

**United Public Service
Employees Union**



The Advocate

We Are Making a Difference in the Workplace

Spring 2015

UPSEU Roosevelt Members Rally for Fair Contract Negotiations!



Roosevelt School District Members

front row: Eydie Smith, Unit President Doris Squires, back row: Debra Rainey, Joan Golden, Patricia Forbes, Silvia Melgarejo, UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Randy Tillman, Stephen Kwakye, David Dillon, Paul Squires



**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

Gary M. Hickey
Executive Vice President

Kimberly Nowakowski
Vice President

Randy Tillman
Secretary/Treasurer

James Gangale
Recording Secretary/Trustee

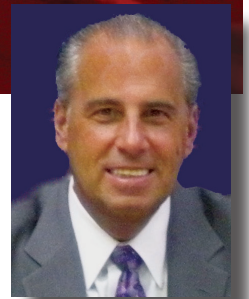
The Advocate is
published bi-annually.

Linda Pickwick
Editor/Designer

Visit our Website
www.upseu.org

1-800-833-3688
631-738-8773
Fax: 631-738-7236

A Message from President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr.



We all feel stress at work from time to time, but when you are treated differently than your co-workers, it's time to contact the union. Too often, members keep quiet about their situation at work, in the hope that it will stop on its own. Many are afraid of retaliation from management if they should report it. Based on my experience with members, I can say with confidence that the mistreatment rarely if ever, ends on its own. Those who do contact the union often say they just want us to document it in our files, but do nothing about it. As a union representative, we want to help make the difference in your working life; that's what the union is all about.

For those who are not ready to step forward to register a complaint, my suggestion is to buy a notebook and document the issue. Keep track of what happened, when it happened, who was there, what was said, how you felt, and why you felt that way. Not only is it cathartic to write it down, but it can also be very useful in the event that you pursue a discrimination, harassment or retaliation case.

When you document the incidents, it is important that you follow a few rules. Write in your log book as soon as possible so the information is accurate; try to do this within twenty four hours. Give as much information as you can and keep a running log so an arbitrator or hearing officer can see that the log was created in chronological order as it happened. Do not use foul language or name calling, unless you are documenting the use of it. Remember to keep it professional. Maintain the log in your personal possession so that it doesn't suddenly disappear. If you have emails or memos, print copies and file them in a personal folder that you keep either in your car or at home. In the event that you are unceremoniously escorted out the door, you already have the documentation that you need. If you are suspended or fired, you will probably not have access to your desk, locker or computer. Never take original documents or files home with you, only copies. Be sure to protect confidential information.

When you have a meeting with management, be sure to add that to your log so you have a record that you notified management of a problem. Anything that you put in writing to the employer should first be seen by a UPSEU representative so we can double check that it is done properly. Mail should always be sent return receipt requested or if sent by email, remember to forward a copy to your personal home email address. If your employer has a date stamp received mechanism, you may hand deliver but get proof they received it.

Every now and then, members who have held back from reporting issues will suddenly explode from the mounting stress. It is only then that they begin listing examples of what happened; however if it wasn't documented and they don't remember exact dates, times, circumstances or witnesses, it may appear to the employer that the member is only making up the examples to get themselves out of trouble. In addition, it is important to know the deadline for filing your case or you could lose your case before it is even heard.

Keeping a log for an employee that is filing a complaint is no different than an employer creating a paper trail; the better the paper trail the better the case. When an employer terminates an employee without proper documentation, they may lose at an arbitration, civil service proceeding, or public employment board hearing. Unless the employer has a paper trail of all the problems that they had with employee, the union can easily refute it, since it was never brought to the employee's attention.

I can recall one meeting where an employer thought they had the goods on a clerical employee for making very costly mistakes. The employee however, had kept a log of what instructions were given to her, who gave the instruction, whether there was written documentation of the instruction (memo, email, etc.), who was present when the instruction was given, and any problems that were brought to the appropriate supervisor for a decision on how to handle. When the employee produced her log, the management team turned beat red and ended the meeting promptly. Nothing came of the meeting; no write-ups and no disciplinary action of any kind.

