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JUNE 2002

# THE WORK FORCE

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

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Photo by Janice Marra

*“We are forming a union to provide the best care possible to our patients.”*

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## Photo of the Month



**HOMETOWN HEROES** — Employees of the State Emergency Management Office (SEMO) were recently honored by the Red Cross of Northeastern New York at a special Hometown Heroes Awards Breakfast co-sponsored by a radio and television station. Strategically buried under yards of concrete and steel on the state Office Building Campus, SEMO coordinates the response of 22 state agencies to make sure the most appropriate resources are dispatched to the disaster. Since 1995, SEMO workers have shepherded New York state through 15 federally declared disasters or emergencies. But their feverish work that started at 9 a.m. Sept. 11, 2001, was unparalleled. They were 150 miles from ground zero at the World Trade Center site but it was the nerve center of the state's response.

### CSEA President Donohue to visit Capital Region

CSEA statewide President Danny Donohue will be available for one-on-one visits in the Capital Region offices on June 12 between 1 and 7 p.m. The office is at 1 Lear Jet Lane in Latham. Please call the region office at (518)785-4400 or 1-800-874-7344 for an appointment and directions.

### Vietnam vets: The time is now for hepatitis C and diabetes screening

CSEA members who are Vietnam veterans or Vietnam-era veterans are urged to contact a local Veterans Affairs Hospital about getting tested for hepatitis C and diabetes. Nationally, approximately 10 percent of people tested have been positive. Recently, out of 297 veterans tested at the VA Hospital in Albany, 27 were positive.

## Every vote counts — get registered

Exercising our right to vote is always important, and this year it becomes even more meaningful.

This year there will be elections for governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, comptroller and mid-term elections for Congress.

On Nov. 5, Election Day, we must deliver the vote. So it's important to make sure every CSEA member registers and votes. This year we are calling our voter registration campaign "Every Vote Counts."

History confirms that every vote does count.

Did you know that:

CSEA member and officer Kevin Hinchey won his Ulster County Legislature seat by only 13 votes.

Former CSEA member Sue Ronga lost her Ulster County Legislature seat by three votes.

CSEA endorsed candidate for Town of Rotterdam supervisor, John Paulino, won by two votes.

Oswego County Legislator and CSEA-endorsed candidate Floyd Boynton won re-election by four votes.

CSEA endorsed candidate for Niagara County Legislature, Bill Davignon, won by one vote.

In the last several years, a handful of votes have decided elections in school districts and all levels of government right up to the highest offices of the United States.

Each CSEA region is conducting voter registration drives. Your Local or Unit can participate in this all-important effort by contacting your region office.

If you have any questions or need additional materials, contact the political action coordinator in your region office.

Our goal is to have 100 percent of our members registered to vote. Make it happen in 2002.

## AFL-CIO's Trumka visits CSEA's Central region

UTICA — Labor activists from around Central New York gathered recently to get a chance to rub shoulders with one of the nation's most influential labor leaders, Richard L. Trumka.

Trumka, secretary-treasurer of the national AFL-CIO, was welcomed by CSEA Central Region President Jim Moore, who also serves as president of the AFL-CIO's Central New York Labor Council.

Trumka joined the Labor Council for the 14th annual observance of Workers Memorial Day and was the guest of honor at a fund-raising dinner and roast.



**CSEA Central Region President Jim Moore, who also serves as president of the Central New York Labor Council, left, talks with AFL-CIO Secretary Treasurer Richard Trumka.**

# Victory in Ellenville

ELLENVILLE — Workers at Ellenville Regional Hospital are celebrating a victory that takes them one step closer to becoming CSEA members.

Hospital administrators just days after a new CEO, Michael Mazzarella, stepped into place, have agreed to conduct a “card check” to recognize the union. The “card check” is expected to confirm that an overwhelming majority of employees, at the rural Ulster County facility, signed petitions stating they are a union.

The decision by Mazzarella is a major win for the workers. It also shows the hospital’s commitment to not only their workers, but to preserving and improving health care in the Ellenville Community.

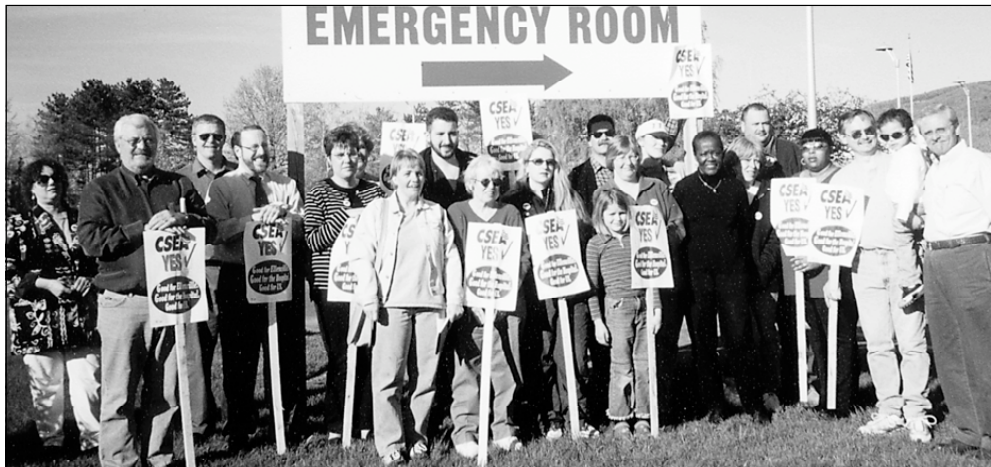
CSEA President Danny Donohue, in response, added: “There are twin goals for the union. Helping the workers win respect, and joining with the community to secure the hospital’s future.”

About 150 nursing, technical,

dietary, maintenance and clerical workers have been working with CSEA over recent months to organize into a union. The employees had approached CSEA in response to ongoing financial difficulties at the hospital, and a recent takeover of Ellenville by Westchester Medical Center, based in Valhalla.

“We look forward to working with the workers toward their goals of fair wages, a secure future for the hospital, good working conditions and a voice at the workplace,” Southern Region President Carmine DiBattista said, adding that he lauded the workers at the hospital for standing up for themselves during the organizing fight.

Hospital management, under new CEO Mazzarella, agreed to recognize CSEA just weeks after then-CEO Anne Flanagan made several alarming moves toward shutting down the hospital.



CSEA union organizers and Southern Region officers join healthcare workers from Ellenville Hospital, where the workers stood up to form a union.

CSEA responded to these actions with vigorous mobilization that included a media campaign highlighting the risks of closing the hospital to the community’s access to health care, hospital workers distributing a petition around their communities



Hinchey

and meetings and conversations with Rep. Maurice Hinchey and other area political leaders.

But for hospital employees who have worked hard toward getting themselves recognized as CSEA, the union means something else.

“We are forming a union to provide the best care possible to our patients,” Kathy Quinn, a registered nurse, said. “We know and understand the financial crisis the hospital is in, but we want stability more than anything else.”

— Janice Marra

# 25/55 bill passes

ALBANY — State legislators have reached agreement on early retirement incentives, including the 25/55 proposal sought by CSEA.

The action was part of Gov. George Pataki’s \$89.6 billion state budget package, which also includes increased spending for education.

There are two separate provisions for retirement under the legislation — Pataki’s targeted Early Retirement Incentive (ERI) and a provision of retirement at age 55 with 25 years of service with no penalties.

“This is a great benefit for CSEA members and will be a big help for the state, localities and schools as they deal with their budget pressures,” said CSEA President Danny Donohue, lauding the Assembly and Senate for standing up for union workers by strongly supporting the legislation.

“We fought hard for this legislation and now we have set a precedent,” Donohue said.

The 25/55 legislation allows workers to decide to retire under specific provisions within certain time limits. Unlike the early retirement incentive, 25/55 is not an option for employers but is strictly up to the employees to decide.

However, where an employer deems a position to be critical for the “maintenance of public health and safety,” the employee can be denied the benefits of 25/55. In this instance, the employee can challenge the determination of an employer in an Article 78 proceeding in court.

The governor’s Early Retirement Incentive is a targeted early retirement that is largely the same as all previous targeted retirements. An employee receives one month credit for each year of service up to a maximum of three years additional credit if targeted. This incentive also carries all of the penalties in previous bills.

CSEA was able to get language removed from the governor’s incentive that eliminates state positions if those positions are targeted by the ERI.

“There will be no more elimination of positions on the state side for this targeted retirement. In addition, the local governments will have the ability to refill positions and they will no longer be required to show a 50 percent savings over two years to do so,” Donohue said.

For educational employees, the open period to decide to retire under 25/55 will begin on June 3 and will run for 90 days. An employee must file at least 14 days prior to the retirement.

For all other local government workers, the open period for a worker to decide to retire under 25/55 will begin on July 3 and run for 90 days.

For state workers, Office of Court Administration workers and SUNY workers, a date will be announced to commence the time period by the state director of operations. If the director does not announce a commencement date, it will automatically go into effect Jan. 1, 2003, and



CSEA President Danny Donohue and AFSCME President Gerald McEntee confer with state Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno, above, and Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, below.



remain open for 90 days.

If a worker is targeted by the employer under the governor’s Early Retirement Incentive (ERI) and also qualifies for the 25/55, the employee will be able to choose which benefit is better for them.

More information on these incentives and other breaking state budget news will be available on CSEA’s website at [www.csealocal1000.net](http://www.csealocal1000.net).

# THE WORK FORCE

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## IN TOUCH WITH THE WORK FORCE

CSEA President Danny Donohue



### Getting Fleeced is Not What the Doctor Ordered

The rising cost of prescription drugs is one of most pressing issues facing CSEA members.

It is a complicated problem and there are no simple answers. But it is clearly time for both the state and the federal government to take some action for change.

For most CSEA members, prescription drug coverage has long been a benefit that demonstrates the value of union membership. In fact, 70 million Americans currently do not have any prescription drug coverage at all.

Still, coverage is not an issue that CSEA members can take for granted. The spiraling costs of prescription drugs directly affect the cost of the insurance premiums and have increasingly become the most contentious issue in contract negotiations in recent years. It means we all have to fight hard to hold onto the benefits we've come to expect.

