

Special Discount Holiday Offers Inside

The Work Force

December 2012

Vol. 15 No. 11

Standing up to Sandy



See Pages 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11

Photo by Jessica Ladlee

We can do better for our most vulnerable, Pages 12, 13

Photo of the Month



Despite travel and communications challenges facing them in the days following the wake of Sandy's wrath, Long Island child care providers Sandra Smith and Lisa Price of Hempstead (in VOICE/CSEA shirt), Maryann Arroyo of Malverne, at left, and Getty Njoku, at right, of Uniondale hand-delivered more than 1,300 letters to the Nassau County Department of Social Services commissioner to protest recent budget proposals that would diminish access to child care subsidies for many families in Nassau County. In a VOICE/CSEA action launched only one week before, members from all across Nassau County collected the letters from parents and delivered them within a set public comment period to the county during the difficult days following Sandy.

CSEA members get out the vote in key elections

CSEA members across the state played a large role in helping elect candidates who will keep the interests of union families in the forefront.

From the re-election of President Barack Obama to key congressional, state Assembly and Senate races, CSEA members in New York spent weeks going door-to-door, staffing phone banks and urging their families and friends to vote to candidates who will support them.

News stories across the nation credit union voters with giving the president the win in Wisconsin, Ohio, Nevada and Pennsylvania. Obama also led the popular vote, which many pundits thought would go the other way.

In New York, CSEA members and their families played a large role in several key congressional and state races. CSEA members were integral to the effort.

"On Election Day 2012 CSEA activists and their families truly stood up for our rights and those of the American middle class. The hard work and commitment to elect candidates who stand with working people was evident in the past several days, weeks and months," said CSEA President Danny Donohue. "CSEA made its mark and helped elect important allies for the challenging fights ahead, and we are grateful for all their hard work."

U.S. Senate

In New York state, CSEA members got out the vote for Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, who won re-election with a record percentage of the vote. The Democrats picked up two U.S. Senate seats, including in Massachusetts, with Elizabeth Warren and a win for Joe Donnelly in Indiana. Having these seats will be critical in defending workers' rights over the next six years.

House of Representatives

CSEA was successful in five of its six priority congressional races. In northern New York, CSEA members helped re-elect Bill Owens, and on Long Island helped elect



CSEA Central Region activists Joe Palmisano, left, and David Lee staff a phone bank for state Assembly candidate Al Stirpe, who won his election.

Tim Bishop, both CSEA priority races.

Other CSEA-endorsed candidates who won were Rep. Louise Slaughter in the Rochester area and the Hudson Valley seat with Sean Patrick Maloney unseating Tea Party-backed Nan Hayworth. In Central New York, Dan Maffei ousted another Tea Party incumbent, Anne Marie Buerkle. Maffei won back a seat he had previously held.

State Assembly

The New York state Assembly Democrat majority picked up another five seats, with a possible sixth bringing the majority total at this time to 106. The wins were all supported by CSEA and include Al Stirpe in Syracuse, Dave Buchwald in White Plains, James Skoufis in the southern Hudson Valley, and Angelo Santabarbara in Montgomery, Schenectady and Albany counties.

State Senate

CSEA support was instrumental in helping Democrat Ted O'Brien win an open seat in the Rochester area.

From the Office of President Danny Donohue



CSEA President Danny Donohue to meet Long Island Region members on Dec. 1.

President Danny Donohue will visit the CSEA Long Island Region on Dec. 1 to meet with members.

The meetings will be held at the Long Island Region Office, 3 Garet Place, Commack. Donohue will meet with union members from 1 to 7 p.m. Please call the Long Island Region office at (631) 462-0030 for an appointment and directions.



Be safe at home and at work during cleanup

Faced with damage and destruction such as that left by Hurricane Sandy, it is only natural for affected individuals and communities to want to get down to the business of cleaning up and rebuilding as quickly as possible. But safety must remain a priority, especially in emergency situations.

The CSEA website, www.csealocal1000.org, contains much information compiled by the union's Occupational Safety and Health Department about how to stay safe and healthy at home and on the job while cleaning up after a major storm.

"We're particularly concerned about our members who are working or live in areas areas that were flooded. Anything that was contaminated with floodwater needs to be disposed of, because of the toxins and pathogens contained in the floodwater.

Even if the water has dried, what remains is dangerous and can cause serious health issues," said CSEA President Danny Donohue.

Tips for safe cleanup at home

- Wear protective equipment, including hard hats, safety glasses, cut and puncture resistant gloves and safety shoes with slip resistant soles.
- Watch for leaning structures and trees and avoid them.
- Stay away from and report downed power lines.

- Do not work with electricity in wet environments.
- Operate, adjust and maintain chainsaws according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Assume all building debris is contaminated (with asbestos, lead and mold).
- Use battery-powered flashlights and lanterns, rather than candles or gas lanterns.
- If you suspect a gas leak, cease all work and slowly leave the area. Do not turn on the lights or do anything that could cause a spark.
- Do not operate any gas-powered equipment indoors.
- Be sure you have a first aid kit handy and a way to call for help.

On the job safety —

immediate safety hazards Building collapse or shift: Do

not enter a space that has any sign of not being structurally sound (for example, large cracks in the walls). If in doubt, stay out until it can be professionally evaluated.

Debris piles: Where possible, avoid direct contact with unstable surfaces. Use bucket trucks, stable and secure scaffolding, and/or fall protection with secure anchor points.

Electrocution: Assume that all power lines are energized unless you know they have been



CSEA members on and off the job are facing the daunting task of cleaning up in areas affected by Sandy. Above left, Town of Stony Point CSEA member Brett Bulson clears a downed tree. Above right, CSEA member Blanca Maldonado stands outside her destroyed Staten Island home. (See related story, Page 8)

de-energized and tested. Do not enter any space that still contains floodwaters until you are 100 percent certain that the electricity is off and will remain off.

Explosion: Do not enter any space where there is a natural gas odor. If possible, do not enter any impacted space until you are sure that gas feeds have been shut off and will remain off.

Asphyxiation (death from lack of oxygen): Do not work in poorly ventilated areas that may be subject to emissions from gasoline-, diesel- or propane-powered generators, vehicles, or equipment. Carbon monoxide poisoning can occur outdoors as well as indoors.

Chemical hazards

Toxic particulates (poisonous airborne dusts) - During cleanup or restoration work, you may be exposed to asbestos, lead, silica, cement dust, or other toxic chemicals. Inhaling (breathing in) any of these chemicals can cause serious, permanent, long-term

harm to your health. Exposure to asbestos or silica may cause cancer.

