

The Work Force

January 2013

Vol. 16 No. 1

“Our hearts are broken.”

*President Barack Obama,
Dec. 16, 2012*



See pages 3, 4

CSEA members: special connection to Newtown

Editor's Note: The mass murder at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., has affected our nation like few other incidents in recent times. It is chilling and heartbreaking for all.

Many CSEA members feel a special connection to the events, not just as parents and neighbors, but also as public employees who work every day to make communities better places to live. There's even more of a kinship for CSEA members who have special responsibilities caring for children in schools, day care facilities, libraries and other places.

The tragedy also connects two longtime areas of CSEA focus and concern: work site security and care for people struggling with mental illness. (See *President Donohue's column – page 4*).

In the aftermath, CSEA members close to the events and those viewing them from afar shared their perspective as Americans tried to come to terms with this senseless act of violence.

PAWLING — In the tight-knit Pawling School District, just across the New York border from Newtown, Conn., the tragedy had two very personal connections.

Flags were lowered in Pawling as the community mourned 7-year-old Daniel Barden, the son of Pawling second-grade teacher Jackie Barden, and Mary Sherlach, the

school psychologist at Sandy Hook Elementary School, whose father-in-law, Jay Sherlach, is a respected retired Pawling school administrator. A statement from the Barden family said Daniel “embodied everything that is wholesome and innocent in the world.”

“It has been very tough for our local community,” said CSEA Pawling School District Unit President Jeff Stevens. “Things are just very, very quiet.”

Stevens, a district bus driver, said the district had more personnel visibly in place when Pawling students returned to school the Monday following the tragedy.

“The increased visibility was to keep students and parents at ease,” Stevens said.

Tragedy brings communities together

For CSEA members and many others in the Albany area, the Newtown tragedy hit hard on the heels of a tragic car crash that claimed the lives of two popular high school students and seriously injured two others. Police have said the students were doing nothing wrong when their vehicle was struck by another vehicle on the Adirondack Northway.

The incident has brought the community together in remarkable ways as people have struggled with loss and grief and especially helping students to find their way through

“As someone in a small town who has also experienced a horrific tragedy, we here in Watkins Glen know only too well what the people of Newtown are feeling right now. The only advice we can offer is to seek out others to help as you grieve; friends, relatives, professionals. Do not let fear cast its dark shadow on your lives or those of your children. Hold those you love close and know our hearts ache for your losses.”

— Schuyler County Department of Social Services Deputy Commissioner (and former CSEA member) Beverly Clickner. Four CSEA members were murdered in their county office in 1992 by a single gunman.



A memorial outside the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., honoring victim Daniel Barden, the son of Pawling School District second-grade teacher Jackie Barden. CSEA represents staff at Pawling.

the sadness. “Something like this happening at this time of year is especially hard,” said CSEA member Kathleen Pepper, a special education aide in the Shenendehowa School District. “But people pull together to support one another.”

Security concerns

The Newtown tragedy has also brought renewed focus on work site security and especially protections and procedures in school buildings. CSEA worked diligently for New York's Worksite Security Law following the murder of four Schuyler County social services employees in Watkins Glen in 1992.

But New York's public schools are not covered under the Worksite Security Act. School districts fall under the Schools Against Violence in Education (SAVE) law. Critics of SAVE contend that the law has little mandated enforcement and many of its standards are inadequate.

“It's standard to report a parent or a student who makes a veiled or direct threat, either in person or through an electronic medium,” said CSEA Nassau Education Local President Monica Berkowitz. “We take that responsibility very seriously.”

But Suffolk Education Local President Maria Navarro points out that despite security monitoring equipment, training and strong emergency preparedness, many are troubled by some questionable protocols. “Clerical staff are required to remain at their posts in an emergency situation to provide

information to the public,” she said.

CSEA is committed to removing inconsistencies, improving security assessments and ensuring training, procedures and other steps to reduce risks for all.

Concerns for mental health services

Many CSEA members work in mental health services, and have concerns that funding cuts are not helping those who need help the most.

Peggy Wheeler, who has worked for the Onondaga County Mental Health Department in Syracuse 26 years, supervises classes of emotionally disturbed children, ages 10-12 from school districts throughout Onondaga County.

“As a mental health professional you have to be concerned that his family was in need. There are no simplistic answers here. Mental illness continues to be a very complex issue. There's still great stigma attached, and on top of the stigma, you have service availability problems, families struggling to access services for young children due to cutbacks,” Wheeler said.

“When you think about budget cuts, we're talking about mostly social programs. Mental health budgets are always cut. The end result is the quality of services needed by families is jeopardized,” Wheeler said.

— Jessica Ladlee, Rich Impagliazzo, Therese Assalian, Mark Kotzin

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143 Washington Ave.
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Danny Donohue, President

STEPHEN A. MADARASZ
Communications Director & Publisher

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Communications Assistant

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

COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALISTS

| | | |
|------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| RICH IMPAGLIAZZO | Long Island Region | (631) 462-0030 |
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| JILL ASENCIO | Headquarters | (518) 257-1276 |

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IN TOUCH WITH THE

Work Force

CSEA President Danny Donohue

In the aftermath of Newtown, let's do some good

There are so many issues that I had planned to share some thoughts on as we start this new year, but they are all overshadowed.

No one can possibly be prepared for the horror of the events like what unfolded in Newtown Conn. on Dec. 14. None of us can possibly be the same afterwards.

It's impossible to try to make sense out of what happened, but we owe it to the children and adults who lost their lives that we come together and work together for a better future.

All of us can feel a range of emotions about what happened to those innocent children and dedicated teachers and education staff. CSEA members can especially feel a kinship, not just as parents and neighbors, but as people in the community who are dedicated to improving the quality of life and, in many cases, taking care of young people.

The situation in Newtown touches our lives and spirit in so many different ways but it also brings together two issues that have long been a focus for CSEA: ensuring work site security and helping people who are struggling with mental illness.

No school, no work site can ever be perfectly safe. Still, we can always make them safer through better assessment, preparation and constant vigilance. We cannot let fear and suspicion dictate how we live our lives and conduct our work and lives, but we can take more steps to be sure that we are safer in our daily routines.

We must also be careful not to stigmatize people and families who struggle with mental illness and encourage people to talk about it and seek out the help they need. (Let me point out that most people who suffer from mental illness are much more likely to harm themselves than anyone else). At the same time, we must do more to ensure that everyone has access to meaningful care and services. We must always remember that mental illness is an illness and illness does not discriminate.

In this challenging time, take care to appreciate those you love and help to create more good by being kind to those who cross your path.



Danny



Wal-Mart rakes in the dough — at workers' expense

Following a recent “Black Friday” strike and a tragic fire that killed 122 workers at a Bangladesh factory that supplied apparel to the company, the nation’s largest retailer is in the spotlight once again, cementing its reputation as one of the nation’s most anti-worker employers.

Despite threats of retaliation by the corporation, Wal-Mart workers and their supporters held more than 1,000 protests in 100 cities on the busiest shopping day of the year to speak out against low wages and poor working conditions. The strike was the latest in a string of coordinated worker efforts that also included earlier strikes at Wal-Mart stores and a company supplier, as well as the founding of “OUR Walmart,” an organization of current and former Wal-Mart workers seeking respect on the job.

