

THE WORKFORCE

**We've
earned it**

See Page 3



Photo of the Month

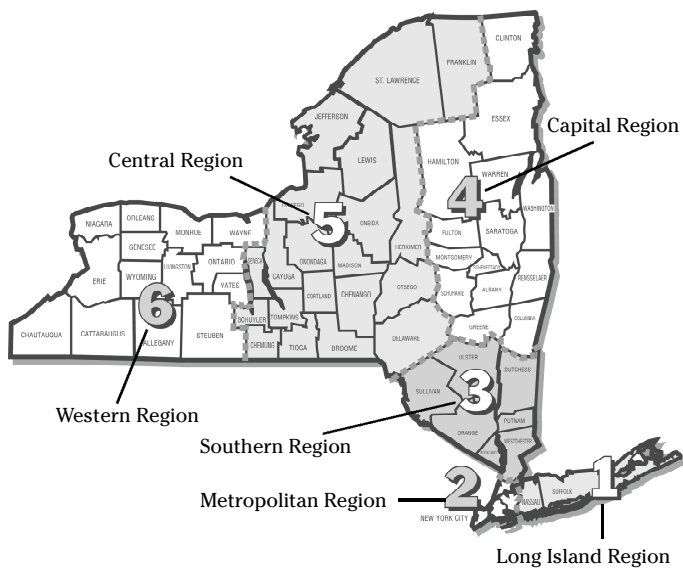


Photo by Mark M. Kotzin

15-month-old Sarah Graham, daughter of Onondaga County Local President Phil Graham, sits on Santa's lap at the local's annual CSEA Night at *Lights On The Lake*. Each year the local sponsors a discount night for union members to attend the holiday lighting display, which is built and maintained by CSEA members working for the Onondaga County Parks Department.

Want to know what's going on in your area?

Learn about events, sales, trips and other benefits related to your CSEA region.



Visit your region's page on the CSEA web site at www.csealocal1000.org, and click on the 'regions' link in the main menu.

Legislature set to act on Erie County crisis measure

ALBANY — The state legislature is poised to take action on approval of an Erie County sales tax increase that will add much-needed revenue to help ease dire county finances.

The governor's State of the State message will be given Jan. 4 before the reconvened state Assembly and Senate. It is expected the sales tax approval vote will be one of the legislature's first acts of business.

Erie County legislators had approved a property tax hike and increasing the sales tax a half-penny Nov. 16. CSEA had been advocating for the increases.

The added revenue would help the county avoid another round of deep cuts, but it does not provide

sufficient funding in some areas. The current budget contains only \$6 million of a \$20 million subsidy for the Erie County Medical Center. CSEA is working with county legislators to restore the remaining funding for the hospital.

As this edition of *The Work Force* went to press, a court decision that would affect the hospital's funding was pending. The county was due to provide the hospital a certain amount of funding this year but Erie County Executive Joel Giambra balked at budgeting the full amount.

The medical center went to court over the issue and won. Giambra appealed that decision, and a decision in that appeal was due at press time.

Peru school workers OK contract after long fight

PERU — After nearly three years of lengthy negotiations that included impasse, fact-finding and super-mediation, CSEA members at Peru Central School District have ratified a new contract by a vote of 89-2.

The contract represents a clear victory for members at Peru Central School District who stuck to their guns and refused to settle for less than what they knew was fair.

The campaign, like many protracted negotiations, had its ups and downs. But members were firm in their resolve that they had to do right by their fellow union brothers and sisters who in some titles were earning 52 percent below the county average.

This fact was discovered through a salary comparison compiled by CSEA's Research Department before the start of negotiations and became a sticking point throughout the talks.

"After they saw the comparison

the team decided that this was going to be the time to make these adjustments," said Labor Relations Specialist Ken Lushia.

Salary and benefits were the biggest hurdles to a deal that came after both sides found common ground and agreed to apply savings from health insurance changes toward support staff salaries. The same night that the school board came back with the deal that would later be signed about 100 CSEA members from around the North Country joined their fellow union members in a strong showing of solidarity.

The new four-year pact which includes retro pay back to 2003 was approved by the school board on Dec. 13 by a vote of 7-0.

"I am so happy to have this over," said Jeanette Cumber Peru Central School District Unit president. "The CSEA team worked very hard and stuck it out to come up with the contract."

— Therese Assalian

'Our reputation? New York's leading union — we've earned it.'

