

UPSEU

United Public Service Employees Union

is M.A.D.E.

Making a Difference Everyday

for YOU!



THE

ADVOCATE



"UPSEU has always gone above and beyond for us. We had to negotiate our contract when other unions were negotiating wage freezes, increased health insurance costs and furloughs. It was through UPSEU's work and commitment that we walked away with money in our pockets every year, no furloughs and no increase in our health insurance."

Sue McAvoy, Rensselaer County



"Years of misrepresentation is how I would describe our unit's years with our previous union; we never had a rep visit us and grievances were left unresolved. We had to do all the work and represent ourselves. When we finally had enough, we voted to join UPSEU. Today, we see UPSEU reps in our workplace, phone calls are immediately answered, and grievances are addressed promptly. Most importantly, our district now respects our unit because we have a strong union."

Ralph DiMaggio, Glen Cove School District

"I consider myself a demanding person when it comes to the representation that I and my co-workers receive. I'm constantly calling, emailing or texting the union about issues and each and every time, they are there for us. We have a difficult and demanding district but UPSEU is always there fighting for us and protecting its members' interests."

Matt Cavanaugh, E. Islip School District



"We needed a union to stand with us and to be there for us. After years of being neglected we didn't have the level of representation we deserved. They were never there as they should have been, until we decided to leave. Now with UPSEU we have a union that stands up for us and is always there for us."

Vinny Biondo, Village of Lawrence



"Thanks to the perseverance of our UPSEU Labor Relations Specialists, our negotiating team and members who refused to give up the fight, we were able to secure raises and retroactive increases after a seven year drought. Working together, we did it. Our unity confirmed we would not be defeated. UPSEU is always there for us."

Doris Squires, Roosevelt School District



UPSEU representatives have always been very dependable, and very professional. They are always only a phone call away when members need them."

Lory Maikranz, Oneida County





**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

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Linda Pickwick
Editor/Designer

Visit our Website
www.upseu.org

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Congratulations 2016 Scholarship Winners!

Paul T. Burch \$1,000 Award



Erica Hecht

Biology/Physical Therapy
Daughter of Julie Hecht
Huntington School District

Special Thanks to the Scholarship Committee

Chair

Kim Nowakowski

Co-Chair

Kathy Wright-Muzio

Linda Kirnan
Michael Wilson
Pat Abitabile
Harry Theopheles

Dependent Child \$500 Awards

Cathleen Blanchfield's dependent Elizabeth
Rosemarie Canton's dependent Amanda Boccio
Ciorsdan Conran's dependent Griffin Cummings
Kathleen Corapi's dependent Gina
Kathleen Corapi's dependent Nicole
Emily Crowell's dependent Susannah
Edward Czyzewski's dependent Lauryn
Jane Degennaro's dependent Matthew
Anna Delrosso's dependent Christina
Kim DiGregorio's dependent Brooke
Count Edwards' dependent Dashea
Mark Englert's dependent Claire
Kathleen Fabrizio's dependent Katelyn
John Gawlak III's dependent John IV
Alex Gillespie's dependent Shannen
Mark Hathaway's dependent Ryan

Kellianne Kelm's dependent Samantha
Donna Knuth's dependent Brittany
Diane Lamb's dependent Sarah
Mariane Leinweber's dependent Benjamin
Maryann McCarthy's dependent Kiernan
Sandy Niedojadio's dependent Hannah
Carlos Patrick's dependent Atiyya
Karen Pedersen's dependent Christine
Dori Quilter's dependent Laura
William Ray's dependent Marielle
Jeanette Steck's dependent Kelsey
Jeanette Steck's dependent Shannon
Janet Vaita's dependent Jeremy
Carol West's dependent Alexander
Brian Williams' dependent Colin

Member \$500 Awards

Jacqueline Besanceney
Jessica Montenegro
Tiffany Nagasawa
Phaedra Nolan

Carlos Patrick
Kelly Reilly
Christina Roda
Raywahmati Singh
Myrissa Sinnot

Erin Streiff
Melanie Taylor
Alexander Williams
Tyler Yaccarino



A Message from President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr.



