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Vol. 2 / No. 4

APRIL 1999

THE WORK FORCE

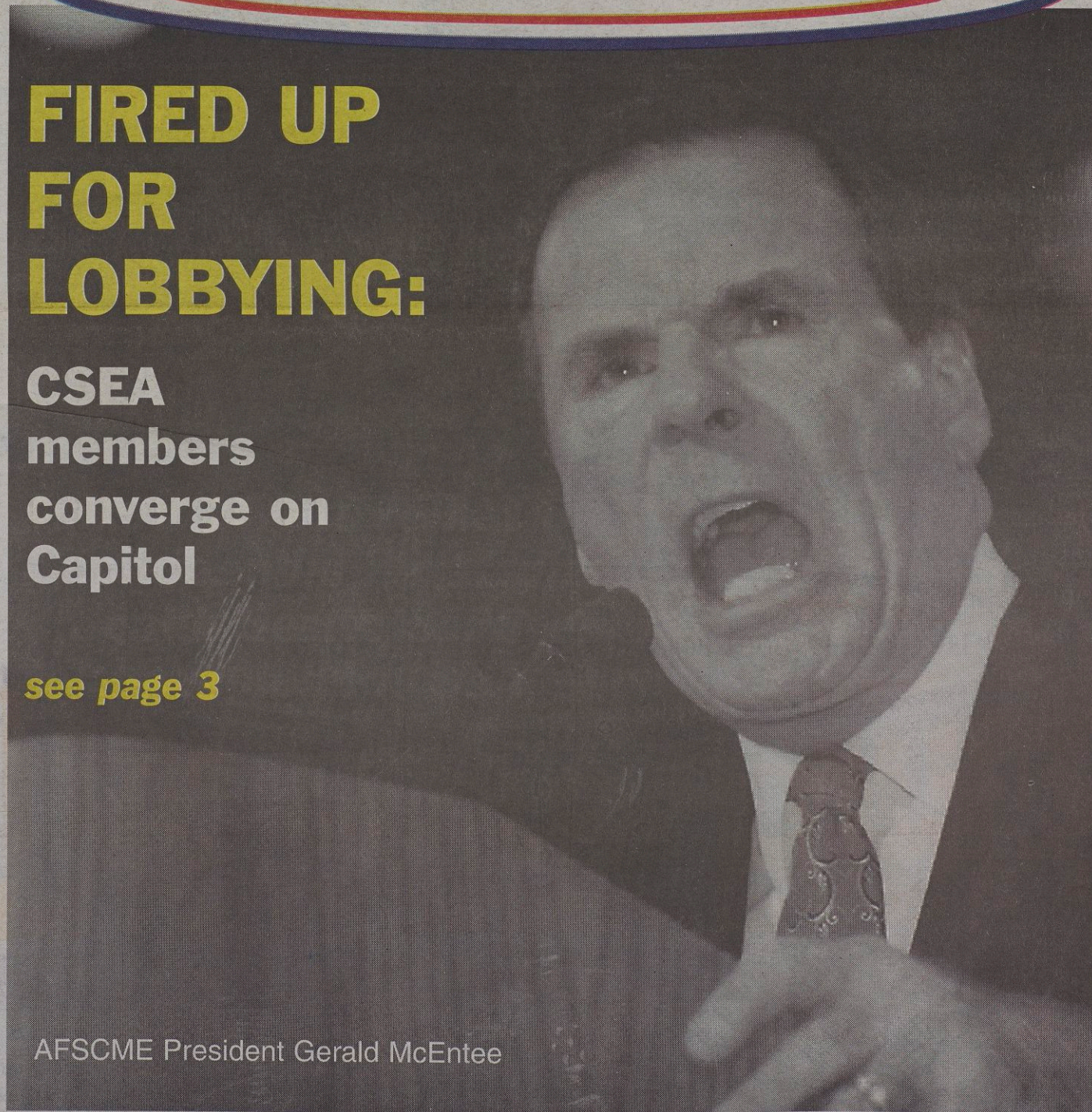
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION **CSEA** Local 1000, AFSCME, AFL-CIO

FIRED UP FOR LOBBYING:

**CSEA
members
converge on
Capitol**

see page 3

AFSCME President Gerald McEntee



State members reject contract

ALBANY — As *The Work Force* went to press, CSEA members rejected a tentative four-year contract with New York State.

“There was an awful lot of noise and misrepresentation about this contract, especially from outside groups, but CSEA will go back to the bargaining table and address our members’ needs,” CSEA President Danny Donohue said.

“There are risks as well as opportunities in any negotiation, particularly after a contract has expired,” Donohue said.

CSEA’s current contract expires April 1. It covers about 77,000 state executive branch employees in four separate bargaining units: the Administrative Services Unit (ASU); the Institutional Services Unit (ISU); the Operational Services Unit (OSU); and the Division of Military and Naval Affairs (DMNA).

The tentative agreement provided an 11 percent

salary increase over the four years; contained no givebacks and protected all health insurance and other benefits coverage, including prescription drugs, into 2003.

The vote was:

ASU	ISU
Yes — 4,497	Yes — 2,681
No — 8,381	No — 3,374
OSU	DMNA
Yes — 2,013	Yes — 60
No — 5,350	No — 89

The ballots were counted by 30 members of the CSEA negotiating team with oversight from an independent auditing firm.

Please see CSEA President Danny Donohue’s column about the contract vote on Page 4.

CSEA training set for officers

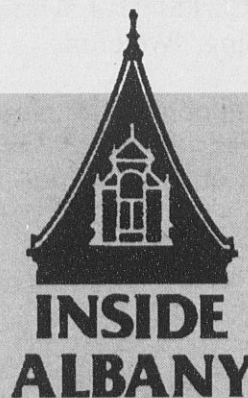
Training sessions are set for all local and unit secretaries and treasurers who remain untrained since taking office in July 1998. Sessions will be held at the following sites on these dates (registration is at 5:30 p.m.):

Secretary/treasurer training:

April 12 Sheraton, Smithtown
 April 13, Metro Region office
 April 29, Comfort Inn, Plattsburgh
 May 5, Holiday Inn, Fishkill
 May 6, Best Western, Amsterdam
 May 20, Holiday Inn, Batavia
 June 15, Holiday Inn, Elmira

Treasurer training only:

April 26, Desmond Hotel, Albany
 June 16, Best Western, Watertown



1999 Inside Albany
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broadcast schedule

Albany-Schenectady-Troy	WMHT	Saturday	6:30 p.m.
	WMHQ	Sunday	11 p.m.
Binghamton	WSKG	Saturday	4 p.m.
Buffalo	WNED	Friday	9:30 p.m.
Long Island	WLIW	Sunday	11 a.m.
		Tuesday	6 p.m.
New York City	WNET	Saturday	1:30 p.m.
		Sunday	6:30 a.m.
Plattsburgh	WCFE	Sunday	9 a.m.
Rochester	WXXI	Saturday	5:30 p.m.
Syracuse	WCNY	Saturday	6:30 p.m.
	WCNY II	Sunday	7 a.m.
Watertown	WPBS	Saturday	5:30 p.m.

AFSCME Lobby Day '99 sets attendance record

More than 1,400 AFSCME brothers and sisters converged on the Empire State Plaza Convention Center in Albany recently and sent a resounding message of solidarity to politicians during a daylong program which set an attendance record.

AFSCME International President Gerald McEntee led union members, including several hundred from CSEA, in the annual lobby day.

McEntee and other union leaders carried the message that workers now, more than ever, need stronger protections in the workplace and a broader security blanket once they retire.

McEntee also urged the crowd to petition Congress to prevent any tinkering with Social Security that could deplete future payments.

The AFSCME leader also railed against cuts to Medicaid and called for more money to create jobs for those coming off welfare.

"Before I go any farther I want to make one thing clear: This is not a Democratic gathering. Nor is it a Republican gathering. Sisters and brothers, this is an AFSCME gathering. If you are with us, we like you. But if you are against us, God help you," McEntee told the cheering crowd.

CSEA President Danny Donohue, introducing Gov. George Pataki, noted that CSEA and Pataki do not always see eye to eye, but added, "we have found that in working cooperatively, we can get a lot done. We pay taxes, too," Donohue said.

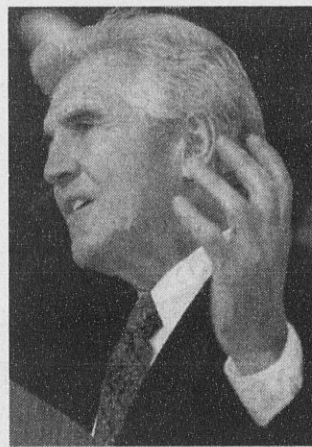
Pataki expressed his pride in the state work force, commenting on the hard work public sector employees do when crises and emergencies arise.

"You don't just do your job, you serve the people of New York State day in and day out. We love you. You are the best in America," Pataki said.

State Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno told the crowd that agency shop legislation moved to the Senate floor that morning.

"We recognize how important you are to all the things that are important to us."

**State Sen. Joseph Bruno
Majority Leader**



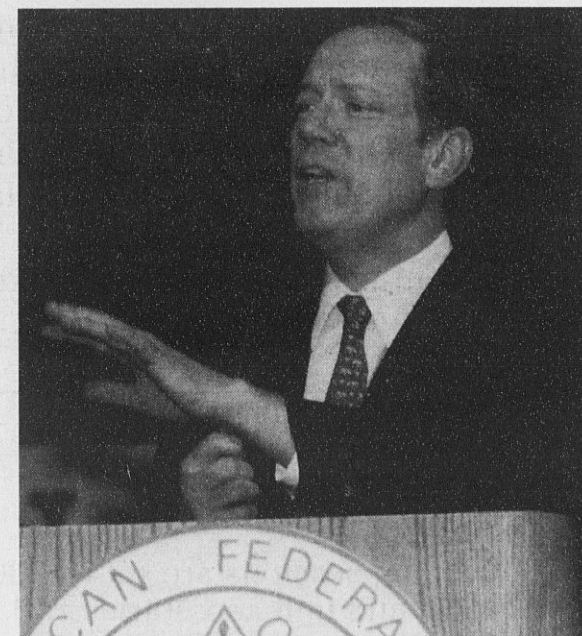
"My message to you here today is that we recognize how important you are to all the things that are important to us," Bruno said.

