



Welcome Paraeducators of Stamford to our Growing UPSEU Family!

The Paraeducators of Stamford Association (POSA), comprised of approximately 420 members, voted nearly unanimously in a secret ballot election to affiliate with UPSEU. The POSA Executive Board knew they needed to provide exceptional day-to-day representation and skilled professional negotiators to work on behalf of the hardworking Paraeducators. The Executive Board had met privately with several different labor unions over the past ten years and each time they felt the labor union whom they met with was not a good fit for the membership. Immediately following a meeting with UPSEU, the Executive Board was confident they finally found the strong labor union they had been desperately seeking to truly meet the needs of the membership. Subsequently, the entire membership was invited to a presentation by UPSEU where the members made it clear that joining our organization for the betterment of the entire membership was long overdue.

UPSEU Regional Director Matt Geer stated, "I commend the Executive Board and the membership for being patient while standing united together as they actively pursued joining forces with a strong labor union. On behalf of UPSEU, we are honored that the Paraeducators, after extensive research, determined that our organization was the right union for them. The members deserve to feel respected by their employer in the workplace and unfortunately that climate didn't exist. However, UPSEU is committed to changing that climate by continually challenging the employer and making it known by our actions that these members now finally have a true advocate in their corner."



L to R: Corresponding Secretary Deena Melchionno McKee, Unit President Paulette DeLeo, Recording Secretary Debra Gibb, 2nd VP Linda Uva and Treasurer Elyse Pastore

The Association Unit President Paulette DeLeo had the following to say, "Searching high and low for just the right representation to affiliate with our Association became a trying task. The timing is critical for big changes coming our way. As soon as we met Matt Geer, we knew we had found our partnership. I look forward to our new relationship and the Executive Board working with UPSEU on behalf of our members." Unit Treasurer Elyse Pastore indicated, "I am thrilled that our association and members voted to affiliate with UPSEU. Matt Geer has provided us with an outstanding amount of support, knowledge and care, as we begin this new journey with UPSEU, and has gone out of his way to make this a smooth transition, and for that we are thankful. I look forward to a long lasting relationship with UPSEU, as we stand together as one."



**United Public
Service Employees
Union**

*Making a Difference
Everyday*

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

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Vice President

Randy Tillman
Secretary/Treasurer

James Gangale
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A Message from President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr.



It seems all too often these days that I am attending a wake or sitting Shiva for a member's child, spouse or other loved one due to an accidental overdose. What may have began as the innocent use of opioids to ease the pain from a sports injury, dental work, surgery, or a chronic pain condition can quickly escalate the downward spiral towards addiction. I have also seen an increase in the number of members getting into trouble from failed drug tests, missing excessive time from work or workplace accidents due to the use of opioids.

Opioids have been prescribed since the 1800's but their use did not skyrocket until 1996, when Oxycontin was approved by the FDA. Oxycontin's potency easily surpassed all other painkillers and became the drug of choice for doctors to prescribe. Within five years prescriptions rose from 670,000 to 6.2 million, thanks to a glut of training trips to exotic locales for doctors, nurses and pharmacists to teach them the benefits of Oxycontin, as well as a slew of free meals, holiday gifts and other rewards. Oxycontin, which initially focused on easing the pain of terminally ill patients, quickly became the drug prescribed en masse by doctors.

Federal and state government agencies are spending billions of dollars to combat this crisis. However, it is barely making a dent in the number of overdoses (68% caused by opioids) or the number of new addicts. For someone who doesn't use painkillers, like myself, this may seem to be a far distant problem. It's easy to think that this would never happen to you or one of your family members, but in reality, we are all at risk.

So, what can you as an individual do to make a difference in this sad epidemic? First, you can talk to your doctor about alternative drugs or treatments that can help you to deal with acute pain. When absolutely necessary, ask for the lowest dosage possible and try to extend the time between doses. Research has shown that opioids can be especially addictive to teenagers, so make sure you keep track of their dosage and that you keep your own prescriptions in a secure place and out of their hands. When you finish using your opioid prescription and there are remaining doses left, bring it to your pharmacist for safe disposal.

