison Ellen Pleasant and UPSEU Vice President Kim Nowakowski for their assistance throughout the process.

North Haven BOE Employees Score Victory with Vacation Allocation Agreement

Shortly after dumping their old union and joining UPSEU, two members of the North Haven BOE Secretaries, Paraprofessionals and Security bargaining unit filed separate grievances which ultimately forced the District to end its longstanding practice of refusing to credit accrued vacation time in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement and the Federal Medical Leave Act.

With assistance from UPSEU attorney Liz Ditman, bargaining unit members ultimately scored a major victory in grievance mediation by securing an agreement for any new hire and ten-month employee who move to twelve month positions, to immediately receive vacation credit upon eligibility, when previously the District required an eligibility waiting period of one fiscal year.

Additionally, new hires and twelve month employees were always previously prohibited from accumulating and utilizing vacation credit from one year to the next. The new agreement, however, stipulates that no new or recently hired twelve month bargaining unit member will lose earned vacation days if they are unable to use their accrued time while in their new position.

Lastly, the new agreement further allows employees whose anniversary date of hire occurs before or during any FMLA leave to utilize their accrued vacation days prior to the District’s previously imposed July 1 deadline. “Shortly after joining UPSEU our new union responded quickly by bringing this issue with grievances to the attention of the District. These agreements will now allow members the benefits they should have always had,” stated North Haven member Daria Gambardella.

UPSEU Wins Battle Over Working Conditions

This past May, one of the superintendent of schools on Long Island was said to have made comments about how teachers and students didn't have air conditioning so it would be unfair if the clerical staff did.

UPSEU Vice President Kim Nowakowski jumped right on the issue. "First I spoke with the Director of Personnel where I heard the same story. I then told the members that if they had a medical condition to get a doctor's note stating that the air conditioning was necessary so that we could make individual cases for accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act," stated Kim. Simultaneously she spoke to the School Board President about the employees and union's right under the Taylor Law that the past practice of providing air conditioning had to continue. She explained that there clearly was a long, consistent practice of allowing air conditioning, so the District had an obligation to notify the union and negotiate with the union if they wanted to end the practice.

"Members don't realize that even though something isn't stated in the contract, it doesn't mean that the District can take it away. The key is that it is well known by both parties, is a long standing practice, and has been consistently provided," stated Nowakowski. Shortly thereafter it was explained that it was a misunderstanding and the air conditioner unit was turned back on.

"It was a stressful two days for both the members and me, since we knew the hot, humid weather days were coming. An improper practice charge takes time to make it through to a Public Employment Relations Board hearing and decision processes, so I had to approach this on a number of levels to get it done quickly," said Nowakowski.

On hearing of the success, President Boyle remarked, "It is times like these that members can appreciate our on-site representation and adequate staffing ratios which allow us to fully focus on the issues important to our members."



Bergen County Parks Supervisors Settle Contract



Bergen County Parks Department Supervisors Negotiating Team

Bill Schaper, Dominic Spitaleri and Bill Kingsley (not pictured)

After a long and arduous battle, the Bergen County Parks Supervisors have finally come to an agreement with the County of Bergen. The group first came to UPSEU seeking to improve their negotiation clout. At that time, the County was offering no increase for two years and was expecting givebacks. The group was also seeking to recover language that had been pried from them in the previous negotiation. That language directly affected their overtime payment. The new administration had already settled contracts with two groups that included a 0% increase for the years 2011 and 2012. They were attempting to impose those same terms on the newly affiliated UPSEU group.

Under the guidance of Labor Relations Representative Mark A. McCart, the group stood strong and eventually forced the County to mediation. In mediation, they were successful in recouping the lost language and limiting the wage freeze to one year.

"The committee of Dominick Spitaleri, William Schaper and William Kingsley together with the members were the real key to success here. They communicated their needs clearly and were patient enough to wait out the administration since mediation is a tiresome process and the membership was getting restless," stated McCart. Retroactive raises were also included in the agreement.