Sewage hazards:

Sewage-contaminated floodwater may remain in a building for hours or days. During this time, extensive penetration and contamination of wood, gypsum, concrete and other materials may occur. If sewage is present, it should be assumed that pathogens are present. Pathogens are disease-causing agents, which can be in the form of bacteria (such as e. coli), viruses, mold spores, or other organisms, and which are normally present in large numbers in sewage wastes.

In any flood cleanup project, regardless of the source, assume that pathogens are present and take appropriate precautions.

Material from the New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health was used in this article.

For a complete listing of storm cleanup resources and guidelines, visit: <http://www.csealocal1000.org/osh.php>

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Work Force

IN TOUCH WITH THE

CSEA President Danny Donohue

Sandy's worst brings out the best in CSEA members

Hurricane Sandy brought unexpected and unprecedented disaster to the east coast. Historic flooding, fire, and downed trees and power lines devastated major parts of New York. Roads were washed out and other means of transportation crippled. The monster storm destroyed homes and communities in its path.

Shining throughout the darkness was the work of hundreds of CSEA members who responded to the disaster with dedication and professionalism — many while their own homes and families were at risk.

Many CSEA members worked around the clock to help with recovery efforts, including removing storm debris and helping utility crews in getting power restored.

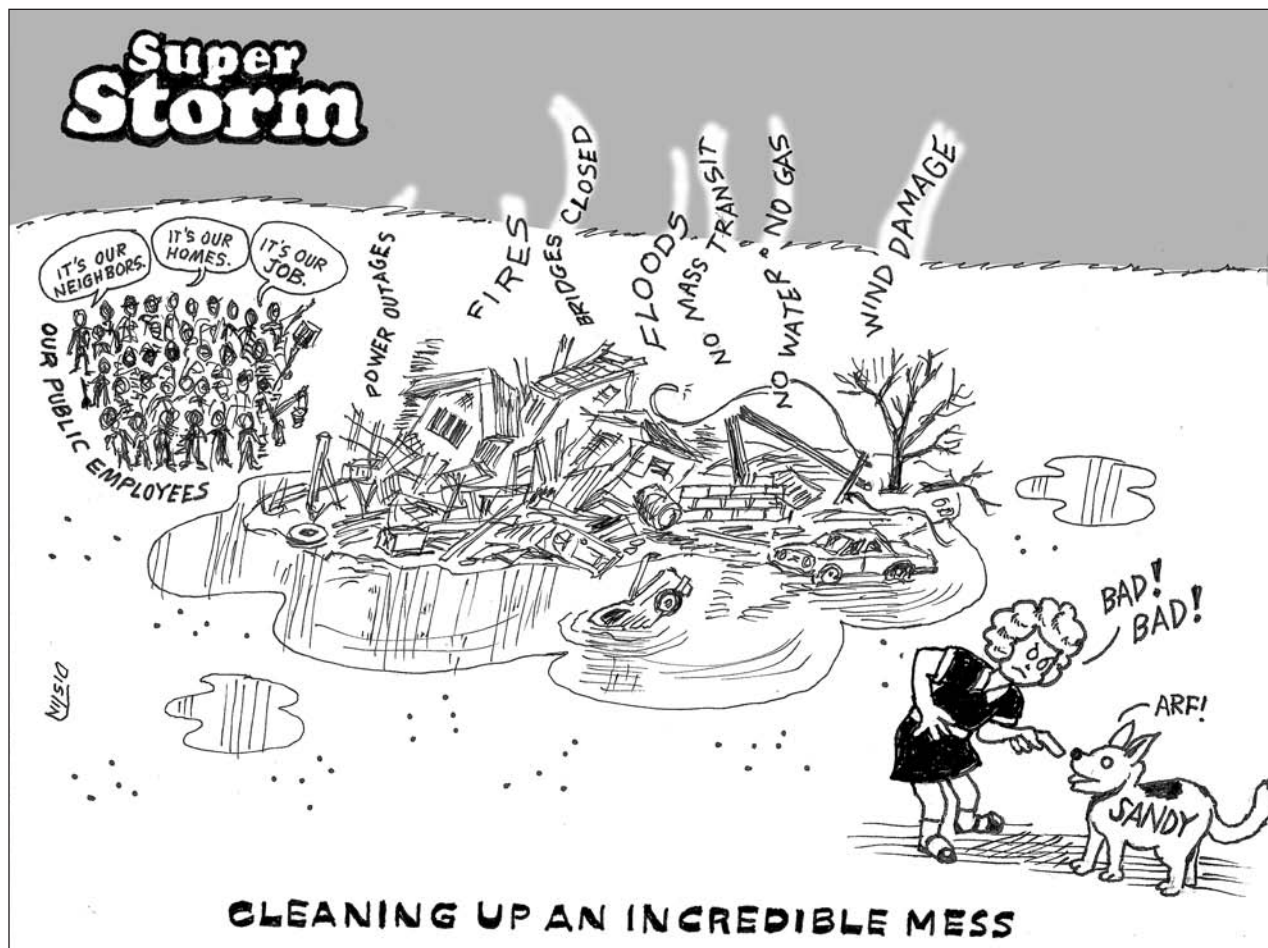
Other CSEA members have worked tirelessly behind the scenes, in health care facilities, human service agencies and emergency management offices helping to protect people and assist families and communities to pick up the pieces of their shattered lives.

Crises often bring out the best in people and CSEA proves the point. No matter if workers are on the front lines performing hands-on services or helping to make sure help gets to where it is needed, CSEA members are crucial to the storm recovery and preparing for the next inevitable disaster.

Their work is testimony to the importance of not only having qualified and capable public service workers on the job but also the value of individuals whose humanity comes through every day.

P.S. The success of CSEA's 2012 Election efforts may be tempered by the reality of Sandy's devastation, but I want to thank all who voted and all who worked to get out the vote. It was an historic election for us in so many ways.





AG Schneiderman investigating Sandy-related gouging

New York State Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman is investigating allegations of post-Hurricane Sandy price gouging after receiving hundreds of complaints from consumers across the state.

“Our office has zero tolerance for price gouging,” Schneiderman said. “We are actively investigating hundreds of complaints we’ve received from consumers of businesses preying on victims of Hurricane Sandy, and will do everything we can to stop unscrupulous individuals from taking advantage of New Yorkers trying to rebuild their lives.”

Since the storm made landfall in New York on Oct. 29, the state attorney general has been receiving and investigating complaints from consumers regarding potential price gouging of necessary goods, such as food, water, gas, generators, batteries

and flashlights, as well as essential services such as transportation and hotels.

Schneiderman is also working to ensure consumers are protected from scams related to home repair, clean up services and tree removal in the wake of the storm.