The workers have a valid complaint. Wal-Mart brags about how well it pays its full-time workers, even though its work force consists mainly of part-time employees. But the \$12.40 average pay for a full-time worker (just under \$26,000 a year) is still below the national median wage.

A recent study by New York University found that Wal-Mart workers earn 28 percent less, on average, than workers at other large retailers. Another study by the University of California found that better paying retail jobs are lost and replaced by jobs that pay 10 percent less in communities where Wal-Mart stores have opened.

Meanwhile, the wealth of the six members of the Walton family who own Wal-Mart is equivalent to that of the bottom 49 million American families combined. That’s right, six people, in one family, with as much wealth as 49

million families combined!

Wal-Mart could learn a lesson from other successful retailers that you don’t have to resort to things like poor wages and benefits, union busting, sex discrimination, child labor, or overtime abuse in order to turn a profit. Employers can treat their employees well and still succeed.

For example, Jim Sinegal, the recently retired co-founder of Wal-Mart rival Costco, earned a salary that seems almost paltry compared to what the Waltons rake in. As head of the nation’s fifth largest retailer, Sinegal was paid an annual salary of just \$350,000 a year, a fraction of what many other Fortune 500 chief executives are commonly paid, because he believed it was wrong for the boss to make hundreds of times more money than his or her workers.

He also paid his workers a lot more than Wal-Mart does. After

four and a half years on the job, Costco employees make \$19.50 an hour, seven dollars an hour more than Wal-Mart employees. Costco workers also receive inexpensive health insurance that includes dental benefits, and the company contributes generously to their 401(k) plans. Another big difference between Costco and Wal-Mart is that the former recognizes the unions its employees have chosen to represent them. (See pages 9-11)

Some Wall Street analysts have criticized Costco for being overly generous to its employees at the expense of profit. However, the company’s business model and philosophy that good wages and benefits mean lower turnover and greater productivity have made it the leading warehouse retailer in the country — just ahead of runner-up Sam’s Club, which is owned by Wal-Mart.

— Ed Molitor

CSEA campaign has some success but much at risk in many places

Local lawmakers fail to do better for NY seniors

Despite a focused CSEA statewide campaign, local lawmakers in several upstate counties voted to disregard the public and put the well-being of the elderly at risk by selling out county nursing facilities under a questionable scheme. Lawmakers in Onondaga, Saratoga and Steuben counties are proceeding with plans to privatize their facilities under terms that are unlikely to benefit current and future elderly residents or county taxpayers.

Public health care facilities must care for all, regardless of ability to pay; private facilities do not.

CSEA successfully turned back immediate threats to sell out the nursing facilities in Orange and Ontario counties but there are still concerns ahead. Circumstances are still uncertain regarding the future for public facilities in Rockland, Cayuga, Chautauqua and several other counties.

Several counties are planning to use Local Development Corporations (LDCs) to fund the privatized nursing facilities under a scheme that may or may not even be legal. Additionally, it does not appear that using the LDCs will provide county taxpayers' anything more than some short term fiscal relief and may undermine services and create other operating complications in the long term.

"How we care for our elderly is an important measure of who we are as a people and how we should be judged as a society," said CSEA President Danny Donohue. "In recent weeks, lawmakers in too many places have failed that test. Surely we can do better for vulnerable seniors."

CSEA's campaign focused the public's attention, community by community, on what is at stake through radio and TV ads, a website (www.betterfornyseniors.com), Facebook interaction and grassroots organizing. The union's efforts are ongoing.

SYRACUSE — Onondaga County legislators have taken their first step toward the ill-advised sale of the Van Duyn Home & Hospital by transferring ownership to a development corporation.

The county's sale to Rockland County-based Upstate Services Group was supposed to raise \$8 million to \$10 million for the cash-strapped county. But, recent news reports peg the sale price at closer to \$5 million.

Even that number is inflated, because the county has agreed to give Upstate Services \$2 million to cover initial operating costs. That leaves net revenue of \$3 million for the county.

Even that amount will take a hit as the county is expected to pay \$2.5 million to demolish a former tuberculosis sanatorium on the Van Duyn property.

CSEA is concerned that a private operator driven by the need to turn a profit will cut staffing and reduce the quality of patient care. The county has ignored the union's request for information about how it calculated Van Duyn's future deficits, and suspects the county inflated its initial sale price.

Steuben County home privatized

Steuben County Health Care Facility workers are stunned and angry after the Steuben County Legislature quickly and quietly pushed through a resolution to sell the nursing home.

Legislators recently voted unanimously to sell the 105-bed home. They did so without a public hearing, and while most county residents were at work.

"This legislature blindsided each and every county resident," said an angry CSEA Western Region President Flo Tripi. "They pulled the wool over residents' eyes, kept them in the dark and silenced their voices."

Legislators did not announce the content of the resolution during the public meeting before the vote and had kept the resolution vague, unlike typical county resolutions.

"County residents should be disgusted with the legislature," Tripi said. "There is no excuse for keeping information from the public and not giving people an opportunity to comment and to tell legislators they want the home to remain public."

Tripi and other CSEA officials were rudely dismissed after they challenged the lawmakers actions.

Reprieve at Valley View

A heated battle between Orange County Executive Ed Diana and legislators over the future of the county-owned Valley View nursing home ended in a reprieve for the facility when legislators recently voted 19-2 to override Diana's veto of an amended 2013 budget, which fully funds Valley View.

"There was strong public support for continuing to fully fund the home, but Diana stubbornly stuck to his position," said CSEA Southern Region President Billy Riccaldo. Diana even dipped into his own campaign funds to pay for television advertising touting double-digit tax increases he claimed would result from keeping

Lawmakers could leave Alma with no place to live.

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

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

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

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



We can do better for vulnerable seniors.

www.betterforNYseniors.com

the doors open, figures that legislators and the media later debunked.

"We see this as a new beginning for Valley View," Orange County Unit President William Oliphant said.

Saratoga's "Closed" process

The Saratoga County Board of Supervisors' Republican caucus moved closer to privatizing the county nursing home, Maplewood Manor, with a key vote in November.

Board members voted a local development corporation (LDC) to borrow monies against the home to offset operating costs and to sell the nursing home to a private operator. A public hearing on the issue is scheduled for Jan. 9.

County residents and workers urged the supervisors to keep Maplewood Manor publicly owned.

Capital Region President Kathy Garrison has strongly criticized the closed process and speed

Continued on Page 15

Ulster probation officers give year-round

KINGSTON – Workers at the Ulster County Probation Department made the holidays a bit merrier for children of local domestic violence victims.

At Thanksgiving, workers provide pies for a community Thanksgiving dinner. And when spring rolls around, residents at a local senior citizen home know they can count on volunteers from the Probation Department to bring a bit of beauty to their home by planting flowers throughout the property.

Volunteerism is a year-round practice for the CSEA-represented

probation officers and their colleagues.

“It allows us to stay in touch with the communities that we work and live in,” said CSEA member Andy Aitken, a 20-year probation officer. “It also shows people another side of who we are.”

