

# The Work Force

*July-August 2012*

*Vol. 15 No. 7*



## Standing up for public services

*See Page 3*

*Photo courtesy of AFSCME*

## Photo of the Month



Photo by Mark Kotzin

CSEA retirees Kathy Johnson and Beverly Centers joined activist Jim Jackson and State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli recently in Auburn to talk about the importance of retirement security.

## Online option available for leadership mailing!

Attention CSEA activists and leaders: The CSEA leadership mailing is now available online. No more paper, if you choose this option! Go to [www.csealocal1000.org](http://www.csealocal1000.org), log into the members only area, and select the Leadership Mailing application from My APPS.

## Voter registration, General Election dates announced

This year's elections include the state Assembly, Senate, congressional races and a presidential election. CSEA members need to support candidates who support unions and working families.

- **State Senate and Assembly Primary Election Day: Thursday, Sept. 13.**

If you are not a registered voter, your voter registration must be mailed (postmarked) by **Aug. 17**, and received by the Board of Elections by **Aug. 24** to vote in Primary Election.

- **General Election Day: Tuesday, Nov. 6**

To be eligible to vote in the General Election, your registration form must be postmarked by **Oct. 12**, and received by the Board of Elections by **Oct. 17**.

Download a voter registration form at:  
<http://www.csealocal1000.org/pdfs/voteform.pdf>

# Western Region member killed in hospital shooting

BUFFALO — CSEA and the state Public Employee Safety and Health Bureau are investigating the June 13 murder of CSEA member Jacqueline Wisniewski, a secretary at the Erie County Medical Center.

Wisniewski, 33, was shot in the head in a domestic violence incident in a stairwell on the Erie County Medical Center campus.

"Our hearts go out to Jackie's family and to her young son," said CSEA Western Region President Flo Tripi. "This is a terrible tragedy."

Police say Wisniewski's ex-boyfriend, ECMC surgeon Dr. Timothy V. Jorden Jr., lured her into the stairwell shortly after 8 a.m. and shot her multiple times at point-blank range.

Following the shooting, the hospital campus and a nearby school went on

lockdown.

"For ECMC workers, losing Jackie is like losing a member of our family," said CSEA Erie County Local and Unit President Joan Bender, herself a hospital employee. "Jackie's family and her son are in our thoughts and prayers."

According to media reports, Wisniewski had confided in co-workers that she feared Jorden and that he still pursued her.

At press time, a PESH investigation into the incident continued. PESH is working with local law enforcement agencies to review the case.

Following the shooting, an intensive manhunt for Jorden began in the United States and Canada. Media reports noted that Jorden served in the Army Special Forces as a weapons expert and he had a carefully planned exit strategy.

Police found Jorden's body in a wooded area near his home several days after the shooting. He died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

— Lynn Miller



Wisniewski

# Drastic cuts wallop workers

VALHALLA — Westchester Medical Center CEO Michael Israel took the ax to the hospital's public work force again in June, hurting the quality of care delivered at WMC by eliminating 250 certified nursing assistant jobs.

The move is another blow to the medical center's reputation as a top notch specialty hospital. Since taking the helm, Israel has continually chipped away at the hospital's experienced work force and eliminated essential services and jobs. Israel's management style has proved to be bad for business, as he has gotten rid of much of the CSEA work force and brought in low-paid contractors. The hospital has lost top medical talent including a nationally recognized cardiology team.

"This is classic union busting and, with Mike Israel in charge, we see no end in sight," said Westchester Medical Center Unit President Peter Piazza. "Israel and his senior management team are running feasibility studies on almost every CSEA job and wherever outsourcing is remotely possible, he's doing it."

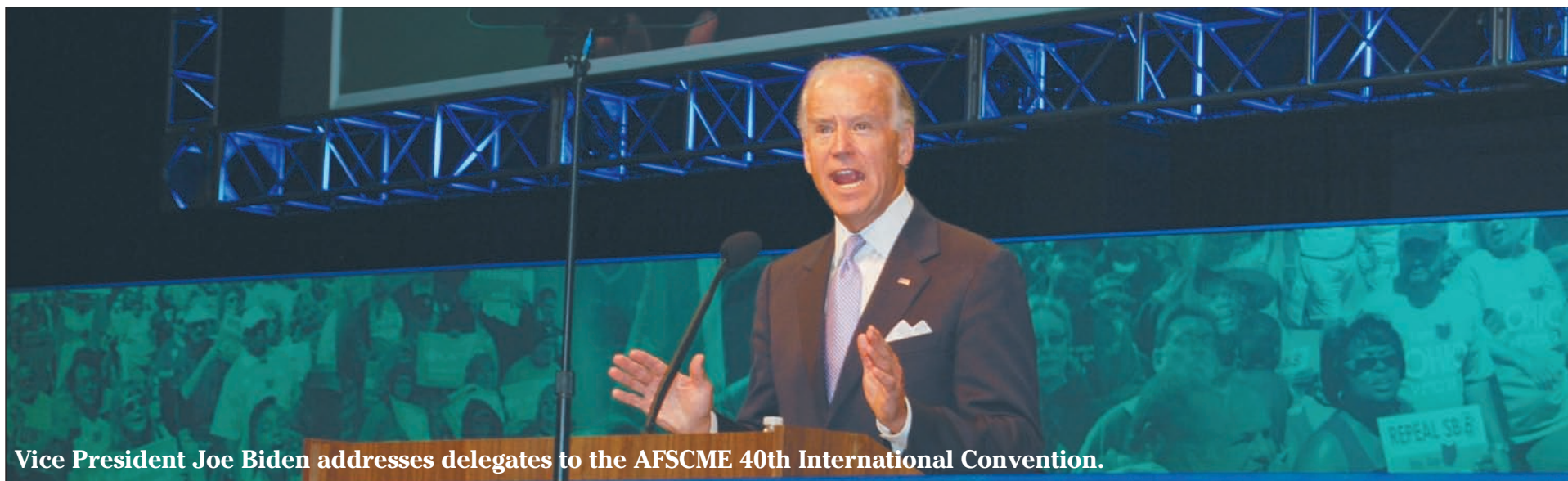
Piazza cited Israel's recent move to

outsource CSEA-represented direct care jobs at the hospital's Behavioral Health Center as evidence that replacing fairly compensated workers with low-paid contractors creates the potential for increased risk to workers and patients. Low wages offered in a high cost-of-living area such as Westchester County means turnover is higher and it's tougher to retain experienced workers.

"It makes no sense for Israel to get rid of the experienced public work force at WMC because it's bad for business," said Westchester County Local President John Staino. "A number of physicians who are at the top of their respective specialties have left for other hospitals and we believe that Israel's continued staffing cuts have to have played a part in their decisions."