If you believe you are a victim of price gouging or a post-hurricane scam, contact the Attorney General’s Consumer Helpline at 800-771-7755 or fill out a complaint form online at: <http://www.ag.ny.gov/complaint-forms>

The attorney general also offers the following advice:

Check with your insurance company: Before making any decisions, be clear about what will be covered and any steps you will need to take.

Ask for references, check for licenses: Ask about local work contractors have done. Talk to the people who hired them; look

at the jobs if you can. Make sure the contractor has any license required by your local government.

Estimates are important — get it in writing: Ask that all estimates for work be in writing and include a description of the material to be used. Be clear that you will not pay for work done that is not agreed upon in writing. Verify that the material used is the same as described in the estimate. Make sure any changes to the estimate are in writing.

Know your rights: Home improvement contractors are required by law to establish an escrow account to hold the homeowners’ un-disbursed funds when a contract is in excess of \$500. Also, a homeowner has a three-day right to cancel a contract unless during an emergency, the homeowner has waived the three-day rule in writing.

Use a contractor with an

address you can verify: If your contractor is “here today and gone tomorrow,” you may find it difficult to enforce the guarantee.

Never pay the full price up front: Establish a payment schedule and adhere to it. Withhold final payment until the entire project is completed to your satisfaction and all required inspections and certificates of occupancy are finalized.

Always be sure the contractor has valid insurance: If a worker is injured or damage is caused on your property, you could be held liable if your contractor does not have the required insurance.

Check with your town or city for required permits: Don’t let a contractor work without the necessary permits. Failing to get approvals can delay your project, or prevent you from occupying a completed building.

CSEA members respond as Sandy batters Long Island

Long Island Region members working for the state Department of Transportation along with county, town, city and village highway, sanitation and parks departments were ready to deal with whatever came their way before and after Hurricane Sandy battered the north and south shores, devastating the area in a manner not seen in more than 50 years.

Tree limbs and signs littered state roads such as Sunrise Highway and the Southern State Parkway, requiring DOT crews to clear these vital roads to ensure the free passage of emergency vehicles and personnel charged with aiding the thousands of people in harm's way. Highway, sanitation and parks department workers quickly began storm cleanup as soon as the floodwaters receded.

Before the storm, City of Long Beach Unit members created large sand barriers all along the ocean and bay beaches to try to prevent surging walls of water from flooding

the streets. Their efforts were undermined when the massive storm surge breached the barricade, flooding streets to the point where the ocean merged with the bay and damaging many homes as well as the sewage treatment plant.

Cleanup operations began once the water began to recede as the highway department cleared debris from local streets and the city's Sanitation Department picked up the refuse deposited on curbs near homes and parks. Members of the beach crew continue to remove and replace the large wooden posts that supported the iconic boardwalk and were broken or loosened by exposure to the pounding surf and salt water.

In north shore communities such as Glen Cove and Bayville, CSEA members were also out in force before the storm situating piles of sandbags in vulnerable locations along the Long Island Sound as part of their precautionary measures. The members then worked to stop further



Village of Babylon Department of Public Works crew members, left to right, Greg Paeitto, Jack Christ and Henry Herman removed mounds of debris from devastated neighborhoods.

damage caused by fallen electrical wires caused by downed trees and branches, clear roads of similar impediments and remove debris from the city streets.

In other Long Island communities, CSEA members worked around the clock to clear and cut up trees and branches from roads and brought the debris to local landfills.

Highway and street lighting crews in the Town of Hempstead are still working long shifts to clear fallen trees and branches from the streets and clean up after the flood at the DPW office and yard in Merrick, where swells from nearby Meadowbrook Creek overflowed into the buildings knocking out electrical power and causing much property damage. Highway and sanitation crews also transported tons of debris to the Roosevelt highway yard and other venues around town to await final disposition. Efforts such as this took place all along the south shore from the Queens border to eastern Nassau County.

"A situation like this demonstrates the tremendous value of public workers and underscores the positive affect they have in their respective communities," said Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte. "I'm very proud of CSEA members working tirelessly all over Long Island and

commend them for their outstanding response to Hurricane Sandy."

Members reach out

CSEA SUNY at Binghamton Local members recently reached out to their brothers and sisters on Long Island when they conducted a relief drive for members affected by the storm,

SUNY at Binghamton Local President David Lee got in touch with activists from the Nassau County and SUNY Stony Brook locals to organize the drive and delivery over the Veterans Day weekend.

In just five days, CSEA members in Binghamton collected dozens of blankets and coats. Binghamton Local members took the donations to Bryant Park in Manhattan. Nassau County Local activist Kelvin Lewis and other Long Island activists picked up the donations there and divided the items between Nassau County and SUNY Stony Brook Local members. The donations nearly filled a 20-foot box truck.

— Rich Impagliazzo and Ryan Mulholland



Activists from the SUNY at Binghamton recently traveled to Manhattan's Bryant Park to deliver donated blankets and coats to members of the SUNY Stony Brook and Nassau County locals who were affected by Sandy. From left are Carlos Speight, SUNY Stony Brook Local president; Barbara Knighton, SUNY at Binghamton Local vice president, Louise Melious, SUNY Stony Brook Local treasurer; David Lee, SUNY at Binghamton Local president; Marty Honeychuck, SUNY Stony Brook Local vice president and Kelvin Lewis, Nassau County Local activist.

As Sandy slams region, CSEA members dedicated, prepared

STONY POINT — Hurricane Sandy hit the lower half of the Southern Region with a vengeance, but CSEA members' skillful preparation, their work during the height of the storm, and their round-the-clock recovery efforts have reinforced the value of a strong public work force in our communities.

The storm hit the Rockland County town of Stony Point the hardest; the Grassy Point neighborhood adjacent to the Hudson River was all but wiped out. Southern Region President Billy Riccaldo praised CSEA members for their dedication in the midst of Sandy's destruction, pointing out that members who lost their homes to Sandy were still on the job in the days following the storm.

"Sandy singled out Stony Point in particular, but the damage across Rockland and Westchester counties was staggering," Riccaldo said. "We have members who lost their homes who were right back on the job. We had direct care workers who stayed past their shifts because their relief couldn't get to work, we had dispatchers fielding an incredibly high volume of emergency calls and we had social services workers ensuring the people on their caseloads were safe while dealing with extended power outages. In this time of great adversity, we've seen CSEA members at their best."



CSEA member Tom Cass Jr., who lost his home to Sandy.

Teamwork

State, county and local highway crews played a crucial role in recovery efforts. The area was littered with fallen trees, which CSEA-represented workers had to cut up and haul off, neighborhood by neighborhood, in order for local utility crews to be able to restore power.