The union lobbyists warmly greeted state Comptroller H. Carl McCall, who greeted the crowd by shouting, "Welcome to Albany, we need you here!"

McCall told the conventioners just what they came to hear.

"I will not rest until every public employee in this state has a permanent cost-of-living adjustment," McCall said.

— Lou Hmieski



Top, state Comptroller H. Carl McCall addresses AFSCME members in the Empire State Plaza Convention Center.

Middle, Gov. George Pataki at the dais.

At left, AFSCME leaders meet with Assemblyman Eric Vitaliano, seated far right, chair of the Assembly's Governmental Employees Committee.



Who does AFSCME represent?

The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees represents 430,000 public and private workers in New York State and 1.3 million workers nationwide. CSEA is AFSCME's largest affiliate.

There were 1,400 AFSCME members from across the state at the Albany Lobby Day.

THE WORK FORCE

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In Touch with the WORK FORCE



CSEA President Danny Donohue

Our members who work for state government have spoken.

As *The Work Force* went to press, CSEA members in four bargaining units rejected a proposed four-year contract with New York State.

We will return to the contract table and will remain focused on our goal: negotiating the best package for our members in state government.

As we hammer out new contract language, I ask you to continue supporting the efforts of the CSEA contract team. Your co-workers from across the state have given selflessly the last few months by accepting this time-consuming and difficult assignment to help improve the quality of your working life.

I also ask our state employee members to carefully study all CSEA material. Ignore the voices outside our union.

We all know it's far easier for outsiders to catcall and complain about our contract negotiations when they're sitting on the sidelines and not worrying about benefit coverage for our families.

The noise, distractions and distortions about the tentative agreement were unprecedented and irresponsible.

But CSEA makes no excuses and we will go back to negotiations until we have reached an agreement.

All of us can reasonably disagree over the merits of a tentative contract or any other union issue for that matter.

The strength of CSEA is in our democracy. But our democracy is weakened if the facts get lost in the noise.

Training is food for thought

BEACON — There's more to mashed potatoes than meets the eye.

Food service workers at the Downstate Correctional Facility took part in a two-day class recently that went beyond mashing spuds to raising safety and health awareness.

"I've been in the food service field a long time," said Phyllis Settembre, who has worked at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility for about a year.

"I've worked in private hospitals and in the restaurant business. It's helpful to refresh your mind," Settembre said.

The New York State/CSEA Labor-Management Committee paid for the seminar, which was developed after corrections employees proposed the specialized training last year.

At the request of state officials, Delhi College instructor Tom Costa created a program covering basic food preparation, sanitation, food safety, accident prevention, contamination, organizing a cleaning program, security and record keeping.

The Department of Corrections has a tremendous focus on training, but much is geared to the security force, said Patrick McGann, citing the need for the food service program.

McGann is deputy superintendent for administration at Downstate Correctional Facility.

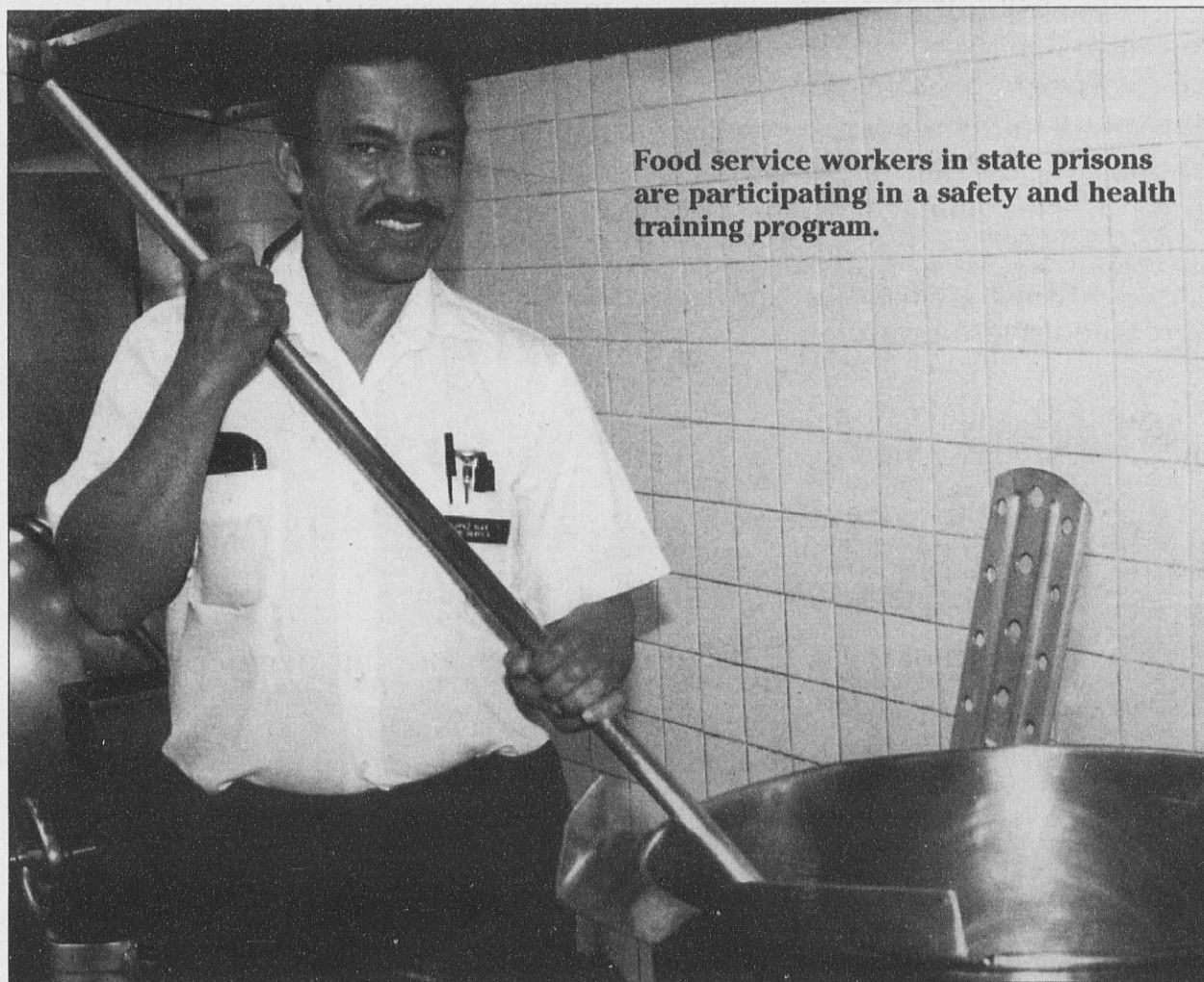
While training for new employees is essential, food service workers should have 40 hours of training every year, said Ann Wells, regional coordinator for Correctional Food Services.

Rudolph Majette agreed. "You can always learn something," said the 32-year food service employee who works at Fishkill Correctional Facility.

"We hope to spread this program all over the state," Wells said.

For more information about the program, call Tim Gerard, New York State Labor-Management Committee representative, at 1-800-874-7344 or Joe Jabour at (518) 473-3416.

— Anita Manley



Food service workers in state prisons are participating in a safety and health training program.

CSEA REPRESENTS
**Corrections
and Law
Enforcement**
15,000 WORKERS IN THIS INDUSTRY

Have a story? Pass it on ...

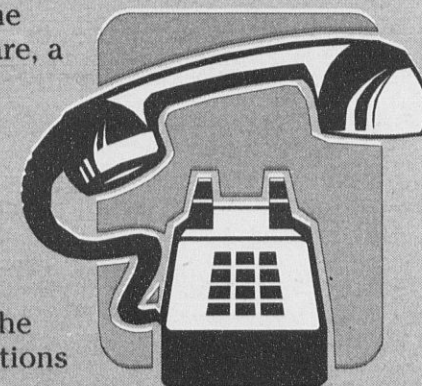
The Work Force is committed to featuring stories and issues concerning CSEA members involved in law enforcement and corrections-related fields.

While the public often hears of the heroics of corrections and law enforcement officers — and their safety and health concerns — little is published concerning civilian members working in corrections and supporting law enforcement.

We want to hear your stories, from officers keeping the peace behind bars, to the cooks and medical staff, office and clerical employees who keep the system working.

Have some news to share, a topic for discussion, or an interesting human-interest feature?

Contact the communications associate in your region and tell them your story.



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OMH budget shifts burden to communities

CSEA activists from across the state buttonholed their lawmakers at an Office of Mental Health (OMH) Lobby Day, urging elected officials to fight funding cuts to OMH programs.

But sometimes lost in the debate over dollars is the real consequence of what the proposed budget's \$4 million funding cut

would mean to communities.

For one, there could be less money for counties to take care of their mentally ill as the state passes

the buck to counties that have relied for decades on state help for residents coping with a variety of mental health issues. Saratoga County, for instance, may lose nine jobs through the Shared Staff Program administered by OMH.

The state has proposed, after 24 years, to move 215 shared staff jobs out of the counties and back to state mental health facilities.

This is another example of the state OMH abandoning the mentally ill and dumping the problem onto counties, CSEA activists said.

In Saratoga County alone, the hit on local government could be at least \$300,000.