Staino noted that at least one private company brought in for staffing has a well-documented poor record in several states. Liberty Healthcare, the company brought in to manage the Behavioral Health Center, was featured in a scathing New York Times article that detailed the company's atrocious record at other medical facilities.

— Jessica Ladlee



Vice President Joe Biden addresses delegates to the AFSCME 40th International Convention.

# Obama administration stands up for public services, middle-class Americans

LOS ANGELES — Vice President Joe Biden delivered the Obama administration's strong defense of public services during an address to delegates at the recent American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) 40th International convention.

CSEA is the largest AFSCME affiliate.

"You provide the safe neighborhoods, you provide the good schools, you provide the school lunches, you provide the daycare centers, you provide the hospitals, you provide the roads, you provide the ability of people to live a decent middle-class life," Biden said.

Biden emphasized that public workers deserve respect and should not be under attack. He said that those who want to undermine labor and reduce public services "don't get that you're the most professional,

disciplined and well-trained workers" in America.

"Being middle class is not a number, it's a way of life; it's a value set," Biden said. "It's about a minimum standard of living, being able to own your own house, not just rent it. It's about being able to live in a safe neighborhood where your kid can walk the streets, where there's a playground that's not polluted, where you can send your kids to school and if they do well they have a chance to go to college and you have a chance to get them there."

"That's not asking too much," Biden said. "It's who we are. That's what we believe. That's what you are all about. You're the ones who make that possible."

*(See Biden's full address to delegates in its entirety at [www.afscme.org](http://www.afscme.org))*

## Saunders, Reyes elected to AFSCME International offices

LOS ANGELES — Lee Saunders and Laura Reyes were elected, respectively, as AFSCME International President and Secretary-Treasurer at the union's 40th International Convention in Los Angeles.

Saunders was elected International Secretary-Treasurer in 2010 after a long career as a top staffer to International President Gerald McEntee, who retired this year after more than 30 years heading AFSCME.

Reyes has been a leader in AFSCME's United Domestic Workers affiliate in California since 2002.

CSEA President Danny Donohue and his running mate, Alice Goff of AFSCME Council 36 in southern California, mounted a vigorous challenge for the top posts. While calling for solidarity, they vowed to continue their efforts for a better, more democratic union that works for its members.

**Learn more at [www.afscme.org](http://www.afscme.org).**

# THE WORK FORCE

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143 Washington Ave.  
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Danny Donohue, President

STEPHEN A. MADARASZ  
Communications Director & Publisher

STANLEY HORNAK  
Deputy Director of Communications

LOU HMIELESKI  
Executive Editor

JANICE GAVIN  
Associate Editor

CATHLEEN FEBRAIO  
Graphic Production Specialist

JANICE M. KUCSKAR  
Graphic Production Specialist

BETH McINTYRE  
Communications Assistant

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Readers:  
Send any comments, complaints, suggestions or ideas to:  
Publisher, The Work Force, 143 Washington Avenue,  
Albany, NY 12210-2303.

## COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALISTS

RICH IMPAGLIAZZO	Long Island Region	(631) 462-0030
DAVID GALARZA	Metropolitan Region	(212) 406-2156
JESSICA LADLEE	Southern Region	(845) 831-1000
THERESE ASSALIAN	Capital Region	(518) 785-4400
MARK M. KOTZIN	Central Region	(315) 433-0050
LYNN MILLER	Western Region	(716) 691-6555
ED MOLITOR	Headquarters	(518) 257-1272
JILL ASENCIO	Headquarters	(518) 257-1276

### The Publications Committee

Jerry Larrichiuta  
Janice Mason  
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Debi Sherk



# Work Force

IN TOUCH WITH THE

CSEA President Danny Donohue

## Reports of labor's death are greatly exaggerated

To paraphrase Mark Twain: Reports of labor's death are greatly exaggerated. While some might like to write our obituary, there's too much at stake for us to let that happen.

We live in a challenging time, when extremism is undermining our democracy and the ability to find reasonable and responsible common ground.

It's made worse by the increasing power of money to buy influence and ignore people. Just consider the staggering amounts of money being spent to misrepresent the truth about working people and manipulate public opinion. Keep in mind that no one spends that kind of money without looking for something in return, and you better believe their payoff is at your expense.

Do we really want a country where the super wealthy get richer and richer while the rest of us get poorer and poorer? Do we want a country where working in public service isn't valued and damns you to second-class citizenship? Do we want a country where facts don't mean anything, especially if you've got the money to drown everything out with lies? Do we want a country where you're either born into affluence or tough luck?

The answer is no. We need balance, community and opportunity. But all of those things listed above are coming to reality in America and it's up to all of us to change it.

More than ever before, we need a strong labor movement to stand up for what's right because the future of the American Dream depends on it.

You don't need a Nobel Prize in economics to understand that working people do better in terms of wages, benefits and working conditions when they have a union. And it's just as clear all Americans do better when unions are strong.

We need to work together to make America better.





## Income inequality steals opportunity

If you had \$10 in your pocket, and someone came along and took \$4, you'd probably be annoyed. If you had \$1,000 in your pocket, and someone took \$400, your likely reaction would be severe.

This is what has happened to the average American worker in the last several years, but there doesn't seem to be much notice in the newspapers we read and the TV news we watch.

From 2007 to 2010, 40 percent of a typical American

family's wealth was lost during the last economic recession. According to a recent Federal Reserve report, some families have recovered some of their lost wealth.

Unfortunately, the hardest hit in the downturn were young, middle-class families, headed by 35- to 44-year olds, according to the Federal Reserve. Their economic net worth dropped 54 percent, more than half, during the recession.

While losing money is bad,

the income inequality the losses create is worse. Not only did the recession leave workers farther behind, it's getting harder to get ahead.

Only 8 percent of students at the country's elite universities come from households in the bottom 50 percent of income, according to a recent book, "The Price of Inequality," by Columbia University Economist Joseph Stiglitz.

"There's not much mobility up and down. The chances of someone from the top (income

bracket) who doesn't do very well in school are better than someone from the bottom who does well in school," Stiglitz said.

In other words, inequality of wealth means inequality of opportunity.

This is why it is more important than ever that working people have a say in how they are treated, what benefits and pay they receive, and how jobs are created.

The best way for workers to have their say? Unions.

# VOICE/CSEA efforts pay off in Westchester

## Parents will not see child care costs increase yet

WHITE PLAINS — VOICE/CSEA and other child care advocates across Westchester County are sighing with relief — for now.

A judge issued a restraining order stopping Westchester County Executive Rob Astorino from unilaterally raising parent co-payments, a plan he intended to follow through despite public outcry and disapproval from the county legislature.