In Orangetown, CSEA members from the town Highway Department aided local firefighters in their rescue efforts after a large tree fell on a home in the hamlet of Pearl River, killing a local man and severely injuring his wife.

In addition to regular work duties, a number of CSEA members serving as volunteer firefighters in their communities traveled to areas of Long Island and New York City to aid efforts there.

Working despite personal loss

When Hurricane Sandy's winds and rain were at their most fierce, CSEA member Tom Cass Jr. was answering calls for service along with other Stony Point volunteer firefighters.

While he was out helping others in the community, Cass wound up losing his home in Grassy Point to Sandy.

"The storm just blew the foundation out, my pool was gone, everything," said Cass, who works for the Stony Point Highway Department. "The water came right over the seawall."

In the days following the hurricane, Cass was out with his co-workers clearing the community of downed trees and other debris, allowing workers from Orange & Rockland Utilities to complete the slow process of restoring power.



Town of Stony Point Unit member Erick Brissing clears tree debris.

Preparation pays off

At Helen Hayes Hospital in West Haverstraw, there was no noticeable interruption in the quality of care because workers were well trained for such situations. As a specialized rehabilitation facility drawing some of the area's most complex rehab cases, having power is essential.

"Our generators kicked in at around 10 p.m. Monday night and ran until after noon on Wednesday," said Helen Hayes Hospital Local President Mike Gonzales, an electrician at the hospital. "We were ready to go. When we lose power, we are back up and running usually within 15 seconds."

Gonzales cited the hospital's regular planning meetings, drills and other planning measures as the reason why things ran so smoothly during the hurricane.

"We had many, many old pine trees that fell that night, but inside it was just as if it was a normal day," he said.

Thanks to the minimal impact, management opened the Helen Hayes auditorium to employees and community members needing a place with heat and showers. CSEA members at Helen Hayes spearheaded a donation drive that brought multiple carloads of needed supplies to Staten Island, Gonzales said.

— Jessica Ladlee



Town of Stony Point Unit members Erick Brissing, Dan Cronk and Mike Finnerty remove a fallen tree.

Loss, devastation follow Sandy

STATEN ISLAND — A game of dominoes may be the reason why Blanca Maldonado is still alive.

The South Beach Psychiatric Center housekeeper was working her shift when she was told to go home due to a powerful approaching storm named Sandy. Officials had already called for the evacuation of the center, all its workers and patients, due to its close proximity to the shore.

"I came home and I was planning to stay and rest," said Maldonado, a native of Puerto Rico who raised two children in the house she bought in 1998. "The last time there was a big storm, nothing happened."

Friends of hers, Lydia and Eric Maiz, thought differently and pleaded with her to join them at their home further inland.

"They asked me to come by and play dominoes with them, and that's why I went. I love dominoes," said Maldonado, who has worked at South Beach for the past 25 years.

That evening, Sandy's ferocious winds and a storm surge not seen in generations, unmercifully addled her home and entire neighborhood to the dark chilly waters of the Atlantic. At the storm's height, her home was filled with more than 7 feet of water. The ocean is more than 10 blocks away.



Blanca Maldonado enters the kitchen in her devastated Staten Island home.

"You lost everything"

The day after the storm she asked a relative, Frank Gonzalez, to check on the house. He did, in a rowboat he borrowed from a neighbor.

"He told me, 'you lost everything,'" said Maldonado, fighting back tears. "I said, 'Oh, my God!' But then I thought, I have my life and I have my family."

That was a sentiment shared by countless CSEA members in Long Island, New York City and other parts of the state who lived through one of the most devastating storms to slam the Northeast.

Just blocks away from Maldonado's Dongan Hills neighborhood, in Midland Beach, eight people died. According to media reports, it was the highest concentration of deaths from Sandy, which claimed the lives of more than 100 people in the U.S. alone.

While many in the region were spared or underwent inconveniences such as fallen trees, the loss of public transportation, heat

or electricity, others like Maldonado lost their homes, cars and even the buildings where they worked.

"I know many members are feeling the pain and misery Blanca Maldonado is feeling. It's been a devastating experience," said CSEA Metropolitan Region President Lester Crockett, who met with Maldonado at her home. "During these times of crisis, we must come together as a union family to make sure our members and their families are provided with every resource and support they need to get back on their feet."

Quick response

At South Beach Psychiatric Center, the order to evacuate came quickly the night of the storm. Workers and patients were told to evacuate to Creedmoor Psychiatric Center in Queens.

"They made a decision and within an hour we were out of there," said Jesus Bautista, a secure treatment aide and CSEA South Beach Psychiatric Center Local activist. "We were told to escort the patients, so we could not take our personal vehicles."

While the evacuation of about 300 patients was orderly and efficient, the next day unpleasant,

Left, Blanca Maldonado, right, tells Metropolitan Region President Lester Crockett about the damage to her home.

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Loss, devastation follow Sandy

Continued from Page 8

if not unexpected, news awaited those who were forced to leave their cars behind.

“The water was up to the dashboard and my car is an SUV,” said Bautista about his 2007 Chrysler Aspen. He bought the car nine months ago.

Sandy’s waves battered the entire lot, which was the furthest from the shore, and indiscriminately tossed, smashed and totaled scores of vehicles.

With orders to return to South Beach in several days, Bautista and many of his co-workers were unsure how they would make the commute.

“This has been a great material loss for the members of this local,” said Bautista. “I hope we can get the assistance to get through this.”

Cleaning up

Back in the nearly gutted, soaked and tattered remains of her home, Maldonado clings to the one of the few personal treasures she was able to salvage. A few days earlier, cleaning crews picked up mountains of debris from the front



Blanca Maldonado looks through a photo album, one of her few possessions to survive the storm.

of her home. Ruined furniture, appliances, and clothing bought with hard earned dollars over the years, vanished into the belly of a sanitation truck within minutes.

“I still have a lot of photos and cuff links from the 1964 World’s Fair,” Maldonado said while poring through the soggy pages of an album. “But, I had a lot of antiques and they are all gone.”

For now, she is still living with the friends who took her in that fateful night, who have also provided her with food and clothing, as have other friends and family.

While her children and immediate family have been helpful, gas shortages have made it difficult for most to get around. And, despite her own precarious situation, Maldonado seems more concerned about her blind, 85-year-old mother who is hospitalized in the Bronx. She was finally able to visit her a few days ago.

After filing paperwork with FEMA, she doesn’t think she’ll be able to return to her home for at least another year.

“I’m still in denial,” said Maldonado, who arrived in New York City 44 years ago with dreams of a brighter future. “Everybody thinks that I’m taking this well but I’m still in shock. Last night,



Blanca Maldonado stands outside her home that New York City building inspectors have determined to be damaged.