Although we strongly encourage members to allow us to respond to concerns, documentation is the next best course of action. The union's concern is for the well being of our members, since over time stress can be damaging to both your physical and mental health. Whether it is responding to an unwarranted write-up or dealing with inappropriate treatment from a supervisor or co-worker, your UPSEU representative is trained and ready to help you through the process.

Welcome New Members

Guilford Dispatchers Unanimously Vote UPSEU

The Guilford Dispatchers, who were previously represented by NAGE/SEIU, recently voted unanimously to join UPSEU. NAGE/SEIU had simply walked away prior to the election, as they recognized they had no support in the unit. The Guilford Dispatchers bargaining unit is the second unit in Guilford to join UPSEU this year. The Dispatchers join the Guilford BOE Nurses who also voted to join UPSEU earlier this year.



Guilford Dispatchers

Ridgefield Municipal Employees Join UPSEU



Ridgefield Municipal Employees
Unit President Trish Pacheco and VP John Rosa

The Connecticut State Board of Labor Relations conducted a pre-election hearing as a result of a petition filed by UPSEU seeking to represent the Town of Ridgefield Municipal employees. The unit, consisting of 45 employees, was represented by CSEA/SEIU.

During the pre-election hearing, CSEA/SEIU voluntarily released these members to UPSEU and the town subsequently recognized UPSEU as the exclusive bargaining agent. UPSEU immediately got to work on behalf of the Ridgefield Municipal employees to prepare for upcoming negotiations. Matt Geer from UPSEU stated, "These employees were desperately awaiting the day to vote for UPSEU and to enhance their representation and expertise at the bargaining table. As a result of the former union's decision and the voluntary recognition of the bargaining unit from their employer, the wait is now over."

Hebron BOE Employees Join UPSEU

For the second time in less than a week, CSEA/SEIU walked away from an upcoming election against UPSEU. With no support from the membership, CSEA/SEIU notified the State of Connecticut Board of Labor Relations that they wished to remove their name from the Hebron BOE Non-Certified employee ballot, and as a result, the Hebron Board of Education voluntarily recognized UPSEU as the unit's exclusive bargaining representative. The Hebron BOE Non-Certified Employees, a unit consisting of 51 members, were set to vote for UPSEU. The unit immediately received the representation they deserved and have sought for many years. We look forward to working with the unit and ensuring that they have a strong voice at the bargaining table.



Hebron BOE Co-Presidents
Nancy Simmons and Katherine Hoffman

Middletown Supervisors Overwhelmingly Vote UPSEU

Soon after UPSEU filed a petition to represent the Middletown Supervisors, the incumbent union, the Teamsters decided to walk away. As they did so, they contacted their Change to Win (CTW) friends at MEIU-SEUI to have UPSEU removed from the ballot, in an attempt to keep the unit in the CTW. The members didn't want the Teamsters or the MEUI, as the 48 member unit voted overwhelmingly to join UPSEU in a state run election. Welcome to the UPSEU family!

New Members

East Windsor Municipal Employees Vote UPSEU

In a secret ballot election conducted by the Connecticut State Board of Labor Relations, the Town of East Windsor Municipal Employees voted by a 75% margin to join UPSEU.

The Town of East Windsor Municipal Employees were previously represented by AFSCME and became tired of the lack of representation that they were receiving and were completely dissatisfied with past contract negotiations with AFSCME.

UPSEU Sweeps AFSCME in 3 Separate Elections

UPSEU recently won three separate elections against AFSCME with UPSEU winning 100% of the votes cast in each election! The Town of Seymour Supervisors, the Rocky Hill BOE Secretaries, and the Rocky Hill BOE Paraeducators each voted to dump AFSCME and join UPSEU.

Matt Geer of UPSEU stated, "The fact that AFSCME was unable to secure one vote in three separate elections clearly indicates that these members were in dire need of a substantially greater level of representation, which they will receive from UPSEU."