CSEA President Danny Donohue, left, meets with Assemblyman James F. Brennan, D-Brooklyn, who chairs the Assembly's Mental Health Committee, during OMH Lobby Day in Albany last month.

"If this move were to occur, it would be a major disruption of service to our clients," county Mental Health Director Dale R. Angstadt said.

At CSEA's OMH Lobby Day, union President Danny Donohue made clear CSEA's position regarding funding cuts and loss of services.

"The arguments are simple: You take care of lives. You're valuable," Donohue told the 150 activists and union officers before they met with lawmakers.

"When the only argument is, 'How much money can we save?' what does that say about us as people?" Donohue asked.

On hand at the lobby day was Assemblyman James F. Brennan, D-Brooklyn, who chairs the Assembly's Mental Health Committee.

"I think all of us here recognize and understand that the state of New York has a moral and legal commitment to care for these patients," Brennan told the crowd.

— Lou Hmielecki

WORK FORCE FACTS

Proposed OMH budget

- Net reduction of 789 positions.
- \$4 million less in funding.
- 215 shared staff jobs, in place since 1974, taken from counties and transferred back to state facilities.
- Assembly Bill 6821 would amend Mental Health Law to establish and implement staff-to-patient ratios in state mental health facilities.

What our members have to say ...

“When the patients talk to us, they say, ‘We’re not ill, we’re here by the court.’”

Therapy aide Frederick C. Bond Jr.

“Being short-staffed creates an unsafe environment, not only for the patients but for the staff.”

Therapy aide Walter J. Harris III

“If you can go 20 years without being injured, it’s a miracle.”

Manny Mangual, Pilgrim Psychiatric Center Local First Vice President

Program teaches sensitivity awareness in the workplace

Onondaga diversity training wins award

SYRACUSE — Public employees must better understand their diverse workplace and their community, and CSEA members in Onondaga County are working to make sure they do.

"Obviously we're working with diverse people and diverse communities all the time," said Frank Forte, the Onondaga County local president.

Members of the CSEA local are preparing to bring a successful diversity training program beyond the county's borders.

"Not only are our employees diverse, and we need to work together effectively, but we work with a diverse clientele and we need to work more effectively with them," said Forte, who recently received the county's 1999 Martin Luther King, Jr. Public Service Award, for helping to bring the diversity training into the county workplace.

NCBI is model for training

That training, sponsored by Onondaga County and Onondaga Community College, was a direct result of Forte's work with CSEA's LEAP Program.

Forte said LEAP Director Ira Baumgarten initially brought the concept for diversity training to the county, using the National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI) model for employee training and workshops.

"I think it's an excellent example of labor and management working together to meet a need," Baumgarten said. "This NCBI workshop is good for our members because it gives them a voice and allows them to be teachers and learners with each other, and allows them to share their own life experiences. It also allows them to learn how to be better allies for each other," he added.

LEAP also helped the CSEA local secure grants from the Consortium for Worker Education to help implement the training in Syracuse.

Identifying stereotypes

The NCBI program focuses on identifying and working through stereotypes and misinformation, healing past scars, building pride in your background while building bridges with other groups, committing to be an ally for other groups, and learning effective communication skills to help resolve workplace conflicts.

"Diversity can be a messy situation. What we're teaching people is to stay in that mess, work through your issues, listen with respect, and erase your previous thoughts of other groups," Forte said.

The more awareness the program raises, the more valuable it becomes, says training participant and DSS Income Maintenance Worker Fran Kribs.



Onondaga County diversity training participants engage in practice dialogues as part of the training. The award-winning program was a direct result of the Onondaga County local's work with CSEA's LEAP program.

"It gave some awareness to be more sensitive in the workplace, not only in dealing with your clients, but with your co-workers as well," Kribs said. "I think it's valuable. The more people it reaches, the more valuable it will become."

Joann Scarsciotti, a typist for the County Sheriff's Department, agreed.

"I think everyone should have it. I feel like I learned that people are a lot easier to get along with, and that you shouldn't judge people right away," she said.

Community awareness

For Corrections Officer Romie Days, one of several CSEA trainers in the program, the training works because it puts employees into a situation where they have to recognize and deal with their prejudices.

"People aren't aware of their prejudices until they are placed in a forum like this where they can no longer play it safe," Days said. "I've been through many of these types of trainings, and this is the best of them, due to the prejudice reduction part," he added.

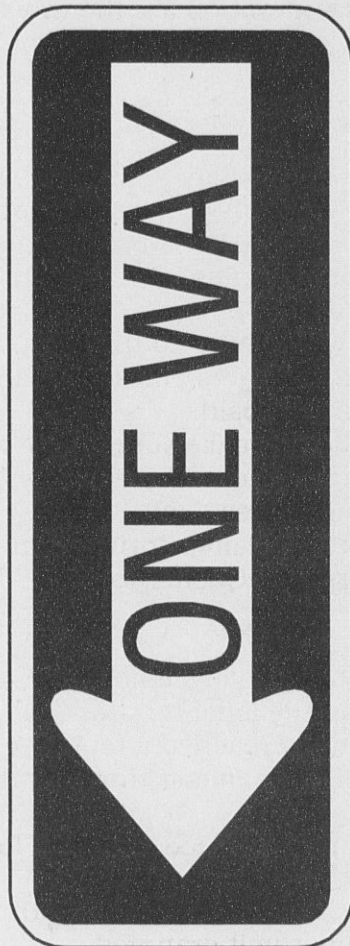
Forte said he hopes to continue branching the diversity training into the community.

"This isn't just a CSEA and Onondaga County thing. It's a major undertaking from a progressive partnership of labor, government and education," Forte said.

"A lot of groups are getting involved. As a large union, we have this vision of making our area more dynamic by engaging our community in this type of awareness," he said. "It's a good thing."

— Mark M. Kotzin

DOT sign shop's initiative points to a successful team approach



HAMBURG — After two years as a self-directed work team, members of state Department of Transportation Hamburg Sign Shop are still proving they can operate efficiently without management.

"This is really a team, and we're proud of what we do," said Don Brisky, team leader of the award-winning group.

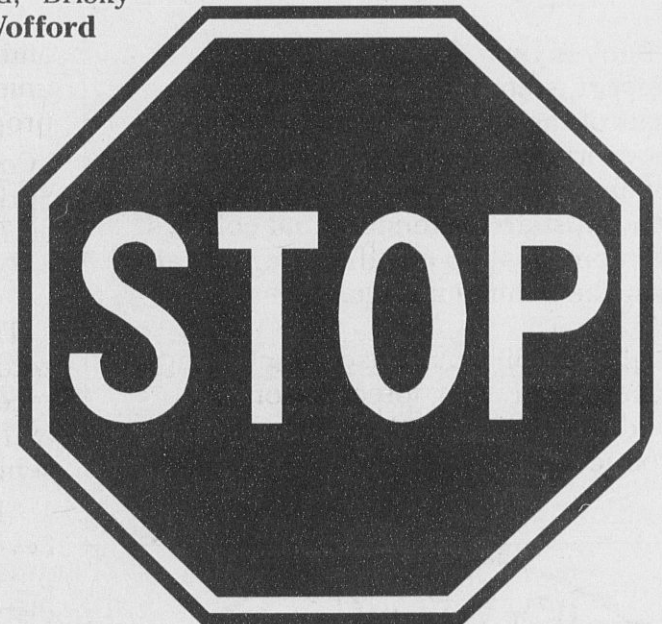
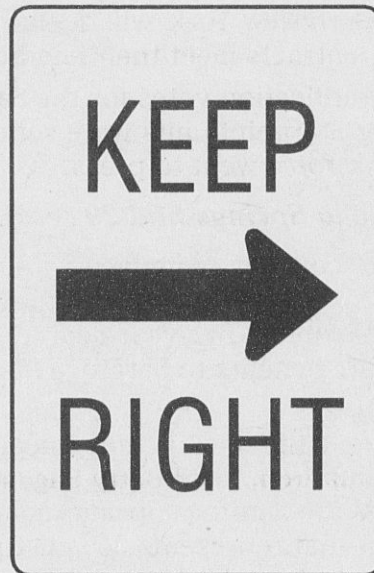
"We're also proud that our team facilitators, Cheryl Arias and Patty Pacanowski, have assessed our progress and given each member of our team an award of excellence," Brisky added.

The self-directed team concept was developed two years ago, when the sign shop faced extinction.

The shop had a two-year backlog of unfilled orders, which has been eliminated. There is now just a six-week wait for projects.

"The 12 team members each took a pledge toward positive change, and our track record has proven we took it seriously," Brisky said.

"Our action plan was developed that pledged each member has the right to work in an environment of dignity and respect, and that leadership will be practiced fairly and consistently without favoritism, and there will be no compromise on safety or quality. Teamwork and accomplishment will be recognized," Brisky added. — Ron Wofford



Don't get buried in your work! Get this booklet instead

A new safety booklet published by CSEA contains loads of information aimed at keeping CSEA members from deadly situations caused by cave-ins and other hazards associated with trenching.

With the spring construction season here, many members will be hard at work in excavation.

But before setting foot in the ground, members should get acquainted with safe digging and trenching procedures, which CSEA's Occupational Safety and Health Department provides.

Trenching and excavations are among the most hazardous construction operations.

Between 1980 and 1990, 607 workers died in excavation cave-ins nationally, according to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

OSHA has specific rules the employer must follow when workers are involved in trenching operations.

If these requirements are not followed, the public employer can be cited by the state Department of Labor's Public Employees Safety and Health (PESH) bureau.

Call 1-800-342-3146, ext. 1308, for more details on the free booklet.

Schools urged to make apparel sweatshop-free

The CSEA-supported program to stop schools from buying clothing made by child labor continues to build momentum and may be considered by state lawmakers this session.

