



UNITED PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES UNION
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Fall 2021

THE ADVOCATE

COMMACK PUBLIC LIBRARY MEMBERS UNANIMOUSLY RATIFY CONTRACT



Front Row: Regional Director/VP Kim Nowakowski and Lisa Cavallaro.

Back Row: Michelle Glovinsky, Maureen Armstrong, Lisa Palmieri, Anissa Mule' and Michael Schellderfer

Members of the Commack Public Library Unit recently unanimously ratified a multiyear agreement. Initially, negotiations were set to begin in March 2020, just as the pandemic hit. The negotiating team and the library quickly agreed to a one year agreement to give time for things to settle down since both sides were working furiously on health and safety issues. The agreement includes annual wage increases and a number of quality of work-life issues. "We effectively agreed that the salaries needed significant increases to compete with other like size libraries in the area," remarked Regional Director/VP Kim Nowakowski, who led the negotiations. "In addition to significant improvements to the annual title adjustment we added in a one time bonus to base salary industry wage adjustment, as well as improvements to the longevity schedule," Kim added.

The library also agreed to two additional paid holidays for full and part time employees, an increase in the retirement sick days sell back which built on the prior one year agreement increase, increased custodial clothing allowance, and a new stipend for notaries. The part time employees achieved an increase in their personal/sick/floating holiday schedule, as well as large adjustments to their vacation schedule. "Previously the vacation schedule only had a 1 year and a 3 year level, and we were able to add 5, 10, and 20 year levels which significantly increased time off for more senior employees. We had a really great team and put in a lot of work both in preparation for negotiations and during the process. It showed not only in our ability to provide the library with information regarding the need for significant changes, but as well in the ultimate outcome," stated Nowakowski. The negotiating team consisted of Unit Co-Presidents Maureen Armstrong and Nancy Paszkiewicz, with members Lisa Cavallaro, Michelle Glovinsky, Anissa Mule', Lisa Palmieri and Michael Schellderfer.

Congratulations are in order for Co-President Maureen Armstrong on her retirement. "Maureen served the unit throughout a number of contract negotiations and retirement incentive negotiations. I was glad to see that she was able to take advantage of our last retirement incentive (part of the one year bridge agreement.) She will be missed by staff and the union alike," said Nowakowski.



**United Public
Service Employees
Union**

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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.

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A Message from President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr.



Time and time again I have written about the importance of being proactive as a member: more specifically that you share your concerns regarding your working conditions, health and safety, or potential disciplinary actions with your UPSEU Labor Representative and Unit Officer. Too often members think they can handle it themselves and delay the proper response. Perhaps it's human nature to put off what should be done. In fact, the saying, "a stitch in time saves nine" dates back to 1723 when it was first recorded in a book. Of course, then it was about mending clothing rather than waiting and giving time for the damage to become greater. This philosophy justifies seeking union representation. UPSEU has professional, trained representatives ready to assist you with any on the job concerns.

Bringing us in before the matter becomes a termination of employment is especially important. At times we are called at that point and find that there are half a dozen write-ups and meetings that took place leading up to the termination. While the member thinks that each meeting/write-up is no big deal or that they can handle the situation themselves, you should let your UPSEU Labor Representative be the judge of that. Often we are able to nip it in the bud by either showing management that they are incorrect in their thinking or coming up with a solution that turns the situation around.

Members not only procrastinate with workplace issues, but with personal issues as well. We have seen members who have lost their lives, whether suddenly or through a long illness, without taking the necessary measures to handle their estate or update their life insurance policies. I recall a situation a few years ago, where a member died in a car accident late one night. Prior to her death and after her divorce, she failed to update her insurance policies. Her ex-spouse got everything from her life insurance policies and her children received next to nothing. In another situation, a member with a long term terminal illness failed to take steps to prepare for the inevitable. Eventually the member became incapacitated and unable to do the things necessary to have his wishes followed. We had urged the member to have a health care proxy, power of attorney, a will and to update all his records to reflect his wishes. His incapacitation was followed by his passing and became a mess for his family handling the legal and financial matters.

Like workplace issues, I know your own demise isn't something you want to think about, but it is important for you and your family to be prepared for the unexpected. A Health Care Proxy will grant your appointed person the authority to make medical decisions on your behalf in the event you become incapacitated by COVID-19 or for any other reason. If you or someone you know has a serious medical condition or unexpected medical emergency and does not have a Health Care Proxy, now is certainly a good time to consider one.

A Power of Attorney provides your designated representative the authority to handle your banking and legal matters. The POA can give authorization to act on your behalf either for limited, specific circumstances or it can be more expansive. You may use either your own personal attorney or an authorized UPSEU provider who offers a no cost consultation and discounted rates.