Seymour BOE Nurses Join UPSEU

As a result of a petition filed by UPSEU to represent the Seymour BOE Nurses, the Connecticut State Board of Labor Relations conducted a pre-election hearing. The unit was previously unrepresented. During the hearing, the Board of Education recognized UPSEU as the exclusive bargaining agent for the group.

These nurses saw firsthand the representation that UPSEU provides to the Seymour BOE Paraprofessionals and knew instantly that they needed to join UPSEU as well.

Trumbull BOE Paraeducators Ditch UE Local 222 for UPSEU



Welcome Trumbull BOE Paras

The Trumbull Board of Education Paraeducators voted overwhelmingly to join UPSEU and ditch their previous union, Connecticut UE Local 222. With close to 90% of the membership participating in the election, the members made it very clear just how important this decision was to them. UPSEU was chosen by a majority of the membership as the clear choice.

Matt Geer, who spearheaded this campaign for UPSEU stated, "The entire membership took a sincere interest in hearing from both unions prior to making their ultimate decision on election day. The Trumbull BOE Paraeducators were impressed with the professionalism of UPSEU, the large quantity of paraeducators that UPSEU represents in Connecticut, and the firsthand feedback they received from current UPSEU members. The membership had lost trust in UE Local 222, which became more apparent when the UE's statements in the campaign did not mirror the facts. In the end, professionalism and honesty prevailed."

Once Again UPSEU Wins Double Header Against AFSCME

UPSEU won two separate elections against AFSCME in the State of Connecticut. The pattern has now been established across Connecticut that UPSEU is the clear choice for union representation and these two bargaining units continue that pattern. The Guilford BOE Nurses and the North Haven Police Officers both voted to leave AFSCME.

The Guilford BOE Nurses voted unanimously to join UPSEU while the North Haven Police Officers had over 85% of the membership vote for UPSEU in their effort to dump AFSCME. We welcome the Guilford BOE Nurses and the North Haven Police Officers to the UPSEU family!

New Members

Welcome Brockport School District Employees

In a March secret ballot election conducted by the NYS Public Employment Relations Board, the Brockport School District non-instructional employees voted to leave SEIU by a vote of 173 to 11.

After decades of dissatisfaction with their former union, the Brockport School District employees sought to be represented by UPSEU based on our reputation for excellence in service to our members. The unit had been part of the Service Employees International Union and its' affiliate 200United. Brockport employees join over 500 other SEIU 200United members who have left to join the UPSEU family in just the past twelve months.

Labor Relations Representative Linda Kirnan stated, "Virtually all of the Brockport School District employees who we spoke with during the campaign were dissatisfied with SEIU's lack of response to their issues, as well as their lack of interest in the members' needs. As a matter of fact, SEIU was so disinterested that they made no meaningful attempt to fight to keep their members!"



Special thanks to Al Hansel and Dan Ash who were instrumental in bringing UPSEU into the Brockport School District

Fayetteville-Manilus School District Transportation Joins UPSEU

In a 40 to 2 vote, the Fayetteville-Manilus School District Transportation employees voted to leave SEIU and its Local 200United for UPSEU. Labor Relations Representative Linda Kirnan stated, "Together with the Brockport School District employees, the Fayetteville-Manilus School District transportation employees were frustrated by SEIU's lack of response to their calls and concerns, as well as being disappointed with recent contract settlements. Once again, SEIU demonstrated their disinterest by not making any meaningful attempts to keep their members."

UPSEU's Lee Zarpentine commented, "With both campaigns, my expectation was that we would be met with resistance. A few phone calls and a flyer from SEIU was not what I expected. Every member we spoke with was dissatisfied with SEIU and looks forward to representation from a union that cares about them and their livelihood."

Greenwich Nurses Rid Themselves of AFSCME



Greenwich Nurses Unit Officers

Unit Secretary Carmen Claudio-Albarran with President Ruth Holz and Vice President Julie Prescott

In a secret ballot election conducted by the Connecticut State Board of Labor Relations, the Greenwich Nurses voted to rid themselves of AFSCME in favor of UPSEU. UPSEU won the election nearly unanimously, as the Greenwich Nurses were in desperate need of better representation.