A recent press conference in Albany by the state Labor-Religion Coalition, to which CSEA belongs, generated substantial publicity.

Buoyed by the groundswell of support, state Sen. Nicholas Spano, chair of the Senate Labor Committee, is sponsoring a bill requiring sports apparel manufacturers — from which city and state universities and colleges buy apparel — to pay their workers at least the minimum wage.

Spano's bill would also bar clothing makers from using forced labor or child labor to make the sport-related products.



"Sweatshop labor remains a problem," Spano said.

"We must lead by example and ensure the numerous sweatshirts, shirts, hats and other items sold by New York's public colleges and universities are not the products of sweatshop labor," he added.

The factories would also be required to protect the environment and allow employees to unionize, according to Spano's bill.

CSEA encourages members, especially those working in local school districts and the SUNY system, to participate in the campaign.

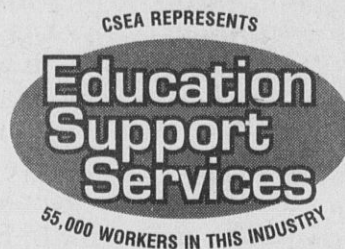
For more information, write the New York State Labor-Religion Coalition, 159 Wolf Road, Albany, NY 12205.

— Daniel X. Campbell

A+ for CSEA contract teams, support staff

Three separate units settle

Union members at three school districts at opposite ends of the state will vote on tentative five-year contracts offering pay raises.



In the Capital District, CSEA members at the Saratoga Springs and Ichabod Crane school districts, and clerical workers

and teachers aides at the Starpoint Schools unit in western New York, will decide if the proposed contracts meet their needs.

Contract ratification votes for the Saratoga Springs and Starpoint units were scheduled as *The Work Force* went to press.

Saratoga Springs had 29 sessions

The CSEA contract team faced a blizzard of zeros and a list of givebacks, but they recently delivered a five-year deal with raises and locked-in benefits to Saratoga Springs school workers.

"These were the most positive negotiations I ever encountered," said Betty Eagan, president of the Saratoga Springs school district unit that represents 360 custodian, clerical, cafeteria and other workers.

"The district came to the table and rewrote our whole contract," Eagan said. "Zeros, givebacks, cutting our sick time in half." CSEA matched the poker move.

"We laughed a lot and gave it right back to them," Eagan said with a chuckle.

"Flexibility and cooperation are the way to go in negotiations, but you have to be firm," she advised.

Starpoint pickets, gets contract

At the other end of the state, CSEA negotiators also forged a five-year deal that includes pay raises for clerical workers and teachers aides in the Starpoint School unit in western New York.

A five-year pact was produced that gave substantial raises to teachers aides, who are among the area's lowest paid.

"We stood together to make sure our teachers aide members were treated fairly," said Patty Gocher, unit president.

"That was one of our main priorities, since they were so underpaid," Gocher said.

No pact for nearly three years

Meanwhile, south of Albany, union members working in the Ichabod Crane School District recently reached a tentative five-year agreement after almost three years of tough negotiations.

Salaries and health insurance coverage for both active and retired employees of the district were the main contract issues with which the 140-member unit grappled.

This contract struggle was chronicled most recently in the February *Work Force* and in the local press. Union leaders said the strength and determination members showed paid off with a tentative contract.

WORK FORCE FACTS

CSEA's 1999 political agenda includes these items:

- CAFETERIA CONTINGENCY**
Legislation to make cafeteria expenses an ordinary contingent expense if a school budget is defeated.
- UNEMPLOYMENT FOR SCHOOL EMPLOYEES**
Legislation to make employees eligible for unemployment benefits between school years.
- SCHOOL BUS STANDEES**
Legislation to prohibit the operation of a school bus while any passenger is standing.

ALBANY — The state income tax deadline careens into Albany and other locales this month, pulling hundreds of CSEA members into this annual workplace fray.

On the phone dispensing advice or on the mail room floor preparing envelopes containing millions of dollars in tax refunds, union members help the imposing state Department of Taxation and Finance run smoothly.

Members of CSEA Tax Local 690 are the nerve center of this taxing season, which peaks with the midnight April 15 filing deadline.

The numbers they work with are staggering. About 8.5 million income tax returns will be filed by April 15; about 4 million will be pushed through the agency's mail room doors between April 14 and April 16.

Everywhere in this sprawling agency, CSEA members said they most likely will break records again this year.

Big Help With Big Numbers

CSEA members who cheerfully answer the toll-free tax line said they expect to smash last year's tally of 371,405 calls for help.

During the April 15 deadline shift, CSEA members who work as telephone service representatives will help an estimated 25,000 callers.

Although some of the tax department's taxpayer services are automated, union members are ready to help.

Employees at the department's Call Center will watch over the self-service automated telephone programs taxpayers use for ordering forms and checking on refunds.

The automated refund service provided 135,551 taxpayers with the status of their income tax refund last year.

CSEA members also erase any glitches from the department's computers, as about 750,000 New Yorkers will hit the "send" button and file their returns by e-mail this year.

The crunch, however, doesn't stop with the April 15 filing date.

By mid-May, union members will have helped send refunds to more than 400,000 taxpayers, many by direct deposit.

As July 1 approaches, more than \$2 billion will be refunded to New York State citizens and businesses.

About Money, It's Often Funny

While the tax season work is stressful, it's often punctuated by entertaining moments — occasionally created by taxpayers' creative excuses.

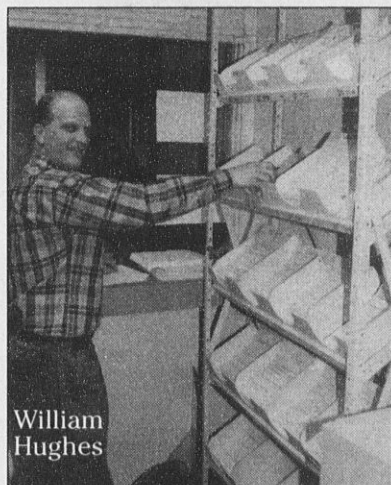
One distraught taxpayer claimed he could not file his income tax form on time because his car with his tax return inside was stolen while he ate lunch.

Police recovered the car and impounded it — tax return and all — as evidence. CSEA members nicknamed this excuse "grand theft tax return."

One woman called to check the status of her tax refund. Thinking the tax department knows everything about everyone, the caller also asked the CSEA member on the phone how many parking tickets she had.

While workers tirelessly repeat information about dozens of tax programs to callers each day, one taxpayer demanded a tax amnesty application.

As the saying goes: a day late and a dollar short. The CSEA member had to gently but firmly tell the caller he was a bit late. The program ended two years ago.



William Hughes



Sue Treacy

"The only sane way to face this is to keep laughing, smiling and helping as many people as we can."

William Hughes
Buffalo
Taxation and Finance

— Daniel X. Campbell

April 15 is a mind-numbing day for the whole department.

One woman called to check the status of her tax refund. Thinking the tax department knows everything about everyone, the caller also asked the CSEA member on the phone how many parking tickets she had.

"The tax season is the time of year when the best comes out in Tax and Finance," CSEA Local 690 President T. J. O'Donnell said.

CSEA workers prepare for the mind-numbing onslaught of taxpayer questions, tax returns and refund efforts which make the department the center of state tax efforts this month.

"The staff really pulls together, veteran co-workers know what they're in for and they help the newer employees. We really pull together to help each other out during that time," O'Donnell said.

Natalie Farley, a 19-year department veteran, and Sue Treacy, a 17-year vet of the mail room, shared some memorable tax crunch stories.

"I once received an open envelope with 12 \$100 bills in it with no tax return, no return address — just Tax and Finance," Farley said. "I turned the money over to Business Administration. We never knew who it came from or what it was for. Just \$1,200 in cash."

Treacy processes the certified, return receipt requested mail.

"When taxpayers call in to talk to 'C. Mail' to see if their return or correspondence had been processed, our service center explains that 'C. Mail' stands for certified mail

and not for a person. Then the taxpayer assistance department answers their inquiry," Treacy mused.

In the tax department building, Dan LaFar, a 27-year employee, handles the bar code sorting machinery which has helped taxpayers receive refunds in the mail sooner.

"Our first busy time in the year is February when we mail out 3.5 to 4 million pieces of mail. The state used to mail out tax forms to all taxpayers even those who use accountants, tax prep companies, etc. Now we just send a label to those individuals and it has saved the state millions in postage," LaFar said.

"But we'll do about 7.5 million refund checks by May out of a total of 25 million pieces of mail we process each year," he added.

LaFar notes the department will put in plenty of overtime the next few weeks.

"It will be 16-hour workdays during the week and 12-hour Saturdays and seven and a half hour Sundays, just like last year," LaFar said.

LaFar is proud of the job he and his co-workers do.

"When the mail leaves here for midtown Manhattan it just goes from our truck to a mail truck and into the city. It doesn't go through a second sort. That saves a day or two but the taxpayer never knows it."

The sign attached to her cubicle in taxpayer assistance reads "Killer Miller," but Dawn Miller, a five-year worker with about a year in tax compliance, really wants to help taxpayers who call her.

"We get tons of last-minute phone calls, usually requests for specific forms or for help with a problem," Miller said.