The injunction is expected to last into mid-summer, providing a stopgap until the

issue can be dealt with more permanently.

Astorino told the local newspaper that he will not fight the restraining order.

VOICE/CSEA Westchester child care providers see this as a major victory for providers, parents and child care advocate allies, all of which have been fighting the onslaught of child care cuts since Astorino took office.

“Our public actions, including speaking out against the cuts in front of the DSS

Commissioner, legislators and business leaders, joining a coalition of local child care advocates to collect and hand-deliver nearly 5,000 petitions from residents, providers and business leaders against the increase, letters to the editor and powerful statements from CSEA leaders were among the many actions by us and our allies that thwarted Astorino’s completely unnecessary plan to balance the budget on the backs of hardworking families,” said VOICE/CSEA activist Cynthia Bolding, a family child care provider. “It goes to show we have the power to make a difference, even against a seemingly impossible administration.”

— Jill Asencio



In this Work Force file photo, VOICE/CSEA members Cynthia Bolding and Patrick Hogan are interviewed in May by News 12-TV reporters before entering to deliver messages against recent child care cuts.

## Members fight for public nursing homes



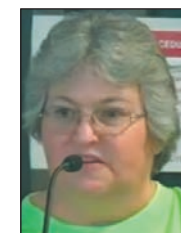
Dawn Patton from the Steuben County Unit rallies supporters outside a legislative committee meeting at the County Office Building in Bath. CSEA is fighting a county plan to outsource several departments at the Steuben County Health Care Facility. The buzz among county officials is that the facility will be sold in a few years. Union activists are working to educate the public and save quality care now, before legislators have a chance to start the sale. Public nursing homes provide an important, vital safety net. They accept residents regardless of ability to pay and the complexity of medical care needed. Meanwhile, private facilities often “cherry-pick” patients, accepting only those with large bank accounts and not too many health issues.

## Conti is PEOPLE Recruiter for May

Rose Conti of the Chautauqua County Local in the Western Region is the PEOPLE Recruiter of the Month for May. She recruited 33 new PEOPLE members at the MVP level.

“Labor has never been under attack more than it is now,” she said. “Everywhere we turn, we are being attacked and we need to have the resources to fight back. PEOPLE helps us stand up for ourselves.”

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.



Conti

— Lynn Miller

Editor’s Note: See page 14 for more about Conti.

# Rockland County proceeds with 80 layoffs

NEW CITY — Members of the Rockland County Legislature recently approved County Executive Scott Vanderhoef's directive to lay off 80 workers, part of an effort to quickly cut costs in order to deal with the county's financial woes.



**Riccaldo**

CSEA members made passionate speeches before the legislature voted, explaining the value of the services they provide county residents and decrying the imbalance in layoffs. Cuts across county

departments barely touched county administrators.

"This never should have happened," said Southern Region President Billy Riccaldo.

"Rocklanders lose with layoffs, both in terms of loss of services and the negative financial impact layoffs have on communities and small businesses. It

adds insult to injury when our members see that some of the political appointees who played

a role in getting the county into this financial mess are able to keep their jobs while other workers are losing theirs."

"Our members didn't cause

this problem, but again they are being forced to shoulder a great deal of the burden," said Rockland County Unit President P.T. Thomas. "What the average

resident might not realize is that the county work force has gotten a lot smaller in recent years

through retirements and other attrition. These cuts will hurt our ability to deliver services at a time when we're already stretched thin."

At press time, there was discussion of resurrecting a proposal to create a public benefit corporation to operate the Summit Park Hospital and Nursing Care Center. If that proposal proceeds, it would be the first nursing home to be operated as a public benefit corporation.

— Jessica Ladlee

***"It adds insult to injury when our members see that some of the political appointees who played a role in getting the county into this financial mess are able to keep their jobs while other workers are losing theirs."***

## County legislators delay Valley View sale to allow investigation

GOSHEN — Orange County legislators approved a 45-day moratorium on the sale of the county-run Valley View nursing home in early June, allowing time for a newly-created special investigative committee to take a close look at how the facility has been run during the past five years.

The special committee comes after legislators demanded a more accurate picture of Valley View's financial situation. In his aggressive push to close or sell Valley View, Orange County Executive Ed Diana has portrayed Valley View as a drain on county finances even though a feasibility study on the facility showed that Valley View's deficit is due largely to the Diana-supported management company that serves as administrator.

"We are in the midst of the biggest fight ever in Orange County," said Orange County Unit President William Oliphant. "Not only are our jobs on the line, so are our very rights. We have submitted honest proposals for negotiations. It is the county that has not responded or counter-offered."

Oliphant noted that several

county legislators have taken up the fight to save Valley View despite Diana's objections.

"A majority of legislators realized they cannot vote on such a serious matter without having all the facts, and they realize that the county executive has not been forthcoming with those facts," Oliphant said. "The fact is, there are many things that could be done to make Valley View operate more efficiently but the county executive wants to do whatever he has to in order to achieve his goal of getting rid of the nursing home."

Even after the feasibility study made recommendations for cost savings, Diana has yet to direct Orange Administrative Services, the company created specifically to serve as the administration at Valley View, to implement those changes.

Orange Administrative Services' partners have pushed privatization elsewhere. Transcripts from a 2006 meeting on the Horace Nye Nursing Home in Essex County quote OAS representatives, including Orange County Republican Committee Chair William DeProspero, touting the benefits of privatizing county



**Orange County Unit President William Oliphant speaks to the media after the legislature meeting in late May.**

nursing homes to members of the county Board of Supervisors.

"Orange County residents are learning the truth and they are outraged," said Southern Region President Billy Riccaldo. "During his tenure, the county executive has apparently had little interest in running Valley View efficiently because he's been setting the county up to sell it."

Oliphant is committed to standing strong.

"This is not a time for dissection but a time to unite," he said. "Remain strong, your union is working to maintain Valley View as a county-owned facility, and to keep all of our employees working with integrity and respect. Stay strong, stay united. We are committed and we will withstand any and all attacks on our workers."

— Jessica Ladlee

# Maplewood Manor workers fight for home

BALLSTON SPA — Saratoga County officials are considering the fate of the county nursing home, Maplewood Manor, and that has residents and employees concerned about the future of public nursing care in their county.

Maplewood Manor has a long history of care in Saratoga County and a current operating budget of \$28 million.

The Saratoga County Board of Supervisors has hired consulting firm Harris Beach to study the nursing home's finances and operations to then lay out options for the future of the facility.

The report is still several months away from being released and the board's decision could take several months after that.

## Fighting for public care

But that hasn't stopped Maplewood Manor employees from galvanizing around the issue.



Maplewood Manor Employee of the Year Michelle Cleveland poses by the CSEA bulletin board at the nursing home.