Westhampton Beach Operations Negotiating Team

James Jones, Tom Hoblin, Wendy Wilms, UPSEU Representative Brandon Nasierowski, Robert Speruta, CGM Unit President Brian Laferty, Jarod Pressgrove and Nick Schillaci (not shown)

Huntington Aides, Monitors & Assistants Unanimously Ratify Pact

A new agreement will provide annual wage increases retroactive to the contract's expiration for the Huntington Aides, Monitors and Assistants. After an extensive negotiating process and three efforts by a NY State mediator to bring closure to a contract agreement, UPSEU filed for fact-finding. After the appointment of a fact finder and as the hearing was approaching, an agreement was reached. Monitors will receive an additional personal day under the agreement.

UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. commended Donna Blair for her leadership throughout the process and as well the excellent work of Unit Executive Board members Nancy Lavery, Marilyn Landman and Barbara Waller during this frustrating process. Barbara and Marilyn are retiring and President Boyle commended their good work at the ratification meeting. Congratulations Barbara and Marilyn on your retirement and thanks for your great work on behalf of the unit.

Mahwah Members Secure Pact



Mahwah Negotiating Team Members
Gina Dunko and Ann Pope

With the exceptional guidance and support of Jim Gangale and Mark McCart, the Township of Mahwah White Collar Collective Bargaining Unit has reached an agreement for a three year contract with the Mayor, Council and Administration. The agreement included annual raises as well as additional dollars to the step plan in order to keep our members moving forward.

“Because of the firm commitment and dedication of these two gentlemen, the Township of Mahwah employees will begin to benefit from salary increases that had become virtually non-existent due to the economic downturn of these past years. Finally, some good news for our hardworking employees and hats off to Jim and Mark!” stated Mahwah Shop Steward Ann Pope.

Boro of Edgewater Members Nearly Unanimously Approve Contract



Boro of Edgewater Negotiating Team
Tim Higgins, Shop Steward Joseph Chevalier, Angelo Salicetti, (standing) Alexander Hallstein

Annual wage increases, improved uniform allowances and a doubling of the eye glass allowance were all included in a new agreement for the Village of Edgewater members. UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Jim Gangale commended the the efforts of team members Tim Higgins, Angelo Salicetto, Alexander Hallstein and Shop Steward Joseph Chevalier for delivering an excellent agreement to the the unit.

Northport Clerical Unit Approves Agreement

A new 5 year agreement that increases wages annually was overwhelmingly approved by UPSEU's Northport clerical membership. Health insurance, a central issue in the negotiations was resolved with an agreement to limit an increase to 1% in the fourth year of the contract. The negotiations went through mediation and ultimately fact finding before an agreement could be reached.

UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. commended the negotiating team of Doreen Christ, Christl Olsen, Maureen Callaghan, Wanda Sarro, Susan Shelton Buehler and Bernice Holstrom (retired) for their work throughout the process and UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Amanda Barker for her assistance throughout the negotiations.

Fighting and Winning

UPSEU Secures Appellate Victory on Behalf of Members

UPSEU secured a court victory of behalf of two Westbury School District members. (one who was wrongfully demoted, and the other member who had been laid off)

UPSEU initially had won an arbitration which the District appealed to the State Supreme Court. After UPSEU's victory, the District again appealed, and this time lost at the Appellate Division.

"With back pay accumulating into the hundreds of thousands of dollars, it is our hope that the District will implement the initial findings of the arbitrator which the courts have affirmed," stated UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Randy Tillman. UPSEU will continue to fight for the rights of our members.

Arbitration for Promoted County Employee Is Resolved

When an Oneida County employee was promoted from a senior to a principal position, since the contract had not been ratified yet, the promotional salary was based on the older pay scale. Once the contract was ratified and the member received her retroactivity, it did not include her position being moved to the appropriate step in the new pay scale.

UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Linda Kirnan immediately filed a grievance which then went to arbitration. The arbitrator stated that since the County did not compensate appropriately in 2014 and 2015, the County needed to correct its records to show that the member was placed at the appropriate step and paid her the difference between the amount they paid her and the amount owed.