The outreach is organized through an in-house probation officer association, which identifies which local charities are selected. In the past, workers have run a mitten and glove drive, collected for Toys for Tots and helped other groups. Workers say they try to support

charities that focus their efforts on local needs.

And while the community service is done with the goal of helping others, the probation staff benefit, too.

“We get back just as much as we give, because it’s gratifying knowing these efforts help local people,” said Ulster County Unit President Todd Schmidt, a senior probation officer. “This has become a terrific tradition for this department, thanks to Andy and everyone who has spearheaded it.”

— Jessica Ladlee



CSEA members, from left, Marcia McCabe, Andy Aitken and Lisa Klein, sit before a small sampling of toys they and their co-workers collected for children of domestic violence victims. All three work as probation officers for Ulster County.

Bangladeshi fire highlights global sweatshop horror

Groups seek meaningful Sweatfree New York policy

A recent horrific fire that ripped through a Bangladeshi clothing factory, killing nine and injuring 200 people, has raised new concerns about global sweatshops being the source for much American clothing and even uniforms and other clothing purchased by governments, like New York state.

In response, CSEA is joining with the NYS Labor-Religion Coalition to push for a Sweat-Free New York that will ensure uniforms and other garments purchased under state contracts come from responsible manufacturers who provide decent and safe working conditions.

New York State spends \$43 million in tax

dollars a year on apparel, textiles and footwear. Currently, purchasing decisions are made based on language that directs New York state to buy its apparel from the lowest “responsible” bidder. In reality, the term “responsible” is so vague that our state often buys its apparel from some of the worst factories around the world.

A meaningful “sweat-free policy” that would define “responsible” in such way that would require manufacturers maintain standards and ensure their subcontractors uphold fundamental human rights and decent working conditions including no child labor.

To help people learn more, the Labor Religion

Coalition and representatives of Sweatfree Communities will launch a statewide speaking tour featuring two garment workers from Central America in early February:

- Feb. 4 – New York City
- Feb. 5 – Syracuse
- Feb. 6 – Ithaca
- Feb. 7 – Buffalo
- Feb. 8 - Albany

For more information about local events and to sign the sweat-free petition, visit: www.labor-religion.org/category/campaigns/sweatshop-free-new-york

Summary of September 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 Denise Berkley for union members.*



Berkley

ALBANY – CSEA’s statewide Board of Directors met on Sept. 28, 2012. In official business, the board:

- Authorized BJ’s Wholesale Club as an official vendor of the CSEA Member Benefits Program;
- Authorized Local 830 to enter into a lease

agreement with TGI Office for a new copier;

- Authorized Local 823 to enter into a lease agreement with Advanced Business Systems, Inc. for a new copier;
- Approved name change for Local 902 from Binghamton Area Retirees to CSEA Local 902 Broome, Chenango, Delaware, Otsego Counties;
- Dissolved Local 256 (Central Region Armory Employees) and transferred members into Local 013 (Syracuse State Employees);
- Approved monetary transfer from Insurance Fund to General Fund to settle the variance between Actual and Budgeted Expenses for two years ended Sept. 30, 2011;
- Approved 2013 Election Schedule for Retiree Locals/Units;
- Approved 2013 VOICE Local 100A Election Procedures /Election Schedule;

- Approved appointment of Jo-Ann Delgado, Debbie Nappi-Gonzales and Albert Luppato to the Long Island Region Political Action Committee;
- Approved the appointment of Delphine Moultrie, Fitzroy Wilson, Bernadette Frett-James, Mary Harmon and John Montelbano to the Metropolitan Region Political Action Committee;
- Approved the appointment of Mary Daniels to the Southern Region Political Action Committee; and
- Approved the appointments of Anthony DeCaro, Veronica Diver and Charlotte Adkins to the Central Region Political Action Committee.

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

New book addresses myths simply

Everything you always wanted to know about unions, but were afraid to ask

If you've ever had questions about CSEA or another union – what it is, how it works, why it does what it does, what it means for you – then Bill Fletcher Jr. has some answers for you.

Just as important, Fletcher has answers to age-old misinformation and often, false criticism of unions.

They're all in his recently released book, "They're Bankrupting Us!" And 20 Other Myths about Unions. It's a clear, direct and very readable set of essays that debunk popular myths about unions with straightforward explanations that are long on facts and commonsense and short on rhetoric.

Fletcher, a long-time activist, labor organizer and educator has worked with CSEA on several projects over the past

15 years and was the keynote speaker at CSEA's Centennial Annual Delegates Meeting in 2010.

'What's a union?'

"I was inspired to write this after an experience of meeting a woman on a plane who was noticeably interested in a book that I was reading about the global labor movement," Fletcher said. "When she asked me about it and I explained, she looked at me and asked, 'What's a union?'"

"I was a bit stunned and thought at first that she was joking with me," he said. "Then I realized that she wasn't, and so I proceeded to explain to her what a union was. She was nodding her head but she was nodding her head in a way that you know someone has no idea what you're talking about."

Valuable insight

"So, this book in many respects is written to her," Fletcher said. "While I was writing it, I thought of it as a conversation with her. I thought of the kinds of questions that she or someone like her might be asking, and I would respond to them in a way that tried to provide context rather than giving pat answers or giving defensive answers or Pollyannaish answers – so that when I finished the reader would have some idea what this all meant."

The book's short chapters present commonly held misperceptions about unions – some innocently perpetuated, others purposely spread as destructive propaganda – and then Fletcher debunks

them. The chapters include titles such as "Unions are bankrupting us and destroying the economy," "Public sector unions cause budget deficits, right?," "Unions were once good but we don't need them anymore" and "Yes, unions are good for their members, but they hurt the rest of us."

Without sugarcoating, Fletcher's calm, purposeful explanations provide strong evidence to counter even the most heated attacks on the labor movement. They also provide new union members and experienced activists alike with valuable insight and encouragement.

Another point of view

"The book is not written for Bill O'Reilly. It is not written for a Lou Dobbs," Fletcher said. "It is not written for people who are ideologically set in their ways. It's written for the woman on that plane. It's written for people who are open to another point of view."

The book cover for "They're Bankrupting Us! And 20 Other Myths about Unions" by Bill Fletcher Jr. features a blue background with a photograph of a group of people holding signs that say "UNION MAKE US STRONG".

Learn more in an interview with Bill Fletcher Jr.

Pages 10 and 11

A conversation with Bill Fletcher Jr.

THE WORK FORCE: You note in your book that many of the attacks on unions today are the same that were leveled – however falsely – from the earliest days of union organizing. Why do these myths persist?

FLETCHER: The myths are constantly reinforced in the mainstream media. I'll give you one example: the term "Labor Boss." It's not just used by people who are attacking unions, it has become a term that all kinds of people will use and they will assume in using it that they're not disparaging unions.

I'll give you another example: In mainstream television, I am a fan of the whole "Law and Order" series and spinoffs. I've noticed on more than one occasion, some very anti-union story lines, for no apparent reason. So people are exposed to it and hear it again and again.

The other part is that a lot of people just don't know. I grew up in New York City and there were unions everywhere, but

"... there is a correlation between the decline of living standards of workers and the decline of unions."

Excerpts from "They're Bankrupting Us!" And 20 Other Myths about Unions by Bill Fletcher Jr.