A committee of several employees, working in concert with local and unit leadership, has been working to promote the mission of public care. They are promoting events at the home and staking out a presence at community events like the upcoming county fair,

running ads and getting a head start on lobbying the town supervisors who comprise the board.

## Dedicated to residents

And it hasn't stopped CSEA members from their dedication to the county's elderly

residents who rely on the home as a safety net.

Michelle Cleveland, a ward clerk at Maplewood Manor for almost three years, was recently honored at a ceremony as Employee of the Year. Her hometown, Clifton Park, also recognized her efforts with a resolution at a town board meeting. "You care about the residents and they care about you," Cleveland said. "It's really more like a family, than a job."

## Not alone in battle

The nursing home's financial issues are the same as other county homes across the state; inadequate Medicaid reimbursement, increasing losses and an apparent lack of will on the part of county officials to uphold the mission of a safety net for the state's most vulnerable residents.

— Therese Assalian

## Washingtonville School District Unit demonstrates for fair contract



Left, Washingtonville School District Unit President Laura Smith, left, led 75 unit members in a recent rally before a district Board of Education meeting. The rally was a show of CSEA solidarity as the unit reaches its second anniversary of working without a contract. CSEA members have been very reasonable in their approach to negotiations, but have been unable to reach a settlement because of management's refusal to budge on the issue of retiree health care. Negotiations are proceeding to fact finding.



# Leaders demand meeting with mental health commissioner

BRONX — Following several weeks of protests and informational pickets, CSEA members at the Bronx Psychiatric Center recently fired off a letter to state Office of Mental Health Commissioner Michael Hogan demanding a meeting to discuss how cutbacks and layoffs will adversely affect the center and community.

The agency has already closed two wards with about 50 beds at the center and downsized about 80 full-and part-time workers on May 31.

The layoffs included 28 mental health therapy aides, nine food service workers and 11 cleaners. For workers already doing more with less, the latest round of cuts prove the administration is out of touch with reality.

“Regardless of the redeployment, redistribution of staff and reconfiguring of pass days, the lack of staff specifically in nursing and food service will cause an additional increase in overtime resulting in the overtaxing of staff mental and physical capabilities due to the number of hours that will be required to work to adequately care for our patients,” wrote CSEA Bronx Psychiatric Center Local President Abraham Benjamin in the letter to Hogan.

Benjamin urged agency officials to do a better job communicating the implementation of any personnel changes since there have been many reports of incorrect seniority dates being posted

and the transferring of support staff from outpatient to inpatient services (positions that serve different populations and require a different set of skills).

“High potential of danger exists to patient and staff due to the lack of recent updated training for this divergent work environment,” Benjamin wrote. “I hope we can salvage the days when we were all invested in the same process, that being to best serve the individuals at (Bronx Psychiatric Center).”

The letter also questions the very cost-savings these reductions in services and staff are supposed to produce.

“The recently negotiated contract between CSEA and the State of New York, provided for a mechanism to put money in the coffers of New York state via implementation of deficit reduction leave,” Benjamin wrote. “Problems will unquestionably balloon when inadequate staffing mandates that employees requesting utilization of these unpaid days off will have their requests denied unless overtime is authorized, which appears to defeat the intended purpose of putting money in the coffers of NYS.”

— David Galarza

**Editor’s Note:** Read the full letter at [www.csealocal1000.org/omh\\_letter.php](http://www.csealocal1000.org/omh_letter.php).



Above, in this April 2012 file photo, Bronx Psychiatric Center Local President Abraham Benjamin, right, leads a demonstration at the center.

CERTIFIED MAIL 7005 3110 0000 7021 3103

June 12, 2012

Michael F. Hogan, Ph.D.  
Commissioner, Office of Mental Health  
State of New York  
44 Holland Avenue  
Albany, NY 12229

Dear Dr. Hogan:

Thank you in advance for taking the time to read this letter on behalf of the working population of Bronx Psychiatric Center (BPC), the individuals they serve at BPC, the community they live in and businesses in those communities that they support.

By way of introduction, I am the Civil Service Employees Association, Inc. (CSEA) Local President at BPC for the New York State Employees that I write of herein. CSEA is the duly recognized bargaining agent for the employees I speak of and on behalf of.

Your reputation precedes you and is one of preparedness and fairness. I would presume that you have been well versed in the diminution of staff and conversely services at BPC.

I am writing because I believe that it is equally important that you hear the intimate, albeit negative details of this action as well.

Due to the absolute **bare bone** staffing that is the result of the drastic 'reduction in work force' impact to our hospital since 2010 up to and including this date, please consider the following:

Above, an excerpt from the letter Benjamin sent to Office of Mental Health Commissioner Michael Hogan. Read the full letter at [www.csealocal1000.org/omh\\_letter.php](http://www.csealocal1000.org/omh_letter.php).

# Standing up to fight for our rights

BUFFALO — CSEA activists from throughout the state came to Buffalo last month to learn ways to stand up and fight for rights.

The annual three-day Spring Workshop focused on changing the conversation about public employees, sharing the importance of the essential services CSEA members provide daily, and fighting back against lies and misinformation.

“We will never apologize for the years of fighting for fair treatment and decent

benefits for our members. We’re proud of what we’ve fought for — fair contracts a decent pension and programs unmatched by any other union. For the hard work you do

**“We’re proud of what we’ve fought for — fair contracts a decent pension and programs unmatched by any other union. For the hard work you do every day, you deserve what we’ve earned.”**

every day, you deserve what we’ve earned,” said CSEA Treasurer Joe McMullen. “It is my hope that the techniques learned will be passed on to CSEA members everywhere,” CSEA Secretary Denise Berkley said. “We must all stand together in our fight for fair contracts and respect. There is

strength in numbers. No one can do it alone.”

“In these tough times, with so many elected officials dead set on tearing us apart, it will take all of us united to retain what we’ve fought for all these years,” said CSEA Western Region President Flo Tripi.

Participants worked to develop leadership skills that will help give CSEA a stronger presence. Those in attendance should now be better prepared to fight back against the ongoing attacks on workers on the local level and throughout the state.



**Berkley**



**Tripi**

membership and the public to support union efforts.

Constituency groups also rallied for their role in the fight by sharing information and building support for the cause.

At the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists table, CSEA members could learn how they can give back to the community.

“We do a lot of community outreach and education on the political process,” said Sharon Ivey of the Buffalo Psychiatric Center.

“We want to start a mentoring program, and we award scholarships every year. We try to work with other constituency groups like Pride at Work for both the good of the community to strengthen unionism.”

The weekend also included the presentation of the annual CSEA Mission Achievement Awards. Recipients this year are: Deborah Downey of Taconic DDSO Local, state award; John Mooney of the City of Long Beach Unit, local government award; and Tina Tomasine of Niagara Falls Head Start, private sector award (See pages 12 and 13 for stories about the recipients).