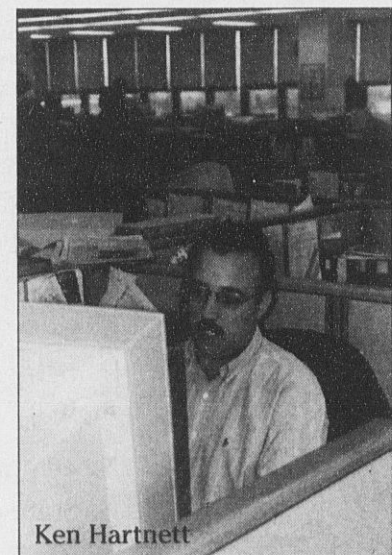
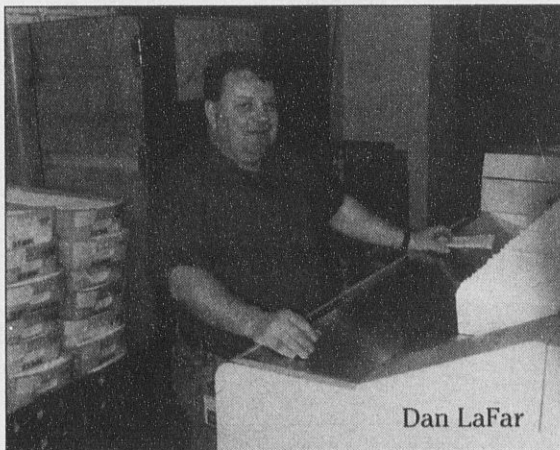
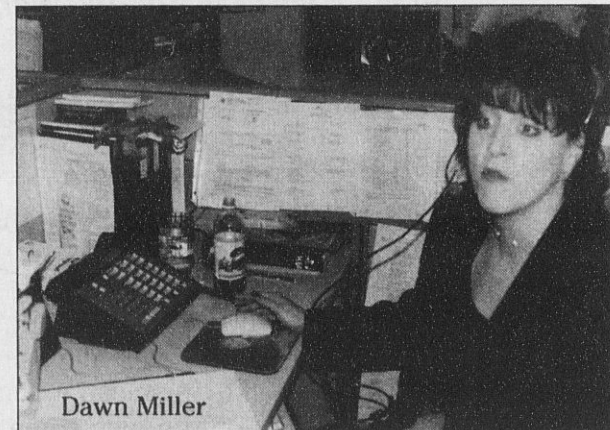
April 15 is a mind-numbing day for the whole department. "The calls never stop, your board is always full, and we go right to midnight, trying to help as many people as possible," Miller said.

At midnight the choices are clear: celebrate with your co-workers to relieve the stress or go home and sleep.

"Most of us go home," Miller said. "Your mind is just filled with questions, form numbers. You're numb."

Ken Harnett, a taxpayer assistance representative, said, "We all know April 15 is coming and we all get mentally prepared for it. We're all professionals."

— Daniel X. Campbell



DMV offices are accidents waiting to happen



"Why does something horrible have to happen before anybody takes action?" asked Barbara Rosenberg of the Metro Region

Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) local on Staten Island.

Unfortunately, that's a question many DMV employees ask all too frequently.

As union members observe Workers Memorial Day this month, thousands of state workers continue to put themselves in danger each day to provide for their families.

At some DMV offices, danger is a workplace companion.

"It seems like every other day we have an incident," said Sharon Gregory, a CSEA member at the DMV local in the Bronx.

"Customers have spit in our faces, they have threatened to return later with weapons or to throw acid in our faces, there are

fights between customers in the waiting area," Gregory said.

"It is quite common for people to pick cups, pens and staplers off our desks and throw them at us. Just last week we had a man come in here with a gun," she said.

"Customers were screaming and running all over the place — out the door, into the employee area, everywhere!" Gregory exclaimed.

"We have three security guards, but there is only so much they can do," Rosenberg of Staten Island said. "When we have serious incidents, we are told to call 911."

Although CSEA has made tremendous progress on workplace safety issues, the fight is not over.

In a move to improve customer service the past few years, safety partitions have been removed from all DMV service centers. The

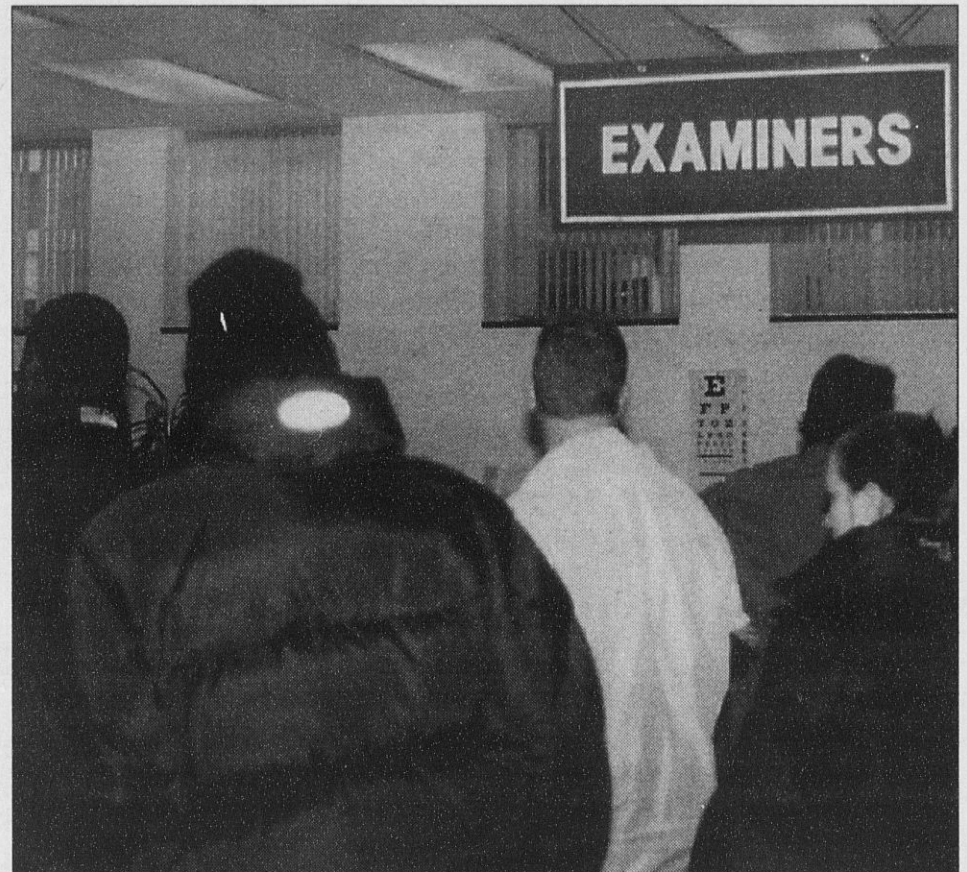
counters have also been lowered to improve personal interaction with customers.

"Customer service is important, but not at the expense of our safety," Gregory of the Bronx office said. "It is an atmosphere of fear. People are afraid to do their job."

A tentative agreement CSEA has with the state provides safety partitions in new DMV service centers, but that is little consolation to workers at older offices.

"Facilities are like neighborhoods, some are good and some are bad," Gregory said.

"They can't all be treated the same," she added. "But in areas like ours, where we service 300 to 500 customers a day and there is such a history of incidents, it is just plain dangerous not to have safety partitions."



New Motor Vehicle offices will have safety partitions in customer service areas.

Rosenberg said the safety issue at DMV is similar to a dangerous intersection.

"Residents write letters and ask for a traffic light for years, but nothing happens until there's an accident," Rosenberg said.

"After somebody dies, there is a light installed the next day. But it is too late, a life has already been lost. And that death could have been prevented," she added.

— Ann Carroll

**Remember to observe
Workers Memorial Day
on April 28.
See page 14 for details.**

Sitting next to Picasso?

Talent abounds among CSEA members

CSEA members bring unique gifts to the job, but the talents of some co-workers may not be appreciated by merely seeing them work.

There are countless artists among CSEA members whose work may never be appreciated by their colleagues.

Rather than letting these talents go unrecognized, some CSEA members are bringing their art into the workplace.

Sandra Pianin, a union shop steward at the state Banking Department local in New York City, saw Black History and Women's History months as a time to showcase the artistic talents of her co-workers.

Malaika Abdul Rahman used the CSEA bulletin board in the break room of the banking department as a gallery to exhibit her art during Black History Month.

Each week, Rahman would display different works from her series "Spirit Rise and Passive Resistance" to showcase the role of the arts in black history.

"Work has always had a strong influence on art, and mine is no exception," Rahman said. "Some of my strongest childhood memories involve traveling the season with my parents, who were migrant workers."

"Art is an excellent way to build community," Pianin said. "People come together to see Malaika's work, and then they find themselves discussing it."

Not all art, however, can be easily brought into the workplace.

Shawna Fliggins of the CSEA State Insurance Fund local is bringing her co-workers to the arts.

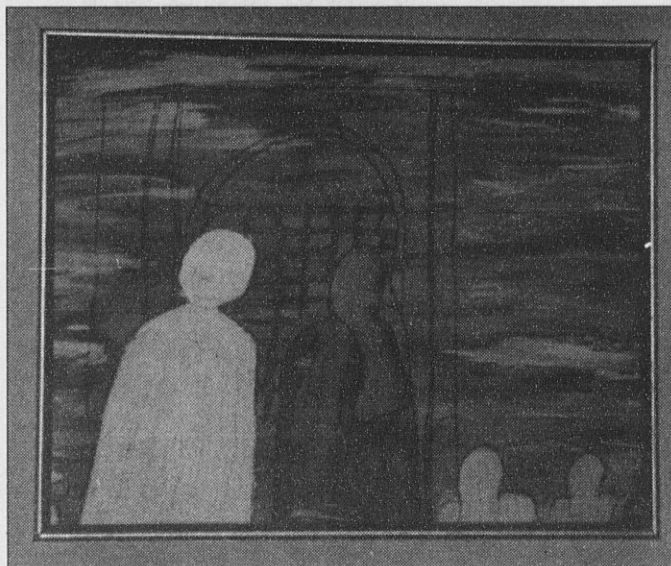
"I am offering special admission to CSEA members who are interested in seeing the show," said Fliggins.