Let your doctor know if you or family members have any problems, such as with alcohol, prescription medications or drug use which could predispose you to addiction. Also be sure to make your doctor aware of all your current prescriptions and avoid alcohol consumption when taking medication. If you are dealing with chronic pain, consider alternative treatments such as cognitive therapy, meditation, acupuncture or yoga, which in addition to pain relief can also help with insomnia, tiredness and concentration. Consult with your pharmacist regarding effective over the counter medications you can take instead of opioids.

Opioid addiction affects people of all ages, economic backgrounds and educational levels, regardless of where you live. Remember that anyone can become addicted even after a short period of time. It's important to evaluate the risks, talk to your family members about addiction and seek help from a professional. Don't wait until it's too late and your family is pulled apart by a devastating accident, lost job or an unexpected funeral. If you or a member of your family has a problem, speak with your UPSEU representative and we will do our best to direct you to the help you need.

UPSEU Welcomes Our New Members

Derby BOE Paraprofessionals Vote Unanimously to Leave UE/CILU



L to R: Judy DiCicco, Elaine Levi, Robin Griskus, Unit VP Rita Mammano, Unit President Samantha Mahan, Lisa Neuman, Bonnie Tillotson, Donna Kalafut, Melissa Basuljevic, Alfonsina Giammarco (hiding), Mary Livoti, and Karen Cordner.

The Derby BOE Paraprofessionals, comprised of 64 members, voted unanimously to leave UE/CILU and join UPSEU through a secret ballot election conducted by the Connecticut State Board of Labor Relations. The membership had grown tired of the lackluster representation they received from UE/CILU over recent years. They were fed up with the lack of follow through on important issues that arose within the local, which negatively impacted members of the bargaining unit. As a result, they knew they deserved more, and actively sought better representation, which they found in UPSEU.

Immediately following UPSEU filing a petition with the Labor Board for representation of Derby BOE Paraprofessionals, UE/CILU engaged in an aggressive campaign, in a last minute attempt to keep the bargaining unit. They began by visiting and calling members at their personal homes, sometimes late into the evening, in order to slander UPSEU. This was followed with negative mailings/propaganda about UPSEU. These unprofessional, mudslinging tactics only solidified the members' decision to leave UE/CILU, as the visibility of the union was too little, too late. The membership was committed to securing exceptional representation from a professional labor union, voting unanimously to join UPSEU.

UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Colleen Ezzo, who spearheaded the campaign stated, "I look forward to working with the Derby BOE Paraprofessionals Executive Board, as well as the entire membership to provide each of them with the day-to-day representation that they have been lacking for several years. This particular bargaining unit is dear to my heart, as I was formerly a paraprofessional in the Derby Public Schools and I know firsthand the vital role that each of these play in supporting the students and staff of Derby."

City of Shelton Supervisors Leave UE/CILU and Join UPSEU



Front L to R: Margaret Domorod, Silvia Rodriguez, Treasurer Doreen Laucella and Unit President James Tortora. Back: Lisa Theroux, Lynn Piscitelli, William Gaffney III, Joseph Ballaro and Unit Vice President Christopher Potucek.

In a secret ballot election conducted by the Connecticut State Board of Labor Relations, the City of Shelton Supervisors recently voted overwhelmingly to leave UE/CILU and to join UPSEU. The bargaining unit simply lost confidence and faith in the representation they were receiving from UE/CILU. Recently, there were countless times the unit leadership asked specific questions of UE/CILU and they were provided with inaccurate legal advice in regard to day to day representation and negotiation issues. Matt Geer, Regional Director of UPSEU noted that, "The City of Shelton Supervisors were seeking an honest, professional and knowledgeable labor union to represent them in all aspects of their jobs. They were immediately drawn to UPSEU." With the election concluded, UPSEU will finally be able to provide these employees with the representation that they rightfully deserve!