— Lynn Miller



**From left, Saratoga County Local activists Katie Purcell and Carolyn Green take part in a workshop focusing on building union power through coalitions and increasing union support in our communities.**



**From left, Dutchess County Educational Employees Local President Scott Rajdzi, Local 2nd Vice President Guy Bilyou and Southern Region President Billy Riccaldo accept the 2012 President’s Polar Cap award from CSEA Treasurer Joe McMullen, far right. CSEA regions raised nearly \$38,000 for Special Olympics of New York by participating in Polar Plunges.**

### Workshops to help members build the union

Workshop sessions focused on appropriate uses for Facebook and social media, building power through coalitions, making our voices heard and mobilizing the



**“If we don’t stand up and get our own message out, no one will. We can’t depend on people to fight for us. We need to fight for ourselves. The services we provide are important. The battles we fought before will be in vain if we don’t keep fighting now. We have to keep at it or we could lose everything.”**

— Roderick Williams, Bronx Psychiatric Center



**“The middle class is being wiped out. We need to be out there and visible. We need to stand up for what’s important. We need to tell people why what we do is important and we need to make sure they understand. We need to not just stand up but to stand together. I can stand up but it won’t make a difference unless someone stands next to me, and someone else stands next to them. Together, we can do it.”**

— Marsha Tuttle, Corning-Painted Post School District

## **Local Government Mission Achievement Award**

# **John Mooney ‘direct, honest, and very effective’**

LONG BEACH — CSEA’s 2012 Local Government Mission Achievement Award recipient, City of Long Beach Unit President John Mooney, recently proved one of the reasons he was selected: leadership.

At a recent membership meeting, Mooney was urging CSEA members to support an agreement brokered by unit officers and city officials to negate the layoff of 38 city workers.

Mooney laid out the specifics to members and explained the rationale for the pact in the days leading up to the meeting, which concluded with the ratification vote. He told unit members that 38 city employees would immediately be brought back to work full time and the city would guarantee there would be no further layoffs for two years under the deal.

The members overwhelmingly ratified the deal after a period of debate, which was at times heated.

“John Mooney is a direct, honest and very effective advocate for union principles and ideals,” said Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte, who presented the award to Mooney at the meeting. Mooney was unable to attend CSEA’s annual Spring Workshop, where the awards are presented.

“His members respect him because he tells it straight, even when the answer isn’t the one they were hoping for. John is also accessible and communicates well with his members through various mediums. Simply stated, he personifies precisely what we are seeking in CSEA leaders,” LaMorte said.

— Rich Impagliazzo

## **State Mission Achievement Award**

# **Debbie Downey instrumental in labor-management cooperation**

AMENIA — The transition to community residences for individuals with disabilities means Taconic DDSO Local President Debbie Downey’s members are spread across several counties, but Downey has risen to the challenge and created an extensive communication network that keeps members as informed as they were when most worked at the main Taconic campus.

That strong member network is just one reason Downey was chosen as the 2012 State Mission Achievement Award recipient.

“Debbie’s not only earned the respect of her members, but she’s also built a strong working relationship with the administration that has evolved into one of the best labor-management partnerships we have in the state,” said Southern Region President Billy Riccaldo.

“She’s represented hundreds, if not thousands, of members and earned the

respect of management,” Riccaldo said.

A CSEA activist for more than 20 years, Downey’s served on many statewide communities, including two stints on the state contract negotiating team. That experience has helped her become a better local president, Downey said.

“Being there in negotiations has helped me better answer a lot of the members’ questions and explain some of the intricacies of the contract,” Downey said.

With the nature of her members’ jobs evolving, Downey has found value in her working relationship with other CSEA local presidents from state Office for People with Developmental Disabilities and Office of Mental Health locals.

“I’ve been able to share some of the things we do, but I’ve also brought back information that has benefited my members,” Downey said.

— Jessica Ladlee



**2012 Local Government Mission Achievement Award Recipient John Mooney, City of Long Beach Unit president, speaks to members prior to the unit’s recent contract ratification vote.**



**2012 State Mission Achievement Award Recipient Debbie Downey, Taconic DDSO Local president, has been credited with creating networks to keep members informed and helping maintain strong labor-management relations.**

## ***Private Sector Mission Achievement Award***

# **Tina Tomasine working hard to maintain union protections**

LOCKPORT — Hard work on behalf of CSEA comes naturally for Tina Tomasine, president of the CSEA Niagara County Head Start Local.

It's something done for the good of all her co-workers, not for recognition.

"I was shocked when I got the call that I had been named the private sector Mission Achievement Award recipient," Tomasine said. "I thought 'What did I do to deserve this?'"

To those in her union, the answer to that question might be "A lot."

Tomasine has been president of the Niagara County Head Start Local for six years. Before that, she served as vice president for six years. She has worked in the kitchen at the Head Start program for two decades, and she currently is a cook.

"When I first started 20 years ago, I was a kitchen helper and that is not a union

position," she said. "My friend was CSEA president and when I became a (unionized) cook, I ran for vice president. Now, six years later, I am president and my friend is my vice president."

"I am going to work as hard as I can to make our jobs the best they can be," Tomasine said. "That's good for all of us. Belonging to CSEA is important. Everything we have could be taken away if we didn't have our union. We have the strength of the union behind us fighting with us and protecting us."

In addition to CSEA and her cook position, family is extremely important to Tomasine. She makes sure to spend as much time as possible with her children and three grandchildren, ages 3, 2 and 2 months.

— Lynn Miller



**2012 Private Sector Mission Achievement Award Recipient Tina Tomasine, Niagara Head Start Local president, said she knows the value and strength of belonging to a union, and works hard to maintain protections and benefits her local has earned.**

## ***Storm cleanup helps restore order to community***

SENECA FALLS — In the aftermath of a recent "microburst" storm that violently tore through parts of Seneca County, causing massive tree damage to the Village of Seneca Falls, it was the CSEA-represented workers in the

county Highway Department who responded, cleaning up much of the damage and restoring order to this normally peaceful village along the northwest shore of Cayuga Lake. CSEA Seneca County Unit President Carla Felice said

the workers worked tirelessly to quickly reopen blocked roadways following the storm and then spent the better part of a week working throughout the county to clean up storm damage, mostly downed tree limbs, which they quickly collected and shredded.

"Our highway workers did an amazing job in their response to the damage caused by this storm and really made it possible for the residents of Seneca Falls and all of Seneca County to get back to their daily routines as quickly as possible. We hope everyone recognizes the great work they did," Felice said.