I couldn’t sleep and my blood pressure is high.”

The devastation wrought by Sandy across the tri-state region have left many with the same uneasy feeling.

“It’s surprising that Mother

Nature can be that rough. It changes the way that we do business,” said Bautista. “We have to be better prepared for the next time.”

— David Galarza

Editor’s Note — *The Lower Manhattan building that houses the CSEA Metropolitan Region office sustained severe flooding during the storm and remains closed. As this edition of The Work Force went to press, CSEA was in the process of acquiring temporary office space for its Metropolitan Region field services. Members needing assistance from the region office should contact their local president for the temporary office’s phone and fax numbers. The information also will be posted on www.csealocal1000.org.*



Blanca Maldonado enters her water damaged living room in her Staten Island home.

Get the help you need to recover from Sandy

Hurricane Sandy has devastated much of the East Coast, including a large part of New York state.

Many CSEA members are on the front lines responding to the disaster with dedication and professionalism. They need our continued respect and support.

Many more members are among the millions of people who have been personally affected by the storm and urgently need help. Here is some information to help with short-term, intermediate and long-term needs.

1. Emergency help

American Red Cross

The American Red Cross can provide lodging assistance for those temporarily displaced, or food, clothing and other basic necessities for those who are able to be in their homes, but who may still be without power, heat or water.

Find your local chapter by visiting: <http://www.redcross.org/find-your-local-chapter> or by calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

Please give generously to Red Cross relief efforts.



2. Intermediate help

The United Way of New York State's 2-1-1 telephone hotline, 3-1-1 for New York City

The 2-1-1 hotline is for residents outside of New York City seeking resources for help and information. You can also visit <http://www.uwnys.org>

Dial 3-1-1 for help and resources for residents of New York City's five boroughs.

There is additional information and links to numerous resources at www.csealocal1000.org.



3. Long-term help

Federal Emergency Management Agency and your insurance company

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides homeowners with relief due to catastrophic natural disasters. The agency's help is meant for loss of homes, and can provide temporary or new housing. FEMA's main phone number is: (202) 646-2500; the number for disaster assistance is: (800) 621-3362. The agency can be accessed online at: www.fema.gov, and there are special pages online for New York, New Jersey and Connecticut residents affected by Sandy.

If you have sustained any damage, you should file a claim with FEMA as soon as possible. You should also contact your insurance company regarding coverage. Be aware that hurricane deductibles have been waived for storm victims.

Political quick fixes put seniors at risk

We can do better

Across New York, lawmakers are using our most vulnerable citizens to balance county budgets and potentially leave those who rely on county nursing facilities, with no place to live. CSEA and other responsible members of the community are standing up, speaking out and seeking better choices.

“It’s just not right,” said CSEA President Danny Donohue. “What does it say about our elected officials and our society that heartless decisions to disregard the wellbeing of our seniors can be made without a second thought because it’s a political quick fix? Surely we can do better for vulnerable seniors.”

CSEA has launched an extensive media campaign to alert the public to what is at stake. Donohue recently convened Nursing Home Summits to bring together

CSEA leaders from across the state to better coordinate the union’s efforts.

More than two dozen counties across New York are actively seeking to sell, privatize or use some other scheme to divest themselves of responsibility for ensuring care for the elderly. It creates risk because public nursing facilities must care for all, regardless of ability to pay. Private operators do not.

There’s plenty of evidence of broken promises, unmet needs and devastating consequences when elected officials try to avoid responsibilities and seek a quick fix through private contractors and other schemes.

Delaware County crisis

A recent crisis developed in Delaware County when a private operator who took control of the county nursing



Better for NY Seniors

WE CAN DO BETTER

Across New York, lawmakers are using our most vulnerable citizens to balance county budgets and potentially leaving those who rely on county nursing facilities, with no place to live. It’s just not right. Public nursing facilities must care for all, regardless of ability to pay. Private operators do not.

There’s plenty of evidence of broken promises, unmet needs and devastating consequences when elected officials try to avoid responsibilities and seek a quick fix through private contractors and other schemes.

[Surely we can do better for vulnerable seniors.](#)

Review the material posted here and use the interactive map to learn about how this situation may be affecting your community and what you can do about it!

Above, part of a website CSEA has launched as part of a media campaign to make the public aware of the growing crisis public nursing homes are facing.

facility several years ago chose to shut down operations rather than address deficiencies identified by state inspectors. The unexpected action sent county officials scrambling to ensure the residents would not be left homeless – a situation that would never have happened if the county had lived up to its responsibilities in the first place.

In Fulton County, the sale of the county facility to a private operator earlier this year has been responsible for nearly total staff turnover in the most economically challenged part of the state. It is a direct result of a dramatic decline in patient

care standards and working conditions.

CSEA’s “We can do better” campaign features nursing home residents speaking out about the undermining of their care and security. It is airing on radio and TV and running in targeted print media across the state. Additionally, the campaign has a website, www.betterfornyseniors.com which links to Facebook pages for active county by county community campaigns. Visit it today to get involved in your local campaign.

“We can make a difference for our seniors and our

Continued on Page 13



CSEA members take part in a recent Nursing Home Summit. The summits are intended to coordinate the union’s strategies in the fight to save public nursing homes across the state.

Summit seeks nursing home strategies

Continued from Page 12

communities,” CSEA Executive Vice President Mary Sullivan told participants at the first of CSEA’s summits in Albany. “We need to work together and more importantly, we need to reach out to our family, friends and neighbors so that they will understand what’s going on ... this is about dignity for our parents and grandparents, aunts and uncles ... and it’s about what we value as a community.”

Fast-tracked transfer

At the nursing home summit, one panelist, CSEA Saratoga County Local President Kathy Moran discussed the status of



Saratoga County Local members demonstrate against the county’s plans to quickly transfer the county’s nursing home to a local development corporation.

her county’s home and CSEA’s campaign efforts.

Moran explained how the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors is rushing through a plan to transfer the county’s nursing home, Maplewood Manor, to an LDC (local development corporation).

There are many unanswered questions about using local development corporations to run nursing facilities, and who has the ultimate responsibility for care standards and debt.

With little warning after a consultant’s report was released, the county’s Public Health Committee was convened suddenly held a “special” meeting where committee’s majority voted the LDC plan on a fast track to passage without regard for public input.

‘Be vigilant’

Given the speed with which the board has moved, Moran urged attendees to “be vigilant” in the face of this relatively new tactic, transfer to an LDC, that is growing increasingly popular among county boards.

CSEA Capital Region President Kathy Garrison, at a press conference in October, warned of the issues of transparency with LDC’s and how the county boards can “fast track” the process by only needing a simple majority for transfer, versus a 2/3 majority normally required for a county to sell or transfer property.