Abandoned by CSEA/SEIU, Seymour BOE Secretaries Join UPSEU

For the last several years, the Seymour BOE Secretaries suspected that their former union, CSEA/SEIU was uninterested in continuing to represent the bargaining unit. Those suspicions were fully realized when CSEA/SEIU was a no-show at a recent Connecticut State Board of Labor Relations (CSBLR) preliminary hearing regarding a petition to have the group join UPSEU. Perplexed by their absence, the assistant state agent conducting the hearing contacted representatives at CSEA/SEIU and was told that it no longer wished to represent the unit and would not challenge the group switching to UPSEU, thereby circumventing the need to hold a secret ballot election. Since then, the Seymour Secretaries haven't looked back and will soon be entering into negotiations for a successor agreement. "The bargaining unit is extremely happy with the switch to UPSEU, since the representation we previously had was not adequate. The membership feels very optimistic that negotiations and contracts will be much improved in the future with UPSEU," said Unit President Holly Zurow.

130 Member Saratoga County Sheriffs Association Joins UPSEU

UPSEU welcomes the Saratoga County Sheriff's Department whose association members voted to affiliate with UPSEU. After an intensive investigative process reviewing various unions, the association members decided UPSEU was the best fit for them and voted 97 to 13 to join UPSEU. UPSEU's Paul Iachetta, who led the campaign and provided the association with information as they conducted their due diligence in deciding the best organization for them stated, "It was a long process, but we look forward to representing this great new law enforcement unit that has joined UPSEU-COPS."

Several other UPSEU represented law enforcement units were contacted by Saratoga Sheriff's Association leaders seeking information about UPSEU's work on their behalf during the association leadership's investigatory process. They learned of UPSEU's record in representing other law enforcement units and they became convinced of their decision. We welcome the Saratoga Sheriffs Association to UPSEU.

Columbia County Negotiating Team Inks New Contract



The Columbia County negotiating team recently signed off on their new contract! *Pictured left to right seated:* UPSEU Regional Coordinator Kathy Wright-Muzio, Patricia Abitabile, Jane DeGennaro, Richard Scalera, Sarah Sterling; *Standing:* Tom Elliott, Katherine Dunst, Donald Coons, Chris Inman, Betty Bednar, Lisa DiStefano, Michaele Williams-Riordon and Cindy Tipple.

Sayville CGM Unit Members Approve New Agreement

A new five year agreement, with annual wage increases and on time step increases, was nearly unanimously approved by UPSEU's Custodial, Grounds and Maintenance unit members. The agreement, in addition to annual wage increases, includes annual longevity increases at 10, 15, and 20 years, with the 20 year longevity increasing by a more significant amount. Gains in unused sick leave payments, benefit fund increases, a new grounds stipend, creation of a uniform committee, and an additional part-time holiday were also included in the pact. Health coverage increases were delayed until the last three years of the agreement.

UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. commended the negotiating team of Daniel Burt, John Chandler, Leonard Cromwell, Jr., Charles Cummings, Chief Steward Robert Kempf, Kenneth Reilly, Jr., and Michael White for their excellent work throughout the process.

UPSEU's Town of Islip Lifeguards Secure New Agreement

After many years of Teamster's representation, the Town of Islip Lifeguards decided to join with their Town of Islip co-workers, who also left the Teamsters to join UPSEU. The Lifeguards unit, which consists of over 190 lifeguards, overwhelmingly approved the new contract with 95% of those participating voting in favor of the contract. Without a contract for six plus years, and after rejecting two Teamster negotiated contracts which included five year freezes, the unit joined UPSEU and now has an agreement, that unlike the Teamsters' agreement, includes increases in each of those five years and additional increases for six added years. Additional increases to the top of the schedule were as well included in the agreement. Other gains included reimbursement for CPR and Stillwater certification training costs. A concern raised by the lifeguards related to uniform wear was addressed with the formation of a Uniform Committee to provide additional options for lifeguard uniforms in time for the 2019 season. Town of Islip Lifeguards protect residents utilizing Town of Islip beaches, pool facilities and Fire Island beaches within town limits.

Special thanks to the negotiating team of Russell Youmans and Michelle Wyeth for their outstanding work and for the assistance of UPSEU Representative Jim Gangale and Town of Islip Liaison Ellen Pleasant for their work throughout the process.