— Mark M. Kotzin

**Left, Seneca County highway workers Barbara Prouty and Kenneth Bennett clean up tree limbs along Lower Lake Road in Seneca Falls, downed in the recent microburst storm that ripped through the village. Above, Bennett saws a downed limb.**



# Activism rewarding for Rose Conti

MAYVILLE — Ask Rose Conti to imagine life without union activism and she'll tell you she can't.

"If the day ever comes when public employers start treating our members with the respect they deserve, I could sit back," Conti said. "Until then, someone has to stand up for us. I just can't not be involved in CSEA."

Conti, whose union activism spans more than 20 years, is planning to retire soon. But her career as a CSEA activist is marked by her hard work to improve the lives of members on and off the job. She is particularly dedicated to advancing working women.

"I started because a friend was a steward," Conti said. "It was something she needed to give up, but she felt like she needed to find her replacement. She talked me into it. I thought 'How much time can it possibly take?'"

Conti found that out right away.

"Once I got started, I just couldn't stop," she said. "What we in CSEA are doing is so important. People need to be protected."



**In this Work Force file photo, Chautauqua County Local President Rose Conti gets the crowd fired up during a "We Are One" rally in Mayville in 2011.**

Today, Conti is president of the Chautauqua County Local and Unit, as well as a member of the statewide and Western Region Women's committees.

She has recently led the ongoing fight to save

the Chautauqua County Nursing Home from privatization.

She recently served as co-chair of the Western Region's biennial Women's Conference. The weekend event took a unique turn, with workshops focusing on bullying and gang behavior.

"As we researched the topic, we learned that bullying in the workplace is much more prevalent than we thought," Conti said. "When you say 'bully,' people often think of violence, but bullying can include verbal abuse and other forms of intimidation."

The workshops also gave attendees a chance to gain skills they can use at home with their families. Sessions on gangs provided information to help keep safe CSEA members who work with the public.

"Gangs and bullying are not just topics for cities like Buffalo and Rochester," Conti said. "This is truly happening everywhere, from urban to suburban to rural areas."

— Lynn Miller

## VOICE/CSEA providers honored as Heroes of Labor

MANHATTAN — Two members of one of CSEA's newest locals have been honored as Heroes of Labor.

VOICE/CSEA Local members Damaris Samolinski and Roxanne Savage were honored recently by LaborPress. The Heroes of Labor honor recognizes labor activists whose contributions included advocating for access to decent working conditions, wages, medical care and pensions, as well as giving a voice to children and minorities.

Samolinski and Savage, both VOICE/CSEA Local activists from the Long Island Region, have gone above and beyond the call of duty for family health care providers and have served as tireless advocates for the children in their care, the communities of Suffolk County and families across the state.

As VOICE/CSEA members, they have been integral in a hard-fought, five-year campaign to form a union. They have also had essential roles in the struggle for longer than that, seeking greater access to quality child care for families and much needed improvement in working conditions for providers, including an unprecedented grievance procedure, a bill of rights for child care professionals and other

program enhancements.

"Damaris and Roxanne have influenced positive changes to state regulation and policy, which have made child care operations safer and improved access to quality programs for low-income families," said Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte. "They possess a clear vision for the future of child care and labor in New York and have been invaluable instruments of transformation."

Both women have worked hard to organize hundreds of local providers on Long Island while promoting the core values of the labor movement and making a difference through political action at the state and local levels.

Together, they have overturned unfair zoning restrictions and fought unfair fees for providers, which threatened the very existence of family child care on Long Island. They have also aided these families by continuing care in the face of non-payment and publicly advocating for restoration when subsidy programs were slashed and frozen or when parents were faced with job losses.

"Damaris and Roxanne certainly earned these awards and are true heroes of labor in every sense of the phrase," said LaMorte.



**VOICE/CSEA Providers Damaris Samolinski and Roxanne Savage at the Heroes of Labor event.**

— Rich Impagliazzo

# CSEA receives grant for safety programs

ALBANY — CSEA, along with several international unions, was recently selected to participate in a national safety program aimed at protecting workers involved in shipping, receiving or transporting hazardous materials.

The International Chemical Workers Union (ICWUC) Center for Worker Health and Safety Education was chosen to administer a large federal grant extending the U.S. Department of Transportation Regulated Materials training (HM-181) to more workers by way of an innovative train-the-trainer program, specifically targeting facilities where hazardous chemicals are loaded and unloaded.

ICWUC handpicked the following unions to help develop



**Representatives from CSEA, the International Chemical Workers Union, American Federation of Government Employees and United Auto Workers recently joined in a program-planning meeting at CSEA headquarters in Albany. The program aims to protect workers, communities and the environment.**

and participate in the program: CSEA, United Auto Workers (UAW), American Federation of

Government Employees (AFGE) and a coalition of rail workers' unions.

As the only union in this group that is not an international union, CSEA was chosen because of its strong occupational safety and health network. ICWUC believed CSEA would be extremely effective at getting the safety message out, which is a top priority of the program.

CSEA received \$19,000 to cover the cost of bringing this valuable program to members. CSEA members and labor-management teams will be sent to designated training locations across the country. The CSEA trainees will then bring the program back to New York and train additional members at individual work sites who would benefit from this program

— Jill Asencio

## Important information for 9/11 responders and survivors

Following the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, Congress created the September 11 Victim Compensation Fund, or VCF, to provide compensation for economic and non-economic loss to individuals or relatives of individuals who were killed or injured as a result of the terrorist-related aircraft crashes. That program ended in June 2004.

Programs and services for responders and survivors have recently been extended. The James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act of 2010 re-establishes the Victims Compensation Fund and created the World Trade Center Health Program.

The program provides services for responders, workers

and volunteers who helped in the rescue, recovery and cleanup at the World Trade Center and other sites affected by the 9/11 attacks. The program also provides services for survivors who lived, worked or were in school in the affected area on Sept. 11, 2001. The act authorizes the VCF to cover claims filed for a period of five years under two separate programs.

- **The Victim Compensation**

- **The Victim Compensation Fund: Administered by the U.S. Attorney General, this program provides for financial compensation for those physically injured or killed as a result of the attacks.**

- **The World Trade Center Health Program: provides for medical treatment and follow-up for WTC-related conditions. The program is administered through the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health.**

**Fund:** Administered by the U.S. Attorney General, this program provides for financial compensation for those physically injured or killed as a result of the attacks.

- **The World Trade Center Health Program:** provides for medical treatment and follow-up for WTC-related conditions. The program is administered through the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health. The VCF and the World Trade

Center Health Program are accepting claims.

For more information and eligibility requirements for the VCF, visit [www.vcf.gov](http://www.vcf.gov).

For more information and eligibility requirements for the WTC Health Program, visit [www.cdc.gov/wtc](http://www.cdc.gov/wtc).