But what's most infuriating about the squeeze is the fact that we're all paying the bill while the pharmaceutical industry is the most profitable industry in the world, earning \$125 billion a year, far surpassing the average profit margins of other industries.

In Canada and other parts of the world prescription drug profits are regulated to ensure fairness in pricing. President Bush opposes federal regulation of prescription drug profit margins, even though there is increasing evidence that American consumers are getting fleeced.

Surprisingly, the president's own brother, Florida Gov. Jeb Bush and the conservative governor of Michigan, John Engler have both recently signed state regulations targeted at keeping prescription drug costs reasonable. Similar state legislation has taken effect in Maine.

CSEA believes that in the absence of federal action, New York state needs to act on its own. One estimate projects a \$1.6 billion annual savings in Medicaid costs alone in New York through regulation. It is irresponsible not to consider that savings, especially when actions could help New Yorkers in so many different ways.

The drug companies will fight tooth and nail to protect their excessive profits. CSEA members have to be ready to mix it up and say bring it on!

# CSEA: *NY Times*' group homes exposé no surprise

NEW YORK — A recent exposé in the *New York Times* on the deplorable treatment of deinstitutionalized individuals with mental illness sparked a storm of controversy and debate but came as no surprise to CSEA.

"For years we have called the state's policy on treating people with mental illness the shame of all New York, but the state has turned its back on the problem," said CSEA President Danny Donohue, who began his career in public service working at the former Central Islip Psychiatric Center.

"CSEA has repeatedly stated that simply pushing patients out of psychiatric centers without ensuring a comprehensive and coordinated system of community care is a continuing recipe for tragedy," the CSEA leader noted.

The *Times* series, "Where Hope Dies" focused on the neglect and deficiencies in adult homes where many individuals with mental illness end up. The series detailed the poor staffing, inadequate training, lack of programs and general disrepair of the facilities.

The series also took issue with the state Health Department's inadequate oversight of these facilities and the spotty record of inspections. A defensive Gov. George Pataki and Health Commissioner Antonia Novello promised improvements in the wake of the *Times* publication.

Donohue is scheduled to present testimony including CSEA's proposals for how to achieve a better system of care

before the Assembly Mental Health, Health and Aging Committees in early June.

CSEA's call for a comprehensive system of institutional settings, transitional housing and programs and a range of community residences and treatment was echoed by numerous advocacy groups including the Mental Health Association in New York State in response to the *Times*' series.

"Action is long overdue," said CSEA Metropolitan Region President George Boncoraglio.

"CSEA members want to provide the best care they can to clients but they don't have the help and resources to do it because the state has repeatedly walked away from its responsibilities.

"We can only hope that this new debate will wake people up," he said.

"We have seen the client population slowly get reduced as people go out the back door and new folks don't get in the front door," said South Beach Psychiatric Center Local President Joel Schwartz.

"The whole idea for the adult homes in the beginning was a good idea because it was seen as a way to get people into the



**CSEA members work with mentally ill individuals were not surprised by the *New York Times* recent series about the state's mental health policies, having seen firsthand a decline in the state's mental health policies for a generation.**

community, but as we can see, these for-profit homes have very little oversight from the state. The corruption is totally understandable but disgusting," Schwartz said.

## A letter to the Editor

Following publication of the *New York Times* series "Where Hope Dies," CSEA President Danny Donohue sent a letter to the editor of the *New York Times*. Portions of that letter are excerpted here:

*For decades CSEA has voiced both strong concerns and disagreement with the policies under which the Office of Mental Health has operated. We never were convinced that "treatment in the least restrictive environment" was ever meant to be the streets and alleys of large cities or in the "new" back wards — the adult homes.*

*We have always believed that when restrictive psychiatric hospital admission policies are combined with unrealistic utilization review expectations, the mentally ill are caught in a "squeeze play." They cannot always get the long-term inpatient care*

*they need nor can they stay long enough in the limited number of supervised living situations that exist in the system.*

*The result — they are ultimately pushed into homelessness or the adult homes your article described so graphically.*

*Simply put, the state should return to the business of directly caring for its disabled citizens. With proper supervision and adequate funding the future of discharged patients could be made brighter. Changing state policy regarding long-term care in psychiatric centers will probably never emerge from your exposé.*

*However, long-term care provided on state campuses is realistic and may prove to be far more effective and caring than simply providing oversight from afar.*

**CSEA**  
**Voices**



*"It's a rewarding profession — to see that you've helped the residents and made their lives easier, and seeing their appreciation for the assistance. I think getting the patients to enjoy life and smile everyday is the biggest goal and challenge. This is their last home and ensuring their quality of life is the biggest challenge."*

**— Sandra Davis, a supervising licensed practical nurse at the state Veterans Home in Oxford, passing out medications to resident Gus Friedel. She has worked at the home for 22 years.**

# Hepatitis C threatens behind bars

CSEA members working in correctional facilities and who find themselves in contact with a criminal population continue to face risks of contracting HIV (human immuno deficiency virus) as well as a more treacherous threat — hepatitis C.

Hepatitis C virus (HCV) occurs 10 times more often in the prison population than HIV, according to recent national studies.

Despite that 10:1 ratio, programs to manage and control HCV in corrections settings continue to be mired in confusion and conflict, while HIV testing for corrections workers has become routine, according to medical studies performed by the medical schools at Harvard and Brown universities.

Hepatitis C can go unnoticed unless detected by tests, thus quietly damaging a person's liver to the point where a transplant is necessary.

Most of the debate over treatment and precaution centers on what is the "best time" to treat for HCV exposure, and whether testing and treatment should be

paid for out of corrections funding or if it is a public health expense.

"While the debate about HCV treatment in corrections continues, significant advances in the treatment of HCV have occurred, and a number of correctional systems are taking advantage of this opportunity to intervene," according to HEPP news, a public health publication.

But full-scale treatment programs have yet to be fully implemented, and education, testing and prevention are still the best ways to avoid contracting hepatitis C, said CSEA Occupational Safety and Health Acting Director Janet Foley.

"Part of the problem is that our members are dealing with a transient population," Foley said.

The first interaction many offenders have with any type of health service occurs only after they have entered a correctional system.

Without healthcare and with many types of at-risk behaviors, many offenders often go without



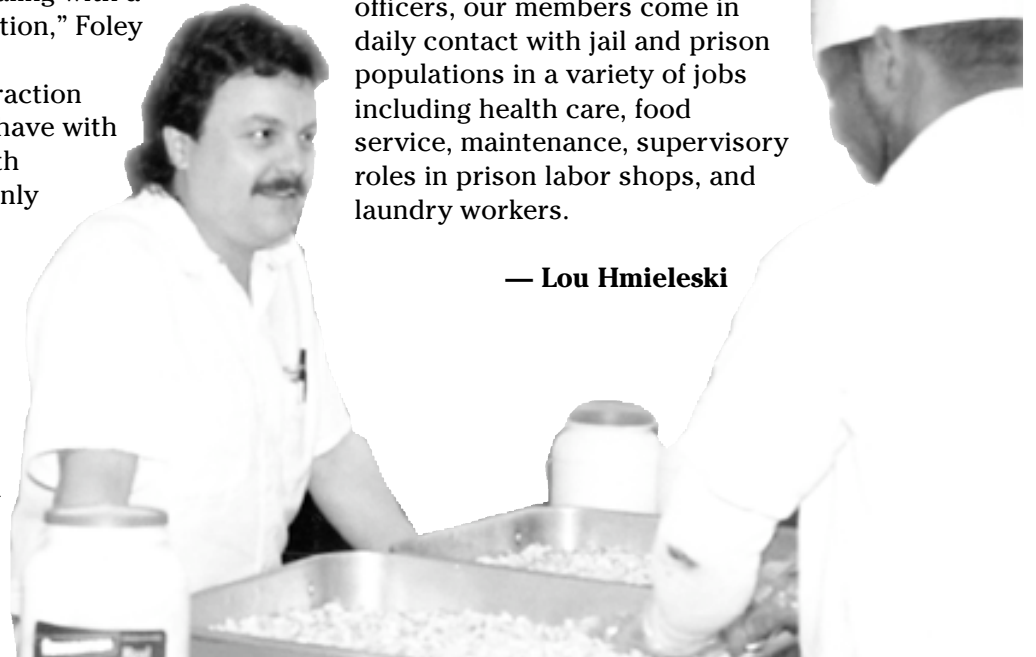
**Without health care and with many types of at-risk behaviors, many offenders often go without proper treatment ...**



proper treatment, spreading HCV within the walls of a correctional facility or jail and then taking it with them into the community when they leave, Foley said.

While CSEA does not represent a large population of corrections officers, our members come in daily contact with jail and prison populations in a variety of jobs including health care, food service, maintenance, supervisory roles in prison labor shops, and laundry workers.

— Lou Hmielecki

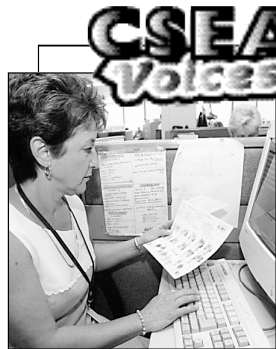


## Guidelines pending

The Centers for Disease Control's HIV and HCV guidelines do not specifically address the management of the two viral infections in correctional settings. Due to the high rate of viral hepatitis among incarcerated populations, the CDC is planning to issue corrections-specific HCV management guidelines in late summer or early fall 2002.

## WORK FORCE FACTS

- An estimated 2.9 to 5.8 million people in the United States has been exposed to HCV.
- The behavior that puts people most at risk for exposure to HCV is intravenous drug use.



## CSEA VOICES

"The union has always been there to back us up on the job, especially with the recent two-grade upgrade our fingerprint examiners received. CSEA has been behind us on those upgrades from the start."

— Jeanie Scott, a fingerprint examiner, state Division of Criminal Justice Services, Albany, since 1967

[www.csealocal1000.net](http://www.csealocal1000.net)  
CSEA has occupational safety and health materials dealing with transmittable diseases available for download from the OSH web pages.