They witnessed firsthand, year after year, nurse bargaining units leaving AFSCME to join UPSEU. These members will now finally have the representation that they deserve.

Wolcott BOE Secretaries Vote Unanimously to Leave CILU-UE

As a result of a Connecticut State Board of Labor Relations election, the Wolcott BOE Secretaries voted unanimously to leave CILU-UE to join UPSEU.

Like other CILU-UE units that have joined UPSEU, the unit was dissatisfied with the CILU-UE's lack of visibility in their workplace, inferior negotiations and lack of preparation for bargaining on the unit's behalf. The unit, rightfully so, felt that they deserved better.

UPSEU looks forward to going to work for the Wolcott Secretarial unit and we welcome them to the UPSEU family.

New Members

Putnam Municipal Employees and Putnam Police Officers 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 past month. 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.

East Lyme Town Employees Speak Loud and Clear

The members of the East Lyme Town Employees voted to leave AFSCME and join UPSEU, clearly making a statement that they were not getting the representation that they needed. AFSCME only received one vote from the entire membership. "UPSEU will work with the membership comprised of sixty six union employees to achieve the representation they deserve and have been lacking for a long time," stated UPSEU Regional Director Ronald Suraci.

Danbury BOE Secretaries/IT Employees Overwhelmingly Vote UPSEU



Danbury BOE Secretarial Unit Officers

President Linda Rosso, Secretary Wendy Burke, VP Pat Jackson

Danbury Board of Education Secretaries and IT employees overwhelmingly voted by a 95% margin to join UPSEU. UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Matt Geer, who spearheaded the campaign stated, "It became clear after the first meeting with the membership that the bargaining unit was long overdue for a better level of representation. The days of bringing issues forward, only to not have them addressed will now be gone, due to the switch to UPSEU. During the campaign, the members had an opportunity to speak with current UPSEU members who had left CSEA/SEIU to join UPSEU in recent years, and the positive experience they have had. The Danbury Secretaries and IT employees will finally have the expertise to represent them in their day to day issues, and as well, at the bargaining table."

Milford DPW Dumps AFSCME



City of Milford DPW

UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Chez DiNino, Unit President Tony Crisafi, Secretary Nicole Hamill, with Executive Board members Ron Hunt, Carol O'Connell and Lori Weinstein

The City of Milford Department of Public Works Unit, consisting of 135 employees, voted nearly unanimously to dump AFSCME and join UPSEU. The results of the election were as follows: UPSEU received 102 votes while AFSCME received only one vote!

The Milford DPW members were disgusted with the lackluster representation, no visibility in the workplace and AFSCME's failure to return phone calls over the years. The unit heard from current UPSEU members within the Milford public schools about the high quality of representation that they received from UPSEU. The DPW unit is the second unit in the City of Milford to join UPSEU in 2015. They now join the Milford Supervisors who voted earlier this month to join UPSEU.



Milford Supervisors Executive Board

Seated l to r: Unit Secretary Kelly Hammill, Treasurer Jean Lasczak, Standing l to r: Unit President Tom Hunt, Chief Steward Corey Vena, and VP David Sulkis

CORS Division Update

Southington Police Dispatchers Vote Unanimously to Join UPSEU

In a secret ballot election conducted by the Connecticut State Board of Labor Relations (CSBLR), Southington Police Dispatchers voted unanimously to join UPSEU. The Southington Police Dispatchers were previously represented by AFSCME and became completely unhappy with the service they were provided. As a result of this election that has changed, with UPSEU paving the path for these dispatchers. The police dispatchers witnessed the level of representation that UPSEU provided to others in their town and wanted the same, as UPSEU also represents the municipal employees and supervisors.



UPSEU Norwich Police Officers

l to r: Retired Captain Tim Menard, Detective Ryan Kelsey, Sgt. Chris Conley, Lt. Chris Farace

Essex Police Make the Switch

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. 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.