Danbury BOE Secretaries and IT Employees Unit Overwhelmingly Approve Tentative Agreement for Successor Contract

Danbury BOE Secretaries and IT Employees Unit overwhelmingly approved terms of a tentative agreement for a new successor collective bargaining agreement during a recent ratification process. A major item during these negotiations was health insurance. From the onset of the negotiations the District was seeking to migrate employees from a High Deductible Plan (HDHP)/Health Savings Account (HSA) to a Health Reimbursement Account/Arrangement (HRA). In addition, the District was seeking to significantly lower the employer funding into the HDHP plan for the employees.

As negotiations commenced, the Paraeducators bargaining unit previously represented by CSEA/SEIU Local 2001 had their contract arbitration award issued. This arbitration award was referenced throughout negotiations by the District as the vast majority of issues, including but not limited to: losing one year of retroactive wage increases, migrating all employees to a HRA insurance plan, significant employee cost share increases, and reduction in the employer insurance funding levels, to name a few. During the course of negotiations, UPSEU was able to incorporate the Technology Aides, who were previously represented by the Paraeducator union (CSEA/SEIU Local 2001) into the Secretarial/IT UPSEU collective bargaining contract. In addition, we were able to secure additional work days and hours for Tech Aides, as well as substantially increasing the hourly rate of pay for these employees. The union also eliminated language which previously prevented the IT staff from receiving overtime pay. The union maintained the HDHP/HSA insurance plan and the employer funding amounts in each year of the contract. We also were successful in securing language improvements, as well as above market wage increases, including a new IT wage grid.

Newly elected Unit President Sandy Sanchez had the following comment concerning the process, "Negotiations were handled as a unit and I'm confident our members were satisfied with the end result." Unit Vice President Linda Rosso noted, "Our union had the pleasure of having Matt Geer with us during our recent contract negotiations. Matt's guidance through the negotiation process was invaluable. His expertise in these areas was apparent and was appreciated by the team members. Our options were clearly explained during each step and I felt very confident that we were getting excellent representation while being encouraged to think for ourselves. We came out of negotiations with a tentative agreement that pleased virtually every member. Many thanks to UPSEU!"

UPSEU Regional Director Matt Geer stated, "Many thanks to our negotiating committee consisting of Wendy Burke, Jennifer Carey, Angela Cefaloni, Linda Rosso, Barbara Savo, Yevgeniy Skylar and Sandy Sanchez. Their respective efforts, passion, time and dedication were an integral part of this process, and I can say without any reservation, that they displayed a high level of advocacy during the course of negotiations."

Plainfield DPW Signs Contract



Plainfield DPW members working on potholes and repairing roads and town parking areas during the spring season. L to R: Dan Bernier, Jim Allyn, Henry Dexter, Unit President Ron Berube, Jason Corrao, Keith Whipple, Kevin Henault, Mike Hawkins. Not pictured: Crew Chief John Ravenelle.

The Plainfield DPW has just executed another three year contract with the Town of Plainfield, Connecticut. Our members in the Plainfield DPW work extremely hard, as they are a small unit with a lot of work to cover. UPSEU is proud to work with and represent the members of the Plainfield DPW.

Northport East Northport Clerical Employees Approve New Contract

Annual wage increases, additional adjustments in years two and four of the contract, increased longevity including new steps, and other gains were included in the new four year agreement. Annual holidays, namely the three Jewish holidays will be granted off as a result of the contract, when they fall on school days for 12 month employees. Health contributions, a central issues during negotiations, was resolved with employee health contributions increasing by 1.0% in the last year of the contract.

A significant issue surrounding the negotiations was the ongoing court case impacting the district related to the Northport LIPA Power plant. LIPA is suing numerous municipalities throughout LI related to its tax rate on various power plants, one of which is based in Northport. The case is ongoing. In the end, an agreement was struck that was approved by a vote of 64 to 3 by the unit.