CSEA is delivering an important message to the public in the next few months as the union launches a new statewide advertising campaign.

The campaign features numerous CSEA members (depicted on Page 1 and below) who help to put a face on union membership and explain how their dedication makes a difference in people's lives.

"For nearly 100 years, CSEA has been a positive force across New York and we're proud to let people know it," said CSEA President Danny Donohue. "CSEA has been using advertising and other marketing tools for decades to help create better understanding about the value of our members and the work you perform."

"It's more important than ever for us to demonstrate the importance of the role CSEA plays in ensuring workers have the support they need in the workplace to deliver quality services and products," Donohue said.

Advertising is an important tool CSEA uses



CSEA member Jeff Roberts prepares to record a segment about how CSEA fights for fairness and respect as part of a recent CSEA ad shoot.

to get its message out and strengthen its image. It has proven effective countless times in helping CSEA produce positive results for its members and all New Yorkers in budget debates, contract fights and other policy issues.

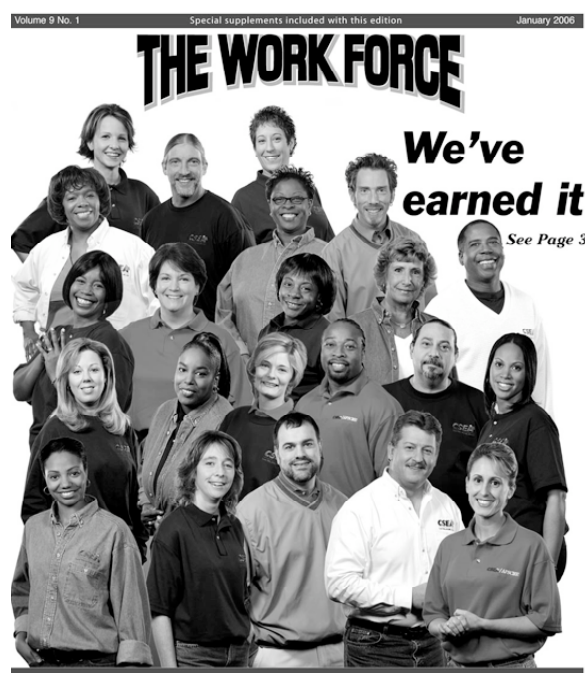
CSEA advertising also helps counter negativity with facts and balance.

In recent times, elements of the business community have been waging a relentless campaign against unions, including CSEA in both the public and private sectors. "We're not going to apologize for who we are and what we do," Donohue said. "No matter where people work, public or private sector, CSEA believes it is in everyone's best interest to ensure that they are paid fairly and gain decent benefits."

"We want people to know that fairness and respect pay dividends in so many ways through stable, quality services."

CSEA's ads are now running on radio and TV stations across the state.

— Visit CSEA's web site at www.csealocal1000.org to view the new TV ad.



CSEA members taking part in the new advertising campaign are, (in no particular order), Jeff Roberts, Dashamali Jennings, Tawanna Wright, Mary Lutz, King Davis, Tom Gabak, Dan Stone, Julie Wadams, Terri Gilbough, Michelle Lang, Ed Figueroa, Cindy Hoag, Douglas Drake, Donna Powell, Virginia Jackson, Jamie Nick, Kerry Mincher, Chrissy Manolakis, Doelle Harrell, Rebecca Mills, Todd Smith, and Shirley Johnson.

CSEA-sponsored announcements a helpful reminder

As part of CSEA's advertising campaign, the union is once again sponsoring snow closing announcements on radio and TV stations across the state.

Snow closings and other emergencies always help reinforce the importance of having qualified and capable CSEA members on the job.

While snow plow operators always come to mind in these circumstances, it's also important to remember that thousands of other CSEA members are on the job as well, doing essential work in health care facilities, group homes, on the 911 lines and in numerous other public safety capacities.



CSEA member Dashamali Jennings gathers her thoughts during a break in production on CSEA's new ad campaign.

THE WORK FORCE

ISSN 1522-1091

Official publication of
CSEA Local 1000, AFSCME, AFL-CIO
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Albany, NY 12210-2303
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The Work Force (USPS 0445-010) is published monthly by The CSEA Publication Office: 143 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12210. Periodical Mail Postage paid at Post Office, Albany, New York 12288.