As President, I am available to both staff and members alike in an effort to ensure the best servicing possible for our membership. However, my effort alone is not what makes this union second to none. Along with my early mentor Hank Miller, I may have developed the blueprint for the UPSEU foundation of success, but it is the Labor Relations Representatives, Regional Directors and Coordinators, Administrative Office Staff, and Executive Board Officers who implement that vision. Together with our Unit Officers, Stewards, and Negotiating Team Members, they are the reason for our success. Meeting the needs of our diverse and varied membership has been, and continues to be, the reason UPSEU exists. While it is impossible to achieve every goal or win every grievance, regardless of the odds, we give it our all. We know you count on us to do just that. It's a matter of leveling the playing field, giving voice to the unheard, and giving strength to the downtrodden. The blueprint for the foundation of our success has four cornerstones which have remained unchanged since our inception.

We communicate with our members on a regular basis to keep them informed and unified. We do this by visiting them in their workplaces and holding unit membership meetings on a regular basis. For those members we miss during our visits or who can't attend unit meetings, we provide unit news by email, regular mail, or direct hand delivery to our members. Our website at www.upseu.org is regularly updated with news, educational materials, and discount programs. Communication also includes sharing our knowledge with our Stewards, Officers, and members during service visits and membership meetings, through newsletters, news updates, and providing training to the Unit Officers and Stewards so they are prepared to work with us to face the challenges of our members. We have always understood the importance of communication in reinforcing strength and unity. Communication is only one cornerstone of our foundation for success.

We maintain high standards of service by returning phone calls and emails the same day, rapidly responding to emergencies, and following up on questions or concerns in a timely manner. Employers know that we are hands on and available to our members throughout each and every stage of a problem. No other union can match our member to representative ratio, (500:1) which is why we are so available to our membership. This is the second cornerstone of our foundation of success.

We fight for our members at the bargaining table and involve our members throughout the negotiation process. This includes democratic elections of officers and negotiating team members, taking proposals from members through surveys and at meetings, updating our members throughout the negotiation process, and most importantly ensuring a vote by the membership on the terms of a tentative agreement. Although these principles are not the norm in many unions, they are for us. These principles serve as the third cornerstone of our success.

The fourth cornerstone of our success is our continuous striving for improvement. This involves overseeing that democratic principles are adhered to at every level of elected positions throughout the organization. It is about upgrading and updating our website to provide training information, labor movement news, UPSEU news, and continually adding new discount programs to benefit our members and their families. Most importantly, it involves strengthening the financial integrity of our organization through internal and external means by employing only those cost saving measures which do not negatively impact the membership. We see our members as partners and value their daily work lives so they deserve no less than our continual search for improvements.

To those members who have been with us from our early beginnings, I thank you for believing in our message and carrying it to others. To those who have just joined us, thank you for allowing your horror stories to remind us of why we so diligently walk the path we have chosen. But above all else, thank you to my dedicated, caring staff for believing in our union and giving their all to our membership.

It is with great pride that we provide professional service, second to none, year after year, and decade after decade. While we may walk to the beat of a different drummer within the labor movement, we truly make a difference in the workplaces of our membership each and every day. We never forget that UPSEU was created for our membership. You, our members, are UPSEU.

Town of Salisbury Highway Reaches New Agreement



TOWN OF SALISBURY

Derek Barker, Gary 'Beagle' Lamphere, Larry Williams, Jr., Matt Stack, Bill Jowett, Walt Hobbs and Highway Superintendent Larry Williams, Sr.

The Town of Salisbury Highway Department reached a new three year agreement. Along with wage increases, the contract included an increase in sick time, holidays and inclusion in the NYS Retirement System 41J program. UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Phil Sedlock and Chief Steward Larry Williams, Jr. pressed the town board to reach an agreement prior to the expiration of the current contract.