UPSEU President Kevin Boyle had nothing but praise for the outstanding work of the negotiating team. Kevin singled out Unit President Clare Roby for her tremendous assistance with data analysis, which was instrumental throughout the process. Boyle, as well commended the work of Unit Vice President Mary Ann Bloom, and members Patricia Gardner, Rene Marino and Lisa Todaro for their terrific work. The conclusion of an agreement is bittersweet, as Unit Vice President Mary Ann Bloom will be retiring June 28, 2019. Mary Ann has been a great advocate for the unit and we wish her health and happiness in her retirement years. She will be missed.

Arbitrator Agrees with UPSEU

A New York State Public Employment Relations Board arbitrator agreed with UPSEU that two Columbia County employees were working out of title and awarded them almost eighteen months of back pay.

“This all came to light when the department wanted to make some adjustments to these two workers’ jobs,” said UPSEU Regional Coordinator Kathy Wright-Muzio. Going on she stated, “After meeting with the employees, there was not only the issue of the current change in duties that the department wanted to make that was the issue, but there was also the fact that these employees had been and were working for a number of years at a higher classification.” The employees felt very strongly about this, and after Muzio reviewed the information, she shared the same belief.

UPSEU and the County went back and forth trying to resolve not only the issue of adding new duties, but also to make right the fact that these workers had been working well above their pay grade and had not been compensated for it. Efforts at the Civil Service commission proved to be fruitless. Ultimately, a mutually agreeable resolution could not be reached and UPSEU filed for arbitration. After a multi-day arbitration and a number of witnesses who testified the parties rested their cases and placed it in the hands of the arbitrator. Shortly thereafter, the decision was rendered with the award of back pay.

The department, regrettably, has backed off of its plan to add new duties to these positions, which would have resulted in an upgrade; albeit not to the degree warranted based upon the arbitration decision. Moreover, they have also decided to work the employees within their civil service title and removed the duties of the higher classification position: a management right they have elected to enact. Regardless of this unfortunate decision on the part of the County, at least there was an acknowledgment by the arbitrator that they were working out of title for years, and did receive compensation for that.

Arbitrator Sustains UPSEU Grievance and Work Begins, Again

In a long awaited decision, a New York State Public Employment Relations Board arbitrator sustained UPSEU's grievance regarding a department head's refusal to pilot a proposed compressed workweek as required by the union contract. UPSEU Regional Coordinator Kathy Wright-Muzio had received a request by a number of employees in a department to be given the opportunity to pilot an alternative work schedule. "We have had several departments make this request over the last seven years. In all instances, prior to even making a proposal to the administration, we survey and prepare mock schedules to ensure there is no negative impact on services and/or coverage," said Muzio.

Once UPSEU determines a proposed schedule can be viable, it is presented to the department and discussions ensue on any concerns the department may have. "We work very hard to collaborate with the departments to come up with a pilot agreement that works for everyone and this case was no different," said Muzio. Historically, alternative work schedules that have been proposed have been piloted and all have been permanently implemented except in one instance. In that situation, the schedule had been piloted but it failed to be implemented permanently, because during the pilot period, unscheduled absences created a staffing and coverage crunch. Such was not the case in the department that the grievance was filed on behalf of.

In this instance, the proposal, a product of an extensive amount of research and preparation by UPSEU was not embraced by the department administration from the onset. Their response was a series of obstacles, avoidance, denial and false hope. "Regrettably, we were very disheartened by the dismissive and disrespectful treatment we were subjected to throughout the process," stated Muzio.

The arbitrator agreed that the department administration had violated the contract when it did not allow the piloting of the alternative work schedules. As part of his remedy, he directed new surveys to be taken again (because the schedules presented at the arbitrator are now over 20 months old), that mock schedules be developed, and the department administration fulfill its obligation under the contract. "So, we won, and now we start the work again, but this time we are armed with an arbitrator's decision that outlines the department's responsibilities and how they are expected to conduct themselves," concluded Muzio.

A word of thanks to UPSEU Assistant Chief Unit Officer Pat Abitabile for all her work and support with the issue as well as all of the other issues she handles. Pat did a tremendous amount to work, and will again for her fellow co-workers.



Kudo's to these Southington Board of Education Paraeducators, ABA's and EL Tutors of UPSEU Unit 50 for their very generous donation of \$1,300 to Bread for Life. This donation represents proceeds from their dress down day. Their donation helps Bread for Life meet their mission: to ensure that no one goes hungry in their community.