Whether it is workplace issues or personal preparation for the unexpected, a stitch in time not only saves nine but an unnecessary implosion of problems. Please reach out to a UPSEU representative to discuss any concerns you have about workplace issues and consider an attorney to assist you with the paperwork necessary to protect your interests in the event you become incapacitated. Make sure that your beneficiaries are up to date. Gather your important documents in one place and let your loved ones know where to find them.

We are here to help. Please contact your UPSEU Labor Representative for assistance or for further information about law firms that offer discounted rates to UPSEU members. It may be an easier path to do nothing, but the consequences can be great!

CONGRATULATIONS 2021 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Paul T. Burch \$1,000 Awards



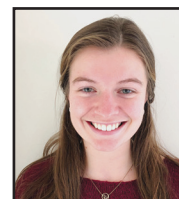
Alexandria Barnes
Biology/Physical Therapy
Clarkson University
Daughter of Elena
Orange Ulster BOCES



Cassidy Ranno
Biology/Environmental Science
Northwestern University
Daughter of Christine
DMEA



Joshua Trent
Sports Medicine/Law Enforcement
SUNY Cortland
Son of Laura
Eastern Suffolk BOCES



Kayla Yuhass
Elementary Education
University of Delaware
Daughter of Jeffrey
Borough of Ringwood

Dependent \$500 Awards

Member	Dependent	Employer	Member	Dependent	Employer
Balzano, Alicia	Juliana	Mahopac CSD	Maloney, Patrick	Jane	Hauppauge SD
Beaumont, Dawn	Hailey	Columbia County	Masker, Darin	Sara	Borough of Ringwood
Bremont, Adam	Emily	Oneida County	Maxey, Julie	Sydney	County of Springfield
Brodsky-Matwey, Allyson	Alexander	Eastern Suffolk BOCES	Merola, Michelle	Alyssa	Rensselaer County
D'Amelio, Sandra	Juliano	Regional SD #16	Mitzel, Wendy	Mallory	Town of Suffield
DeSantis, Michele	Matthew	Marlboro SD	Monaco, Barbara	Alivia	Monroe BOE
Doraz, Jennifer	Isabelle	Madison Public Schools	Nieves, Sylvia	Christopher	Borough of Ringwood
Ferreira, Christine	Devin	Trumbull BOE	Plompen, Patricia	Connor	Sayville SD
Greene-Levin, Paige	Hope	Cold Spring Harbor SD	Raden, Joanne	Diana	Eastern Suffolk BOCES
Grosskopf, Linda	Patrick	Eastport South Manor SD	Rivas, Angelita	Kristen	Freeport Public Schools
Henkler, Maryellen	Owen	Orange Ulster BOCES	Rosen, Melanie	Sydney	Hewlett-Woodmere SD
Hughes, Andrea	Sydney	Mahopac CSD	Rueck, Kristina	Richard	Three Village CSD
Koppenal, Jennifer	Garrett	Borough of Hawthorne	Rusiecki, Dora	James	Southington Public Schools
Kosiewicz, Tania	Braedon	Guilford Public Schools	Sargis, Dawn	Jacob	Town of Southington
LaBanca, Dan	Justin	Town of Branford	Scattergood, Kenneth	Kelly	Village of Rhinebeck PD
Lemere, Michele	Alex	East Haven BOE	Scotti, Janine	Tomaso	Darien Public Schools
Lemire, Michele	Sophie	E Longmeadow Public Library	Sherbitsky, Laurie	Sydney	Bayport Blue Point SD
Lemire, Michele	Olivia	E Longmeadow Public Library	Stewart, Susan	Gary	Darien Public Schools
Loura, Sue	Amanda	Darien Public Schools	Stiles, Laura	Noah	Bay Shore SD
Lucia, Shennon	Samuel	Saratoga County	Vandenburgh, Jason	Michael	Hudson Valley Community College

Member \$500 Awards

Member	Employer	Member	Employer
Julia Buonfiglio	Madison Public Schools	Nicole Miano	Rensselaer County
Carrie Dunham	Rensselaer County	John Perry	City of Norwich PD
Alycia Fahrenkrug	Hewlett Woodmere Public Schools	Patricia Russo	Bayport Blue Point SD
Patricia Fogarty	Bay Shore School District	Jodian Walker	Bloomfield BOE
Matthew Marlow	Town of Coxsackie Ambulance	Desiree Wallace	Huntington UFSD
Justin Martinez	East Islip Library		

Thank you to our Scholarship Committee UPSEU Vice President Kim Nowakowski, Ellen Pleasant, Steve Geurds, Jennifer Perryman, Beverly Greco, Dan Yoxall, Michelle Wadas, Maureen McKay, Geri Nigg, Evelyn Overton, Ellen Mari, Frank Sequenzia, Deborah Stevens, Jude Fitzgerald, and Scott Menard.