**Postmaster: Send address changes to:
CSEA, Attn: Membership Department,
143 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12210.
CSEA on-line: The CSEA website
can be accessed at www.csealocal1000.org**

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New year brings challenges and opportunity for you to make a difference

The new year is upon us and 2006 promises to be a watershed moment in our history.

We will elect a new governor this year. No matter who your employer is, it makes a big difference for you and all other New Yorkers who is elected as our next governor. Much of CSEA's 95-year history centers on our relationship with New York's governors.



No one should take our support for granted. We will consider the candidates and make decisions based on who we believe will do the best job for all CSEA members and New Yorkers. When we make our endorsement, we will support our candidate with every effort we can muster because the result will impact us all far beyond the election season.

Even before we get to election time, CSEA still has enormous challenges to face. Some of these challenges include reforming the funding formulas that shortchange public health care; standing firm against contracting out that undermines our pay and benefits, and helping unorganized workers overcome threats and intimidation from their employers as they try to join our union.

CSEA needs your help. You cannot afford to be indifferent to any of these issues. Make your New Year's resolution to care about your CSEA membership and get involved.

Danny

Westchester Medical Center workers win contract battle

VALHALLA — Members of the Westchester Medical Center Unit overwhelmingly ratified a new contract that will include a 3 percent across-the-board raise in 2006 and a retroactive increase in longevity payments.

The two-year contract, retroactive to Jan. 1, 2005, comes after more than seven months of negotiations.

While the hospital's ongoing financial problems complicated contract talks, both sides were able to negotiate an agreement that will reward longtime employees with a raise and include changes in the salary scale made to boost recruitment of

skilled professionals such as pharmacists.

While hospital administrators had insisted union givebacks were necessary for the hospital's financial recovery, their position on the issue appears to have changed as CSEA members working at Westchester Medical Center proved to be a potent lobbying force for the hospital in Albany and with county officials in White Plains.

CSEA member activism also defeated a plan to outsource approximately 200 jobs last year.

"This new contract affirms what we've known all along," said

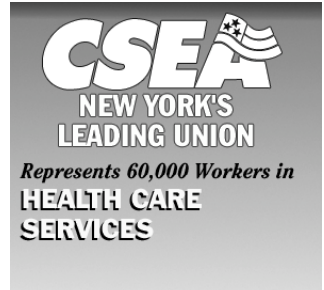


CSEA member and physician's assistant Matt Cichon, shown here in this 2005 file photo, is among the Westchester Medical Center workers who treat the region's worst trauma cases, some from as far away as the Albany area.

Unit President Artie Alfreds. "CSEA members are the backbone of Westchester Medical Center and keeping a

quality work force on the job requires a contract fair to all."

— Jessica Stone



"CSEA members are the backbone of Westchester Medical Center."

CSEA *Voices*



"Participating in CSEA's ad campaign was fun and a new experience. It feels really good to represent CSEA and my profession. "

— Dashamali Jennings, Developmental Aide, Central New York Developmental Disabilities Services Office and 12-year member, speaking about her involvement in CSEA's new advertising campaign (See Page 3 for more on the campaign.)

Private sector care workers win round in organizing fight

MANHATTAN — Workers at a major private sector not-for-profit developmental disabilities care provider, whose employees are fighting to gain the benefits and security of belonging to CSEA, have won a card-check neutrality agreement in their organizing campaign.

The campaign for Lifespire workers has brought together workers, elected officials, the religious community, local activists and union members.

Lifespire provides services to individuals with developmental

disabilities. The neutrality agreement will ultimately allow about 1,200 workers to decide whether they want to form a union without being subjected to harassment and intimidation from their employer.

From Dec. 6 to Feb. 9, Lifespire has agreed to remain completely neutral while Lifespire employees decide whether they want to organize.

At the end of this period, if a majority of workers sign union authorization cards, verified by an arbitrator, the company has

agreed to voluntarily recognize CSEA and begin negotiating a contract.

Since beginning this struggle in May, members of the union organizing committee, Lifeline/CSEA, have worked with parents, elected officials and concerned citizens and community groups to reach their goal of improving working conditions and the quality of care Lifespire's consumers receive.



Sullivan County Jail Unit wins improvements in new contract

“This is something that is long overdue.”

MONTICELLO — The Sullivan County Jail Unit recently ratified a four-year contract that includes significant wage increases for the majority of the bargaining unit, an improvement that is expected to improve morale at a work site that has suffered from high turnover due to low starting wages.