Visit CSEA's Occupational Safety and Health Department web page at [www.csealocal1000.org/osh](http://www.csealocal1000.org/osh) or contact Matthew Kozak at 1-800-342-4146, ext. 1465 or by email at [matthew.kozak@cseainc.org](mailto:matthew.kozak@cseainc.org).

**Act now to ensure that you are not left out. You must file a claim within two years of when you learned or when you should have reasonably learned of the 9/11-related harm.**

# Empire Plan enrollees: Exclusivity period for generic Lipitor ends

As of June 1, 2012, the Empire Plan's "exclusivity"

## Health Benefits



a large negative impact on the plan.

During negotiations,

the "brand over generic" Enhanced Flexible Formulary was negotiated, which allowed Empire Plan enrollees to continue to receive Lipitor during the six-month "exclusivity" period. Now, the generic version of Lipitor is considered a Level 1 (preferred) drug.

If your prescription is written with a DAW (dispense as written), the brand name Lipitor will be dispensed and you will be charged a Level 3 co-payment in addition to being required to pay the ancillary charge (difference between the brand name drug and the generic equivalent) unless you and your physician complete a "generic appeal" through the program.

To learn more about your pharmacy benefits and medications or to initiate a generic appeal, call The Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program (currently administered by Medco Health Solutions, Inc.) at 1-877-7-NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447) and select option 4.

The generic for Lipitor was released on Dec. 1, 2011. When new generics are brought to market, the actual cost to the health insurance plan for the new generic is higher than the brand name during the first six months of "exclusivity" before other generics come to market.

When the generic Lipitor was released, the generic moved to Level 3 (Non-Preferred) on the prescription drug formulary and Lipitor moved to Level 1 of the prescription drug formulary (for the duration of "exclusivity" period).

Since Lipitor is one of the top drugs used under The Empire Plan, if the generic is more expensive than the current arrangement for Lipitor when brought to market, it will have

**To learn more about your pharmacy benefits and medications or to initiate a generic appeal, call The Empire Plan Prescription Drug Program (currently administered by Medco Health Solutions, Inc.) at 1-877-7-NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447) and select option 4.**

## MEMBERS ONLY INFORMATION

LOCAL 1000



AFSCME, AFL-CIO

# Legal Services Program

Workers' Compensation and Social Security Disability

Personal Legal Matters

Personal Injury Matters

Taking Care of Business/Elder Law

Veterans Disability Benefits

This members-only benefit program provides attorney representation for Workers' Compensation, Social Security Disability, Personal Injury, Veterans

# Know Your Rights!

Disability Benefits and Personal Legal matters including Taking Care of Business for members and their dependents. Quality legal representation at little or no out-of-pocket cost for injury/illness related matters; quality legal representation at pre-negotiated/discounted fees for other personal matters.

The Injury Related Program is administered by the firm of FINE, OLIN & ANDERMAN, LLP through its statewide network of offices. Personal Legal Services are provided by a closed network of specially selected attorneys dedicated to quality service for CSEA members.



**1-800-342-4146**

Call during normal business hours, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., Mon.-Fri., and follow the menu instructions for the Legal Services Program

CSEA Headquarters, 143 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12210

Web site: [www.csealocal1000.org](http://www.csealocal1000.org) (through the CSEA members-only portal)

# NYSHIP rate change effective July 1, 2012

The state Department of Civil Service has advised that due to changes in the Executive Budget for participating employers (which include participating authorities and other quasi-public organizations of the state), **state enrollees** will experience relatively minor changes to NYSHIP rates effective July 1, 2012.

The 2012-13 Executive Budget calls for participating employers to begin contributing toward the Medicare Part B premium component as of April 1, 2012. The Medicare Part B premium is already calculated as a component of the NYSHIP premiums for New York state enrollees.

These updated rates reflect the cost of reimbursing Medicare Part B premiums to

eligible state and participating employer enrollees from the effective date of the legislation (April 1) through the end of 2012. Since the legislation was not passed until March 30, it was impossible for the state to implement before July 1, 2012.

You will note that this change results in a slight decrease to the Empire Plan premiums. Since the state contribution to the cost of HMO coverage is based on the cost of Empire Plan coverage, the decrease in Empire Plan premium results in a decrease in the state contribution to HMO coverage; therefore, in most cases, the enrollee contribution for HMO coverage is increasing. This increase in the enrollee contribution for HMO coverage is not considered "material" by the state, therefore, no Special Option Transfer Period

is being offered.

The earliest paycheck in which a deduction change will be made for Administration Lag-Exempt employees was the check of June 20, 2012.

The earliest paycheck in which a deduction change will be made for Administrative Lag employees is the check of July 3, 2012.

The earliest paycheck in which a deduction change will be made for Institutional Lag-Exempt employees was the check of June 14, 2012.

The earliest paycheck in which a deduction change will be made for Institutional Lag employees was the check of June 28, 2012.

A chart detailing the new rates is below.