Three Village Clerical Unit Approves New Pact

A new five year agreement that increases wages annually and delivers on time steps was overwhelmingly approved by unit members. In addition to annual wage increases, improvements in longevity and contributions to the union's benefit plan were included. One snow contingency day was added, along with a retirement incentive and health contributions that remained unchanged for the life of the agreement.

The health waiver was a significant issue in negotiations, but with the teachers agreeing to eliminate the benefit in its recent negotiations with the District, the District made the issue a central one in all its negotiations. Heading off its inclusion was not possible. Percentage increases were however, better than average.

President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. commended the excellent work of Unit President Debra Garnier and negotiating team members Lorraine Jordan and Donna Pesapane. President Boyle also thanked Kim Nowakowski who provided tremendous assistance throughout the process.

Islip CGM Unit Approves Contract

By a nearly unanimous vote, UPSEU's Custodial, Grounds and Maintenance (CGM) unit members in the Islip School District approved terms of a new agreement. With annual raises and on time steps, a continuation of four additional days off during the February recess, an additional holiday and no concessions, the agreement had significant support of the membership.

Previous new hire provisions, that provided less sick days and personal days, which were negotiated more than 20 years ago and now impact 70% of the unit was reversed, granting these employees two additional sick days and one additional personal day. An additional base salary increase was also provided for Custodial II staff for their supervisory responsibilities.

"We're pleased that the administration and the board were willing to recognize the dedication of the CGM unit and worked with UPSEU and its negotiating team to achieve this above average agreement," stated UPSEU representative Pat DeFelice.

Special thanks to the leadership of Co-Presidents Ed Cramer and Kevin Mercer and to the negotiating team of Leonard Giammanco, Thomas Wolters, Steven Saidler, Brian Branch and Joseph Ficarra.

Southington BOE Paraeducators/ ABAs Ratify Contract

The new contract for UPSEU's Southington BOE Paraeducators and ABAs addresses numerous areas which have long been desired and deserved by the membership. Highlights of the agreement include significant wage increases, elimination of the two lowest wage steps, no reference to the Cadillac Excise tax (language that was sought by the administration), no health changes in year one, health insurance cost shares significantly reduced in years two and three, the ability to use sick days for family members, improved seniority and layoff language, and increased stipends.

Unit President Deborah Stevens had the following to say regarding negotiations, "On behalf of the Southington Paraeducators/ABAs, I would like to take this opportunity to say how appreciative we all are for having UPSEU negotiate our second contract! This new contract that was fully embraced and supported by our members, is an excellent contract. Switching unions was the best decision we ever made as a unit (previously represented by CSEA/SEIU) and this second round of negotiations just solidifies the relationship we have with UPSEU. The professionalism, support, hard work and compassion provided by Matt Geer of UPSEU was nothing less than stellar! We are beyond grateful!"

UPSEU Regional Coordinator and Chief Negotiator Matt Geer stated, "Our negotiating committee and membership finally received the respect and recognition for all of their hard work through this new contract. Clearly, our work is not done yet and we will continue to advocate for further improvements, however this is a giant step in the right direction. The negotiation committee consisting of Deborah Stevens, Sue Topper, Mary Lynn Wild, Melissa Robarge, Sherri Larose, Hattie Griffin, Nancy Snow, Spencer Richards, Caroline Turek and Lisa Klein were instrumental in securing such a great contract for our Southington BOE Paraeducators/ABAs."



FAYETTEVILLE-MANLIUS NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

Labor Relations Representative Lee Zarpentine, Michele Henson, Chief Steward Jeff Richer, Steward Christine Nicholas, Assistant Chief Steward Tammy Duda and UPSEU Executive Vice President Gary M. Hickey

Little Falls Agrees on New Contract

UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Phil Sedlock, along with negotiating committee members George Gay, Ken Gardinier, Bill Miles and Roger Quackenbush, achieved a new four year agreement with the town. The contract added above average wage increases as well as a longevity buyout, additional time off, an increase in tool allowance and new benefits for part timers. Both sides worked together to produce an agreement that was beneficial for all.