The contract, retroactive to Jan. 1, 2004, and expiring July 1, 2007, includes several significant perks on top of the regular salary increases.

Shift differentials were increased from 35 cents per hour to \$1 per hour, while hazardous duty pay of 50 cents per hour was added, a move that will benefit food service and clerical workers who do not have corrections duties but are exposed to inmates 50 percent or more of their workday.

Changes in the policy for longevity payments for employees not on step stand to benefit newer employees, who under the old contract only began to collect longevity payments after 10 years with the jail. Longevity payments for these employees will be an additional \$100 per year after one year, through 25 years.

Another contract improvement is the addition of three higher steps. Employees who have enough years of service to reach the top

of their salary step ladder will receive a 9 percent wage increase on that step change alone.

The Dec. 31, 2003, sunset provision on the salary schedule for corrections and security officers was eliminated from the new contract. Under the new agreement, employees on a salary step receive an average step increment of 5.3 percent per year in addition to the negotiated annual raises.

“I want to congratulate Unit President Bob Brewster and his members on this fine contract,” said Southern Region President Diane Hewitt.

“Not only does it include improvements in so many areas that have long been lacking, such as shift differentials, it also includes language for regular safety and

health training. Working in the state’s oldest jail, with outdated equipment, this is something that is long overdue.”

— Jessica Stone

CSEA Voices



“It was a great experience to represent CSEA in this way. I felt very proud to be a spokesman for all of the members of CSEA and express our pride and respect for our jobs, communities, families and union.”

— Todd Smith, president, Rensselaer County 911 Unit, speaking about his involvement in CSEA’s new advertising campaign (More on Page 3.)



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Holiday giving brings cheer



Erie County Correctional Facility employees, from left, Kim Zydel, Denise Clay and Christine Piniewski place their donations into a bin during the Erie County Local’s holiday party. The local collected donations for the Food Bank of Western New York. It is the second year the local conducted the collection at its holiday party.

Onondaga County Unit declares impasse in contract talks

SYRACUSE — CSEA is turning up the heat in Onondaga County after the union recently declared an impasse in contract negotiations after county officials failed to give the union a formal response since the last bargaining session.

The union had waited a month for the response. More than 3,500 county employees in 10 bargaining units are covered under the pact.

Onondaga County Local President Phil Graham called the county's last offer "shamefully inadequate."

"There are several accepted ways to measure average annual increases in cost-of-living expenses to workers," he said. "The county's last offer doesn't

come anywhere close to meeting any of those numbers."

"They kept promising a written response, but it never came," said Labor Relations Specialist Richard McCormack, CSEA's chief negotiator. "Now, we've been forced to take the process to the next level by declaring impasse."

Graham said the workers have stretched their resources for years, allowing Onondaga County's finances to remain stable compared with finances in many other New York counties.

"We're simply asking for a fair increase that allows our county workers to keep up with rising costs for gas, heating their homes, food and other

cost-of-living increases," he said. "They've already gone for a whole year with no increases. It's time to move this forward."

Graham said county officials showed no shame in offering workers substandard increases.

"By declaring impasse, we wanted to send the clear message to Onondaga County that we're completely ashamed they apparently value their workers so little that they would even entertain such a paltry contract offer," he said.

The union filed the declaration of impasse with the state Public Employment Relations Board in early December. PERB is expected to assign a mediator within the next month and start

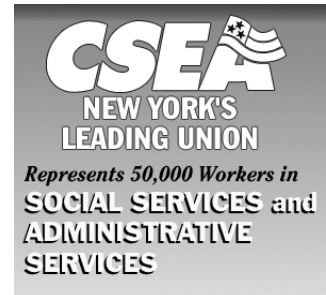
scheduling meetings with both parties.

CSEA is hoping that mobilizing members will be enough to start making progress at the bargaining table.

Graham said the union is launching a campaign to educate the public about the value of public services provided by the county work force and why the workers deserve a fair contract offer.

"We're going to do the best we can to get our issues heard by the public," Graham said. "A fair contract will benefit taxpayers too, so we're hopeful we can gain their support in our struggle."

— Mark M. Kotzin



"It's time to move this forward."

CSEA *Voices*

Social Services workers help brighten holidays

MAYVILLE — CSEA members helped make the holidays a bit brighter for some children and senior citizens in Chautauqua County.