— Therese Assalian

Lawmakers could leave Alma with no place to live.

Alma Boser became a resident of her county nursing facility after a bad fall.

Now, Alma relies on the county’s nursing home for care. But, lawmakers could leave Alma, and many others, with no place to live.

“It upsets me. I really could not find the help that I have here anywhere else.”

Public facilities must care for all, regardless of ability to pay, but private operators do not! Abandoning responsibility today means consequences tomorrow.

Since 1910
CSEA
New York’s LEADING Union
LOCAL 1000 AFSCME, AFL-CIO
DANNY DONOHUE, PRESIDENT



We can do better for vulnerable seniors.

www.betterforNYseniors.com

An example of CSEA’s Better For New York Seniors media campaign, above. CSEA members are urged with visit www.betterfornyseniors.com to learn about nursing home campaigns in their regions, and to follow links to Facebook pages and other areas to help support these fights.

102nd Annual Delegates Meeting

Stand Up for Your Rights!

At CSEA's 102nd Annual Delegates Meeting, held Oct. 15-19 in Washington, D.C., more than 1,000 CSEA officers and delegates developed the skills workers need to better "stand up for your rights."

In accordance with the meeting's theme, "Stand Up for Your Rights," many of the meeting's programs focused on helping CSEA members fight back against ongoing attacks

on middle-class workers by some politicians, corporate interests and media.

In addition to conducting official union business, delegates also heard addresses by U.S. Rep. Steve Israel, who represents Long Island; National Labor Relations Board Chairman Mark G. Pearce and AFSCME International President Lee Saunders.



Statewide Secretary Denise Berkley addresses delegates.



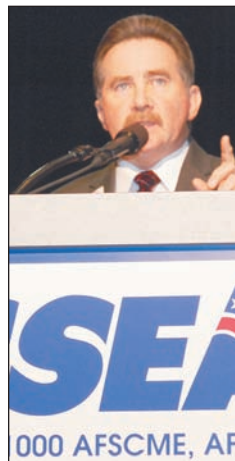
CSEA Executive Vice President Mary E. Sullivan addresses delegates.



CSEA officers pose with National Labor Relations Board Chairman Mark G. Pearce. Back row, from left, Statewide Treasurer Joe McMullien, Central Region President Colleen Wheaton, Statewide Secretary Denise Berkley, Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte, Metropolitan Region President Lester Crockett, Pearce and Executive Vice President Mary E. Sullivan. In front row is Western Region President Flo Tripi. Pearce served as CSEA's region attorney in Buffalo before his appointment to the NLRB.



CSEA President Danny Donohue addresses delegates.



Statewide Treasurer Joe McMullen addresses delegates.



Above, AFSCME International President Lee Saunders, left, and CSEA President Danny Donohue show union solidarity.



Left, U.S. Rep. Steve Israel addresses the Annual Delegates Meeting.

Activists gain skills, knowledge to mobilize across the state



Delegates get fired up at the general business session.



From left, SUNY Health Science Center at Brooklyn Local (Downstate Medical Center) delegates President Althea Green, Mary Harmon, Maurie Dunaway and Juanita Nottingham listen to a workshop presentation.



Left, Western Region delegate Bob Pyjas speaks out on the convention floor.



Bronx Psychiatric Center Local President Abraham Benjamin and Port Washington School District Custodial, Transportation and Maintenance Unit President Richard Acevedo speak out at a workshop.

Delegate action

Delegates to CSEA's 102nd Annual Delegates Meeting in Washington, D.C. approved proposed amendments to the union's Constitution recommended by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee with the exception of a proposal to change the policy for reimbursement for Locals sending delegates to the Annual Delegates Meeting, and a proposal to create new language providing for replacing delegates who resign or cannot attend, which were defeated. A proposal to establish a laid-off member fund was referred to committee. A proposal to constitutionally create a Next Wave Committee was withdrawn by its makers. All proposed resolutions were approved by Delegates.

Haldane School District Unit member honored with Excelsior Award

COLD SPRING — Haldane School District Unit member Gary Van Asselt is the 2012 winner of the prestigious Excelsior Award, an award from CSEA and the New York State Public High School Athletic Association honoring a CSEA member who promotes and fosters athletic spirit in their local school district.

CSEA President Danny Donohue recently presented Van Asselt with the award before a gathering of Haldane workers and students. Van Asselt was featured in a video tribute during the Annual Delegates Meeting in Washington, D.C. and was slated to be honored at the NYSPHSAA football championship at the Carrier Dome in Syracuse.

"Gary represents the very best in CSEA," said Donohue. "He is dedicated to his work, cares about the young people he works with and

contributes to the quality of life in his school district."

While Van Asselt begins his days at 5:30 a.m. as head custodian, his responsibilities transition to athletics once afternoon arrives. He's served as girls' varsity soccer coach since 2008. In addition, Van Asselt is the announcer for football games, shot clock operator for basketball games and bus driver for district sports teams. During the 1990s, he coached girls' softball, saving what was at that time a foundering program.

"Gary has been an excellent role model and teacher for our Haldane student-athletes," said Unit President Carol Filmanski. "It's gratifying to see him receive statewide recognition for his role in building and sustaining Haldane athletics."

— Jessica Ladlee

Right, CSEA President Danny Donohue, left, congratulates Excelsior Award recipient Gary Van Asselt.



Watch the video tribute to Van Asselt at www.youtube.com/watch?v=ApYbYOSnWIS

EBF announces local government dental upgrades

CSEA President and Employee Benefit Fund (EBF) Chairman Danny Donohue and the EBF Board of Trustees recently approved significant upgrades to EBF's Dutchess, Equinox, Horizon, and Sunrise dental plans to take effect Jan. 1, 2013.

Many services have received major fee schedule upgrades including exams, cleanings, fillings, root canals, crowns, periodontics, dentures, extractions, orthodontics, and orthodontic maximums.

These increases will help to maintain EBF's current panel of participating providers and also reduce out-of-pocket costs for members who visit a dentist outside of the panel.

If you use a non-participating provider and they are interested in joining our panel of participating providers, please invite them to contact our dental provider liaison at 800-323-2732 or they can visit www.cseabf.com for more information.

Services must be rendered on or after Jan. 1, 2013 to receive the upgraded fee schedule allowances.

How will I know if I receive the upgrade?

A mailing will be sent in mid-November including copies of the new booklets to members of CSEA local government bargaining units that have negotiated for coverage under the Dutchess, Equinox, Horizon, and Sunrise dental plans in their contract. The

new plan booklets include important information that outlines the changes to your benefits.

Beginning Jan. 1, 2013, the new booklets will be available to download online from the EBF website: www.cseabf.com.