EAST LYME NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

front: Unit President Anna Hartung, Ron Bence, Stephen Holliday
back: Karen Zmitruk, Julie Wilson, UPSEU Representative Jeremy Powell, Jim Schenking, UPSEU Representative Dan Bonfiglio, Marge Broderick, Pierre Bumgardener

Town of Dickinson Reaches New Agreement

The Town of Dickinson Highway Committee led by Shop Steward Renee Smith, along with Jason Martin, Eric Hagen and Labor Relations Representative Phil Sedlock achieved a new three year agreement. The agreement included significant wage increases, as well as an increase in all longevity steps, two additional days off and a new clothing allowance. "The committee worked hard to come to an agreement that provided numerous increases together with no givebacks," stated Sedlock.



New Pact Approved for Hewlett Woodmere Secretarial Unit

By a unanimous vote, UPSEU's Hewlett Woodmere School District Secretarial unit members approved a new five year agreement that will provide annual increases, together with on time steps. A small increase in health contributions was included in the contract with unit members receiving an additional base wage increase that more than offsets the increase. A retirement incentive with the choice of a lump sum payment or improved retiree health coverage together with additional improvements were included in the pact.

UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. commended the great work of the negotiating team: Unit President Dorothy Drysielski, Patricia McEntee, Carolyn Bonkowski, Peggy Frank, June Winters, Donna Jaksic, Diane Chemick, and Kathy Martilotti.

Norwich DPW Steward Dave Siswick finishing preventative maintenance on his mini excavator.



NORWALK CUSTODIANS, MAINTENANCE AND SECURITY

Unit President and Executive Board at a local union meeting discuss progress in negotiations while they work to suppress privatization. Pictured are Grievance Chair Ryan Loris, Executive Board member Scotty Nails and Unit President Charlie Wyatt.



PLAINFIELD POLICE

Detective Paul Gadue, Unit President Officer George Bernier, Police Dispatcher Julie Poe with Labor Relations Representative Jeremy Powell at a recent shop visit.

ORANGE ULSTER BOCES CLERICAL/TECHNICAL UNIT NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Michael Wilson with Jim Hargadon, Pauline Aumick, Chief Unit Officer Michelle Danko, Veronica Pedro-Garone, Janet Markiewicz, Janet Vaitas, and UPSEU Executive Vice President Gary M. Hickey



UPSEU is Making A Difference Everyday!

Fight Ends for Contract in Rockland County

In 2011, with the county's fiscal issues at a forefront, the county advised all county unions that it would need to lay off employees unless it achieved significant givebacks. Among the givebacks there was a freeze on step movement, no increases, no longevity movement to new levels, a nine day deferral of pay and a provision requiring new employees to pay 15% of the health plan for the duration of their employment, instead of the 15 year cap in the contract.

UPSEU stood strong and was joined by five other unions in rejecting the county's position, while CSEA and another union agreed to the terms after being "guaranteed" there would be no layoffs. UPSEU, which was slated for a 10% staff reduction, went before the legislature and fought the cuts. Our efforts proved successful, and not a single UPSEU member was laid off. Most importantly, we didn't agree to the draconian cuts. In developing the no layoff language, CSEA left an opening for the county to lay off employees, which the county did in fact, after "guaranteeing" that they wouldn't. Thus, CSEA not only lost members but their members lost significant money due to the huge givebacks they agreed to for the periods 2011-13.

UPSEU went back to the bargaining table and made it clear that we would not take 3 years of givebacks and wanted to move forward with raises and other improvements. In the end we settled with the same new provisions as CSEA and RAM, but without the concessions. UPSEU was also able to secure five additional improvements in issues that were extremely important to our members and twelve of our members were spared the new hire health change that CSEA agreed to. "It was a long struggle, but in the end UPSEU and its membership took the right course by not agreeing to the concessions which cost CSEA and RAM members over \$10,000 in lost earnings. UPSEU members secured nearly \$5,000 in gains with step and longevity movements during the same period," stated UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr.