The show is Fliggins' first full length play, "Murderers," which she wrote and directed. It has played during March at the Von King Cultural Arts Center in Brooklyn, and is being held over this month.

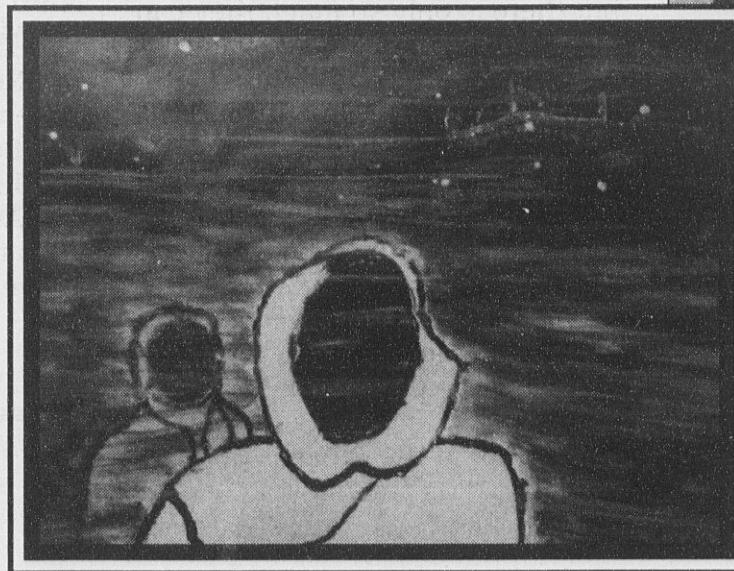
"The play shows how there are two ways to kill a person," Fliggins said.

"You can kill their body through physical injury, but we can also kill someone's spirit with our words."

"The production of the play has been exhausting," Fliggins said.



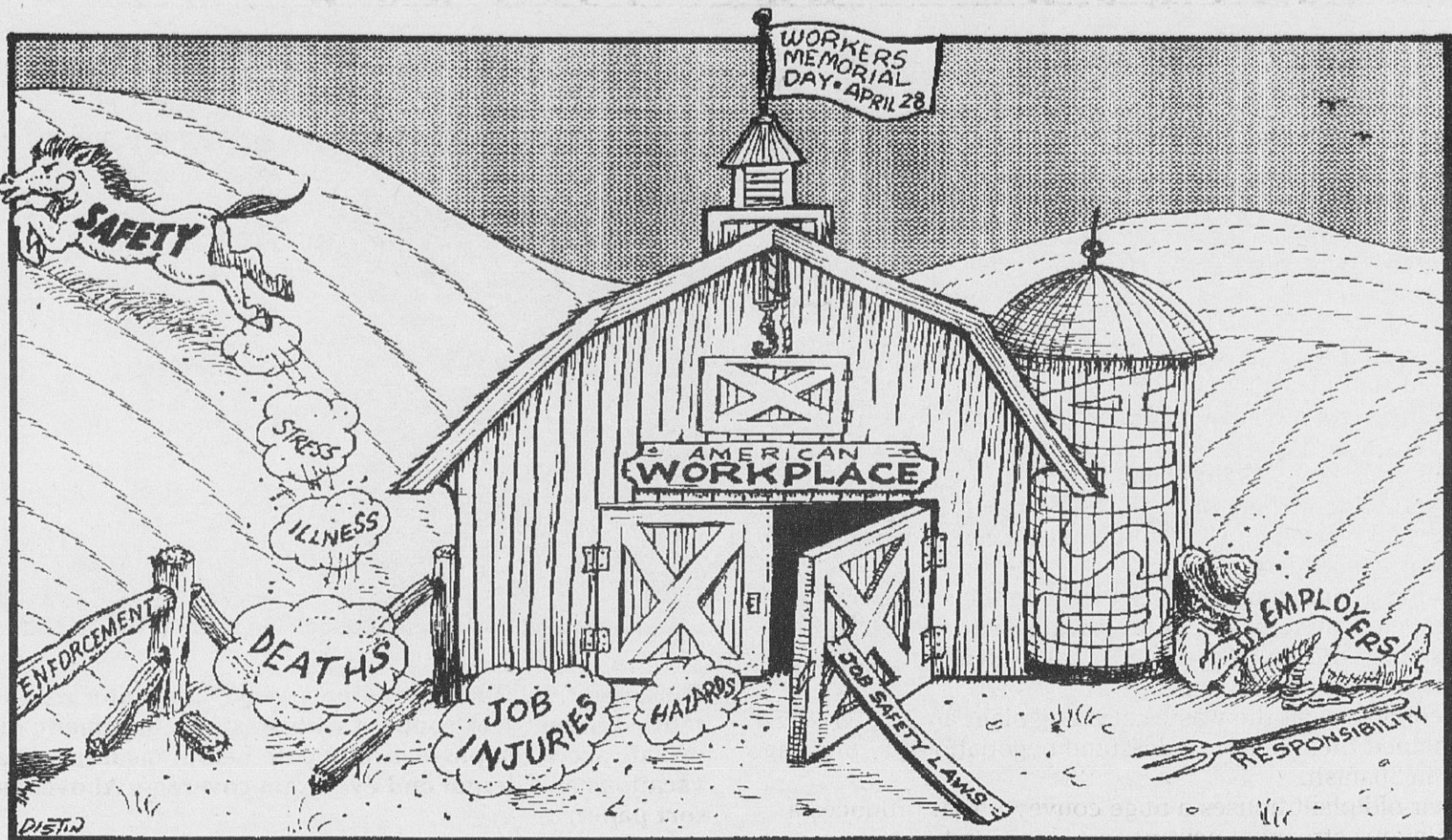
"Some of my strongest childhood memories involve traveling the season with my parents, who were migrant workers."



Malaika Abdul Rahman, above, of the state Banking Department local displays some of her artwork in the workplace. "Work has always had a strong influence on art, and mine is no exception," she said.

"After I leave work every day, I go straight to rehearsals, which don't end until 10 or 11 at night," she added. "It is very tiring, but it is so rewarding to see the message spread about how our words affect people."

— Ann Carroll



On April 28, remember those hurt or killed on the job

On April 28, the unions of the AFL-CIO observe Workers Memorial Day to remember those who have suffered and died on the job and to renew the fight for safe workplaces.

CSEA encourages members to take part in local activities marking the day.

For decades, unions have led the struggle for improved working conditions and dignity and respect on the job.

Unions have won laws and protections that have made workplaces safer and through union contracts have given workers a voice on the job. But the struggle is far from over.

Each year more than 60,000 workers die from job injuries and illnesses, and another 6 million are injured.

Thousands of workers who try to join unions or raise job safety concerns are fired. Across the country, workers' rights to safe jobs and their right to organize unions to improve their lives are under attack.

Employer groups and anti-worker members of Congress are trying to block needed job safety protections and weaken enforcement.

They want to stop unions from speaking out for stronger job safety laws and other worker rights and protections.

The labor movement has fought these weakening measures successfully, but similar proposals are likely to be advanced in the 106th Congress.

On this Workers Memorial Day, we call for:

- The right of workers to organize and join unions without employer interference or intimidation.
- An end to employer and congressional attacks on workers' safety and health and workers' rights.
- Stronger safety and health protections and enforcement.
- Coverage for all workers under the job safety law.
- Stronger whistleblower protections for workers who report job hazards and injuries.
- Implementation of an OSHA ergonomics standard to prevent repetitive strain injuries.
- Fair and timely compensation for injured workers.
- The right of workers and unions to speak out for strong job safety laws.

What you can do

- Organize a protest against employers and elected representatives pushing to weaken the job safety law and workers' rights.
- Hold a candlelight vigil, memorial service or moment of silence to remember those who have died on the job.
- Create a memorial or shrine at workplaces where workers have been killed on the job.
- Urge your city council or state legislature to pass a proclamation designating April 28 as Workers Memorial Day.
- Organize petition and letter-writing campaigns to encourage members of Congress and other elected officials to oppose rollbacks in worker protections.
- Organize a pledge campaign; have local employers or government officials sign a pledge committing to support strong safety laws and the right of workers to organize.

Workers OK contract at private recycling plant

HILLBURN — CSEA has added to its private sector successes with the recent unanimous approval of a four-year contract for recycling center workers in Rockland County.

CSEA negotiators hammered out a pact with Waste Management, Inc. which gives the 30 workers fully paid health insurance, paid vacations, and, for the first time, dental and eye exam coverage.

"This contract wouldn't have been possible without CSEA," unit President Harold Dennison said.

This is the second contract CSEA has negotiated in the private waste recycling industry. The other agreement is also with Waste Management at its Long Island plant.

"CSEA did great with all parts of the contract," Dennison said. "The workers are very happy" with the almost 12 percent raise over four years, he added.

"It was hard bargaining — particularly on the wage issue," said Mark Higgins, director of CSEA's private sector affairs unit.

He was aided during talks by CSEA Labor Relations Specialist Harold Krangle from Long Island.

Many employees at the waste recycling plant are Guatemalan, and CSEA helped them better understand negotiations by printing fact sheets in Spanish.

The year-old plant houses a huge conveyor that produces a nearly continuous stream of newspapers, cans, and glass and plastic bottles which workers sort for recycling.

"You're standing there eight or nine hours a day," said Dennison about the conveyor belt detail.



Workers at the Rockland County recycling center recently ratified a four-year contract with Waste Management, giving the private sector employees fully paid health insurance, paid vacations and dental and eye exam coverage. Above, employees sort paper.

"It does get tiring and there's wear and tear on the back, but it's a good job.

"And we're happy to have a contract," Dennison said.