Officer/Steward Training in Massachusetts

UPSEU held a Basic Steward/Officer Training in Massachusetts, where those in attendance learned how to handle a grievance from the beginning through the final stages of grievance arbitration. Attorney John Connor and UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Roger Stolen provided the training for those in attendance. The officers/stewards who attended learned how to identify when a grievance occurs, the importance of meeting with the grievant to obtain all the facts, the need to request information from the employer as it pertains to the grievance, standard grievance language, the legalities of grievance arbitration and the process involved.

Roger Stolen stated, "The training was a huge success, as the participants learned a tremendous amount of information as it pertains to the grievance process. Our officers/stewards are dedicated to both the job they perform at work and also to the job of being a unit officer/steward. This was evident on the day of the training where there was a snowstorm and several officers/stewards were unable to attend, as they needed to perform essential plowing for their respective municipalities."

Eleanor Rulon-Miller, Unit Vice President of the Westfield Dispatchers said, "I found the subject to be informative and directly relevant to the environment that exists between the dispatchers and management in Westfield. The techniques and advice that we were taught will help us in our future endeavors to properly identify and resolve potential grievances in a fair and equitable manner."

UPSEU cannot thank each of our unit officers and stewards enough for the important role that each of them plays on a day-to-day basis for their respective bargaining units. While not always an easy job, the role of an officer/steward can be deeply rewarding.



*Front L to R: Eleanor Rulon-Miller (Westfield Dispatchers), Christine Gustafson (Westfield Dispatchers), Laura Bonavita (City of Springfield)
Back L to R: Michael Towle (West Springfield Custodians), Attorney John Connor, John Fontaine, Sr. (Holyoke Water), and Roger Stolen, Labor Relations Representative*

Hicksville UFSD RN's Ratify Agreement

The Hicksville Union Free School District Registered Nurses recently ratified a five year agreement which includes a wage package above the typical tax cap increases found on Long Island. The first year of the agreement established equity in the workday and a new enhanced salary schedule. In addition to normal annual step movement, employees not at top step have the ability to receive up to five additional steps (to reflect work experience as registered nurses prior to their hire date) in the second year of the agreement.

"It is always a goal to achieve a fair settlement for both the newer employees and those with many years of service," said UPSEU Negotiator Kim Nowakowski. She continued, "This can be tricky to accomplish but we worked hard to achieve something for each group. All employees received higher salaries as a result of the newly enhanced salary schedule. While the experience steps favored the newer employees, the longer term employees benefitted from the two new longevity levels and an improved payout for unused sick days at retirement. The negotiations occurred over many difficult meetings, but in the end the District and the Board recognized that the salary issue was affecting both the district and the employees. They, as well as us, were motivated to find a means of improving hiring and retention."

The agreement maintained health insurance contributions and retiree health benefits as stated in the prior contract and contained a cap on the payout for not taking the insurance, which is similar to their prior payouts. Special thanks to Unit President Joan Welsh and negotiating team members Gail Hunker and Susan Keogan.

Record Turnout at 15th Annual Meriden Unit Officer/Steward Training

UPSEU's 15th Annual Basic Unit Officer and Steward Training drew the largest ever turnout of local unit officers from across Connecticut, forcing organizers to hold this year's event at the Augusta Curtis Cultural Center in Meriden, instead of the much smaller Meriden Public Library, where the training has been held since its inception in 2004.

Matt Geer, Regional Director of UPSEU's Meriden office opened this year's day long training session by welcoming the huge crowd of attendees and thanking each of them for being dedicated unit leaders, before turning the floor over to representatives of Hearing Care Centers, a UPSEU vendor-partner, who specializes in offering hearing impaired members and their dependents discounts of hearing evaluation and selection, measurement fittings, repairs and technical assistance. This year's line-up of guest speakers also included Labor Relation Representatives and attorneys from UPSEU Meriden office, each of whom spoke at length on a variety of collective bargaining related topics such as the difference between a grievance and an unfair labor practice, the importance of knowing one's collective bargaining agreement, investigating and prepping a grievance for arbitration, and the many benefits UPSEU offers members such as employee assistance, a scholarship program for dependents, a free accidental death and dismemberment insurance benefit valued at \$10K, as well as various entertainment, car rental, clothing and other discount plans. All of these can be accessed through UPSEU's recently upgraded website at www.upseu.org. In addition to the many guest speakers, attendees received several helpful handouts to take back to their respective bargaining units covering youth employment provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), Weingarten and Garrity Right, standard grievance forms and important union contact information.