With the membership's overwhelming approval of UPSEU's Rockland County Highway terms of a new contract, the battle for a successor agreement will immediately begin, since the contract, as with all county contracts has again expired.



Roosevelt Members Approve New 7 Year Agreement

Negotiations in the Roosevelt School District had essentially been at a standstill for several years due to their being under state oversight, as well as facing some difficult issues which made this a long and arduous process.

However, with changes in the administration there appeared to be room for movement and specific discussions on how our long standing disputes could be resolved began to take hold. With contracts throughout the district out nearly four and five years, UPSEU and each respective negotiating team held onto its goal of securing a fair retroactive agreement. Negotiations began to move forward as the parties wanted to achieve contracts that would meet the needs of both UPSEU members and those of the district. UPSEU stated that retroactive pay was a must in the contract.

Ultimately, the Custodial/ Grounds/ Maintenance/ Clerical and Security Units achieved agreements that not only provided retroactive annual wage increases but future increases as well. All increases were plus step. Those in the schedule had been receiving steps in accordance with the law. Most significantly, no concessions were included in the contract. These long term agreements give the parties breathing room for future negotiations, as the contracts go several years into the future.

UPSEU's Randy Tillman, who headed up the negotiations stated, "It was a long struggle, but members in each unit were steadfast in the demand for retroactive pay while maintaining the benefits they have enjoyed. They achieved their goals. The gains were beyond expectation, and I commend the teams of the three units for their patience and willingness to stand firm in their commitment to their co-workers. Critical to the process was the willingness of the membership to wait out the process for as long as it took to achieve their goals."

MANSFIELD MAINTENANCE

UPSEU members Bob Lee, Craig Lambert and Unit President Roland Poitras

UPSEU is Making A Difference Everyday!

UPSEU is M.A.D.E. for YOU



"UPSEU works for us, is strong and professional at the bargaining table and are always available to answer a question or to address a concern. They visit us at our departments regularly as well. They file grievances (our previous union left most issues unresolved) and UPSEU fights for each and every member."

Barbara Maltese
Town of Islip

"I love the professionalism of the representatives, and especially like the fact that it is not your coworker alone who defends you with whatever issues you may have."

Tim Dittfield
Oneida County



"We were with another union and they ignored our needs. We joined UPSEU and now we are a priority. Our representative returns calls the same day and is knowledgeable in nursing issues. We are extremely pleased that we joined UPSEU."

Tricia Giamoleo
Eastport South Manor Nurses

Rensselaer County Workers Receive Over \$60,000 in Lost Overtime

Several Rensselaer County Probation employees recently received overtime pay due to incorrect calculations that were made when they originally worked the extra hours. "UPSEU had been contacted last year by a group of employees who discovered their overtime had been incorrectly calculated," said UPSEU Regional Coordinator Kathy Wright-Muzio.

When the records were reviewed, it was determined that the employees were entitled to a cumulative total of approximately \$70,000 due to the incorrect calculations. Shortly following that claim, a few more employees discovered they, as well, had not had their time calculated correctly. "Once we found out there were more employees in the mix, we filed a grievance and the County agreed to settle it," said Wright Muzio. In September, the employees received a payout totaling slightly more than \$60,000. A special note of thanks to the UPSEU Co-Chiefs Jamison Facteau, Sue McAvoyn and Dan Mahoney for their continuing persistence and dedication to resolving this issue.

Greene County Nurses Win Battle for New Salary Steps

The Greene County Public Health and Corrections Nurses joined UPSEU last year after years of neglect from their previous representative. "They had been without a contract for years," said UPSEU Regional Coordinator Kathy Wright-Muzio.

Once certified, UPSEU got to work quickly and negotiated a contract that was unanimously ratified by the employees. "One of the improvements we achieved was the addition of two new salary steps that are tied to the employees' years of service," said Wright-Muzio. Once the contract was implemented, the County unilaterally decided that employees whose years exceeded the new steps would have to wait an additional year until they reached the new top step. Wright-Muzio explained, "We tried to resolve the issue quickly and efficiently but the County was entrenched in its position, so we moved for arbitration."