# Staffing woes, caseloads dilute Albany County DSS

ALBANY — County understaffing is being blamed in the recent discovery of three young children left alone by their mother in a vermin-infested apartment without food or heat.

County Comptroller Michael Connors said vacancies in the Albany County Department of Social Services, and the heavy workloads that result from those vacancies, “are directly responsible for situations like this.”

Local CSEA leaders agree and say the county’s failure to fill vacancies in a timely manner is affecting services and workers who are trying provide those services with less help.

CSEA Albany County DSS Unit President David Kircher said his agency, which is responsible for Adult and Child Protective Services as well as entitlement programs like Medicaid and food stamps, averages 30 to 50 vacancies per year that go unfilled.

“The impact is that you have staff unable to provide all the services that our clients need,” Kircher said. “People have to prioritize and do things on more of a Band-Aid or emergency basis because you’re short staffed.”

## Bigger workloads hurt quality

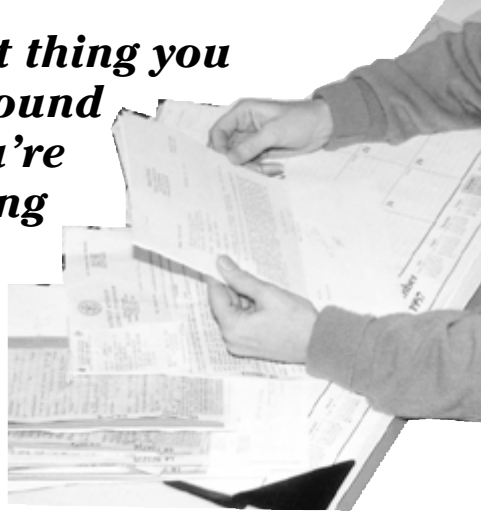
“As workloads get bigger you can’t attend to them as well,” said 29-year employee Wayne Rodier, a senior caseworker who provides home care for sick, blind and disabled individuals.

“It’s one thing to manage 60, 70, even 80 cases,” Rodier said, “but next thing you turn around and you’re managing 125 cases. There’s no way you can provide quality services with that many more cases in the same amount of time.”

“With the increased caseloads comes increased paperwork,” Rodier said. “The people become almost secondary to the paper. The paper is the thing they’re pushing. They want to see it and they want to see it quickly. It’s almost as if they’re an incidental to the job.”

CSEA Albany County Mental Health Department Unit President Scott Allison said his agency, which treats some of the county’s most severely and persistently mentally ill residents as well as people with mental

**‘It’s one thing to manage 60, 70, even 80 cases, but next thing you turn around and you’re managing 125 cases.’**



retardation and substance abuse problems, is currently down 13 people.

“When you’re stretched thinner something’s got to give,” said Allison. “Having a month wait when someone goes in and applies for social services to get a substance abuse assessment, I mean, that’s not acceptable. That’s not an acceptable level of service.”

“Delay time is really a crucial issue for someone who’s acknowledged they have a problem and is ready to go into treatment,” added Kircher. “Sometimes if you don’t grab them in time you can lose them.”

## System delays filling vacancies

Both union leaders blamed county bureaucracy for the delay in filling vacancies.

Since 1994, they said, a county justification committee must review all vacancies before they can be filled. Agency directors must complete lengthy justification forms, to fill all vacancies, even those that are generally known to be vitally needed.

After being sent to an agency commissioner for assessment and the budget director for review, paperwork often comes back for additional clarification and the process begins all over again.



Once vacancies finally get approval to be filled there are additional delays. Some vacancies have gone unfilled up to half a year after being approved said union leaders who questioned whether the county may be using the process to save money without actually cutting positions and laying off people.

“Should you be making these kinds of decisions based purely on economics?” asked Allison. “These are services people need which we have an obligation to provide.”

Trying to meet that obligation with fewer and fewer staff is taking its toll on CSEA members left to provide services.

“Our members are feeling a great burden because they try and do what needs to be done,” Kircher said. “And when they do that they’re taking on greater responsibility, more burden and it’s constant, there’s no release valve.”

“We’ve had a lot of turnover and a series of people going out on leaves, which further exacerbates the problem, because everyone’s trying to cover for those people,” said Allison. “It’s sort of a steamroller and it does eventually get out of control.”

— Ed Molitor

“Trying to find the appropriate placement for the children who are getting placed in care, that’s the big frustration with my job. The biggest reward of my job is when our agency is able to successfully reunite a family. It makes it worthwhile and it makes me and my staff feel good — we make a difference.”

— Diana Fegley, a six-year foster care supervisor for the Seneca County Department of Social Services



# Bethpage workers on par with pros

FARMINGDALE — The Bethpage Black golf course has been labeled by some pro golfers as the gold standard of municipal courses.

That being the case, then CSEA workers maintaining the emerald greens and tricky bunkers are part of the mint that stamped out the challenging public treasure, which will test the mettle of the U.S. Golf Association's best players this month.

When the U.S. Open tees off June 13, Bethpage Black will join the elite list of golf courses that have hosted golf's premier challenge.

For the first time in its 102-year history, the Open will be played at a municipal, daily-fee public course, the Black Course at Bethpage.

"It's numbing for all of us here that the Bethpage Black to be included in the same prestigious list as Far Hills, Baltusrol, Pinehurst, Winged Foot, and Pebble Beach," said Bill Gundel, CSEA motor equipment supervisor, as he ticked off a list of past Open courses.

Bethpage Black needed a facelift to comply with U.S.

## Filling the foursome

Along with Bethpage groundskeepers, police civilian units and ambulance medical technicians from the CSEA Nassau County Local will be working the U.S. Open. Also on the card, Town of Oyster Bay sanitation workers will make midnight garbage pickups due to road closures during the day that will keep the trucks off their normal daytime routes.



Open regulations. Course designer Rees Jones carefully supervised the work.

"Bethpage was really a restoration and a modernization at the same time," Jones said. "The CSEA workers really pulled through and contributed long hours."

Union members put in overtime daily, often beginning their days at 5 a.m.

"The members are preparing the final touches as we speak," said Local President Paul D'Aleo.

"We are thankful for the U.S. Open Championship Committee, in selecting Bethpage Black, but we give a bigger and louder 'thank you' to CSEA for their years of hard work on behalf of our members. From contract negotiations to ensuring the safety of our park workers, CSEA is there."

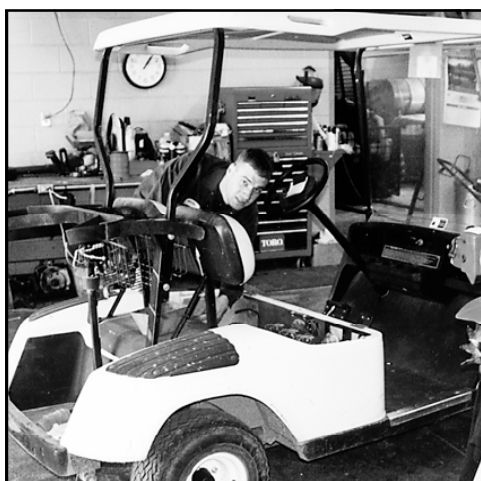
"This is pretty exciting for Local members and CSEA members regionwide," said CSEA Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte.

"On the third week of June and beyond, golf enthusiasts from all over the world will witness the fruits of CSEA labor in Long Island. The Bethpage U.S. Open is not only wonderful for New York, it is a milestone for public employees that will open up public courses across America to be host contenders for future U.S. Open championships."

— Rolando Infante



Above, parks worker Ryan Daly clears the brush at Bethpage Black in preparation for the 2002 U.S. Open.



Left, Kevin Moore, mechanic assistant, tunes up a golf cart.



**CSEA VOICES**

"Having a great union, like CSEA, allows me to perform my duties without having to constantly be looking over my shoulder."

— Alfredo Madden, custodian Nassau Coliseum Local

## WORK FORCE FACTS

- 🌳 The Bethpage Black was built by over 1,800 workers employed under, the Depression-era, Works Relief Project Act.
- 🌳 From 1934-1935, the Green, Blue, Red and Black courses were constructed, as well as the clubhouse. A fifth course, the Yellow course, was opened for play in 1958.
- 🌳 The 2002 Bethpage Open will be the longest course (7,214 yards) in US Open history.
- 🌳 It will be the first U.S. Open to feature a two-tee start.





# North Tonawanda activism drives budget



North Tonawanda Schools Transportation Unit President JoAnn Klemann at a board informational picket.

NORTH TONAWANDA — Faced with the possibility that their bus driver and bus aide jobs would not be in the school budget with a private contractor taking over, North Tonawanda Schools Unit members went into activist mode.

“Today, there’s less tension among our members, because the board voted for a budget that leaves our jobs intact,” said JoAnn Klemann, Unit president. “Our members really pitched in to deal with the threat, and I’m sure we’re a much tighter Unit, because everyone had a part in the final outcome.”

Besides eliminating district-hired drivers and aides, the district also considered a proposal that included leasing the district’s bus garage to a private contractor. The district currently contracts out about 70 percent of its transportation.

But Unit members rolled up their sleeves and went to work to educate the public, remind it of their dedication and gain its support. Members garnered 700 petition signatures, passed out fliers, placed newspaper ads, attended and picketed board meetings, and were joined by supportive parents in speaking out and speaking up for district hired drivers.

“We also checked out the figures that our

*“We are neighbors and relatives of the children we serve. If the district had contracted our jobs, they would have severed those relationships. The end result is another CSEA union victory.”*



opponents used in pushing for removal of district hired transportation,” said LRS Dom Luna. “And we questioned those figures against our own. Theirs (those pushing for total privatization) didn’t add up. By our figures, we showed our members’ jobs are more cost-effective, by far, than the private contractor’s.”

“I’m sure our dedication and humanitarian message played a large role in our success,” said Klemann.

“Our bus drivers have years of experience. We have a one-on-one relationship with the parents and students we transport. We see them before each school day, and are the last school district employee to see them on their way home. We know our community. North Tonawanda district employees and their families live in this district, and feel responsible for the quality of our work. We are neighbors and relatives of the children we serve. If the district had contracted our jobs, they would have severed those relationships. The end result is another CSEA union victory.”