Woodbridge Police Among Many Police Units to Join UPSEU/COPS in 2015

UPSEU/COPS Division continues to grow. The members of the Woodbridge Police Union voted unanimously to leave IBPO/NAGE and join UPSEU/COPS Division. 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 to the UPSEU COPS family.

Hadley Police Officers and Blandford Highway Employees in Massachusetts Vote UPSEU

This spring, the Massachusetts Labor Board 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, who had been represented by the Teamsters, voted nearly unanimously to join UPSEU. The Hadley Police Officers became disenchanted with the lack of 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!

Orange Police Officers Vote Unanimously to Join UPSEU COPS Division

Officers of the Orange Police Union voted unanimously to leave CIPU/UE and join UPSEU/COPS Division, as they wanted a union that would be able to address the needs of police officers. They felt that CILU/UE could not handle the task. In speaking with several officers they were concerned that their union did not provide the expertise that UPSEU/COPS had to offer and after careful consideration the members took the necessary steps to change unions. They are now part of the UPSEU/COPS family.



UPSEU COPS Fairfield Police members took first place at their Scholarship fundraiser at the Patterson Club in April. Pictured l to r: Michael Docktor, Officer Keith Perham, Lt. Keith Broderick and Sam Boccuzzi

Islip SD Clerical Members Ratify New Contract

A new three year agreement was overwhelmingly approved by UPSEU members of the Islip School District Clerical Unit. The agreement provides for annual wage increases, on time step, continued off step adjustments and several other improvements. Additional gains were achieved in areas such as retirement incentive and expansion of coverage by the sell back of sick days at retirement.

"The unit had previously been represented by CSEA/AFSCME some twenty years ago. Since that time, we have worked hard to continuously improve wages, including equity adjustments and off step base increases. Over time we have brought the unit salaries from the bottom range to the middle range and above," said Regional Director Kim Nowakowski.

UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. commended the work of UPSEU Vice President Kim Nowakowski for her work in closing what had been a tremendous gap in the parties' positions. Ultimately, the District Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent, out of great respect for the outstanding work the unit provides, stepped in and worked with UPSEU and the unit to make a fair agreement happen. UPSEU President Boyle gave special thanks to Unit President Laura Lucas for her work and guidance throughout the process, along with the great work of negotiating team members Susan Debus, Yolanda Alvarez, Robin Bauer and Rose Ann Apostolico.

Editor's Note: *The Advocate winter edition contained an article for Islip Clerical which ran before it was ratified. It has since been ratified by its membership. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.*

Herkimer County Hwy Negotiating Committee



UPSEU Executive Vice President Gary M. Hickey, Labor Relations Representative Phil Sedlock, Stuart Upson, Adam Fowler and Unit President Brian Riesel

2 Westhampton Beach Units Reach Agreements



Westhampton Beach Clerical Negotiating Team
Unit Co-President Evelyn Overton, UPSEU Vice President Kim Nowakowski, Maureen McKay and Unit Co-President Geri Nigg

After difficult negotiations for the Westhampton Beach UFSD which lasted nearly one year, both groups reached tentative five year agreements which were overwhelmingly ratified. "The two units were quite different in that one unit is made up of entirely of clerical employees and the other support staff unit includes custodial, grounds, maintenance, network and systems, and security guards. Not only was their make up entirely different, but so were the goals they set out to achieve," remarked Vice President Kim Nowakowski.

The Support Staff agreement included above average annual increases with annual step movement, an increase to the ten year longevity, and increases to the contractual stipends for night differential and designated titles. "I have to give Kim a lot of credit. She said the negotiating team makes the decisions and she followed through with that, even though she had a different opinion on certain issues," commented Brian Lafferty, Unit President. The unit voiced their agreement with the decisions made by the negotiating team by ratifying the agreement 29 to 7. Special thanks to Unit President Brian Lafferty and the negotiating team of Rob Speruta, Nick Schillaci, James Jones, Wendy Wilms, Tom Hoblin, and Jared Pressgrove.