Once the parties had convened on the day of the arbitration, and the arbitrator met with the attorneys, the County conceded, reversed its position, and agreed to place the qualifying nurses at the correct salary step.

Special thanks to UPSEU unit representatives Doris Veddar and Holly Pavlin for their support and dedication throughout the grievance process. Also, congratulations to Doris on her impending retirement after 30 years of service. We will miss you, Doris!

UPSEU Wins Fight Against Privatization for Hackensack Sanitation Workers!!!

This past June, City of Hackensack announced its plan to explore privatization of their Sanitation Department. The group, represented by UPSEU, would lose over thirty workers, many of whom were minorities. The City Council claimed that this was only an exploratory process and that workers didn't need to fear for their jobs. This was a claim union workers had heard before and UPSEU was taking no chances. Mark A. McCart, Labor Relations Representative, tasked with organizing the campaign, reached out to community leaders. The UPSEU members reached out to their friends and friends.



At the first meeting, hundreds of citizens filled the Council Chambers. Dozens more were left out in the street due to fire code restrictions. Reverend Gregory Jackson from the Local Mt. Olive Baptist Church spoke. Anthony Cureton of the NAACP argued against the move. Various members, including former supporters of the Council took to the podium, one by one. Shop Stewards from Hackensack and other UPSEU groups took their turn at the microphone to express their dismay at threatening the jobs of low wage workers. Labor Representative McCart vowed that they would be vigilant until this matter was laid to rest. Councilwoman Keeling-Geddis joined the voices in the crowd and committed her vote against privatization.

Soon the City also had a new look. Hundreds of red and white UPSEU 'Save Our Sanitation' signs graced the lawns of every section of the community. The grassroots movement crossed political and economic lines. Thousands of flyers were handed out at the Fourth of July Celebration. Petitions were passed around under the hot July sun. The petitions were later presented to the Council.

By August, the Council had agreed to limit the number of employees that would be affected by the layoff. They assured the crowds that only non-permanent workers would lose their jobs. Two of the provisional workers were given a commendation for saving the life of someone who had fallen in the Hackensack River. UPSEU reminded the Council that these two workers would soon lose their jobs. The bids from private haulers were accepted and opened under the scrutiny of UPSEU and the community. UPSEU posted the bids for everyone to see and the numbers didn't look promising for the privatization supporters.



UPSEU Shop Steward Rich Muller of Teaneck speaks out at City Council Meeting

UPSEU and its supporters continued to call for an end to the privatization plan. Councilman Sims now joined Keeling-Geddis and openly agreed that the privatization plan should be scrapped. They had convinced the Council to hold a special meeting at the high school which has a large auditorium that would hold hundreds. Plans were made and community leaders were committed to motivating their constituents to come out in a show of force. UPSEU dusted off the big rat. The members were ready for the ready for the final showdown: a showdown that never came. On September 21, 2016, the City Council released an announcement. They had unanimously agreed to scrap any plans to privatize and would explore purchasing new trucks so that the sanitation workers can continue to do their job. The war was over and the employees with their families breathed a well-deserved sigh of relief.

"For me, this was a classic example of how unions bring a voice to their membership. When united under one banner, with one cause and one voice, the community can beat City Hall. However, the members must be willing to work and they must stand together. These members did just that and they should be proud of themselves. I'm glad that I work for an organization that isn't afraid to take on the big fights. Special thanks to Stewards Jim Morrell, Rich Terranova, David Hayes and Juan Meneses for a job well done," stated McCart.