— Ron Wofford

## CSEA hammers carpenter promotion at SUNY Fredonia

FREDONIA — John Latshaw is happy in the new job he started recently, as a supervising carpenter, thanks to CSEA assistance in gaining an arbitrator’s decision ordering his placement in his new position.

Latshaw, a former 17-year state plumber-steamfitter, the last 10

years at SUNY Fredonia, was found to be the most senior and most qualified applicant for a supervising carpenter position that was awarded to a less senior applicant.

“CSEA really went to bat for me, and I’m really grateful,” said Latshaw. “I wouldn’t be in this new job without the union. They went the extra mile to prove the case.”

CSEA action began when Latshaw and co-worker Ray Bogue, both senior to the original appointee, filed grievances on violation of the state/CSEA contract article 45.1, which requires seniority rules when all other factors are equal in job promotions.

Both Latshaw and Bogue were more senior than the appointed applicant, and CSEA represented them in an earlier arbitration proceeding that found them both qualified for the supervising carpenter job, and in the final proceeding that addressed the college’s operating needs.

“What’s fair is fair,” said Wayne Dorler, Local president. “We took action to make sure our contract is upheld. If management adheres to the contract, we won’t have situations like this in the future.”

The decision also calls for Latshaw to receive nearly three years of back pay for the difference between his new and previous job.

— Ron Wofford



Formerly a plumber-steamfitter, John Latshaw is now a supervising carpenter, thanks to a CSEA-won arbitration.

**CSEA VOICES**

*“I love working with the kids. They make my job worth all the work that I do.”*

—Mary Vickery, library aide, Mahopac School District, Putnam County



# State workshop eyes contract talks

**G**earing up for what may well be the toughest state contract negotiations in CSEA's history, more than 500 CSEA activists recently convened in Saratoga Springs to take part in intensive workshops and plenary sessions jam-packed with information intended to educate and mobilize the union membership.

"I think it's going to be very helpful to make them move to the next step and really talk about mobilization," said Ross Hanna, CSEA director of Contract Administration.

"People are going to be energized after this meeting and will be able to get people active and moving."

Members also heard speakers address the current state budget, trends in health insurance and the use of political action to mobilize membership.

A special and moving Workers Memorial Day program was also held in honor of CSEA brothers and sisters lost during the past year. (See complete coverage on Page 15).

On the first evening of the state workshop, CSEA President Danny Donohue discussed past contract fights and victories and introduced staff and members of the negotiating team from each of the regions.

"We know that the state is in dire financial shape, we know that there isn't a lot of money," said Donohue. "Does that mean we give up? No."

"We intend to make sure that we fight to maintain our benefits and make them better," said Donohue. While stressing the necessity to make members aware of the



**CSEA members plot strategies for upcoming state contract negotiations.**

bare-bones state budget realities, Donohue also emphasized the importance of being treated fairly.

Frank Mauro, of the Fiscal Policy Institute, enumerated the implications of the state budget for members, and the effect of the governor's use this year of reserves to close the budget gap will have in coming years.

### Getting politically active

While CSEA's membership is one that is varied and diverse, "one way CSEA builds power is by sticking together and speaking with one voice," said CSEA Political Action Director Francine Turner.

CSEA has much to offer candidates running for statewide or local office, but with only 68% of the membership registered to vote, CSEA's power is diminished, Turner noted.

"We have to show that CSEA can deliver if we want them to deliver for us," said Turner. "We have to register to vote and get out to vote."

Activists spent a good part of the conference engaged in one of six workshops organized by type of workplace or geographic location. Using case studies related to each

of these areas, activists working in groups explored issues in communicating with members and developing networks to get and receive information to and from every member.

"I think we have a lot of work to do," said Mary D'Antonio, president of the SUNY Old Westbury Local, who attended the workshop for SUNY campuses. "I have to go back to my local and get my shop stewards involved and my executive board involved."

### Getting out the word

Members also worked throughout the weekend on improving a survey that will be mailed out to members and will be crucial when the negotiating teams develop strategies and priorities.

"I think we are going to get a better response than we usually get," said Hanna while pleading with members to return their surveys. The survey is one of the best methods to gauge member needs.

Yolanda Medrano, a shop steward at SUNY New Paltz, said the union needs to explore ways to communicate with workers whose first language is not English.

"I can relay to them the information that I gathered here, but we need to be more able to communicate to all of our members who may speak another language," Medrano said.

As a first time participant to the state workshop, the message Metro Region member Godfrey Davis obtained was all too clear.

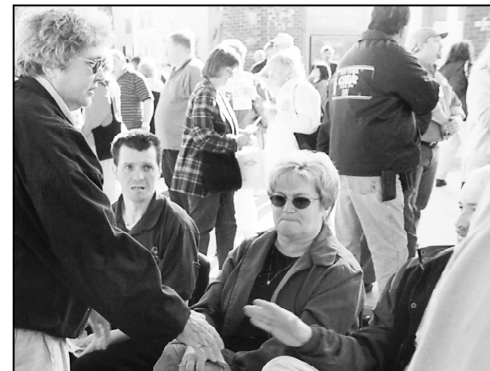
"We all need to get out there and be serious about this contract," said Davis. "Everybody always wants more money but do you want to work to get it?"

— David Galarza

**The Thomas H. McDonough Memorial State Workshop, CSEA's annual state division workshop, is named in memory of Thomas H. McDonough, a longtime statewide leader of the union who passed away in 1983. McDonough, an employee of the State Department of Motor Vehicles in Albany, held numerous CSEA positions throughout his decades of service. He was the union's Executive Vice President at the time of his death.**



**CSEA President Danny Donohue and Executive Vice President Mary Sullivan greet relatives of Melinda Drum, a CSEA member who died last year. More coverage of CSEA's Worker Memorial Day ceremonies is on Page 15.**



**See Page 15 for more Workers Memorial Day coverage**

## Mission Achievement Award winner Calhoun accepts sacrifice

Bob Calhoun gets choked up when he thinks about all the time he spends away from his family attending to union business and meetings.

But he feels he has no choice. In fact, he's doing it for them, too.

"Everybody should have their fair share," said Calhoun, a pay phone inspector for the Department of Public Service in the Capital Region, and a longtime activist. "That's what the union believes in and that's what I believe in. You can't do it by sitting on your butt."

His dedication and commitment to the union movement was recognized during the Thomas H. McDonough Memorial State Workshop. While his wife, Tina, and his sons Robbie, 8, and Nicholas, 5, proudly looked on, CSEA President Danny Donohue presented Calhoun with the CSEA Mission Achievement Award.

"Bob, you typify what we believe is the best quality of our organization," said Donohue. "The dedication to the members. The understanding that this is selfless work. That when a member needs a hand they don't have to reach any further than Bob Calhoun."

A member of CSEA for 21 years, Calhoun is presently Local president at the Department of Public Service and has been a statewide board representative for 17 years. Among the many committees he's involved with are: chair of the regional Activist Committee and also the statewide Standing Legal, Budget, Personnel, and Budget Committees.

Calhoun credits his uncle Henry Junco, who owned the Golden Fox and Stone Ends restaurants, for instilling in him many of the values that he now holds dear.

As a young man Calhoun would clean pots and pans, sweep floors and anything else that needed to be done. All the while he was learning every facet of the restaurant business and the value of hard, honest work.

"He taught me what is fair for one is fair for others," said Calhoun. One of the major issues he has taken up as an activist has been welfare reform.

When the state began using welfare recipients to do jobs ordinarily covered by union workers, Calhoun went straight to work, educating members, talking to legislators and attending meetings.

"We were looking for the dignity of these workers," said Calhoun. "But we also want to make sure that union jobs are not eliminated."

A past recipient of the Capitol Region President's Award, Calhoun said he admires strong leadership.

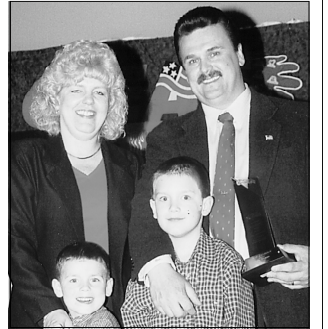
During those rare free moments, Calhoun can be found enjoying the company of his family. He also likes skiing, gardening and working around the new house he had built about seven years ago.

"I have a motorcycle that I don't ride as I much as I used to," said Calhoun.

In contemplating the next round of state contract negotiations, he urged members to get involved in some way despite busy work and family lives.

"The lesser your involvement and the less that you care then the less they are going to do for you," said Calhoun.

— David Galarza



**CSEA state Mission Achievement Award winner Bob Calhoun with his wife, Tina, and sons Robbie, 8, and Nicholas, 5.**

## Health checks set for workers assigned to WTC projects

In response to the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, many state workers were assigned to assist in rescue, recovery and direct support roles at the World Trade Center disaster.

The state has implemented a medical monitoring program for all state workers assigned by their agencies to respond.

This program is only for workers who were assigned to respond to the disaster — not for anyone who volunteered to help with the recovery.

The Governor's Office of Employee Relations (GOER) has sent a letter to all workers who were assigned by their agencies, informing them of their optional participation in the medical monitoring program and a request for participation form.

The medical monitoring program includes only state workers assigned by their agency to respond to the World Trade Center site from Sept. 11 to Dec. 23, 2001, including the secure/exclusion zone, waste stream corridor and the Fresh Kills Landfill.

State workers who volunteered or responded in a role outside state service are not included in this program.

The program consists of two parts: a medical monitoring and health/exposure questionnaire and a future search, surveillance study.

Participation is up to the worker, and workers can choose to participate in both parts or one.

The medical monitoring piece includes a physical exam, pulmonary function test, blood and urine analysis and a physician diagnosis.

All examination and test results are confidential. Medical exams will be conducted on state time and at no cost to the worker. The state cannot use the urine and blood samples for drug and alcohol screening, or anything other than to test for compounds the workers may have been exposed to at the recovery sites.

The deadline for participation was April 20, however, it has been extended.