The Clerical Unit agreement included modifying their current schedule to provide for equalized steps and added to the top of the schedule to ensure increases for those off step movement. Additionally they focused on time off issues such as reinstatement of summer hours and the elimination of payback hours in exchange for having the mid-winter recess off. "For this unit, although monetary issues were a concern, they wanted to ensure that their salary schedule was fair both now and into the future, while adding to paid time off," remarked Kim Nowakowski.

"The members of the clerical unit were very appreciative of all the hard work and hours that Kim put into the process," said Evelyn Overton, Unit Co-President. "She kept the negotiating team involved throughout the negotiations and updated our members so when the ratification meeting was held, the members already understood what had taken place at the bargaining table," said Co-President Geri Nigg. "We couldn't have reached the agreement without the hard work and dedication of the negotiating team of Evelyn, Geri, and Maureen McKay. I really appreciated their assistance," remarked Kim.

Three Village Clerical Unit Approves New Agreement



Three Village Clerical Negotiating Team
Front row l to r: Donna Pesapane, Unit President Debra Garnier,
Linda Melfi, Back row: Teresa Bernstein and Lorraine Jordan

On time steps and top step increases highlighted a new long term agreement on behalf of UPSEU's Three Village CSD Clerical Unit membership. While negotiations were protracted, in the end the unit achieved an agreement that was fair and equitable to both parties. The unit membership overwhelmingly approved the terms.

Gains in bereavement benefit fund contributions, sick leave payout upon retirement and a new holiday for the day before Thanksgiving, rounded out the pact. A significant gain was also achieved with the addition of a new twenty five year longevity added to the three existing levels. Health coverage, a significant issue throughout the process, was resolved with a 1% increase in the last year of the agreement. Those retiring in 2015 were excluded from paying the 1% increase into retirement.

UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr., who headed up the talks for the negotiating team, praised the work of the negotiating team. "We were very fortunate to have a committed negotiating team that never wavered throughout the process. They were focused and tough. Unit President Debra Garnier, who is and has been a terrific leader, led the team which included Teresa Bernstein, Donna Pesapane, Linda Melfi and Lorraine Jordan. They all participated and contributed great ideas to the process. I couldn't be more proud of their work," stated Boyle.

"Labor unions have raised wages, shortened hours, and provided supplemental benefits. Through collective bargaining and grievance procedures, they have brought justice and democracy to the shop floor."

John F. Kennedy

Columbia County Members Approve Pact

UPSEU Columbia County membership approved a new four year contract by a better than three to one margin. The new contract will:

- increase wages
- provide for a bonus
- reduce health costs with a change to a self-insured health plan that keeps all co-payments and prescription costs unchanged
- provide a new maintenance drug program which will eliminate the employee co-pay for brand named formulary drugs

Additional gains were also reached in on-call pay, uniforms, equipment allowances and shoe allowances. Highway Department members will see increases in discretionary time off accumulation and a new snow season on-call program. All DPW employees will also enjoy an increased snow bonus program.

UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. commended the negotiating team of Patricia Abitabile, Betty Bednar, Donald Coons, Jr., Jane DeGennaro, Ann Delaney, George Filipovits, Chris Inman, Josh Gaylord, Patricia Moskaluk, Cindy Tipple and Barbara Stedje for their terrific efforts in achieving a solid agreement for our members.

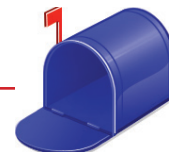
"Thanks as well, go to UPSEU Regional Coordinator Kathy Wright-Muzio for her excellent work throughout the process," stated President Boyle.

Copaigue Members Achieve Contract

UPSEU's Security, Food Service and Aides Unit in the Copaigue School District overwhelmingly approved a new agreement. The new pact increases wages annually and provides new seniority language, improves longevity, codifies existing days off and adds a day off.