"A labor union seeks to win a collective bargaining agreement or contract with an employer. The fundamental purpose of the collective bargaining agreement is to oppose favoritism and set work and salary standards, not to impede the advancement of a worker."

today there are people who can grow up in this country and not encounter a union.

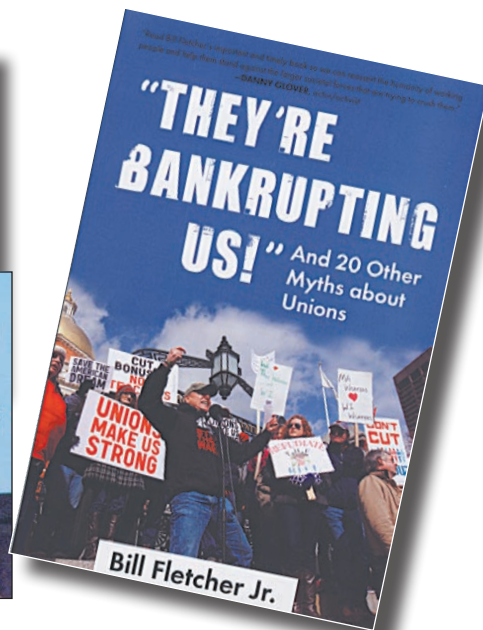
THE WORK FORCE: At a time when smart phones and the Internet make access to information nearly immediately available, is there any excuse for people to not know the facts about issues that affect their lives and livelihoods?

FLETCHER: Some people just have short attention spans, but we have a population that by and large is not encouraged to question and that's the more dangerous part. Add on to that, with the pressure on peoples' lives, it's much easier to turn on some television show about

the crazy housewives of Anchorage, Alaska, rather than focus on something that's serious. If people don't believe there's hope, they may not want to know what's going on.

THE WORK FORCE: We've seen a lot of evidence of a concerted war on working people in recent years. Is this attack accelerating or is it just more obvious?

FLETCHER: It's become more aggressive. It's always been with us. If you think back to the early part of the 20th century, there's



always been rabid anti-union activity, including goon squads, the KKK and the Black Legion.

What's different now, is after the New Deal period until about 1980, if you were in the Northeast, the Midwest, or the West Coast, you could believe that unions had become an accepted part of the environment. But beginning with Reagan's attack on PATCO, (the air traffic controller's union) we've seen a whole wave of assault against unions and the percentage of workers represented by unions has steadily declined even though the absolute numbers have not decreased dramatically.

So we're at a very critical

"What mythmakers ignore are those facts that undermine their core argument."



"The political right – in arguing that wages and benefits of public sector workers comes at the expense of taxpayers – are arguing, in effect, that public sector workers should not receive compensation that helps them to live."

moment where the right wing and corporate America have decided that this is the time to take unions out. Not just to weaken unions but to eliminate them. So we see things like this effort in Michigan to turn it into a right-to-work state. It's something that even five years ago, most people would not have conceived as possible. But they believe that unions are weak enough that they can pull it off.

THE WORK FORCE: What are some recent examples of unions effectively responding to false or misleading information about labor?

FLETCHER: Two examples that come immediately to mind are the United Parcel Service strike of 1997 involving the Teamsters and the Chicago Teachers strike of 2012. What was common in both of those was that the leadership gave a great deal of attention to educating the membership to the issues, and they also went to the broader public and made a very compelling case about the issues that were contained in their struggle.

In the case of the Teamsters, they made the case that they were fighting for the broader public that sought full-time work. This was very important because when the strike started, opinion poll after opinion poll showed that the public sided with the workers despite everything that UPS tried to do.

When you take the Chicago Teachers strike, it became a strike for the kids. The point is, this can be done.

THE WORK FORCE: What can and should individual union members personally do about strengthening the labor movement and why is that important?

"... the mere existence of a public sector union doesn't affect a state, county or municipal budget. In fact, bargaining only affects a budget in one way; it guarantees that budget decisions that affect public employees aren't unilateral."

FLETCHER: Union members need to be active in their union — not leave activism to someone else. So if there's an election, vote. There's a meeting, show up. That's the bare minimum. Other things that people can do include running for office within the union. If you don't like the way the union is run, run for office. Try to make a dent. Volunteer for activities — whether it's in organizing campaigns or writing material for the newsletter or website, whatever the case may be.

The other thing that can't be overstated is that we're in a public relations war and we need union members to post on blogs and write letters to the editor. Union members need

to be flooding newspapers, the airwaves and the Internet with our voices about economics that are completely bankrupt. That sort of audacity, that sort of visibility can be very important for influencing the broader opinion. So there's no excuse for someone not being involved.

Go to the website of the AFL-CIO or go to the website of CSEA and there are things that you can identify that you can immediately do.

"They're Bankrupting Us!" And 20 Other Myths about Unions by Bill Fletcher Jr. is published by Beacon Press and available online.

"... public sector workers are doing a service – their job – for the larger society. Is this something for which they should receive inadequate compensation? If so, what are the ramifications for the quality of the work force, not to mention the quality of the work performed?"



Some straight talk with CSEA President Danny Donohue

What you should know about CSEA's voluntary insurance program and how it can help you

What should CSEA members know about the union's voluntary insurance program?

Donohue: I think it's important that every CSEA member should know that CSEA has offered a voluntary insurance program since the 1930s, using the strength of our extensive membership to benefit our members. We were actually pioneers in a group insurance program that has literally benefitted millions of members and their families over the decades. CSEA oversees the program, which is administered by Pearl-Carroll Associates.

The program today is better than ever with a full range of offerings from life insurance products to supplemental disability, to rental and homeowners insurance to auto, boat and motorcycle. We even have catastrophic illness and pet insurance available. Everything that you might need in your life.

Is this program one of CSEA's best-kept secrets?

Donohue: We promote it regularly in our publications, on our website, through member information events, via mailings – the Pearl-

Carroll sales representatives also regularly visit CSEA local offices and work sites. But I'm always surprised when members say they aren't aware of the CSEA insurance program — I guess I shouldn't be. We all lead busy lives with our work and kids and home life and it's easy to miss a lot of things. There's a lot of value here that people should check out.

Why is it important?

Donohue: The insurance program is designed to help members be prepared for whatever might happen in their lives. The recent devastation from weather disaster over the past couple of years should be a clear reminder of the importance of being prepared and having adequate coverage. There are always unexpected things that happen in our lives.

One of the program's great benefits is payroll deduction, so that you can pay your premiums right out of your paycheck.

I would encourage CSEA members – particularly younger members – to look into what the CSEA insurance program has to



offer. Lots of members take advantage of the program and it's just good sense to know what's available to you.

How can members find out more?

Donohue: You can find out more by contacting Pearl Carroll Associates directly at **1-800-366-7315** or view their website at **www.pearlcarroll.com**. There are representatives available in every part of the state to help you with questions and information.

CSEA's Foley recognized for grassroots health and safety efforts by national association

CSEA Occupational Safety and Health Director Janet Foley was recently recognized by the American Public Health Association's Occupational Safety and Health Section for helping lead the union's grassroots safety and health efforts.