In all, 412 CSEA members were on the list GOER provided from various agencies that were assigned to the WTC details, the most coming from the Department of Transportation (260).

CSEA will be sending out a follow-up letter to all members identified by GOER as state responders to encourage participation in the program.

CSEA's Occupational Safety and Health Department will continue to work with GOER throughout the process of the program. CSEA's OSH Project Developer, Matt Kozak, is the staff contact person for the project and can be reached at (800) 342-4146, ext. 1465 or at [kozak@cseainc.org](mailto:kozak@cseainc.org).



## Village stonewalls safety inspection

CORNWALL-ON-HUDSON — Village officials are trying to bar CSEA from inspecting village facilities to ensure the health and safety of workers there.

And the union is fighting back.

In late February, CSEA Labor Relations Specialist Glenn Blackman and CSEA Occupational Safety & Health Specialist Gary China had informed village officials in writing that the union was planning to inspect the village's sanitation and highway garages. Union staff had requested to inspect the garages to ensure the buildings were hazard-free.

Village officials responded to the union by noting that CSEA was "without authority" to inspect the two buildings for violations, pending receiving by the

union legal basis for the inspections. The village had also denied CSEA information relevant to the facilities' health and safety.

"Most employers have a reasonable approach and don't object to ensuring the health and safety of their employees,"

Blackman said. "We're just looking to review the garages and make sure that there's no safety violations."

Blackman added that the alternative to CSEA inspecting the garages is for the union to file a complaint with the state Department of Labor.

CSEA was planning to inspect the two garages as a follow-up to a November disciplinary case in which the village pressed civil service charges against two CSEA sanitation employees because the workers refused to remove rat feces from the facility.

Prior to the case, the village's sanitation garage was infested with rat feces, which can make people sick. The garage's proximity to the Hudson River makes rat infestation an ongoing problem.

When the employees refused to follow an order to remove the feces, they did so because the village lacked protective equipment for such tasks and one of the workers had become ill from previous exposure.

After a hearing before Village Board members, the two CSEA employees were found guilty of misconduct in relation to their refusal to remove the feces. However, the circumstances in the case led village officials to sentence the workers to 10 days without pay as opposed to the original recommendation of 20 days without pay.

CSEA Southern Region President Carmine DiBattista, a trained public health manager, said the village's denial of letting the union inspect the garages is more of a human issue than a legal issue.

"The village is not considering the human side of this issue," he said. "They are clearly not showing any concern or respect for their employees' health and safety."

— Janice Marra



## Westchester Local receives United Way award for giving

RYE BROOK — The United Way of Westchester and Putnam counties recently recognized the CSEA Westchester Local with the prestigious Spirit of Westchester and Putnam Labor Award for the Local's ongoing efforts in Westchester County communities.

Westchester Local President Gary Conley accepted the award on behalf of the Local at a recent Spirit of Caring Awards Luncheon. Prior to the event, Conley also appeared in a three-minute acceptance video that details United Way projects that the Local has been involved in over the past several years.



Conley

Westchester Local served as a sponsor for the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk, held at Manhattanville College in Purchase. Members of the Local also responded to relief efforts in the aftermath of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, through donations of food, clothing, supplies and blood.

"I'm honored to be accepting this award from the United Way," Conley said. "Our members live in the community and we are the community. We also want to give to our communities, which the United Way allows us to do."

Along with the Local's award, the Westchester County Unit, the City of

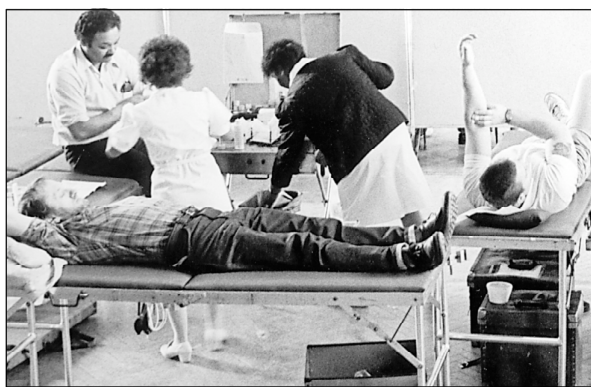


***“I'm honored to be accepting this award from the United Way. Our members live in the community and we are the community. We also want to give to our communities, which the United Way allows us to do.”***

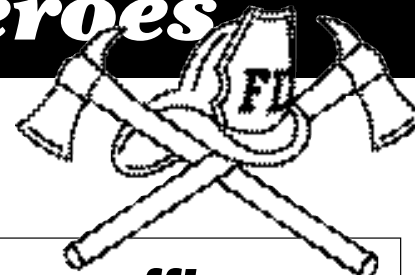
Mount Vernon Unit and the Yonkers Public Schools were recognized with Labor Partnership Awards for contributing dramatically to United Way campaigns on behalf of their overall organizations.

Several CSEA Westchester Units were also recognized with Achievement Awards by the United Way for their contributions: the City of Mount Vernon, City of New Rochelle, City School District of New Rochelle, City of White Plains, Harrison Central School District, Mount Vernon Central School District, Westchester County, Yonkers Public Schools and the CSEA State Employees Federated Appeal.

— Janice Marra



## Everyday Heroes



### West Seneca officer earns community accolade

TOWN of WEST SENECA — As the designated Citizen of the Year for the West Seneca Chamber of Commerce, CSEA Unit President John Gullo has added another accolade to an impressive list of accomplishments and public service.



"My parents had a lot to do with my community involvement and commitment to public service," said Gullo, who is a 15-year fire inspector and deputy disaster coordinator for the town.

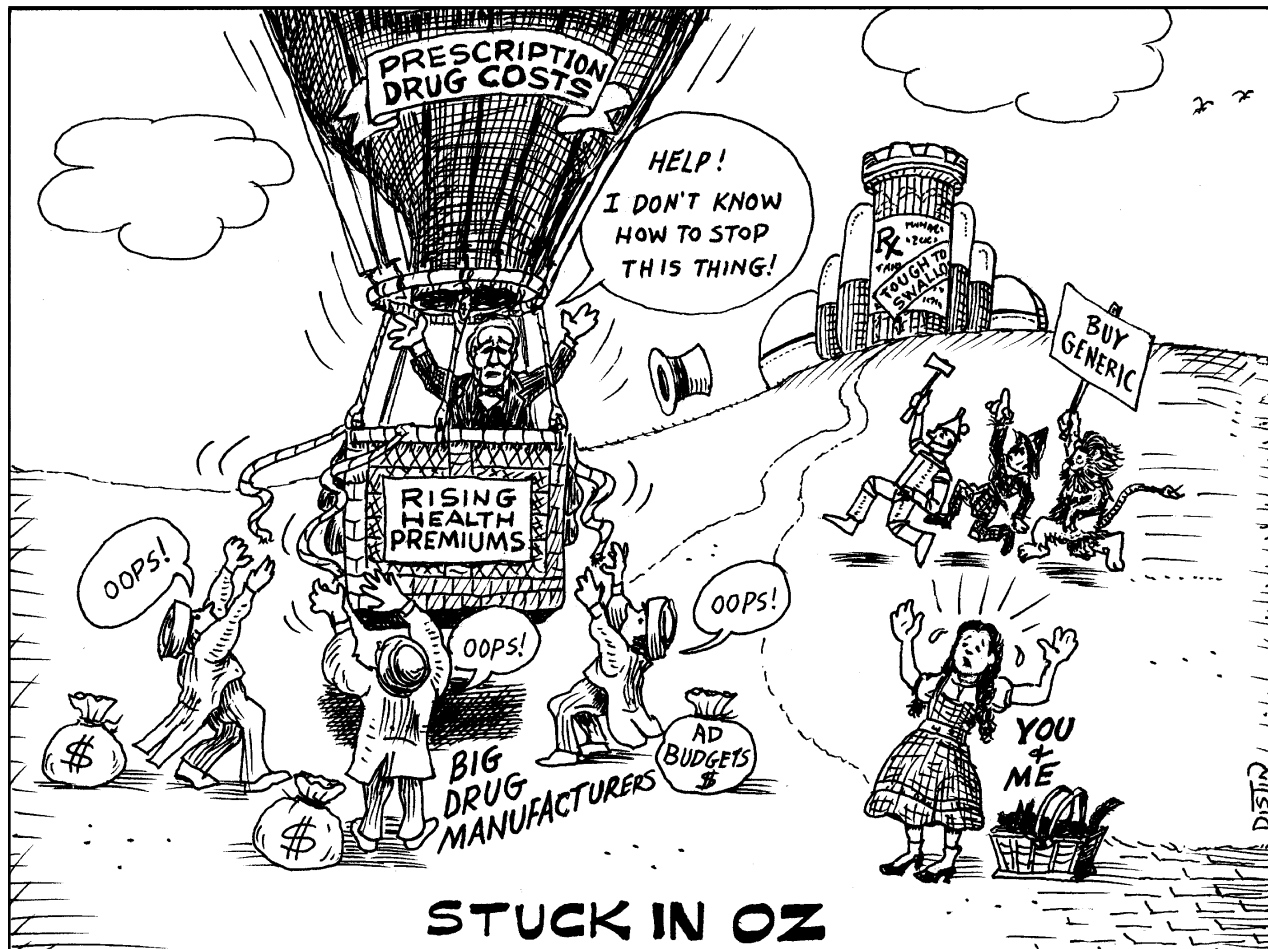
As a fire inspector, he inspects homes that have been burned, to insure they are safe for families to reoccupy. He has been a volunteer firefighter for the Vigilant Fire Company since 1984, with many citations for being a Top 10 responder. He has even served as the fire chief for a number of years and is currently the fire commissioner.

"As a fire inspector, you feel good when you can allow a family back into their home after a fire," said Gullo. "But you have to be sure it is structurally sound, no matter how anxious they are."

Gullo was also cited for his commitment to helping the youths of his community, which he attributes to his Boy Scout background that saw him achieve Eagle Scout status.

"I'm glad to say we have good labor-management relations here in the town," said Gullo. "That's very important to me also."