UPSEU Welcomes Our Newest Members:

**Locust Valley CGM
Fairfield BOE Custodial Maintenance
Town of Berne Highway Department**

and Bids Farewell to some of our long standing members:



Suzanne Johnson

On August 30, 2016 after 17 years as Chief Shop Steward and 33 years with Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES Custodial, Grounds, Maintenance and Security Unit, Ray Hall called it a day. In 1999, Ray was the key member in securing UPSEU as the representative union for the unit. He was an asset to both his co-workers and to UPSEU. During his tenure, there was only one grievance filed. Ray's tenacity allowed him to accomplish his job as Chief Shop Steward in such an outstanding fashion that positive settlements with BOCES became the norm. We wish Ray the best with his new journey into retirement, although he is the type of person who will not be idle for long. Thank you Ray for all your years of dedicated service to your co-workers, Monroe 2 Orleans BOCES and with great gratitude, UPSEU.



Ray Hall



Rose Sweeney

Long time Hauppauge School District member Rose Sweeney, after a distinguished career as a professional bus driver, has decided to call it quits. Hauppauge School District was the first public sector unit organized 30 years ago by United Industry Workers, which became UPSEU in 1992. Rose was a strong advocate for her co-workers from day one, served as shop steward for many years, and was a member of numerous bargaining teams. UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr., commenting on Rose's retirement stated, "I'm proud to know Rose for the past 30 years, and even prouder to consider her a friend. She will be missed, but after a long career, she deserves our wishes for a happy and healthy retirement, as she moves into a new chapter of her life." Thank you for all that you've done, Rose.

Dear Mr. Boyle,

I would like to commend two of your labor relations representatives, Mr. Cory Garfman and Mr. Matt Geer for their recent diligent attention and hard work on behalf of the Trumbull Food Service Workers and the Trumbull Schools Custodians, Maintenance Workers and Para-Professionals. The Trumbull Board of Education voted to change our medical coverage from Anthem to State Plan 2.0 without so much as a 'by your leave'. UPSEU reps Cory and Matt quickly jumped into the fray, putting the BOE and its lawyer and finance director on notice that this potential contract violation would not go unchallenged.

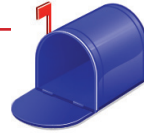
Several long and emotion filled meetings followed with Cory and Matt sitting through them all, as well as sending out many email queries and updates to address the concerns of our members. Finally we decided to accept the state plan as the equivalent of our current Anthem medical coverage, but not before Cory and Matt convinced the BOE negotiating team to reduce the percentage we pay for medical coverage and to offer payouts to members who choose to waive medical coverage (even though they are eligible) for the next four years.

I was particularly impressed by Cory and Matt's decision to put the vote on the state plan to the bargaining unit membership. The teachers delegated their decision to an executive board vote, but Matt declined to take the easy way out. And so Cory mailed a detailed explanation to all our members covered by medical insurance. Matt, with impressively calm authority, chaired yet another two hour long information session before the vote.

I was simply amazed by the extra measures these two gentlemen took to ensure that each UPSEU member had the opportunity to cast an informed vote. Truly, UPSEU is a union that respects and values the opinion of each member. And there is no better proof of that than the recent over and above efforts by Cory and Matt.

Madelyn Meagher
Trumbull Food Service

UPSEU Mailbox



Dear Mr. Boyle,

I am writing to express my gratitude and thanks to one of our union's Labor Relations Representatives, Peter Pollak. Mr. Pollak was an essential part of making my retirement process as easy as possible. I recently retired in June of 2016, and he assisted in helping me fill out all of my paperwork, which can be a daunting process. He also took time out to accompany me to a meeting with the NYS and Local Retirement System which determined my retirement benefits; I felt this was an extremely thoughtful gesture. I am also very thankful for the advice he gave me and his overall presence, in front of lawyers and other representatives from worker's compensation and disability. While I was injured, Mr. Pollak served as a liaison between myself and the Town's Personnel Department and fought for me every step of the way, making sure that I did not lose any of my hard earned time and benefits. Mr. Pollak displayed a high level of professionalism during this process, as I was constantly being informed of what was going on, and if there were any changes to policy or procedure, and what to do if a change occurred. I felt very reassured and comfortable that he was helping me while I was recovering from being injured on the job. I believe that Mr. Pollak is an asset to this union. He helped me in more ways than one, and I am extremely grateful for his service to UPSEU. With employees like Peter Pollak fighting hard for members, this union will survive for years to come.