For first time attendee Paulette DeLeo, the training she received at this year's event is invaluable in her capacity as Unit President for the Paraeducators of Stamford Association (POSA). "I loved the training provided by UPSEU. It was another learning curve for me and I am now more knowledgeable to better serve our members," said DeLeo. Doreen Denhardt, Unit President of Branford Town Hall Employees said she enjoyed the training particularly since it gave her an opportunity to interact with other unit officers and stewards from across the state and served as a reminder to her of the importance of being a UPSEU member. "It was a great introduction and overview. I was glad to listen and talk to other members and hear some of the issues they are dealing with. Overall, it was a very motivating experience," said Denhardt. Oxford Municipal Employee's Unit President Kelly Weymer also said she enjoyed interacting with other UPSEU members and that although she is a regular attendee of the training, each year she learns something helpful she didn't previously know. "As a frequent attendee of the UPSEU basic steward training seminars, no matter how many times you attend, you will always learn something new. Not only did this bring an overwhelming feeling of camaraderie, but it also shows the success of UPSEU. I am proud to be one of its members," stated Weymer.

Matt Geer, Regional Director, stated, "UPSEU is honored to have such dedicated unit leaders as was shown by this year's attendance. The role each of these unit leaders holds is invaluable to the success of their respective bargaining units, as they work corroboratively with their assigned UPSEU Labor Relations Representatives to best serve each of the members. I am confident that our recent training provided our unit leaders with the tools necessary to enforce their contract and defend UPSEU member's rights on a day-to-day basis. UPSEU cannot thank each of our unit officers and stewards enough for all that they routinely do, which helps our organization continue to deliver the highest level of representation and be a true advocate in the workplace for our hard-working members."

NJ UPSEU Representatives Attend Annual Public Employment Relations Commission Conference

UPSEU representatives regularly attend conferences and educational seminars to insure that our members have the best representation possible. The annual New Jersey PERC conference offers great insights as to changes in the law and the interpretation of labor law, as well as valuable insights from arbitrators and mediators. This year's conference, held on April 26th in East Brunswick, New Jersey also included a first. Governor Murphy attended the conference and gave its key note speech. This was a change from previous governors and seems to signal a major change in labor relations in the State of New Jersey. The Governor spoke about the Janus Decision and the workplace Democracy Act. He also made a commitment to the process of collective bargaining, praising state workers unions for bargaining in good faith and reaching a contract that both sides could embrace.



NJ Governor Phil Murphy and UPSEU's Hackensack Building Maintenance unit member Frank Licata meet during discussions on pension protections.

State Senate Majority Leader Loretta Weinberg and New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo also spoke at the conference. Discussions included Post Atlantic County increment cases and bargaining for contract expiration, post Janus litigation and the Diane B. Allen Equal Pay Act and its' impact on the public sector. Hetty Rosenstein from Communications Workers of America spoke about her recent negotiations with the new governor. CWA agreed to modify its Health Benefits Plan in order to save millions for the State of New Jersey. In return, state workers were able to dismantle Chapter 78 contributions and return to a salary based percentage. Wage settlement trends were also briefly addressed at the conference.

Islip School District Clerical Unit Unanimously Approves Pact

In a unanimous vote UPSEU Clerical Unit members in the Islip School District approved a new four year agreement. The contract terms included annual wage increases, an improved above top of step adjustment, (which is paid annually) and an annual pay adjustment for all unit members in each year of the contract. There were no changes to health coverage. Other gains included a continuation of the February recess period off, which sunsets at the end of each contract. UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. commended the negotiating team led by Unit President Yolanda Alvarez, along with team members Dali Colon, Trish Connelly, Eileen Debitetto and Susan Hogan for their great work.