Foley was presented with the 2012 Tony Mazzocchi Award for Grassroots Organizing. The prestigious, national award recognizes grassroots health and safety activists in local unions or other local organizations fighting for the health and safety rights of workers.

Mazzocchi, who was a Chemical Workers Union member, was an influential labor leader who mentored hundreds of health and safety activists and played a key role in legislative struggles, including the passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act.

Foley, who became CSEA's Occupational Safety and Health director in 2003, has helped the union remain a national leader in occupational safety and health efforts. She has been instrumental in many of CSEA's legislative initiatives, including passage of New York's historic Worksite Security Act, which helps protect public sector workers from workplace violence.

As co-chair of the New York State Zero Lift Task Force, Foley is now advocating for legislation that would require health care facilities to adopt safe patient handling techniques to prevent injury to health care workers who must lift or move people.

Foley leads a staff of professionals who, among other duties, provide training on many health and safety issues, support the union's

Peer Trainer Program, investigates work sites for unsafe conditions, advocate for laws that protect workers and provide other safety and health resources.

"We're proud of Janet and all of our safety and health staff," said CSEA President Danny Donohue. "Safety on the job is one of CSEA's top priorities and something we have to fight for every day. Despite the strides we have made, going to work is still too dangerous for too many people."

"Everyone who goes to work must have the right to come home safe and healthy," Foley said. "Not all employers would provide a safe workplace without the advocacy of CSEA members and strong laws that protect workers. CSEA fights for these rights every day."

— Ed Molitor

The bottom line: Stack's career indispensable for CSEA

In December 1974, David Stack came to work for CSEA and the union was never again the same. Over 38 years, Stack's steady hand, unmatched professionalism and winning personality have guided CSEA from handwritten ledgers and manual transactions into a complex, technologically savvy, multimillion-dollar operation.



Stack

Stack, who recently retired as CSEA's Director of Internal Operations, has long been responsible for overseeing the union's finances, offices and technical operations.

"David Stack has been the indispensable man for decades in CSEA," said CSEA President Danny Donohue. "He is a man of few words, but his record in securing the stability of this organization, past, present and future, speaks for itself."

Along the way, Stack was an eyewitness to some of the most significant events in the union's history, but his clear-headed judgment — usually undertaken with a ledger sheet comparing the pros and cons of choices — helped shape the organization for the better and position it for the future.

"I first became aware of CSEA when I was going to Siena College and working part-time in the post office," Stack said. "I dreaded coming to the CSEA office building because there were bags and bags of mail every day to be picked up."

Following his graduation, Stack's stint with an Albany accounting firm brought him into closer contact with CSEA as an auditor and eventually he was hired to run the union's financial operations in 1974.

"Back in those days, just about everything had to be done manually," Stack said.

"We had literally thousands of membership cards that had to be processed which meant ... manually coding up some information and sending it off to the state or to some local government. It was a folksy kind of operation."

"It's dramatically different today in how we do business," Stack said. "Computer, phone, internet technology, all of our offices are connected. But a lot of things haven't changed and it all comes down to good people — on the staff side and on the leadership side."

"We have challenges, but in the big scheme of things, it is a big operation, a lot of people, a lot of dedicated members, and it's tough to stop," he said.

A holiday wish: reduce overtime at OPWDD

Children of CSEA direct care workers at the state Office for People With Developmental Disabilities are sending a holiday message to agency Commissioner Courtney Burke, letting her know excessive overtime is taking its toll on their families.

In an unusual approach to addressing the issue of mandatory overtime resulting from unfilled positions, the union has printed holiday postcards addressed to the commissioner and signed by children of OPWDD workers throughout the state asking her to fix the problem.

"Commissioner, if you could grant me one wish this Christmas, could you find it in your heart to fix the problem of my Dad working frequent overtime instead of spending time with our family? I miss him," reads one card adorned with a candy cane and a Teddy bear stuffed Christmas stocking. "I am so proud of my Dad for taking care of the developmentally disabled, but when he is working all that overtime, I am left to wonder who will take care of me or help me with my homework or come see my school concert."

CSEA has raised the issue with OPWDD officials at statewide labor-management meetings and the agency has made a commitment to address the problem. The postcard campaign is intended to urge Burke to make it more of a priority to follow through.

— Ed Molitor

May 15 is deadline for submitting proposed resolutions, changes to CSEA's Constitution & Bylaws

Proposed resolutions and proposed amendments to the CSEA Constitution & By-Laws for consideration by CSEA delegates to the union's 2013 Annual Delegates Meeting must be submitted by May 15, 2013.

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 Denise Berkley, CSEA Headquarters, 143 Washington Ave., Albany, N.Y. 12210-2303.

The 2013 CSEA Annual Delegates Meeting will be held Oct. 21-25 in Lake Placid.

CSEA membership/agency shop fees effective Jan. 1, 2013, for biweekly payrolls

| | RANGE | BIWEEKLY |
|---|-----------------|----------|
| The scheduled adjustment in membership dues and agency shop fees is effective Jan. 1, 2013, to reflect AFSCME's minimum dues structure approved by delegates and the AFSCME convention. | up to \$5000 | 6.07 |
| | \$5000-\$9999 | 9.04 |
| | \$10000-\$12999 | 12.44 |
| | \$13000-\$15999 | 15.12 |
| | \$16000-\$21999 | 16.92 |
| | \$22000-\$27999 | 18.79 |
| | \$28000-\$29999 | 19.14 |
| | \$30000-\$31999 | 20.30 |
| | \$32000-\$33999 | 21.32 |
| | \$34000-\$35999 | 21.71 |
| | \$36000-\$37999 | 22.80 |
| | \$38000-\$39999 | 23.91 |
| | \$40000-\$44999 | 24.71 |
| | \$45000-\$49999 | 25.33 |
| | \$50000-\$54999 | 25.96 |
| | \$55000-\$59999 | 26.60 |
| | \$60000 & above | 27.23 |

2013 CSEA ELECTIONS INFORMATION

Public Sector Local and Unit Elections

Private Sector Local Elections

Elections will be conducted for all Public Sector Local and Unit Officers and All Private Sector Local Officers in spring 2013.

The term of office for all current Public Sector Local and Unit officers and all current Private Sector Local officers expires June 30, 2013. Public Sector officers and delegates will be elected to **four-year** terms. Private Sector officers and delegates will be elected to **three-year** terms.

Balloting for Public and Private Sector officers will be conducted between May 15 and June 15, 2013.

Each Local and Unit executive board must select its own election committee and Election Committee Chairperson, or Election Meeting Chair, if applicable (see box below). The Local and/or Unit Election Committee is primarily responsible for conducting the election.

Slating petitioning and slate voting will be an option for candidates for Local and Unit office (*see Page 15*).

Members may run as individual candidates if they wish to.

Note: When circulating and signing individual and slate petition forms, members must write in their own CSEA ID numbers.

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

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

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

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

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



Locals and Units with 150 or Fewer Members Holding an Election at a Special Membership Meeting

Locals and Units with 150 members or less may choose to appoint an Election Meeting Chairperson (instead of an election committee) and conduct an election at a meeting.