— Ron Wofford



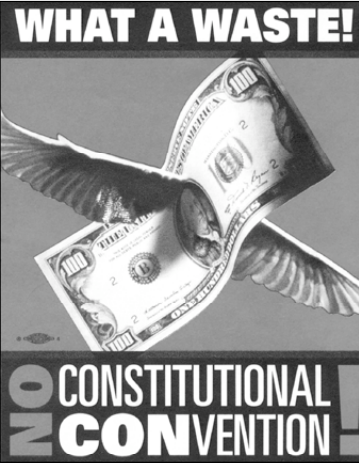
See President's column Page 4



1997

**Five years ago ...**

In 1997 CSEA scored one of the union's most impressive political action victories. CSEA played a leading role in a broad-based coalition that turned back a ballot proposal to hold a New York State Constitutional Convention.



CSEA along with the AFL-CIO and other groups, including the League of Women Voters, worked long and hard to convince New Yorkers that a Constitutional Convention would be too risky and cost too much. The coalition also argued that the convention could have threatened a variety of protections without any guarantees of improvements in state government operations.

A public education campaign began in early summer and was stepped up as election day approached leading to an unexpectedly decisive victory at the polls. "Our message was clear and strong and it made sense to voters," CSEA President Danny Donohue said.

**Also in 1997:**

- \* A federal jury in Denver finds Timothy McVeigh guilty on 11 counts of conspiracy and murder for his part in the destruction of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City.
- \* Thirty-nine members of the Heaven's Gate cult — including the cult's leader Marshall Herff Applewhite — found dead March 26 in a mansion in a suburb of San Diego.
- \* The Hale-Bopp comet billed as the biggest, brightest comet in the last century, stretches across a third of the sky at its peak brilliance in late March and early April.
- \* The tobacco industry settles with the attorneys general of 40 states in a deal worth billions of dollars in exchange for the industry's immunity from future legal action.
- \* Mother Theresa dies in Calcutta.
- \* Princess Diana is killed in a car crash in Paris setting off a worldwide media frenzy.
- \* Hong Kong turned over to the control of China.
- \* The top movies of the year include Titanic, As Good As It Gets, LA Confidential, Wag the Dog, and Austin Powers.
- \* The Florida Marlins win baseball's World Series in only their fifth year of existence.

# CSEA marks Workers Memorial Day

CSEA members across the state took time on and around the April 28 Workers Memorial Day to join with other unions and labor affiliates to remember the thousands of workers killed and injured as they went about their jobs.

The past year was a particularly difficult one for CSEA, which lost 10 members in work-related deaths.

## State Workshop Ceremony

A moving outdoor tribute was held during the Thomas H. McDonough Workshop.

"None of us should ever take a safe workplace for granted," said CSEA President Danny Donohue before asking members to light a candle, "whether it be the World Trade Center or the roads in which we work and drive in."

Members were joined by the family of Melinda Drumm, a member who worked for the Saratoga County Office for the Aging and died in a car accident while going about her job.

The five members who worked for the state Department of Taxation and Finance and who lost their lives in the World Trade Center attacks on Sept. 11 were also remembered: Ivette Anderson, Florence Cohen, Harry Goody, Marian "Marty" Hrycak and Dorothy Temple.

Members also honored Daniel Haskins, a SUNY Oswego worker who died while unloading a printing press; Charles Schanbacher, an Ithaca bus driver who died after his bus was struck by another vehicle; Lowell Young, an Onondaga Parks Department worker who died while making his evening rounds; and George Sheffield, an

Albany County worker who died while repairing an air conditioning unit on the Albany County Office Building.

## Monroe DDSO ceremony

Among the many statewide and national observances, the ceremony at the Monroe Developmental Center of the Finger Lakes DDSO was especially moving.

More than 150 facility residents and staff, many of them CSEA members, were joined by CSEA President

Danny Donohue, OMRDD Commissioner Thomas Maul, and other union leaders in a solemn, bagpipe-led procession to honor the memory of those lost or injured on the job.

"This ceremony is also to honor you, for the heroic work you do every day," said Donohue to the facility CSEA members who care for the developmentally disabled throughout 10 counties. "Your efforts are part of what helps make our state work force the best it can be, and we won't quit seeking safety improvements for you, because you deserve it."

A plaque was unveiled that will be mounted on a boulder in a memorial garden painstakingly built by the hands of Mike Wrobel, senior groundskeeper and Finger Lakes DDSO local member. Local President Kathy Button was joined by other union members in the unveiling.

The plaque reads, "Together we remember all who have made the ultimate sacrifice while in public service, and we commit to a safe workplace for those serving others, today and tomorrow."

In CSEA's Long Island Region, CSEA joined the Long Island Federation of Labor in honoring fellow workers who died from on-the-job injuries. The event was held in the New York State Office Building in Hauppauge.

The event, in its 14th year, was dedicated to the lives of union workers killed in the Sept. 11 attacks, including CSEA's five members.



Above and below, CSEA members take part in a Workers Memorial Day ceremony at the State Government Workshop in Saratoga Springs. Below left, Finger Lakes DDSO Local President Kathy Button unveils a plaque during the dedication of a memorial garden.



Organizers unveiled a plaque outside the State Office Building honoring the workers lost in the attack. The memorial is adjacent to a 30-ton monument erected in 1999 to honor Long Island workers who have died on the job.

"They went to work, did their jobs and expected to come home," said CSEA Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte.

— David Galarza, Rolando Infante and Ron Wofford



## CSEA offers personal legal services

**DID YOU KNOW** ... one out of every two Americans will need legal advice during the next 12 months? Half of these people will attempt to deal with the matter on their own because they either do not know how to retain an attorney or are afraid of the costs associated with doing so.

CSEA has instituted this Legal Services Plan to provide its members and their families with the knowledge and affordability to protect their legal rights in personal matters. In exchange for a small enrollment fee, members receive free specified legal services and are eligible for discounted attorney fees for other services. Enrollment is voluntary.

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Members who belong to the State, Local Government, Education, Private Sector or Retiree Locals in the following areas:

All of the CSEA Long Island and Metropolitan Regions, plus Albany County, Broome County, Chautauqua County, Chemung County, Chenango County, Columbia County, Erie County, Dutchess County, Genesee County, Greene County, Monroe County, Niagara County, Orange County, Orleans County, Rensselaer County, Saratoga County, Schenectady County, Tompkins County, Ulster County, Westchester County, and Wyoming County.

If you work in these areas, you may join the plan. Additionally, your spouse and your dependents may use any of the legal services included in your enrollment at no additional cost.

Eligibility for services commence 7 days after enrollment in the plan.

### HOW DOES THE PLAN WORK?

To become a member of the CSEA Legal Services Plan, you choose one of four plan options. The enrollment fee automatically entitles you to the number of services indicated. You choose which particular services from the list below:

- \* CSEA CHARTER: \$100...any 2 of the legal services below
- \* CSEA SUPERIOR: \$175...any 3 of the legal services below

\* CSEA EXTRA: \$200...any 4 of the legal services below

\* CSEA ADVANTAGE: \$260...all 5 of the legal services below

### LEGAL SERVICES OFFERED:

- \* One simple Will (or amendment to existing will)
- \* One Power of Attorney
- \* One Health Care Proxy
- \* One Legal Document Review
- \* One Legal Consultation (60 minutes)

In addition to any option you choose, you become entitled to additional legal services at reduced rates according to a fixed fee schedule.

Plan members or their eligible dependents have a full year from date of enrollment to use the free services.

### WHAT IF I NEED LEGAL SERVICES OTHER THAN THOSE INCLUDED IN MY MEMBERSHIP?

CSEA has negotiated a Fixed Fee Schedule for its members. The Fixed Fee Schedule not only provides you with reduced rates for a full range of legal services, but it also provides you with prior information as to the cost for each service, which is a benefit that sets the CSEA Plan apart from other plans. Some of the services that can be provided to you and your family at a reduced rate include: traffic tickets, buying/selling a home, personal injury, property disputes, matrimonial/divorces, estates, family law, bankruptcy, criminal matters, and tenant rights.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

For a detailed brochure/application, fixed fee schedule, and application for the CSEA Legal Services Plan, please contact CSEA Headquarters, Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 1-800-342-4146, extension 1443.

**The CSEA WORKERS' COMPENSATION  
LEGAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

**covering Workers' Compensation  
and Social Security Disability**

If you are injured on the job or sustain a job-related illness, CSEA's Workers' Compensation Legal Assistance Program can help you navigate the maze known as Workers' Compensation. If you become disabled, the program can help you obtain Social Security Disability benefits.

*The Program Services Are Absolutely Free, And So Is The Call*

- If you have a possible Workers' Compensation or Social Security Disability case, SIMPLY CALL 1-800-342-4146 TOLL-FREE and select the proper menu options. Your call will be answered by the firm of Fine, Olin and Anderman, P.C., through its statewide network of offices staffed by attorneys who specialize in Workers' Compensation and Social Security Disability Law.
- Brochures describing the program in detail and intake forms to assist you in compiling correct and complete information before making the initial call will be available from CSEA Region Offices, CSEA Local and Unit Presidents and CSEA Labor Relations Specialists.
- All calls will be accepted, no cases will be turned down and there is no out-of-pocket cost to CSEA members and their dependents for the program services.

**1-800-342-4146**  
Follow the menu options  
for instructions  
to access the program

The CSEA  
WORKERS' COMPENSATION  
LEGAL ASSISTANCE  
PROGRAM

## What's In It For You?



### EBF DENTAL PLAN PROVIDERS

Over the last year and a half, the CSEA Employee Benefit Fund has made considerable strides toward the "Ever Better Future" that has been mentioned each month in *The Work Force*. A major concentration has been the improvement of the EBF's dental programs for both state and local government **and** growing the Participating Dental Provider network.

In addition to making enhancements to the program fee schedules, the fund has made several internal changes designed to simplify the submission of claims and speed up turn-around time. The most visible of these changes is that the fund no longer requires the use of CSEA EBF forms to submit dental claims. Dentists may now submit the American Dental Association (ADA) universal claim form for services rendered or they can continue to use the EBF form.