East Rockaway Building and Grounds Unit Prepare for Negotiations



L to R: Robert Brockett, Unit President Antonino Profeta, Joe Sblendorio, Hugo Espeleta, Mike Mercadante, Carlos Bosques, (in the front) Mike Stern.

Sayville Office Professional Unit Overwhelmingly Approves New Pact

A new five year agreement was overwhelmingly approved by UPSEU members. This agreement will increase wages annually with on time steps, improves longevity, adds a day off for part-time staff, and increases the daily rate of pay for sick leave at retirement, among other gains. Health coverage, a significant issue in negotiations, was settled with a slight increase in the later years of the agreement. The health percentage cost will mirror the other units in the district that previously settled contracts. UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. commended the work of the negotiating team led by Unit President Sharon Linehan and which included Alice Ascetta and Fran Knox.



Dear Kim,

I just want to say thank you for meeting with us. In addition to all your knowledge that you bring to us, you also have a real sense of what our job entails and the challenges that we face on a daily basis. I truly appreciate all your efforts and sense of clarity that you give to us. All the best.

Reva Miller R.N., West Hempstead Middle School

To whom this may concern,

Thank you very much for selecting me as one of the candidates for this year's UPSEU Children's Scholarship Award. I was thrilled to learn of my selection for this honor and I am deeply appreciative of your support. By awarding me with this \$500 scholarship, you have lightened my financial burden which allows me to focus on the most important aspect of school, learning. I hope one day I will be able to help students achieve their goals, just as you have helped me.

Rhea Rene, New Hyde Park/Garden City Park School District

Thank you for a very informative steward/officer training session. It was well worth the time and a great introduction/overview. I was glad to listen to and talk to other members and hear some of the issues they are dealing with. Overall, it was a very motivating experience.

Doreen Denhard, Branford Town Hall

Thank you Kristen and also to Matt who is the BEST! You have made a horrible, abusive workplace experience somewhat bearable by being so kind and acting in my best interest. I wish you both well in everything in life! Thank you for all of your help, Matt. You are a very special person to have taken so much time on my behalf.

Michelle Hurteau, Hamden BOE Nurses

Members in the News

TOWN OF ISLIP PARK RANGERS SAVE TOWN RESIDENT



UPSEU Town of Islip Park Ranger members Anthony LaGrasta and John Rivera receive a plaque in recognition of their outstanding work in saving the life of a town resident. *Pictured left to right:* Deputy Commissioner Tony Prudenti, Sgt. Tom Snyder, UPSEU's Frank Correia, Park Rangers Anthony LaGrasta and John Rivera, UPSEU's Pat DeFelice and Unit Vice President Tom Keane.

SOUTHINGTON 2020 PARAEDUCATOR OF THE YEAR



Congratulations to Caroline Turek who has been working as a paraeducator at Derynoski since 1997. Caroline was nominated by colleague Tina Airo. Why Caroline? She is diversified in multiple disciplines, a member of Little Dragons Mentor Program, a tutor responsible for intervention and progress monitoring, started her own "lunch bunch" with the students, helps students with coping skills and provides a safe and happy learning environment.

**UPSEU wishes our Members and their Families
a safe and happy Summer!**



UPSEU SCHOLARSHIPS BY THE NUMBERS

20 Years of Giving Members and Dependent Children:



41 Paul T. Burch Awards
163 Member Awards
543 Dependent Child Award



747 Scholarship Awards Totaling over \$400,000

Special Thanks to:

Kim Nowakowski, Scholarship Chair

Kathy Wright-Muzio, Scholarship Co-Chair

175 past member volunteers serving on annual Scholarship Committees

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

3139 State Route 11, Malone, NY 12953

29 Liberty Street, Unit 210, Batavia, NY 14020

130 Research Parkway, Suite 201, Meriden, CT 06450

1 West Main Street, Clinton, CT 06413

One Bergen County Plaza, Rm 396, Hackensack, NJ 07601

20 Maple Street, Springfield, MA 01103



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