The unit recently joined UPSEU after years of CSEA representation. UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Brian Honahan attributed the success of the negotiations to the great work and participation of the team, which included James Memisha, Julie Frazzitta, Patricia Robinson and Sherranda Rush.

UPSEU Mailbox



Dear Mr. Boyle,

I am writing to extend my appreciation for the efforts made by many in the union on my behalf, in particular the staff of the Albany office, including Gary Hickey, Kathy Wright, and most especially Mike Kutski. After I was illegally terminated without cause from my position with the Village of Valatie, due most pointedly to the mayor's personal opposition to employee rights, unions in general, and UPSEU specifically, as well as his inability to work with others in a productive fashion, these folks all were there when needed. Mike became a confidant and full time, one-man support team. I always felt he had my back and fought tirelessly to win our case. When health issues sidetracked Mike for a short time, Kathy and Gary stepped right in without missing a beat until he returned. Ultimately, the case would have surely been won in our favor, had not the Village residents, upon realizing the outlandish behavior of the mayor (literally hundreds of thousands in public monies spent on his personal vendetta, and no records to support his position) ousted him in a landslide election defeat, where his opponent garnered 70% of the vote. The new administration quickly set about correcting past wrongs and reinstated me without prejudice.

I also want to commend you for your choice of attorney. Mark Walsh performed his task with great efficiency and finesse; even with the seriousness of the case looming ahead, he was a joy to watch in action. He greatly outclassed his opposition and often, I believe, left them wondering just how they had been so out-manuevered. Most opposing "witnesses" were shown to be either indebted to, paid by the mayor or simply unreliable. Most of their testimonies contained contradictions with others or even themselves, all of which were gleaned by Mr. Walsh and exposed so subtly that their perpetrators were unaware of what was happening, until it was too late to go back and attempt damage control.

The Village of Valatie, with two members is I believe, the smallest bargaining unit in the union. However, at no time were we treated like the "poor cousins." A great deal of money was spent on this fight. At all times, the union showed that they would leave no one behind, and that no member was greater or lesser than any other. I think it is important for all UPSEU members to realize the debt of gratitude we owe to the union and our fellow members, especially in these times when public employees are being villanized by many, mostly in the political arena, as scapegoats for all our economic woes; most of which were actually caused by the political backers of those pointing the fingers. All members of UPSEU should be greatly thankful for our membership in the fine organization that you lead, and for your obvious dedication to the lives and betterment of hard working people. Again, my heartfelt thanks and appreciation for you all.

Paul R. Warner
Village of Valatie

Dear Kathy,

For years I used to see you pop in our office and say "hi," and I hardly paid any attention. Just being honest!! I didn't know that one day I would be so happy to know you! People always told me "Talk to your union, talk to your union" any time I had an issue. I never did, until we got a new director. I really never knew how helpful union representation could be. Call me naive. I am always impressed with your professionalism and confidence. I truly am. Thank you again for everything you do for ALL the staff in our department. You continuously go above and beyond for us and I really appreciate it.

Michele Clarke
Columbia County

Dear Mr. Boyle,

I am the president of the Food Services Managers Unit of Local 424. I would like you to know that we are EXTREMELY PLEASED with the job that Wayne Gilbert and Brooke Sherer has done for us. They fought for us as if we were a 50 person team. We are only 5 person strong. It has been a long and tedious process. I would like you to know that we unanimously agreed on our contract! We would like to thank Wayne and Brook again for all their hard work, and it is nice to know that Wayne's "got our backs." Thank you again.

Dawn Kanaple
Berlin BOE Food Service

Dear Mike,

We would like to say thanks again for all your help with our dispute with Rensselaer County. Your hard work and determination really paid off. We truly appreciate all your efforts. Thanks again.

Jennifer Fredericks and Lisa Simmons
Rensselaer County

Huge Binding Arbitration Victory for New Haven DPW

UPSEU fought a hard and lengthy battle with the City of New Haven during negotiations for a successor collective bargaining agreement. During negotiations, which began in 2010, the City attempted to take away many of the rights and benefits afforded to the Department of Public Works employees.