You can make a difference

Join us in Albany on Tuesday May 4
Farmworker Advocacy Day '99

Stand in support of farmworkers while they seek change

For more information and to register, contact:

Eastern NY

Minerva Moya
c/o Rural & Migrant Ministry
PO Box 4757
Poughkeepsie, NY 12602
(914) 485-8627

Western NY

Lew Papenfuse
c/o Farmworker Legal Services NY
80 St. Paul St., Suite 620
Rochester, NY 14604-1350
(716) 325-3050

Northeastern NY

Barbara DiTommaso
c/o 40 North Main Ave.
Albany, NY 12203-1422
(518) 453-6695

Thank you for making this year's Forty-Hour FAST a success

CSEA President Danny Donohue, Albany Catholic Diocese Bishop Howard Hubbard and NYSUT President Thomas Hobart joined together at the Capital District Regional Food Bank to begin this year's fast.

The focus this year was the great mass of human beings known as "the working poor" — those who have jobs, even 40-hour-a-week jobs, but who cannot escape the shackles of poverty because they are paid a poverty, rather than a living, wage.

Sponsored annually by the New York State Labor-Religion Coalition, the fast gives New Yorkers the opportunity to do something extraordinary: join others from around the state to act for what is right.

Many New Yorkers around the state fasted from 8 p.m. March 8 until noon on March 10 to bring attention to those men and women who go to work every day, often putting in overtime, but are unable to get ahead.

"Hungering for justice is what this is all about."

— Susan Zucker
Asst. Coordinator of the
NYS Labor-Religion Coalition



Your Reference Guide To CSEA Member Services & Benefits

Your Toll-Free Connection To The Employee Benefit Fund – 1-800-323-2732.

In the 518 area, call 782-1500. For answers regarding the Dental Care, Vision Care and Prescription Drug for state employees and participating local government employees. **TDD for hearing impaired only:** 1-800-532-3833. Mailing address: CSEA Employee Benefit Fund, One Lear Jet Lane, Suite One, Latham, NY 12110-2395.

Grievances & Discipline

Report any grievance immediately to your local grievance representative or shop steward. If they are unavailable, tell your CSEA Unit or Local President, or your CSEA Labor Relations Specialist at your region office. Don't delay if you believe you have a problem — grievances must be filed on a timely basis.

Workers' Compensation Legal Assistance Program

Covering Workers Compensation & Social Security Disability.

If you are injured on the job or sustain a job-related illness, CSEA's new 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. If you have a possible Workers' Compensation or Social Security Disability case, call 1-800-342-4146, toll-free, and select the proper menu option for Workers' Compensation.

Education & Training

CSEA provides workshops and training programs for union activists. For more information, call toll-free 1-800-342-4146; on a touch-tone phone, press 9, then extension 1294, then "#". On a rotary phone, ask the operator for extension 1294. Union-oriented videotapes are available from your CSEA region office.

Insurance

CSEA offers several insurance programs at low group rates with the convenience of payroll deduction.

For details on CSEA Security Life Plan, Disability Income Protection Program, Whole Life or Universal Life, and Hospital Income Insurance Plan, call toll free: Jardine Group Services Corp. 1-800-929-6656.

For details on Auto Insurance and Homeowners/Renters insurance, call toll free: 1-800-833-4657.

For details on the CSEA Long Term Care Program, call toll free: 1-800-366-5273.

Health Insurance

For answers to your specific questions about the New York State Health Insurance Program's Empire Plan:

Blue Cross Claims:1-800-342-9815
or (518) 367-0009

Metropolitan Claims
(MetraHealth)1-800-942-4640

Participating Providers1-800-942-4640

Home Infusion/Nursing, Diabetic Supplies,
Durable Med Equip Home Care Advocacy
Program.....1-800-638-9918

Hospital admission approval/ surgical review:

Empire Plan Health Call.....1-800-992-1213

Mental Health & Substance

Abuse Hotline1-800-446-3995

Managed Physical Medicine
(chiropractic & physical therapy) 1-800-942-4640

Civil Service Exam Help

The Labor Education Action Program (LEAP) can help you prepare for civil service exams with low-cost study booklets on a variety of relevant subjects. Call toll free: 1-800-253-4332.

Safety Concerns

Report serious accidents, unsafe and unhealthy working conditions to the CSEA Labor Relations Specialists at your region office.

For occupational safety and health information, call CSEA Headquarters at 1-800-342-4146; on a touch-tone phone, press 9, then extension 1465, then "#". On a rotary phone, ask the operator for extension 1465.

Retirement

For general information about retirement and retiree membership, call the Membership Benefits Department at Headquarters, 1-800-342-4146.

Talk to a CSEA-provided retirement counselor if you are retiring soon. It's important that you select the proper option from the Employees' Retirement system, so you can plan the lifestyle that you want to enjoy. Call toll free: 1-800-894-1960.

Advantage Union Family Savers

----- C S E A -----

■ **CSEA's Cellular Phone Program:** Keep in touch the union way with CSEA's economical and discounted cellular phone benefit. For more details on this members' only benefit, call CSEA's Member Benefits Department at 1-800-342-4146, ext. 1359.

■ **Buyer's Edge:** Get in on the buy-by-phone consumer buying service that many of your fellow CSEA members are saving money in. For details call the Member Benefits Department at 1-800-342-4146, ext. 1359.

■ **Quest International:** CSEA members pay a special annual membership fee of \$29.95.

- 50% Hotel Discount — subject to space availability
- 25% Hotel Dining Discount — at participating Quest Hotels
- Rental Car Discounts — National, Hertz and Alamo
- Guaranteed satisfaction or your money back

For an application and more information, call the CSEA Member Benefits Department at 1-800-342-4146, ext. 1359, or order by phone: 1-800-STAY-450 (access #1813-01).

----- A F S C M E -----

■ **AFSCME Advantage Mastercard:** Features one of the lowest interest rates. No annual fee. For an application form, call your CSEA Membership Benefits Department at Headquarters, 1-800-342-4146 or to apply by phone, call 1-800-522-4000.

■ **AFSCME Advantage Legal Services:** You can obtain high quality, affordable legal services for many personal legal matters through the AFSCME Advantage Union Privilege Legal Services Program. For details and a list of participating lawyers in your area, call your CSEA region office or the Membership Benefits Department at Headquarters 1-800-342-4146.

■ **Disney World, Theme Parks Discounts:** Discount admission to Disney World in Florida, Disney Land in California, Six Flags Amusement Parks, Universal Studio's Fan Club and Anheuser Busch Theme Parks Clubs (*i.e.* Sea World and Busch Gardens). To receive discounts, call 1-800-238-2539 between 7:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. Monday-Friday. Identify yourself as a CSEA/AFSCME Local 1000 member and provide your Social Security number.

■ **AFSCME Advantage Mortgage Program:** Makes buying a home or refinancing your mortgage easier and more affordable. Savings for buyers and sellers. Special help for first-time buyers. Call toll free: 1-800-848-6466.

■ **AFSCME Advantage Dental Program:** A discount dental program (not dental insurance) that allows you and your family to choose your dentist from a lengthy list of qualified professionals and receive instant discounts on a wide variety of dental services on every visit. May help lower your out-of-pocket expenses even more if you are already covered by dental insurance. Membership fee \$29.95 annually. For more information call toll-free 1-800-257-8352.

■ **AFSCME Advantage Loan Program:** Unsecured personal loans from \$2,500 to \$15,000, with affordable monthly payments, are available to credit-qualified applicants. Call toll-free 1-888-235-2759 for applications, information.

For more information on member benefits, call the CSEA Membership Benefits Department 1-800-342-4146



Jardine Group Services Corporation

Exciting new disability plan option for CSEA members

*In response to member requests for a more economical option under the disability income insurance program, a new short-term disability plan has been created called the **Basic Plan**.*

CSEA, working with Jardine Group Services Corp. and our plan underwriter New York Life Insurance Co., is offering for a **limited time** the opportunity to enroll in the basic disability income program **without medical underwriting**. During the initial open enrollment period, there are **no medical questions to answer** to qualify for coverage.

This plan features:

- Coverage amounts ranging from \$300 per month to \$1,000 per month based on current salary;
- Coverage for accidents on the job and off the job;
- Coverage for sickness;
- Additional benefits if hospitalized;
- Survivor benefits;
- Work stoppage benefits;
- Accidental death and dismemberment benefit;
- Option of choosing a 0/7 or 30/30 day elimination period depending on your specific needs;
- Convenience of payroll deduction.

CSEA members must be under age 60, not currently insured under the disability program, and meet the actively-at-work requirement.

**This special offer under the new basic plan
is only available for a limited time.**

*All applications must be received within
the 45-day open enrollment period specified
in the mailing materials.*

For more information and a brochure with complete plan information, including eligibility, costs, benefits, limitations, exclusions and termination provisions, contact your Jardines service representative at

1-800-929-6656

MAY 15 IS DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS, CHANGES TO CSEA'S CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

Proposed resolutions and proposed amendments to the CSEA Constitution and Bylaws for consideration by CSEA delegates to the union's 1999 Annual Delegates Meeting must be submitted by May 15, 1999.

Proposed resolutions may be submitted only by a delegate and must be submitted on the proper forms. Forms for submitting resolutions are available from CSEA headquarters and region offices.

Proposed resolutions and proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws must be submitted no later than May 15 to Statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves, CSEA Headquarters, 143 Washington Ave., Albany, N.Y. 12210-2303.

The 1999 CSEA Annual Delegates Meeting will be held Oct. 18 - 22 in Washington.



**THANKS FOR
DESIGNATING
YOUR SEFA GIFT
TO NEW YORK'S
UNITED WAYS.**

What other
investment
shows this
kind of
appreciation?

CSEA offering \$23,000 in scholarships; filing deadline is April 15

Graduating high school seniors who have a parent or legal guardian who is a CSEA-represented employee may apply for a total of \$23,000 in scholarships offered by or through CSEA. A single application covers three scholarship programs.