Holding your election at a Special Membership meeting simplifies the election process in that, where there are races (more than one candidate for an office), the Election Meeting Chairperson calls a Membership meeting for the purpose of electing officers.

Application for Office

Special election rules are available to Locals and Units of 150 or fewer members. In these smaller Locals and Units, completion of the Application for Election to Office replaces the requirement to obtain signatures on a nominating petition.

In Locals or Units with 150 or fewer members, any member who submits the application and meets election requirements under the appropriate Local or Unit Constitution will be placed on the ballot.

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 duty, upon return, are considered to have had continuous membership status for all CSEA election purposes.

Please notify the CSEA Membership 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.

2013 CSEA ELECTIONS INFORMATION

Public Sector Local and Unit Elections

Private Sector Local Elections

Important Information about Slate Petitioning and Slate Voting

Local Elections

In Local elections, a slate must contain a candidate running for the offices of President, one or more Vice Presidents, as set forth in the Local's by-laws, Secretary and Treasurer.

The slate may also include candidates for other offices that have been created according to the Local Constitution and by-laws. In Locals that have created the combined position of Secretary-Treasurer in their by-laws, the slate must include a candidate for that office.

Unit Elections

In Unit elections, a slate must contain a candidate running for the offices of President, one or more Vice Presidents, as set forth in the Unit's by-laws, Secretary and Treasurer.

The slate may also include candidates for other offices that have been created according to the Unit Constitution and by-laws. In Units that have created the combined position of Secretary-Treasurer in their by-laws, the slate must include a candidate for that office.

Candidates should know the following:

- A member cannot be a candidate for officer and for delegate on the same slate. An officer candidate must circulate a separate nominating petition in order to appear on the ballot also as a candidate for delegate. The member will appear on the ballot as a candidate for office as part of the slate and as an individual for the position of delegate.
- When circulating and signing petition forms, members must write in their own CSEA ID numbers.
- Candidates who run as a slate must complete a Slate Eligibility and Consent Form and a Slate Petition Request Form. By petitioning as a slate, candidates who appear as part of a slate need to submit only one set of the required number of signatures to qualify as a candidate. Individual petitions are not necessary for slate candidates.
- Candidates who withdraw from a slate must complete a Slate Withdrawal Form and return the form to their election committee.
- More detailed information about election slates will be available from Local and Unit election committees.

County lawmakers putting New York's seniors at risk

Continued from Page 6

by which the board has moved to divest the county of this valuable asset. "This is a sad day in Saratoga County," Garrison said when addressing the board recently. "This vote effectively ends a rich legacy of decades of caring for our county's most vulnerable residents."

Strong warning

Cayuga County legislators are considering a potential merger between the Cayuga County Nursing Home and Mercy Health and Rehabilitation Center.

In a letter, Central Region President Colleen Wheaton urged legislators to rethink the county nursing home's merger or sale.

Wheaton cited the Countryside Care Center, the nursing home formerly owned and operated by Delaware County. Six years after selling the home to a private operator, the home closed when the private operators walked away from their ownership and the promises they made to the county and its residents.

"It would be a tragic mistake to allow what happened in Delaware County to happen here," Wheaton said. "With privatization, we lose the direct control we have over quality of care and costs, and we lose that 'safety net' mandate to care for our most vulnerable citizens if they don't happen to be able to afford private care."

Victory, but caution

A misguided plan to give the Ontario County Nursing Home to a private hospital has been abandoned, but CSEA members are not halting efforts to protect the essential health care safety net.

The county board of supervisors had been considering simply giving the nursing home away, transferring county nursing home to the private FF Thompson Hospital, which would have renovated and added on to its campus to accommodate those needing care. The hospital scrapped the project – dependent on \$25 million in grants – because of a lack of grant funding.

CSEA members are continuing to educate the public about the importance of public nursing homes to communities.

Future of home uncertain

The future of the Rockland County-owned Summit Park Hospital & Nursing Care was still up in the air at press time after legislators postponed a public hearing on a local development corporation to acquire and eventually sell the facility.

CSEA leaders, vocal opponents of selling Summit Park, have been speaking out at legislative meetings and arguing in the media for the preservation of the longtime county safety net facility.

"This county has always taken care of its own and during these tough times, the last thing we should be doing is eliminating such a vital safety net," said Southern Region President Billy Riccaldo, a county resident and worker. "It's a shame that the residents and work force at Summit Park are facing the possibility of a sale because of the county executive's years of mismanagement."

— Lynn Miller, Jessica Ladlee, Therese Assalian and Mark Kotzin

2013 NYSHIP rates for CSEA active state employees

Editor's Note: The following information is intended for CSEA represented Executive Branch enrollees - enrollees employed by the State of New York covered by one of the following CSEA collective bargaining agreements; Administrative Services Unit, Institutional Services Unit, Operational Services Unit or the Division of Military and Naval Affairs.

The NYS Division of Budget has approved the Empire Plan's premium rates for 2013. New York State active employees have until **Dec. 31, 2012** to change their health insurance option.

Any member wishing to change their health insurance option must submit a signed health insurance transaction form (PS-404) to their agency health benefits administrator **no later than Dec. 31, 2012**. The "Rates & Deadline" brochure, which lists the biweekly premium rates for each plan, has been mailed to each employee's home.

The "Health Insurance Choices" Guide, which

summarizes the NYSHIP plans available for 2013, has been mailed to all agencies. Enrollees can request the Health Insurance Choices Guide from their agency health benefits administrator. Please note that for 2013 NYSHIP will again offer NYSHIP Option Code #700 (The Opt-Out Program). See page 17 for more details.

New health insurance options for Administration Lag-Exempt employees will begin **Jan. 3, 2013**. The earliest paycheck in which a deduction change will be made is the check of **Dec. 19, 2012**. If you change options, because of processing time, most paycheck changes will be made in January and will include retroactive adjustments for option changes beginning on **Jan. 3, 2013**.

New health insurance options for Administrative Lag employees will begin **Jan. 3, 2013**. The earliest paycheck in which a deduction change will be made is the check of **Jan. 2, 2013**. If you change options, because of processing time,

most paycheck changes will be made in January and will include retroactive adjustments for option changes beginning on **Jan. 3, 2013**.

New health insurance options for employees under the Institutional payrolls will begin **Dec. 27, 2012**. The earliest paycheck in which you will see a health insurance deduction change will be the payroll check of **Dec. 13, 2012** (for Institution Lag-Exempt) and **Dec. 27, 2012** (for Institution Lag). If you change options, because of processing time, most paycheck changes will be made in January and will include retroactive adjustments for option changes beginning on **Dec. 27, 2012**.

The following is the breakdown of biweekly rates of active state employees (showing the premium change from July 2012) for the Empire Plan and HMOs approved under NYSHIP. Please note, under NYSHIP rules, an individual must live or work in the HMO's NYSHIP service area to enroll in the HMO.