Three Village Central School District Clerical Employees Unanimously Approve New Agreement

A new agreement will provide above average wage increases plus increment and significant longevity increases to each of the four steps of the longevity schedule. As well, the agreement provides the addition of the Juneteenth holiday, enhanced benefit fund contributions, the ability to sell back vacation days annually, changes in levels for specific positions and other gains.

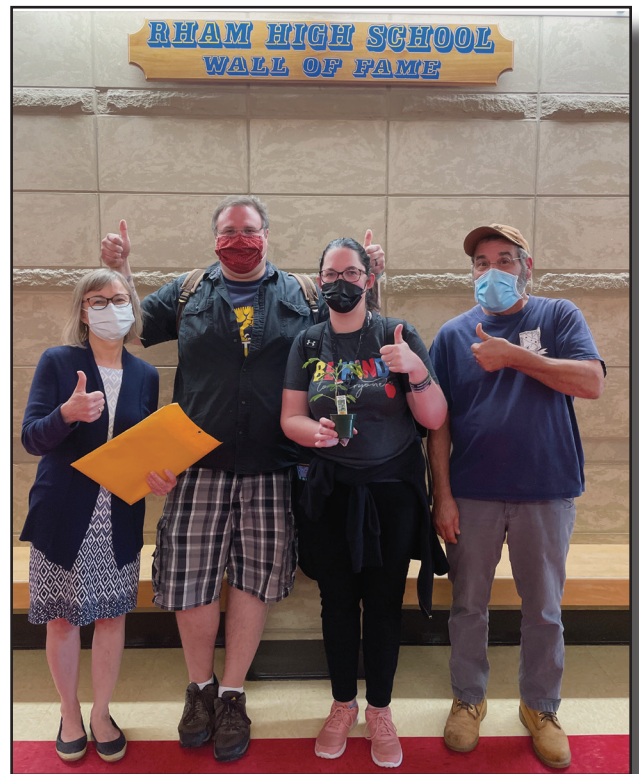
UPSEU President Kevin E. Boyle, Jr. thanked the unit leaders, Unit President Donna Pesapane and Treasurer Sally Loria for their leadership throughout the process. UPSEU President Boyle specifically commended Donna's extraordinary efforts stating, "Donna worked above and beyond to make this agreement happen. Donna Pesapane stated, "UPSEU was there with us throughout the process, and we thank the administration of the district and the BOE for recognizing the valuable work of the clerical unit."

UPSEU Addresses Wage Disparity in New Multiyear Region 8 Agreement

The Region 8 negotiating committee, consisting of Co-Presidents Natalie Bradley, Steve Pozzato, Christina Poston, Molly Vigeant and Rick Hann began their work on a successor contract long before sitting down at the table with the Board of Education. Their extensive legwork included gathering many comparable contracts to support the union's position that bargaining unit members in each classification were significantly underpaid compared to others in their classification.

In the first meeting with the Board, the union made it clear that in order to reach an agreement at the table, the wage disparity for Region 8 employees had to be addressed. Improvements also had to be made to the paid leave benefits for 10 month employees. Through great determination, UPSEU reached a multiyear movement to bridge the gap in wages with other cities and towns. The medical and dental coverage will see no increases in co-payments or premium shares over the contract term. Improvements were also made to the sick and holiday paid leave benefits for 10 month employees, and provided for a reclassification of administrative assistants that had taken on significant duties and responsibilities.

Unit Co-President Natalie Bradley stated, "Thanks to our hardworking negotiating team and the expertise of our UPSEU Representative Colleen Ezzo, The RHAM Non-Certified Bargaining Unit has been awarded a multiyear contract which I have not seen the likes of in my twenty years of union activism!"



Region 8 Negotiating Committee: Natalie Bradley, Steve Pozzato, Christina Poston and Rick Hann. Missing from photo is Molly Vigeant

Derby Paraeducators Unanimously Approve Multiyear Contract



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on in-person meetings, negotiating the Derby Paraeducator's first agreement since joining UPSEU had to be delayed in order to allow for more productive negotiations of a full successor contract.

In late spring, the Derby Paraeducator Negotiating Committee, consisting of Unit President Sam Maham, Unit Treasurer Rita Mammano, Robin Griskus, Gessy Philius, Lisa Neumann, Cory Bartone, Donna Kalafut and Ron Swierbitowicz, started meeting to determine those issues that would be prioritized in their next contract and brought forward in upcoming negotiations with the Board. Extensive discussions took place around recent movements for "The Fight For \$15", as well as the significant role paraeducators provided to support students throughout the COVID-19 health crisis. As a result of these discussions, the consensus was unanimous: wages had to be addressed.

UPSEU provided the Board with an analysis of paraeducator earnings in surrounding towns to support their position that wages would be front and center in these negotiations. Following several discussions with the Board, a tentative agreement was reached.