While this may seem minor, it eliminates extra paperwork and administrative time for many offices. The fund's goal is to take away as many of the headaches and obstacles that were previously in the way for those dentists who service our members.

These changes aren't the last — the fund will soon be able to accept dental claims electronically which will save even more time and money.

A question asked frequently by our members is: **Why aren't there more dentists on the EBF Participating Provider List?**

When dentists sign on as a plan provider, they agree to accept the CSEA EBF fee schedule as payment in full for covered services. By doing this, they are agreeing to a **reduction in payment** from their normal prices. For a variety of reasons, not all dentists are willing to accept that reduction even with the potential of bringing in new patients.

The participating provider listing is meant as an aid to help you choose a dentist. The fund maintains and provides this listing, but please understand that it is not a recommendation and the fund does not control the quality of a dentist's work or monitor his or her office procedures.

The provider listing is also subject to change so you should verify your dentist's participating status prior to every treatment appointment.

### How can I get my dentist to accept the plan?

As stated earlier, it is ultimately the dentist's choice whether or not they will accept the fund's fee schedules as payment-in-full for covered services. The EBF will happily canvass any

dentists recommended by our membership. The next time you are in your dentist's office, ask them if they would consider accepting the program as a participating provider. The fund has canvassed virtually every dentist in New York state and while many have declined to accept the program, it's not so easy to say "no" when a familiar name and face of a patient is placed in front of them.

If your dentist is not a CSEA EBF participating dentist and you would like him or her to consider participating, simply fill out the request for information below and return it to the fund. Your dentist will be supplied with information and an application to become an EBF participant. The fund cannot guarantee that your dentist will join, but it can guarantee that we will make every effort to bring new participating providers into our system.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FORM  
for dentists interested in participating in the  
CSEA EBF Dental Provider Panel

NAME OF DENTIST: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to:

Colleen Switts, Member /Provider Liaison  
CSEA Employee Benefit Fund  
One Lear Jet Lane, Suite #1  
Latham, New York 12110  
1-800-323-2732

### CONGRATULATIONS

The EBF would also like to congratulate the following groups which have recently joined the fund for benefit coverage:

**Town of North Hempstead Community  
Development - Platinum Vision  
Village of Larchmont - Equinox Dental**

and these groups that have either added a new benefit or upgraded an existing EBF plan:

**Chester School District  
Town of Oyster Bay Housing Authority  
Village of Amityville  
Village of Pelham Manor**

**Are you missing out on something you really can't afford to pass up?** For more information about the CSEA EBF and their programs, please contact the Fund at 1-800-323-2732 or visit the EBF web page at [www.csealocal1000.net](http://www.csealocal1000.net) and click on the Employee Benefit Fund in the Member Benefits section.

## An Ever Better Future

# Benefits provided by The Empire Plan

The Empire Plan is a comprehensive health insurance program for employees of New York State and their families. The plan has five main parts:

**• Benefits Management Program**  
(formerly administered by Intracorp)

*Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield* (1-800-342-9815 or 518-367-0009) Effective January 1, 2002 enrollees must contact Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield for pre-admission certification prior to a scheduled hospital admission or maternity admission, within 48 hours after an emergency or urgent hospital admission, before admission or transfer to skilled nursing facility. Blue Cross will also perform concurrent review of hospital and skilled nursing facility (SNF) admissions, discharge planning,



inpatient complex medical case management and the high risk pregnancy program.

*United HealthCare* (1-800-942-4640) Effective January 1, 2002 enrollees must contact United HealthCare for Prospective Procedure Review prior to receiving any elective Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI). United HealthCare will also oversee voluntary specialist consultations and outpatient medical case management.

**• Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield 518-367-0009 or 1-800-342-9815**

Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield pays for covered services provided in an inpatient or outpatient hospital setting as well as in a skilled nursing facility, Center of Excellence for Transplants and hospice care.

	<b>Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield</b>
Hospital Inpatient - semi private room	Must call for pre-admission certification 1-800-342-9815 or 518-367-0009. No copay or deductible for 365 days per spell of illness, for medical/surgical care while inpatient in hospital.
Hospital Outpatient - surgery, diagnostic laboratory and radiology including services for mammograms, X-ray, lab, pathology, EKG/EEG, etc.	\$25 per visit - waived if admitted as an inpatient directly from the outpatient department Copay waived for preadmission testing prior to inpatient admission, chemotherapy, radiation therapy or dialysis.
Physical Therapy MPN 1-800-942-4640	\$8 for medically necessary physical therapy following a related hospitalization or related inpatient or outpatient surgery.
Emergency Room	\$35 visit - waived if admitted.
Skilled Nursing Facility - semi-private room	Pre-admission certification required 1-800-342-9815 or 518-367-0009. Covered in an approved facility when medically necessary.
Centers of Excellence Transplant (bone marrow, peripheral, stem cell, cord blood stem cell, heart, liver, lung, kidney, heart/lung and pancreas/kidney) 1-800-342-9815	Preauthorization required- <b>Center of Excellence</b> - covered in full benefits and travel, lodging, meal allowance available; <b>Non-Center of Excellence</b> - accordance with hospital coverage or medical/surgical coverage under UHC.
Hospice Care	Paid in full when provided by an approved hospice program.

**• United HealthCare 1-800-942-4640**

United HealthCare is the insurer for medical expense benefits such as office visits, surgery and the Managed Physical Medicine Program.

UHC provides benefits for certain medical and surgical care in a hospital when not covered by Blue Cross. UHC benefits under medical/surgical are paid under either the participating provider program or the basic medical program.

Call United HealthCare's Home Care Advocacy Program (HCAP) at 1-800-638-9918 for home care services and durable medical equipment/supplies as well as infertility benefits. Call United HealthCare's Complementary Alternative Medicine Program at 1-888-447-2144 for a list of providers who specialize in massage therapy, acupuncture and diet/nutrition.

## Prescription Drugs

### Rx Premium and Health Insurance changes effective January 2003

The 1999-2003 CSEA/NYS Collective Bargaining Agreement included several changes in health benefits effective January 1, 2003.

As a result of successful negotiations, CSEA State employees who are enrolled in the New York State Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP) experience the benefit of a paid-in-full prescription drug premium. What this means is that New York State pays the entire cost of prescription drug premiums (amount contributed biweekly from paycheck).

*Beginning January 1, 2003*, CSEA NYSHIP represented State enrollees will be responsible to contribute 10 percent towards the cost of individual prescription drug premiums and 25 percent towards the cost of dependent prescription drug premiums.

Additionally Empire Plan enrollees should be aware of contractual copayment changes effective 01/01/03. The office visit copayment increases from \$8 to \$10, Rx copayments increase from \$3 generic/\$13 brand single source to \$5 generic/\$15 brand single source and non-par deductible increases from \$175 to \$185.

Although it is still too early to know what the 2003 health insurance premiums will be, it is reasonable to expect enrollee responsibilities to increase due to increased health insurance and prescription drug premiums.

If you have any questions regarding these changes for 2003, please contact the CSEA Joint Committee on Health Benefits at 518-785-4774 or 1-800-286-5242.

	<b>United HealthCare (E.P. Participating Provider)</b>	<b>United HealthCare (E.P. Non-participating Provider)</b>
Provider/specialty office visits, office surgery Laboratory and radiology diagnostic services including mammograms, X-ray, lab, pathology, EKG/EEG	<b>PAR PROVIDER:</b> You pay \$8 copay for each covered service per visit to a participating provider. Max of two copayments per provider/visit No copay for prenatal visits or well child exams	<b>*BASIC MEDICAL</b> <b>Annual Deductible</b> - \$175 enrollee; \$175 enrolled spouse/domestic partner, \$175 all dependent children. <b>Coinsurance</b> - Empire Plan pays 80 percent of reasonable and customary charges for covered services after you meet deductible. <b>Coinsurance Maximum</b> - \$776 per employee and covered dependents combined. After max reached, benefits are paid 100 percent of R&C for covered services.
Routine Health Exams	\$8 copay per visit to participating provider	For non-participating providers, up to \$250 per year for active employees age 50 or older, and up to \$250 per year for an active employee's covered spouse/domestic partner age 50 or older. This benefit is not subject to deductible or coinsurance.
Physical Therapy/Chiropractic Visits	\$8 copay for office visit to MPN provider (additional \$8 copay for additional related radiology and diagnostic lab services billed by MPN provider) **Guaranteed access to network benefits - call MPN for approval	Non-Participating MPN Provider <b>Annual deductible</b> - \$250; <b>Coinsurance</b> - 50% of network allowance after deductible; <b>Annual Maximum Benefit</b> - \$1,500 annual maximum benefit.
Home Care Advocacy Program (home care services, skilled nursing services and durable medical equipment/supplies) 1-800-638-9918	Paid-in-full network benefits - Precertification required. Call and arrange covered home care services for durable medical equipment and supplies, including oxygen, nebulizers, insulin pumps medjectors, etc. <b>Diabetic Supplies</b> - call 1-888-306-7337 <b>Ostomy Supplies</b> - call 1-800-354-4054	Non-network - the first 48 hours of home nursing care are not covered *Basic Medical Annual Deductible - \$175; Coinsurance - 50% of network allowance
Infertility - Center of Excellence 1-800-638-9918 All authorized procedures subject to \$25,000 lifetime max per individual	Center of Excellence - paid in full subject to benefit max. Non-Center/Participating Provider - authorized procedures paid according to copay and benefit max.	Non-Center/Non-Participating Provider - authorized care according to *Basic Medical and benefit max.
Ambulatory Surgical Center	\$15 copay covers facility, same-day on-site testing and anesthesiology charges for covered services at participating surgical center.	*Basic Medical for non-participating centers
Hearing Aids	Up to \$1,200 every 4 years (every 2 years for children)	Up to \$1,200 every 4 years (every 2 years for children)
Ambulance	See non-par benefit	\$35 copay for local professional ambulance charges. Voluntary ambulance services up to \$50 donation for under 50 miles and up to \$75 donation for 50 miles and over.

**• ValueOptions (administrator for GHI) 1-800-446-3995** ValueOptions administers mental health and substance abuse benefits.