NYSHIP Biweekly Employee Cost Schedule (Effective January 2013)

| Health Plan Name | Grade 9 and Below | | Grade 10 and Above | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| | Individual/(Change) | Family/(Change) | Individual/(Change) | Family/(Change) |
| The Empire Plan 001 | \$33.67 (\$0.90) | \$140.67 (\$8.60) | \$44.89 (\$1.20) | \$167.75 (\$10.05) |
| Aetna 210 | \$116.89 (-\$8.56) | \$485.00 (-\$23.96) | \$128.48 (-\$7.65) | \$513.28 (-\$21.34) |
| Blue Choice 066 | \$25.38 (-\$0.23) | \$109.24 (-\$1.68) | \$33.84 (-\$0.31) | \$130.13 (-\$1.97) |
| Blue Cross/Blue Shield (WNY) 067 | \$34.29 (\$2.16) | \$165.89 (-\$2.22) | \$45.17 (\$2.33) | \$193.66 (-\$1.42) |
| CDPHP Capital 063 | \$30.76 (\$2.45) | \$131.43 (\$10.37) | \$41.01 (\$3.27) | \$156.60 (\$12.37) |
| CDPHP Central 300 | \$61.97 (\$4.69) | \$200.63 (\$6.04) | \$72.61 (\$5.40) | \$227.34 (\$8.22) |
| CDPHP Hudson Valley 310 | \$56.85 (-\$5.21) | \$187.04 (-\$19.18) | \$67.35 (-\$4.59) | \$213.40 (-\$17.21) |
| Empire BC/BS Upstate 280 | \$55.88 (\$13.48) | \$207.06 (\$17.13) | \$65.64 (\$11.86) | \$231.70 (\$13.28) |
| Empire BC/BS Downstate 290 | \$129.93 (\$6.63) | \$401.07 (-\$1.96) | \$139.77 (\$4.81) | \$425.91 (-\$6.34) |
| Empire BC/BS Mid-Hudson 320 | \$131.30 (\$18.45) | \$404.77 (\$31.82) | \$141.17 (\$16.74) | \$429.69 (\$27.72) |
| * GHI HMO Capital 220 | \$45.46 (-\$70.43) | \$194.18 (-\$194.20) | \$56.38 (-\$70.40) | \$221.71 (-\$193.73) |
| * GHI HMO Hudson Valley 350 | \$57.36 (-\$84.77) | \$216.55 (-\$250.00) | \$68.16 (-\$84.86) | \$243.77 (-\$249.84) |
| HIP 050 | \$72.70 (\$11.17) | \$216.42 (\$19.39) | \$83.67 (\$11.58) | \$243.85 (\$20.84) |
| HMO Blue Central NY 072 | \$115.35 (\$30.69) | \$329.46 (\$69.96) | \$126.34 (\$31.66) | \$356.77 (\$72.77) |
| HMO Blue Utica Region 160 | \$123.04 (\$26.66) | \$382.19 (\$64.82) | \$133.84 (\$27.56) | \$409.30 (\$67.50) |
| Independent Health 059 | \$36.56 (-\$8.71) | \$141.99 (-\$23.92) | \$47.45 (-\$8.09) | \$169.17 (-\$22.11) |
| MVP Rochester 058 | \$27.80 (\$1.79) | \$118.44 (\$7.39) | \$37.07 (\$2.39) | \$141.14 (\$8.82) |
| MVP East 060 | \$30.27 (\$1.99) | \$129.32 (\$8.41) | \$40.36 (\$2.66) | \$154.09 (\$10.04) |
| MVP Central 330 | \$53.08 (\$2.80) | \$175.82 (\$0.14) | \$63.49 (\$3.52) | \$201.98 (\$2.37) |
| MVP Mid-Hudson 340 | \$52.51 (-\$2.49) | \$173.85 (-\$13.32) | \$62.85 (-\$1.85) | \$199.81 (-\$11.31) |
| MVP North 360 | \$98.80 (\$7.81) | \$292.61 (\$14.04) | \$109.42 (\$8.55) | \$319.29 (\$16.33) |

* Please note the GHI HMO premiums for 2013 have experienced a significant reduction due to a one-time credit applied as a result of the HMO failing to meet the Federal Medical Loss Ratio as required under the U.S. Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. This is only a temporary decrease for 2013 as a result of the overpayment credit.

NYSHIP health insurance opt-out deadline is Dec. 31, 2012

The New York State Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP) will again offer

Health Benefits 

the health benefits administrator during the annual option transfer period in order to continue participation in 2013.

NYSHIP Option Code #700 (The Opt-Out Program) to New York state active employees represented by CSEA, for 2013.

The Opt-Out Program will allow eligible employees who have other employer-sponsored group health insurance to opt out of their NYSHIP coverage in exchange for an incentive payment.

New York state employees who currently participate in the Opt-Out Program will be required to resubmit completed PS-404 and PS-409 forms to

Employees interested in participating in the Opt-Out Program for 2013 should see their agency HBA during the Annual Option Transfer Period for a copy of the October 2012 edition of Planning for Option Transfer (which includes specific details, plan requirements and deadlines). Required paperwork needs to be completed and returned to health benefits administrators no later than Dec. 31, 2012.

Almost time to retire?

Your local may pay the first year of CSEA retiree dues, which is only \$24!



CSEA retiree members enjoy many of the benefits and discounts of belonging to a union. In return, you get access to a wide variety of money-saving benefits such as:

- Access to insurance plans at CSEA's low group rates.
- Travel discounts.
- A discounted consumer items buying service.
- Discounted dental and vision care programs.
- A personal legal services referral network.
- The Retiree News quarterly.

Being a CSEA retiree member also makes you part of a growing statewide body that can effectively advocate on your behalf:

- Legislative and political action programs designed to enhance and protect retiree pension and health benefits.
- Participation in a CSEA Retiree Local.
- Effective lobbying against Social Security reform.
- Three informative publications.

For more information, visit www.csealocal1000.org and select "CSEA Retiree Members" from the "For CSEA Members" menu.



In-depth news from New York's Capitol

Broadcast Schedule

'New York NOW' on New York Public Television (PBS)

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

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

Long Island
WLIW | Sundays at 11 a.m.

Rochester
WXXI | Fridays at 9 p.m.

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

Binghamton
WSKG | Sundays at 11 a.m.

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

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



nynow.org | [Twitter @NYNOW_PBS](https://twitter.com/NYNOW_PBS) | 'Like' New York NOW on Facebook

Watch New York Now on PBS

CSEA members are encouraged to watch New York Now, a weekly program focused on state government that airs on New York's public television stations.

CSEA is helping underwrite New York Now to help New Yorkers better understand the news being made in the state Capitol.

"People need to be actively involved in their government and that starts with understanding the issues. It's the only way we can hope to achieve a better New York for all," CSEA President Danny Donohue said. "I urge CSEA members to tune in to New York Now on their local PBS station."

State employees: Take advantage of EBF's Prescription Drug Co-Payment Reimbursement Benefit

Did you know the CSEA Employee Benefit Fund offers a Prescription Drug Co-Payment Reimbursement Benefit to CSEA-represented New York state employees? Learn more about this money saving benefit on this page.



What is the Prescription Drug Co-Payment Reimbursement Benefit?

The Employee Benefit Fund helps members and their dependents defray some of the costs associated with co-payments for prescription drugs. Up to \$150 is reimbursable if you qualify for this benefit.

Who is eligible for this benefit?

All CSEA-represented state employees who are currently enrolled in a New York State Health Insurance Program (either the Empire Plan or a health maintenance organization) are entitled to reimbursement once annually for NYSHIP prescription drug co-payments.