The agreement provides significant wage increases in year one of the contract. Each paraeducator will realize higher than average increases in each of the remaining years, in step increases, or a general wage increase. Unit President Sam Mahan commented, "A big shout-out to our Labor Relations Representative Colleen Ezzo for all her hard work and help in securing these increases!"

An additional change to this contract was the elimination of a sunset clause that prevented new hires from receiving a stipend for working with students with high needs. Bethany Seefeldt, who was impacted previously by this clause stated, "A very special 'Thank You!' to UPSEU and this committee for opening the door for new hires to be compensated the same as others for the work that we do!" The medical insurance will see no changes throughout the contract, with coverage, premium shares and co-pays remaining untouched.

UPSEU Labor Relations Representative Colleen Ezzo commented, "I want to pay special tribute to this committee, who were called into more than one meeting at a moment's notice - most especially Unit President Mahan and Unit Treasurer Mammano, their never-ending dedication, passion and commitment in advancing the wages and benefits for this unit led to this very successful negotiating session, and ultimately this agreement!" Committee member Griskus expressed, "We are on our way with UPSEU!"

Members in Action



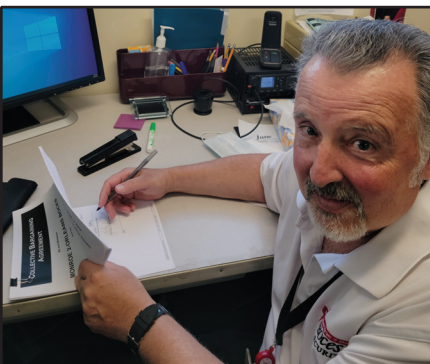
In celebration of the new Town of Islip contract
Left to right: White Collar Representative Ellen Pleasant, White Collar Unit Vice President Reese McGuire, Supervisor Angie Carpenter, Blue Collar Representative Chris Warren, and Blue Collar Unit President Jack Roarty.



This picture was taken at our Batavia office with our members from the Batavia Downs Casino. Up front is Nick Paliani. Back row, left to right is Union Steward Brian Mogenhan, Chief Steward Ashley Richley, and Bill Nuttall.



Pictured to the left are James Cummings and Ryan Hoelzer, Blue Collar members pumping out water in flooded areas of Islip town. This nor'easter dumped five inches of rain with wind gusts up to 50 mph. Flash flood warnings were in effect for parts of the township. Town of Islip Blue-Collar members pumped out roadways while the White-Collar unit took in the complaints of flooding from residents.



Chief Steward John Gigliotti from Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES, signs their new contract agreement.



The East Rockaway School District acknowledges UPSEU Member James Lores as a Front Line Hero. James is a member of the Grounds/Maintenance/Custodial group as a School Bus Driver/Messenger.



Town of Islip Representatives Christopher Warren and Ellen Pleasant with school supplies collected for donation.

Members in the News



Congratulations to Detective Kerry Dalling, a 24-year veteran of the Fairfield Police Department, who has found a passion in investigating and helping survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Dalling's passion recently earned her The Center for Family Justice 2021 "Partner of the Year" award. It's an honor given to someone who supports the center's mission of providing services to more than 4,300 victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence and child abuse each year.



Congratulations to Elizabeth Scannello on her retirement. Liz served as Unit President and on the negotiating teams over a number of contracts for the Huntington UFSD Registered Nurse Unit.



Congratulations to retirees Karla Simpson-Lapp and Sue Vail who worked for the Churchville-Chili Central School District transportation department.

Watertown CT Police Dept Honors Dispatchers



Chief Bernegger, Dispatcher Bessette, Communications Supervisor, Dispatcher Bostick and Dispatcher (APCO Representative) Lafferty

This past August, the Watertown Police Department Administration and Communications Administration notified Dispatcher Patricia Bessette and Dispatcher Melissa Bostick that they had been selected as the Atlantic Chapter of the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO) "Public Safety Communications Team of the Year Award." Dispatchers Bessette and Bostick commonly work together during the day shift and as a team have professionally handled numerous chaotic emergency 911 calls.

The dispatchers not only answer the 911 calls and speak to the complainant, but simultaneously dispatch police, fire and ambulance personnel, all while updating those agencies with the pertinent information. A brief ceremony was held at Police Headquarters notifying them of the prestigious recognition and a formal ceremony will be held in Stowe Vermont in October 2021.

The APCO consists of public safety communication personnel in the New England states, as well as the states of New York and New Jersey. APCO International presents awards to public safety communications personnel who have demonstrated the highest levels of personal and professional conduct and performance in the line of duty. The Public Safety Communications Team of the Year Award is designed to honor two or more individuals from the same public safety communications agency who worked on the same incident, event or project.

ATTENTION: UPSEU MEMBERS

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**And Best Wishes
for a Happy New Year
from
the Officers and Staff
of UPSEU!**



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