"We are pleased that the arbitrator agreed with our interpretation of the contract and that UPSEU was able to ensure she received her rightful salary," said Kirnan.

UPSEU Wins Major Arbitration for Hempstead Member

Upon being promoted to Head III Title, UPSEU Hempstead member Kevin Robinson was improperly placed on Step 10, even though his years of service qualified him for Step 18. Arbitrator Robert Simmelkjaer, Esq. found through the credible testimony of UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Brain Honahan and other members, as well as a consistent contractual practice that Mr. Robinson should be placed on Step 18. As a result, Kevin was awarded significant back pay.

Alternative Work Schedules Continue to be Explored in Columbia County

For the past two years, the Columbia countywide Labor Management Committee has worked towards identifying departments where alternative work schedules could feasibly be entertained without causing an undue financial and operational hardship. Independent of Labor/Management, there were two departments where alternative schedules were negotiated several years ago. One department had expanded its hours, which brought up the issue of work shift changes. The other department needed to remain compliant with state requirements, so they needed uninterrupted time for staff to complete their documentation.

"Unfortunately, this is not an easy or speedy process," said UPSEU Regional Coordinator Kathy Wright-Muzio. "We have to survey staff to determine what people want, prepare mock schedules to determine if coverage can be achieved, and then contend with and address all of the concerns of the department administration," she continued.

At present there are proposals underway for two additional departments to pilot compressed schedules, as well as a modification to an existing department's compressed work schedule.

New Columbia County Departmental Labor/Management Committee Launched

UPSEU and Columbia County have recently committed to launching a Labor/Management Committee in the Mental Health Department. This committee will be tasked with discussing issues of concern raised by both employees and the department administration.

"Labor Management Committees are not only invaluable in addressing non-contractual operational items, but they also serve as a great channel of communication," stated UPSEU Regional Coordinator Kathy Wright-Muzio.

UPSEU Mailbox



Dear Jim,
I so appreciate your thoughtfulness and generosity. Thank you for caring and all your support through the years. All the best to the best!
Grace, Mineola

Dear Mike,
After almost 15 years of fighting and getting nowhere, I'm finally going to be able to breathe a little better come January. Just wanted to say thank you for everything. I appreciate all that was done.
Theresa Hart, New Paltz Police

Dear Ms. Nowakowski,
I would like to thank UPSEU for the scholarship award and we are grateful for this opportunity. Thanks too for your help in the process.
Paula LaFerriere, Rensselaer County

Dear Kim,
Thank you for your speech last night at the Board of Education meeting. It was great and means a lot.
Sue Signer, Sachem Central School

Dear Linda,
Thank you for the comfort and support you have given me during this very difficult time in my life and showing me how you can relate.
Thank you so much.
Roseann Starsiak, MVCC

Members in the News



Congratulations to UPSEU member Leon Russell on his retirement from Hempstead School District. Pictured left to right are Glen Bucknor, UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Brian Honahan and Leon Russell.

UPSEU Oldest Member Retires

Commack Public Library employee Michael Cacioppo recently retired at the age of 97. Michael began working at the library at the age of 72 as a page employee. UPSEU Vice President Kim Nowakowski negotiated a retirement incentive as part of the last round of collective bargaining. With the incentive, he received a dollar amount for each year of service pro-rated to his part time work schedule.

"I don't know if we we have any other member, now or in the future who will beat this record," remarked President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. He continued, "But with folks living longer and the government talking about raising the rate for social security retirement, we will see."

"Special thanks to the negotiating team of Co-Presidents Maureen Armstrong and Nancy Paszkiewicz and members Judith Calderone, Suzanne McGuire, Phyllis Calev and Lisa Cavallaro for working so intensely to make the retirement incentive happen for Michael and others," concluded Nowakowski. Congratulations, Michael!

TOWN OF REDDING HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT





Making a Difference in the Workplace



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