Irving Flaumenbaum Memorial Scholarships

Three \$1,000 Irving Flaumenbaum Memorial Scholarships will be awarded in each of CSEA's six regions.

The awards are presented in memory of the late Irving Flaumenbaum, who was a spirited CSEA activist for more than three decades. He was president of CSEA's Long Island Region and an AFSCME International vice president at the time of his death.

Jardine Award and Met Life Award

One \$2,500 Jardine Award scholarship will be awarded to a student entering the SUNY system.

This award is provided by Jardine Group Services Corp. and is given in memory of Charles Foster, a longtime CSEA activist in the 1930s who

became the first business officer of the SUNY system.

One \$2,500 MetLife Award will be presented and is not limited to a student entering the SUNY system.

It is given in memory of the late Joseph D. Lochner, CSEA's first employee and former executive director who was a CSEA employee for more than 40 years.

The top 2 percent of scholastic achievers, based on high school average, class rank and SAT scores, will be selected to create the eligibility pool for these two awards.

Application deadline is April 15

Scholarship applications are available from CSEA local and unit presidents and at CSEA headquarters, region and satellite offices.

Applications must be filed by April 15. Winners will be notified in June and announced in *The Work Force*. The CSEA scholarship program is administered by the CSEA Memorial Scholarship Committee.



Black Trade Unionists convention set

Mark your calendar The Coalition of Black Trade Unionists plans its 28th National Convention for May 26-31 in New Orleans.

An Official Convention Call was sent in January.

If you have any questions, please call Portia Given at (518) 257-1210.

Also, CBTU membership dues should have been paid by Jan. 1.

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.

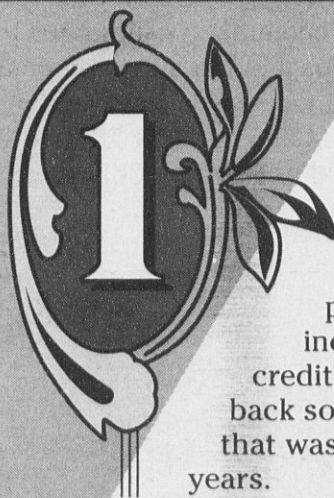
Only members "in good standing" can participate in these activities. To be in "good standing," your dues cannot be delinquent.

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.

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.

You must 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.

Earned Income Tax Credit eligibility extended



The Earned Income Tax Credit is a special tax benefit for working people who earn low or moderate incomes. Workers who qualify for the credit and file a federal tax return can get back some or all of the federal income tax that was taken out of their pay during the years.

Formerly, only families with children qualified for the credit; now, the credit is available to low-income workers without children. For working families with one child, the maximum income in 1998 is \$26,473. For working families with more than one child, the maximum is \$30,095.

The credit can make a real difference in the lives of

many moderate and low-income workers, as long as they know it's there and understand how to get it.

Workers should understand that they can get an advance payment of a portion of the credit in each paycheck during the year or a rebate when they file on April 15.

Low-income workers without children can also claim the credits for the past three years.

For a copy of prior year forms, please call 800-TAX-FORM.

The Internal Revenue Service also has new instructions on treatment of workfare. The 1997 Balanced Budget Act provided that compensation for workfare be excluded when calculating income for earned income credit purposes.

If you want to receive a kit explaining the Earned Income Credit, call the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities at (202) 408-1080.

Introducing CSEA Protection Plus Voluntary Universal Life

What is it? Protection Plus is life insurance designed to provide insurance protection plus future cash value. Universal Life premiums are designed to remain level for the life of the policy. You can choose any amount of coverage. The rates are unisex and non-smokers are eligible for discounted rates. Premiums can be paid via payroll deduction.

When can I get it? A pilot program was launched in February at selected work locations throughout the state. There will be a six-month open enrollment period assigned by work location.

How much coverage can I purchase? During the open enrollment period, CSEA members under age 65 may apply for coverage up to three times their annual salary, or the amount purchased by \$20 a week (whichever is greater) up to a maximum of \$250,000.

What about dependent coverage? Spouses under age 65 may apply for the amount purchased by \$3 a week or \$10,000, whichever is greater. Children's coverage is available in amounts of \$15,000 and \$25,000.

Don't wait to enroll! Take advantage of this unique opportunity to apply during your initial eligibility period. If you plan to participate, apply now because:

- CSEA members who do not participate during their introductory period may have to meet more stringent underwriting requirements in the future;

- Your health could change before the next enrollment and you may be unable to obtain the insurance protection you need;

- Depending on when the next enrollment is scheduled, you could be a year or more older and your premiums would be higher.

Need more information about your open enrollment period? Contact your Jardine Insurance representative. A personal meeting with each CSEA member will be scheduled at your work location.

CSEA • LOCAL 1000 AFSCME • AFL-CIO

CSEA Today

265,000 MEMBERS STRONG!

WILLIAMSON SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZES —

Williamson Central Schools workers in Wayne County have voted decisively to join CSEA. Voting 74-22, the unit consisting of bus drivers, school monitors, food service, clerical, maintenance and custodial workers and teacher aides cast their ballots recently for CSEA. Robert Bradshaw, supervising organizer, said the new unit had an "excellent" organizing committee "that really took the lead in getting out the pro-union vote." He also credited organizers Lynn Knoop and Frank Antonucci for their assistance. ... **HEMPSTEAD RATIFIES** — After demonstrations, substantial media coverage and good, hard work and persistence at the bargaining table, CSEA members in the CSEA Town of Hempstead Local have a contract. The new pact took 18 months to achieve. The contract calls for pay increases plus steps over three years. ... **JANUARY, FEBRUARY PEOPLE RECRUITERS** — January's recruiter of the month was Harriet Clark in the Southern Region. She recruited 23 new PEOPLE members. In February, Frank Balsano in the Western Region was recruiter of the month signing up 46 new PEOPLE members. ... **WELL-DESERVED BREAK** — CSEA member Butch Pignatelli retired after serving as the president of New Hyde Park's Department of Public Works for a record 35 years. Pignatelli recently was feted by his co-workers. ... **CUSTODIAL UNIT REACHES DEAL** — The CSEA Connetquot Custodial Unit recently hammered out a contract. Led by CSEA Labor Relations Specialist Guy DiCosola and Unit President Steve Panno, the contract includes pay raises

and calls for a change from self-insurance to the Empire Plan, which will enhance benefits, and increases in sick leave buyouts and longevity. ...

SENECA STALEMATE —

Negotiations continue in the West Seneca School District, where there has not been a contract in almost two years. CSEA has requested a factfinder be appointed. ... **PRIVATE PUSH** — A Private Sector Membership Training Program is set for this spring, with the hope that the program will be extended to all regions. ... **DOES COMPUTE** — Applications are pouring in for the new state employees computer training program, PC STAT Plus. ... **ENCON MEETS** — The Department of Environmental Conservation recently held its first statewide labor management meeting in several years with a newly constituted committee. ... **ROME CONQUERED** — A recent IP victory in the city of Rome resulted in reinstatement with back pay and benefits to a worker whose bargaining unit work was transferred to non-union employees. ... **MALONE ON BOARD** — The Employee Benefit Fund added the Malone School District for dental and vision benefits, effective March 1. ... **WATCHING THE BENCH** — CSEA General Counsel Nancy Hoffman was recently named to the prestigious federal judicial screening committee for New York. She and the 13 other lawyers on the committee will recommend candidates for federal judgeships and U.S. attorney positions in the state. Hoffman was nominated by former state AFL-CIO President Edward Cleary with the approval of U.S. Sen. Charles Schumer.

TELLING OUR STORY — Letchworth Developmental Center Local President Sara Bogart and CSEA Political Action Coordinator Jason Haenel advanced the union's position on the New York Cares Campaign on a WRKL radio program recently in Rockland County. Bogart and Haenel urged listeners to ask their legislators to push for more state-operated beds for the developmentally disabled.





Does It Matter That State Policies Will Jeopardize Mental Health Services In Your Community?

YOU BET IT DOES.

IS THIS THE MENTAL HEALTH FACILITY OF THE 21st CENTURY?

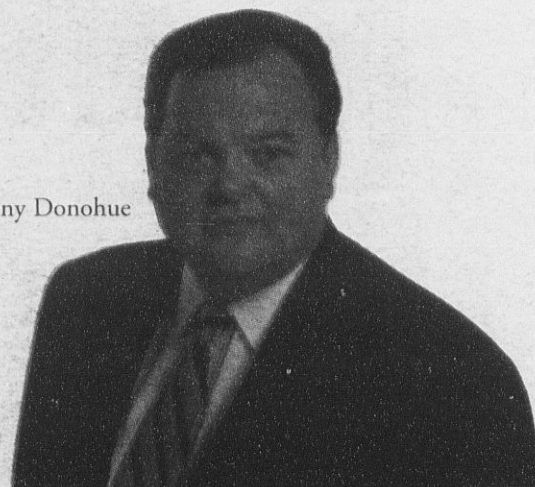
CSEA applauds the governor's goal for New York to be No. 1. But we cannot lead if our mental health policies are shameful.

Thousands of mentally ill people will be denied vital services if we continue to downsize psychiatric centers without ensuring alternative care.

Substance abusers and violent patients needing treatment in secure, supervised settings will be forced onto the streets. Tragically, some will commit violent crimes that could have been prevented with adequate care. Many will be jailed, adding to the already overburdened prison system. In the end, localities will bear the costs.

The 265,000 experienced, dedicated members of the CSEA Work Force are committed to make New York No. 1. But our state can only be a leader if it provides more responsive, responsible mental health services to our family, friends and neighbors.

Danny Donohue



CSEA
The Work Force

Local 1000 • AFSCME • AFL-CIO
Danny Donohue, President