	<b>ValueOptions Network</b>	<b>Non-Network</b>
<b>Inpatient Mental Health/Substance Abuse</b> (All benefits based on determination of medical necessity by ValueOptions)	No cost; Mental Health - unlimited when medically necessary Substance Abuse - 3 stays per lifetime.	Annual deductible - \$2,000; Coinsurance - 50% of network allowance; Mental Health - 30 days/calendar year; Substance Abuse - 1 stay per year, 3 stays per lifetime; Annual Limit - Substance Abuse \$50,000 Lifetime Limit - Substance Abuse \$100,000
<b>Outpatient Mental Health/Substance Abuse</b> (All benefits based on determination of medical necessity by ValueOptions)	Mental Health - \$15/visit Substance Abuse - \$8 visit Unlimited when medically necessary	Annual Deductible - \$500; Coinsurance - 50 percent of network allowance; Mental Health - 30 visits/calendar year; Substance Abuse - 30 visits/calendar year; Annual Limit - Substance Abuse \$50,000; Lifetime Limit - Substance Abuse \$100,000

**• CIGNA/Express Scripts 1-800-964-1888** CIGNA insures prescription drugs and the mail service pharmacy.

	<b>Express Scripts</b>
Prescription Drugs 1-800-964-1888	At a participating pharmacy, you pay \$3 for generic drugs and \$13 for brand name drugs that have no generic equivalent. If you fill a prescription for a brand name drug that has a generic equivalent, you pay your brand name copayment plus the difference in cost between the brand-name drug and its generic equivalent. One copayment covers up to a 90-day supply at either a participating pharmacy or through mail service. Prior authorization is required for certain drugs. At a non-participating pharmacy, you pay the full cost and then submit a claim for partial reimbursement.





FROM



TO



## Field representation covers all the bases

Each CSEA region has a staff of trained professionals who mentor, advise and work with officers and activists to help make the union work more effectively.

CSEA labor relations specialists (LRS) work one-on-one with union officers to help mentor, guide and assist them in any and all labor relations needs. They can also act as point person to accessing all the rest of CSEA's available resources.

### Labor Relations



Whether it's negotiating a new contract, enforcing the terms and conditions of a current contract, fighting unfair disciplinary actions or violations of contract rights, CSEA officers turn to CSEA's professional labor relations staff for assistance.

### Communications

When CSEA needs to better communicate with the media, the public, or even our own members, assistance is available from CSEA communication associates.

Whether it's putting together letters to the editor, fliers, informational pickets, Info Days, newsletters, contract campaigns, press releases or articles for *The Work Force*, communications associates can help with all communication needs.

### Safety and Health

CSEA occupational safety and health specialists are available to assist Safety & Health Committees and Local/Unit officers and activists across the region in making sure work sites are safe.

Conducting a work site walk-through to assess existing or potential hazards, filing a safety and health complaint with the state Department of Labor, advising the Region Safety & Health Committee, or conducting training for workers on safety issues are some of the jobs your CSEA occupational safety and health specialist handles.

CSEA provides a variety of field assistance to locals and units on legal, safety and health, benefits, political and labor relations issues.

### Legal

When CSEA members need legal representation for work-related matters, CSEA has a network of legal staff and attorneys to work hand-in-hand with your elected leadership and labor relations staff to make sure that members' legal rights are protected.

Subject to approval of CSEA's Legal Assistance Program, CSEA provides, at no cost to the member, an attorney for arbitration and other legal actions. The union's own Legal Department staff attorneys also advise on a wide range of issues.



### Political Action



As a group of workers organized and working together to better ourselves, we wield some of our greatest power at the ballot box. That's why each CSEA region has a political action coordinator.

Political action coordinators help CSEA leaders and activists get involved in the political process in many different ways.

Working with locals and units to help leverage the union's political power at the grassroots level, political action coordinators provide assistance on local and statewide issues affecting the membership.

CSEA From A to Z is a regular feature of *The Work Force*. If you have a topic you'd like to see covered, contact Lou Hmieleski, executive editor, at 518-257-1273 or [hmieleski@cseainc.org](mailto:hmieleski@cseainc.org).

## Summary of the April 2002 statewide board of directors meeting

*Editor's note: The Work Force publishes a summary of actions taken by CSEA's board of directors. The summary is prepared by CSEA Statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves for union members.*



ALBANY — CSEA's statewide Board of Directors met on April 4. In official business, the board:

- Retained the services of accounting firm PricewaterhouseCoopers for the union's fiscal 2002 audit;
- Established a special election schedule for unfilled board seats in Chenango, Franklin, Lewis, Schoharie, Schuyler, Sullivan and Warren counties and Central Region Local Government Educational;
- Approved appointment of John Anderson, Harry Ader, Catherine Custance, Rutha Bush and Tom Byrne to the Long Island Region Political Action Committee;
- Approved appointment of Ivon Bowery, Deborah Christian, Paula Fields, Clinton Pierce and Crispin Booker to the Metropolitan Region Political Action Committee; and
- Approved appointment of James Blake, Georgia Gentile, P.T. Thomas and Rose Sinagra to the Southern Region Political Action Committee.

Questions concerning the summary should be directed to CSEA Statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves, CSEA Headquarters, 143 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12210, (800) 342-4146 or (518) 257-1253.

### Break in membership affects eligibility for union office, voting privileges

A break in union membership status can have long-term future implications. Your membership status affects your eligibility with respect to:

- seeking or holding union office;
- signing nominating petitions for potential candidates;
- voting in union elections, and;
- voting on collective bargaining contracts.

Only members "in good standing" can participate in these activities. To be in "good standing," your dues cannot be delinquent.

If you go on unpaid leave or for any other reason have a break in your employment status, your dues will not continue to be paid through payroll deductions. You must make arrangements to pay your dues directly to CSEA to continue your membership status. If you are either laid off or placed on leave without pay status due to becoming disabled

by accident, illness, maternity or paternity, you may be eligible for dues-free membership status for a period not to exceed one year. If you are called up for active military duty you may also apply for dues-free status.

Note, however, you **must** continue to pay dues to run for office.

Dues-free or gratuitous membership allows members to continue their insurance coverage while out of work. It does not protect your right to run for or hold office. This does not apply to members who are on leave due to being called up for military duty. Members on active military duty, upon return, are considered to have had continuous membership status for all CSEA election purposes.

Please notify the CSEA Membership Records Department at 1-800-342-4146, Ext. 1327, of any change in your status and what arrangements you are making to continue your membership in CSEA.

**LEAVE DONATION GROWS** — CSEA Montgomery County Local Vice President Ed Russo helped gain passage of county legislation allowing for members of the Local to donate sick leave to two CSEA members in the Local who have catastrophic illnesses and have used all their sick leave. So far, Montgomery County CSEA members have donated 1,635 hours of sick time ... **PEOPLE PEOPLE** — April's PEOPLE Recruiter of the Month is Rutha Bush of CSEA's Long Island Development Center and Sagamore Children's Psychiatric Center. She has recruited 30 new PEOPLE members. Also, the region given for February's Recruiter of the Month, Julie Sandoval, should have been the CSEA Central Region. PEOPLE is CSEA and AFSCME's political action program aimed at getting friends of working families elected to Congress ... **HERO JOE** — CSEA member Joseph Weyant, 20, has been a custodian at North Garnerville Elementary School for a little more than a year. The Stony Point resident is known as "Mr. Joe" to the children, and always has a kind word and occasional spare coin for a child who forgot his lunch money, said principal Judith Newman. Recently, Weyant saved a



choking 7-year-old, performing the Heimlich maneuver after a corn chip became lodged in the boy's throat. "I just was glad I didn't go into shock,"

Weyant, a custodian at the school, said. "Afterward, I just started shaking." "Joe is that kind of person," Newman said. "He's very modest and unassuming" ... **SEAT FILLED** — Michele Titus (D-Queens) won a special election to fill a vacancy in the 31st Assembly District due to the death of Assemblywoman Pauline Rhodd-Cummings ... **SIGN THAT CARD** — All Agency Shop fee payers received in April the new CSEA brochure and membership application. An ALERT has simultaneously been sent to all local/unit presidents urging them — and their membership committees — to follow up the mailing by encouraging fee payers to convert to membership ... **LET'S HOPE IT STICKS** — Delaware County Unit members recently participated in a "sticker day" as part of the union's campaign to break a contract stalemate, largely over the county's refusal to negotiate a partially employer-paid health insurance benefit to retirees.



### Apply now for tuition benefits

Going to school this year? It's time to apply for the NYS & CSEA Partnership (formerly LEAP) tuition benefits.

Tuition benefits are available to members in the Administrative, Operational and Institutional Services Units, the Division of Military and Naval Affairs and CSEA-represented employees of the State University Construction Fund, Teachers' Retirement System, Unified Court System, Waterfront Commission of New York Harbor and Health Research, Inc. (one benefit annually).

Eligible applicants can receive two tuition benefits (each good for a three or four credit course or one non-credit course up to \$548) anytime between April 1, 2002 and March 31, 2003. In addition, some members may also receive reimbursement for certain national credit by exam fees.

New this year (for ASU, ISU, OSU and DMNA Unit members) is Personal Computer Training that provides either a

voucher or reimbursement for one personal computer course up to \$150, in addition to two tuition benefits.

Applications may be mailed to the Partnership, 1 Lear Jet Lane, Suite 3, Latham, N.Y. 12110-2393 or faxed to 518-785-4854 or 518-785-4862. Applications are accepted over the telephone on Thursdays only from 9 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Call the Partnership at 1-800-253-4332 or 518-785-4669.

Catalogs and application forms were recently mailed to members who applied for tuition benefits in the past year. State agency personnel and training offices also have a small supply of catalogs.

If you did not receive a catalog and can't get one from your agency call the Partnership and request one. The catalog and application forms are available on the CSEA Web site [www.csealocal1000.net](http://www.csealocal1000.net).

Contact the Partnership with questions about the tuition benefits or other education and training benefits. Professional advisers are available between 9 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. weekdays and 9:00 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. on Thursdays.



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