Some local government units such as towns, villages and school districts and Unified Court System employees may have also negotiated this benefit in their collective bargaining agreements.

These benefits may differ slightly from the state benefit. Make sure to check your contract to see if your unit has negotiated this benefit.

I am eligible. How do I qualify to receive the \$150?

Once your co-payments for prescription drugs for the calendar year (January - December) reach \$300, the next \$150 in prescription drug co-payments is reimbursable.

To obtain the maximum benefit of \$150, wait until your co-

payment expenses reach \$450 before filing your claim.

If you do not accumulate \$450 before the end of the year, submit your claim after Dec. 31 for what you did pay over \$300. See the examples on the chart below.

| Family | Prescription Co-payment Totals | Minimum Amount | Benefit Reimbursement | Notes |
|-----------|--------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|--|
| Andersons | \$278 | \$300 | \$0 | Do not meet requirements |
| Smiths | \$385 | \$300 | \$85 | Not maximum benefit, but some money is reimbursed. |
| Williams | \$478 | \$300 | \$150 | Maximum benefit is reimbursed. |

What do I need to do to properly file a claim?

- Obtain a New York State Employee Prescription Drug Co-Payment Reimbursement Claim Form by visiting the EBF online at cseaebf.com, or by calling EBF at 1-800-323-2732. Once you get the form, fill it out completely.

- Obtain a complete itemized pharmacy printout clearly indicating the co-payment amount. Cash register receipts, original pharmacy receipts and canceled checks are not acceptable.

- Mail the claim form and the pharmacy printout to:

CSEA Employee Benefit Fund

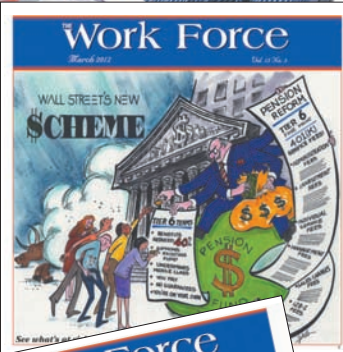
P.O. Box 516

Latham, N.Y. 12110-0516

- Please allow up to six weeks for processing
- Deadline for claim submission for the 2012 calendar year is March 31, 2013.

A special message from CSEA President Danny Donohue

Looking forward to 2013 with hope



WE'VE HAD ENOUGH WALL STREET GREED

Complaints about public employee pension obligations miss the truth — they're not the result of excessive benefits — they are fallout from Wall Street greed that nearly destroyed our economy!

Historically, 85 cents of every pension dollar came from investments — not taxpayers.

But when stock market investments crashed, New Yorkers had to make up the shortfall.

Wall Street got bailed out at taxpayer expense and New Yorkers also got the bill for pension fund losses.

Now misguided politicians and Wall Street henchmen have a new scheme. Their radical plan would reduce pension benefits 40 percent and drive young workers into a 401(k) style option with no guarantees and all the risk on employees — and conveniently create a windfall of service fees for Wall Street.

We've seen enough damage to middle class retirement security in recent years.

Tell the governor and state lawmakers:
NO on TIER 6
NOT good for people
NOT good for the economy!
Call 1-877-255-9417



The past year was a rough one for working people.

In places like Michigan, Wisconsin, Ohio and many other states across the country, public service workers and their unions were under constant fire from extremists and self-serving billionaires who tried to blame working people for economic conditions we did not create, so they could advance an ideological agenda. Our wages, our pensions and benefits, even our right to fairness at the bargaining table were all under attack.

Here in New York, CSEA members had a particularly hard time of it as we battled everything from layoffs to Mother Nature.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo and New York lawmakers cut a naked political deal in the dead-of-the-night on Tier 6 pension legislation that traded the future retirement security of working New Yorkers for politically favorable legislative redistricting lines. As a result of this “dark deal,” CSEA made only limited state legislative endorsements and contributions to individuals who earned our support by standing with us.

The year saw a state budget rubber-stamped by lawmakers that undermined state operations and shortchanged schools and localities.

As municipalities struggled to balance their budgets, many jobs and services were on the line as an ill-advised property tax cap made bad situations even worse.

Message continued on Page 19



Special Message: State of our union 2013

Special Message: State of our union 2013



Lawmakers could leave Alma with no place to live.

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

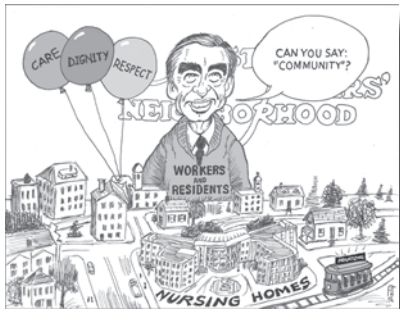
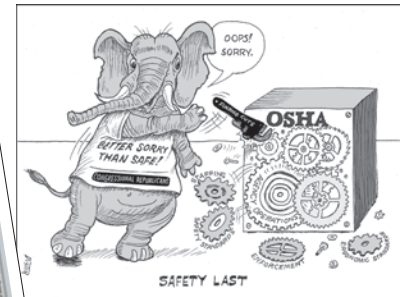
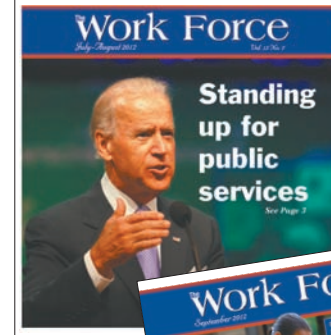
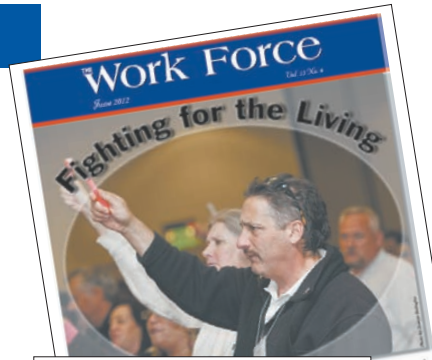
Now, Alma relies on the county's nursing home for care. But, lawmakers could leave Alma, and many others, with no place to live.

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

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

We can do better for vulnerable seniors.

www.betterforNYseniors.com



More and more counties jumped on the bandwagon to privatize their nursing homes through questionable schemes, potentially leaving our most vulnerable citizens with no place to live. CSEA launched an intensive campaign to protect seniors from the devastating consequences that occur when elected officials try to avoid responsibilities and seek a quick fix through private contractors and other irresponsible schemes.

Despite the many challenges we faced throughout the year, CSEA members stood strong and persevered with dedication and professionalism. This was especially true when Hurricane Sandy brought unexpected and unprecedented devastation to the East Coast. Shining from the darkness was the work of hundreds of CSEA members who worked around the clock on the front lines and behind the scenes — many while their own homes and families were at risk.

As the year was coming to a close, CSEA members went door-to-door, staffed phone banks and urged family and friends to vote for candidates who will keep the interests of union families in the forefront. Thanks to their efforts, working people in New York and across the nation elected important allies who will support us in the challenges we will surely face in the year ahead and provide hope for a better New York for all.