Anthony Alessi
Town of Islip

Hi Linda,

I received my settlement check from Oneida County. Thank you very much for all of your help with my case. The County made every attempt to put up roadblocks whenever possible and I greatly appreciate UPSEU's diligence. I recognize that this is "your job," so to speak, and that you deal with similar cases every day. But for me it has been a difficult situation personally and professionally. This final step will allow me to move forward and begin to put the whole thing behind me.

Matt VanSlyke
Oneida County

Matt,

Just wanted to say thank you for all your efforts on behalf of the Ridgefield Secretarial Union during our recent contract negotiations. I can't say enough about how effectively you represented us and negotiated on our behalf. Though I've known and worked with you for the last several years in my capacity as union president, you seem to get better and better! The contract we just finished negotiating had an end result that even surprised me in how well you did for us. I feel we ended the process with a contract I can be proud to present to the membership and I am confident they will be pleased. It's been night and day since we left CSEA 6 years ago for UPSEU and that is due mostly to your efforts. Your knowledge, skills as a negotiator and effective problem solver, have made a huge difference in the quality of our working lives. Thanks again for everything you do for us and I look forward to many good years to come.

Ellen Mari
Ridgefield Secretarial Union

Dear Mr. Boyle,

Earlier this year I required the assistance of Alma Cruz, my union rep and Marilyn Siesto, my shop steward to resolve a scheduling dispute I was having with the Library Director. In November 2013, I retired from being a full time librarian and became part time under a contract working 12 hours a week. In February 2016, my director demanded that every other week I would work Friday 5-9 then Saturday 9-5, my entire 12 hour week in a 24 hour period. When I was first asked to work Saturday I had worked out a more reasonable schedule with my supervisor, but this was overridden by the demands of the director. I was also providing a doctor's note stating the reasons why my hours needed to be more reasonable. Alma and Marilyn advised me throughout this ordeal on how to proceed to resolve this dispute. When Alma tried to speak to the director by phone, she was spoken to rudely and had the phone slammed down on her. She immediately emailed the library board of trustees that the director was obstructing communication in a dispute the union was trying to resolve. Within a half hour, the president of the board was in touch with the director. Alma received a call from the director apologizing for her behavior. On the following Monday my scheduling supervisor notified me that she would be putting in effect the more reasonable schedule we had planned. The successful outcome that I attained in this dispute was a direct result of the actions of Alma Cruz done on my behalf and would not have been possible without her intervention.

Ann Maria
Westbury Library



Happy Holidays

from the Officers & Staff of UPSEU



Important Info: NYS Constitutional Convention

What is a Constitutional Convention?

Every 20 years, New Yorkers are given the opportunity to decide whether a convention is needed to amend the New York State Constitution. The last constitutional convention was held in 1967 and cost taxpayers approximately \$6.5 million. The last vote for a convention was held in 1997 and 62% of New Yorkers voted no.

Why is this important?

The convention could result in radical changes. All public employees rely on the state constitution to protect their terms of employment, state pensions and their right to organize and collectively bargain. All of this could be at stake and if the convention is allowed, changes instead could be decided by a few select political insiders who would meet in Albany and have the ability to amend any part of the New York State Constitution.

What is at stake?

Protection against reductions in public pension benefits
Right of employees to organize and bargain collectively
The right to Workers Compensation
Environmental protections

Civil Service merit and fitness
Children's right to a quality education
Judicial organization

Can the Constitution be amended without a convention?

Yes. Bills can be passed through the state legislature as questions on the ballot during a general election. Our constitution has been amended over 200 times in this way since 1894.

What can you do?

Vote no on the constitution to keep control in the hands of voters, not political insiders. Talk to your friends and family about how a constitutional convention could affect them. Contact your state legislators and tell them there are better ways to make changes in New York. While we will talk more about a Constitutional Convention in the coming months and throughout 2017, ultimately, **we urge all to say NO to a Constitutional Convention!**

Making a Difference in the Workplace



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