## NYSHIP Biweekly Employee Cost Schedule (Effective July 1, 2012)

Health Plan Name	Grade 9 and Below		Grade 10 and Above	
	Individual/(Change)	Family/(Change)	Individual/(Change)	Family/(Change)
The Empire Plan 001	\$32.77 (-\$0.16)	\$132.07 (-\$0.41)	\$43.69 (-\$0.21)	\$157.70 (-\$0.49)
Aetna 210	\$125.45 (\$0.56)	\$508.96 (\$0.94)	\$136.13 (\$0.50)	\$534.62 (\$0.85)
Blue Choice 066	\$25.61(-\$0.08)	\$110.92 (-\$0.16)	\$34.15 (-\$0.10)	\$132.10 (-\$0.19)
CDPHP Capital 063	\$28.31 (-\$0.07)	\$121.06 (-\$0.15)	\$37.74 (-\$0.10)	\$144.23 (-\$0.19)
CDPHP Central 300	\$57.28 (\$0.56)	\$194.59 (\$0.94)	\$67.21 (\$0.50)	\$219.12 (\$0.85)
CDPHP West HV 310	\$62.06 (\$0.56)	\$206.22 (\$0.94)	\$71.94 (\$0.50)	\$230.61 (\$0.85)
Community Blue 067	\$32.13 (-\$0.07)	\$168.11 (\$0.94)	\$42.84 (-\$0.10)	\$195.08 (\$0.85)
Empire BC/BS Upstate 280	\$42.40 (\$0.56)	\$189.93 (\$0.94)	\$53.78 (\$0.50)	\$218.42 (\$0.85)
Empire BC/BS Downstate 290	\$123.30 (\$0.56)	\$403.03 (\$0.94)	\$134.96 (\$0.50)	\$432.25 (\$0.85)
Empire BC/BS Mid-Hudson 320	\$112.85 (\$0.56)	\$372.95 (\$0.94)	\$124.43 (\$0.50)	\$401.97 (\$0.85)
GHI HMO Albany 220	\$115.89 (\$0.56)	\$388.38 (\$0.94)	\$126.78 (\$0.50)	\$415.44 (\$0.85)
GHI HMO Hudson Valley/Ulster 350	\$142.13 (\$0.56)	\$466.55 (\$0.94)	\$153.02 (\$0.50)	\$493.61 (\$0.85)
HIP 050	\$61.53 (\$0.56)	\$197.03 (\$0.94)	\$72.09 (\$0.50)	\$223.01 (\$0.85)
HMO Blue CNY 072	\$84.66 (\$0.56)	\$259.50 (\$0.94)	\$94.68 (\$0.50)	\$284.00 (\$0.85)
HMO Blue Utica 160	\$96.38 (\$0.56)	\$317.37 (\$0.94)	\$106.28 (\$0.50)	\$341.80 (\$0.85)
Independent Health 059	\$45.27 (\$0.56)	\$165.91 (\$0.94)	\$55.54 (\$0.50)	\$191.28 (\$0.85)
MVP Rochester 058	\$26.01 (-\$0.07)	\$111.05 (-\$0.15)	\$34.68 (-\$0.10)	\$132.32 (-\$0.19)
MVP East 060	\$28.28 (-\$0.07)	\$120.91 (-\$0.14)	\$37.70 (-\$0.10)	\$144.05 (-\$0.19)
MVP Central 330	\$50.28 (\$0.56)	\$175.68 (\$0.94)	\$59.97 (\$0.50)	\$199.61 (\$0.85)
MVP Mid-Hudson 340	\$55.00 (\$0.56)	\$187.17 (\$0.94)	\$64.70 (\$0.50)	\$211.12 (\$0.85)
MVP North 360	\$90.99 (\$0.56)	\$278.57 (\$0.94)	\$100.87 (\$0.50)	\$302.96 (\$0.85)



# Employee Benefit Fund ID cards available online

CSEA Employee Benefit Fund ID cards can be ordered online for all primary policyholders in a dental and/or vision plan.



The EBF card uses a randomly generated nine-digit number, which members can use instead of their Social Security number when they visit a dentist or call with a question on a claim. This ID number is separate from members' CSEA ID number. Members can look up their EBF ID number online at our website at [www.cseaebf.com](http://www.cseaebf.com) or print a temporary ID card. The card is red and white with the image of the U.S. flag along the top. A sample of the new EBF card is shown on this page.

Since the cards were issued, some questions have arisen as well as some misunderstandings regarding the use of the card. Some things you should know about the benefit ID card are:

The EBF ID number is listed directly below the primary policyholder's name. It is a nine-digit number in bold print. Please use this number for dental and/or vision services, to check on the status of claims, and to verify personal information in our enrollment system.

Each primary policyholder has been issued two benefit cards in the policyholder's name. The same number will be used for all dependents. Since the card contains the member ID number, it is not necessary for all covered dependents to produce a card at the dental or vision provider's office.

If you did not receive a benefit identification card or if you lose a card, but need to either use your benefit or check on claims, here's what to do. Members can look up their nine digit EBF ID number, order a new ID card or print a temporary ID card on our website. Processing

time for replacement cards is four to six weeks.

Please remember that receipt of the new EBF benefit identification card is not an automatic guarantee of enrollment in both dental and vision plans. All EBF plans are negotiated benefits. To verify which plans have

been negotiated for you, please refer to your collective bargaining agreement or contact the CSEA Employee Benefit Fund Marketing Department at 1-800-323-2732.

**WE'LL SEE YOU THIS SUMMER**  
**AUGUST 9-12**

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**CSEA Member Exclusive Offer**

**BUY ONE GET ONE FREE**

RESERVED WEEKEND GRANDSTAND SEATING:  
Choose either 90 or Stewart Grandstand

**ONLY \$90!**

**FOR TICKETS:**  
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Group Sales  
607.535.2486 x283  
[klong@theglen.com](mailto:klong@theglen.com)

Offer Expires August 3rd



# Take advantage of summer deals



## Special CSEA member benefits!

Take advantage of your CSEA membership for discounts to fun summer events and activities in your region and beyond.

*There are great discounts for union members and their families.*

- Click on “CSEA Regions” at [www.csealocal1000.org](http://www.csealocal1000.org);
- Choose your CSEA region, and;
- Begin having fun and saving today!

*Visit CSEA’s website at [www.csealocal1000.org](http://www.csealocal1000.org) for even more savings on restaurants, entertainment, vacations, consumer goods and other offerings.*

# THE Work Force

www.csealocal1000.org

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Come to the New York State Fair on CSEA DAY, Sunday, Sept. 2, 2012, when CSEA members save \$4.00 off admission with coupon.



**The State Fair**  
– It's Still A  
**Value**  
Fair dates:  
Aug. 23 thru Sept.  
3, 2012  
**CSEA DAY is**  
**Sunday, Sept. 2**

**Sunday, Sept. 2, 2012, is CSEA DAY** at the New York State Fair in Syracuse. CSEA members and their family members will receive \$4.00 off admission **THAT DAY ONLY**, compliments of CSEA and the New York State Fair.

**Stop by and visit the CSEA booth**  
any day, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

**Clip one coupon at right for each CSEA member** and one coupon per family member and bring coupon(s) to any fair gate to get \$4 off the price of admission on Sunday, Sept. 2, 2012, only. **Discount will not be given without a coupon.**

**The New York State Fair is at the Empire Expo Center** located off Exit 7 of I-690, 3 miles west of Syracuse. **Hours of operation are 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily.**

CSEA DAY ONLY – Sunday, Sept. 2, 2012  
**CSEA member admission \$6.00\***

**SAVE \$4.00**

**CSEA**  
Local 1000 AFSCME, AFL-CIO

Coupon is valid for CSEA DAY ONLY – SUNDAY, SEPT. 2, 2012. Coupon must be presented for discount. One coupon per person.

CSEA MEMBERS AND EACH FAMILY MEMBER MUST PRESENT A COUPON FOR DISCOUNT ADMISSION. **ONE COUPON PER PERSON.**  
\*Adult admission. Children 12 and under admitted free. **REPRODUCED COUPONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
CSEA LOCAL \_\_\_\_\_

**SAVE \$4.00** Sun. Sept. 2

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NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
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NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE \_\_\_\_\_  
CSEA LOCAL \_\_\_\_\_

**SAVE \$4.00** Sun. Sept. 2

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Additional coupons will be available at your CSEA region office. New York State Fair schedule of events available at [www.nysfair.org](http://www.nysfair.org)