By the time the parties entered binding arbitration, there were thirty issues that remained open, most of which were brought forth by the City. The panel issued the decision in December 2014, awarding the union's last best offer in 63% of the open issues. This was by far the biggest union victory in binding arbitration in Connecticut in the last 7 years.

One of the most important issues before the arbitration panel was the City's proposal to eliminate overtime pay from the pension calculation for all employees who had not reached 10 years of service as of July 1, 2010. The City tried to take away this important retirement benefit from current employees, including those who became vested in the pension plan since July 1, 2010. UPSEU was the only union in the City of New Haven who successfully saved this important method for calculating pensions for the members.

UPSEU would like to thank the negotiating committee comprised of Jerome Houser, Reinaldo Rivas, Robert Roberts, Scott Murphy, Fabian Esponda, Sean O'Grady and Joseph Fatone, as well as Wayne Gilbert, Brooke Sherer and Roger Stolen for all of the hard work and effort put in to securing a favorable contract on behalf of the entire membership.



Dear Jack,
On behalf of myself, and the entire Red Hook Police Department we send our sincere gratitude for your professionalism and dedicated commitment to working with our department during collective bargaining agreement negotiations. Having you for our union representative was a privilege and honor. You will be greatly missed.
Patrick Hildenbrand, Sgt.
Red Hook Police Department

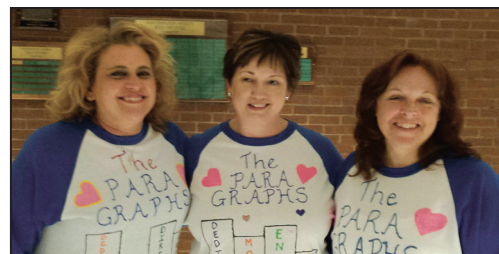
Dear Matt,
Just wanted to say many thanks to you and UPSEU for resolving a long-standing issue that our previous union could not resolve for over a year. You and UPSEU resolved the issue in one meeting with management. Very pleased with UPSEU and Matt Geer. Great job.
Trish Pacheco
Ridgefield Municipal Employees

Dear Mark,
Just a note to say thank you for meeting with Phillip and I and for your support. Thank you for going to bat for me! I truly appreciate it!
Meredith Torcivia
City of Hackensack

Members in the News



UPSEU Westbury Security Guard Tony Hollie (on right) received a commendation for bravery from Nassau County Police Officer Jonathon Cutrone. Hollie has been a security guard in Westbury School District for 16 years and was recognized at the October Board of Education meeting for his heroic actions in reporting a possible crime. His quick thinking prevented what could have been an even worse situation. Congratulations, Tony!



The Southington Paraeducators were enthusiastic to participate in the Southington Education Foundation's Fifth Annual Community Spelling Bee! The proceeds will go towards programs and activities that are not from public resources or local tax dollars and otherwise would not be available to Southington school children. The SEF motto, "to instill a love of learning" resonates with the Paraeducators, who hope to return next year to score a victory!



West Hempstead Office Staff Retirees
Pam Margaroli, Suzanne Pica and Rita Bozzi

Reminder: Scholarship Applications are due by July 1, 2015
Applications may be downloaded from www.upseu.org

Enjoy Your Summer!



EARTH DAY CLEANUP

UPSEU Vice President Kim Nowakowski, Town of Islip Supervisor
Angie Carpenter and UPSEU Town of Islip Liaison Ellen Pleasant

Making a Difference in the Workplace



UNITED PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES UNION
3555 Veterans Highway, Suite H, Ronkonkoma, NY 11779
21 Aviation Road, Albany, NY 12205
288 Genesee Street, Utica, NY 13502
130 Research Parkway, Suite 201, Meriden, CT 06450
1 West Main Street, Clinton, CT 06413
One Bergen County Plaza, Rm 396, Hackensack, NJ 07601
101 State Street, Suite 607, Springfield, MA 01103

® 825-C

NON PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
RONKONKOMA, NY
PERMIT NO. 2000