How do I verify which plan I'm in?

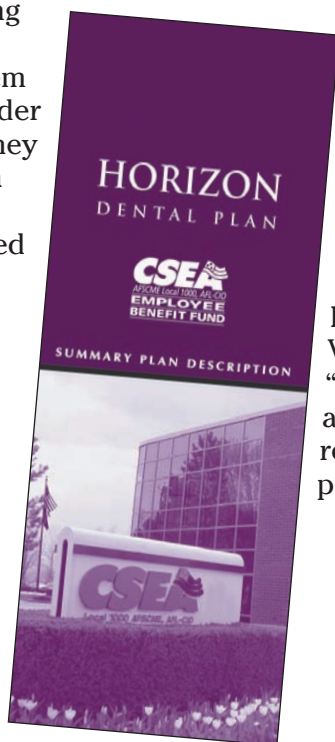
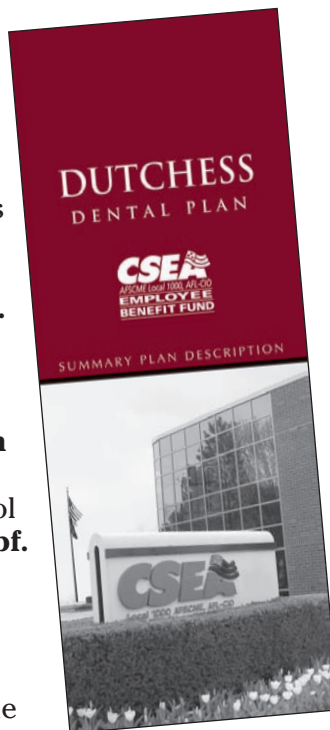
Our benefit search tool located at www.cseabf.com allows members with EBF coverage to locate their plan documents. From the home page, click on the "Benefit Search" icon and then select whether you are a New York state or a local government employee.

If you are a New York state employee, you can select your division and your plan documents will be displayed and available for download.

If you are a local government employee, select the county in which you reside. Then, you will be able to select your employer, if you have coverage. If your employer is listed, your plan documents will be displayed and available for download.

How can I get coverage through EBF?

Visit www.cseabf.com and click on "benefits specialists" and you will be able to email your region's marketing representative and they will be able to provide you with more information.



"On behalf of the CSEA Employee Benefit Fund Board of Trustees, I am very pleased that we were able to review the recommendations of the EBF's professional staff and approve

upgrades to our local government dental plan offerings. In order to continue to keep and attract quality providers, our plans are continually under review. The changes going into effect on Jan. 1, 2013 will help maintain the integrity of the EBF's plans."

— Danny Donohue, CSEA President and EBF Board Chairman



"The EBF's Chairman and Board of Trustees are dedicated to the goal of securing the best benefits at the lowest cost on behalf of CSEA's hardworking members. These enhancements were done in order to update and modify the EBF's dental offerings as well as reduce member out-of-pocket costs. I am very pleased that we are able to make these important changes to our dental plans during these difficult times."

— Bill Howard, EBF Director



2013 health programs: important dates to remember

Now is the time for New York state employees (including the Unified Court System) to think about health insurance options for 2013.



Watch your mailbox for important information, including the 2013 health insurance premium rates, option transfer information and deadlines. Other important benefits and dates to remember are highlighted on this page.

Flex Spending Account

Open Enrollment has been extended to Nov. 30, 2012

“Health Care Spending Account” allows you to set aside pre-tax salary to pay for health-related expenses not reimbursed by your health insurance. *Before you enroll, carefully review the information on the Flex Spending Account website concerning benefits eligible for reimbursement.* For more information, visit www.flexspend.ny.gov or call 1-800-358-7202.

Pre-Tax Contribution Program (PTCP)

Open Enrollment Ends Nov. 30, 2012

Your share of health insurance premium is deducted from wages before taxes are withheld, which may lower your taxes. You were automatically enrolled in PTCP when you became eligible for health insurance, unless you declined.

Under Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rules, if you are enrolled in PTCP, you may change your health insurance deduction during the tax year **ONLY** after a qualifying event. If you wish to change your pre-tax selection for 2013, see your agency health benefits administrator and complete a health insurance transaction form (PS-404) by Nov. 30, 2012.

Productivity Enhancement Program

Open Enrollment Ends Nov. 30, 2012

Exchange previously accrued annual and/or personal leave in return for a credit to be applied toward the employee share of your New York State Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP) premium.

The credit will be included in biweekly paychecks and divided evenly during the plan year. To elect PEP for 2013, you must apply by November 30, 2012. Please see your agency health benefits administrator for more information and an application. If you are currently enrolled in PEP, you must re-enroll to continue your benefits in 2013.

NYSHIP Annual Option Transfer Period

Dates to be determined

The annual Option Transfer Period will begin once the 2013 New York State Health Insurance Program premium rates are approved. During the Option Transfer Period, you may change your health insurance option for the next plan year:

- from a NYSHIP HMO to The Empire Plan
- from one NYSHIP HMO to another NYSHIP HMO that has a NYSHIP service area where you live or work
- from a NYSHIP health plan to the Opt-out Program, or
- from the Opt-out Program to a NYSHIP health plan

NYSHIP Health Insurance Opt Out

Dates to be determined

NYSHIP will continue to offer the Opt-out Program, which allows eligible employees who have other employer-sponsored group health insurance to opt out of their NYSHIP coverage in exchange for an incentive payment.

If you currently participate in the Opt-out Program for 2012 and wish to continue to receive incentive payments, you **MUST** elect to opt out for 2013 by submitting a completed Opt-Out Attestation Form (PS-409) during the Option Transfer Period.

To be eligible for the Opt-out Program, you must have been

enrolled in NYSHIP by April 1, 2012 (or your first date of NYSHIP eligibility if that date is later than April 1), and remain enrolled through the end of 2012. Please see the agency health benefits administrator or the Planning for Option Transfer Guide for specific parameters regarding eligibility for this program.

We anticipate that the open enrollment dates for the opt-out will coincide with the Annual Option Transfer Period (dates not yet available). Please watch your mail and The Work Force for more information.

The CSEA Health Benefits Department can be reached at 518-785-4774 or 1-800-286-5242 or by email at healthben@cseainc.org.

Health insurance option transfer for 2013

The annual NYSHIP Option Transfer period for active state employees (including Unified Court System) will be held once the 2013 health insurance premium rates are approved. At the time this article went to press, the rates were not approved.

Once the 2013 premium rates are approved and sent to agencies, enrollees will have 30 days from the date the rates are made available to the agency in which to change options.

Enrollees will have the ability to change their health insurance plan during the option transfer period. Enrollees should visit their agency health benefits administrator (typically located in the personnel office) and pick up a copy of “Choices for 2013,” your guide to New York State Health Insurance Program health insurance options. If you are thinking about changing

your option, read the descriptions of plans in your area and compare coverage and out-of-pocket cost sharing for benefits that are important to you and your family.

For enrollees who currently participate in the Opt-Out Program for 2012 and wish to continue for 2013, or you are currently enrolled in NYSHIP coverage and wish to participate in the Opt-out Program, you **MUST** elect to opt out during the annual Option Transfer Period and attest to having other employer-sponsored group health insurance each year. See your agency health benefits administrator for more information.

Please watch your mail, The Work Force and our website for more information, including the Option Transfer dates and the 2013 health insurance premium rates.

ATTENTION: Public Sector Local and Unit Presidents and Private Sector Local Presidents

Did you send your Election Committee Data Form to CSEA Headquarters?

Beginning in January 2013, registered Election Committee Chairs and Election Meeting Chairs will receive an election package from CSEA to assist them in performing their election duties. This material is necessary for you to have to run a proper election.

Election packages will **only** be mailed to those Chairs whose Local or Unit President has sent in the required Election Committee Data Form (ECDF). CSEA Headquarters cannot send material and information to any Chair, without first receiving the completed ECDF from the Local or Unit president.

Inquiries regarding election committees may be directed to the CSEA Statewide Election Committee at 1-800-342-4146, ext. 1447.

Don't Zone Out in work or school zones

As the school year starts and highway construction season continues, do your part to keep everyone safe on the roads!



Always remember:

- Be alert while you're driving;
- Obey speed limits in work and school zones;
- Do not use your cell phone while driving and hang up if someone calls you while they're driving;
- Do not read or send text messages while you drive;
- Move over for amber lights (road workers) as well as emergency lights and
- Sign up for CSEA's Don't Zone Out pledge today at www.csealocal1000.org!

New York NOW In-depth news from New York's Capitol
Broadcast Schedule
'New York NOW' on New York Public Television (PBS)

Albany
WMHT | Fridays at 7:30 p.m.; Sundays at 11 a.m. and 11 p.m.

New York City
WNET | Saturdays at 11 a.m.

Long Island
WLIW | Sundays at 11 a.m.

Rochester
WXXI | Fridays at 9 p.m.

Buffalo
WNED | Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

Binghamton
WSKG | Sundays at 11 a.m.

Watertown
WPBS | Sundays at 7:30 a.m.

Plattsburgh
Mountain Lake PBS | Saturdays at 6:30 p.m.



nynow.org | Twitter @NYNOW_PBS | 'Like' New York NOW on Facebook

CSEA supports New York Now on PBS

CSEA is once again helping to ensure that people across New York can better understand the news being made in the state Capitol. The union has signed on to help underwrite New York Now – a weekly program focused on state government that airs on New York's public television stations.

"New York Now has established itself as a valuable and relevant program that brings people into the public debate around issues that matter to New Yorkers," said CSEA President Danny Donohue. "People need to be actively involved in their government and that starts with understanding the issues – it's the only way we can hope to achieve a better New York for all."

"I urge CSEA members to tune in to New York Now on their local PBS station," Donohue said.

Smith shows PEOPLE power as Recruiter of the Year



Gloria Smith of the SUNY Syracuse Local in the Central Region is the PEOPLE Recruiter of the Year. She recruited 101 new PEOPLE members at the MVP level. From left are CSEA Executive Vice President Mary E. Sullivan, Smith, Central Region President Colleen Wheaton and CSEA President Danny Donohue.

Flaherty is Retiree PEOPLE Recruiter of the Year



Michael Flaherty of the Buffalo-Niagara Frontier Retirees Local in the Western Region is the PEOPLE Retiree Recruiter of the Year. He recruited 66 new PEOPLE members. From left are CSEA PEOPLE Coordinator Cheryl Palmer, Executive Vice President Mary E. Sullivan, Flaherty and CSEA PEOPLE Committee Chair Rutha Bush.

CSEA's PEOPLE program protects and improves our jobs, benefits and pensions in Washington, Albany and in your community. Your support and participation in PEOPLE strengthens CSEA's clout in the workplace, in the legislature, in your community and in the labor movement.

CSEA Capital Region's "Biggest Loser" a big winner at getting healthy

Mike Guynup is the "Biggest Loser" in CSEA's Capital Region.

Guynup, an account clerk at the Office of the State Comptroller, recently won the CSEA Capital Region's "Biggest Loser" competition. When Guynup began his wellness journey several years ago, he weighed 365 pounds and had already lost 129 pounds when the competition began.

During the competition, Guynup saw his weight go from 236 pounds to 184 pounds, a 52-pound – and 22 percent – weight loss. He credits mixed martial arts workouts for getting him into shape.

Guynup won a trip to the Biggest Loser ranch in Niagara Falls.

When the region's Membership Committee launched the contest in May, 51 members joined the competition, in which contestants try to lose the largest percentage of their starting weight,

just like the hit NBC television show of the same name.

Eighteen members attended the final weigh-in the region's recent annual conference. Together, the group lost 286 pounds. During the 19-week competition, events were held to educate and motivate participants and the effort was assisted by the New York State EAP Health Coordinator Linda Carignan. CSEA Capital Region President Kathy Garrison and Membership Committee Chair Patty Kaufman were integral in getting the program up and running. "We are so proud of our participants' success and also to be the first region to implement a wellness event of this type," said Garrison.

— Therese Assalian

Mike Guynup, left, poses with Capital Region Membership Committee Chair Patty Kaufman after being announced the winner of the competition in Lake Placid.



THE Work Force

www.csealocal1000.org

Published by CSEA

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Since 1910

CSEA

New York's LEADING Union

LOCAL 1000 AFSCME, AFL-CIO
DANNY DONOHUE, PRESIDENT

Resilience

Hurricane Sandy left a path of destruction and disruption on the East Coast. New Yorkers are standing up to the challenge.

Many CSEA members are on the front lines responding to the disaster with focus and professionalism – handling emergency calls, clearing roads, removing fallen trees and other debris, repairing sewage systems, checking the safety of our water supply and helping people pick up the pieces of their lives.

Others are maintaining our health care system, taking care of our most vulnerable citizens and repairing schools and other public facilities.

They need our continued respect and support.

Many of these workers and others are among the millions who have been personally affected by this unprecedented storm and still need help. Make sure the help is there by generously contributing to the relief effort through the American Red Cross, United Way and other reputable agencies.



People working together
to make a better New York **for all.**

SMART | DYNAMIC | CARING | DEDICATED