CSEA members working in the Department of Social Services' Third Party Resources, Fiscal Management and Managed Care/CASA units raised money throughout the year to buy gifts for the people they serve. The "Rainbow Fund," as it is called, is a way for the employees to reach out to those in need.

"We buy pop and water on sale and keep our fridge filled," said Social Services worker Bonnie Peters. "It's always 50 cents, and any of the profits go into the fund."

Caseworkers then submit the first name, age and a holiday wish for foster children and others who are less fortunate, Peters said.

"Our workers let us know

about the kids they have," Peters said. "They may have wishes for something like a new shirt, or a toy. We try to get them something nice."

In 2004, the units expanded the program to include a segment of the senior population. Proceeds from the pop sale are now also used to buy items for homebound elderly.

"For the seniors we'll buy things that we often take for granted, like a nice brush and comb set, slippers, tins of cookies, stationery and envelopes, stamps or treats for their pets," Peters said. "For the homebound elderly, it is a big deal. They may not be able to go out and get a new toothbrush. They also like to have a little something, like a tin of cookies, to offer to the people who come to their home."

The employees spent



CSEA members Pat Hooks and Sue Clawson sort through items bought with proceeds from the Rainbow Fund. CSEA members working in three Chautauqua County Department of Social Services units raise money annually so they can buy gifts for children and seniors in need.

about \$500 this year. Volunteers purchased, wrapped and distributed the gifts within a week's time.

In addition to pop sale profits, workers conduct other activities, such as bake sales, to promote the

Rainbow Fund. The fund is usually larger, Peters said, but the workers decided to donate a portion to Hurricane Katrina relief efforts this year.

— Lynn Miller



"What I appreciated is that CSEA actually used union members to get our voices out there as opposed to a canned commercial. I think that people hearing it from the union members themselves is the best way to get the word out."

— Kerry Mincher, Saratoga County Unit (Maplewood Manor), speaking about her involvement in CSEA's new advertising campaign (More on Page 3.)



DOT workers help out in Wilma's wake

CSEA members helping in Hurricane Wilma recovery efforts so far have worked at 148 signal sites, installed or hung more than 145 traffic signal heads, 72 pedestrian signal heads, 65 flashing school zone signs and more than 4,000 feet of steel span wire to hold up the school zone signs.

CSEA Voices



"The CSEA ad campaign was a lot of work, but it was a good experience. It made me take pride in my job, and pride in my union. I felt honored to take part in it."

— Tawanna Wright, Developmental Aide, Central New York DDSO and 12-year member, speaking about her involvement in CSEA's new advertising campaign (See Page 3 for more about the campaign.)

BROWARD COUNTY, Fla. T-shirts and work under swaying palms are only a dream for most state Department of Transportation workers making roadways safer in frigid weather.

For a dedicated group of mostly CSEA members, it's a weather respite to help Floridians recovering from the catastrophic wrath of Hurricane Wilma.

Despite long hours and time away from home, it's a rewarding job for Bob Walaszewski, John Darramone, William Smart, Henry Legas, Joe Neer, Fran Tripicco, Larry Tyler and Paul Gregory. All but Gregory are CSEA members working for the DOT traffic signal shops in

Utica, Rochester and Binghamton. Gregory is their traffic signal engineer in charge, and a Public Employees Federation member.

The crew arrived in November in a caravan of three signal repair trucks with elevated towers, a support truck with a trailer full of supplies and one state van and will be returning soon.

"It was really something to see. I've never seen anything like this — the damage that was done. When Hurricane Wilma blew through, it took most of the traffic signals down. We'd find signals twisted and blown blocks away," said Walaszewski, a CSEA activist and supervising traffic signal mechanic



State DOT workers load a road sign in preparation of replacing one damaged by Hurricane Wilma.



A state DOT worker from Utica helps repair traffic signals in Broward County, Florida. Workers were called in to help in the wake of Hurricane Wilma.

out of the Utica DOT Region 2 Shop.

"When we got here, we were just trying to get the signals up and working. Now we're trying to get everything operating correctly, like it was before the storm."

The workers are putting in 12-hour days, six days a week. Prior to the storm repair efforts, most had never met. Now, Walaszewski said, they're all good friends, even celebrating Thanksgiving together in a Florida restaurant.

"We've all made friends and we all work together very well as a team. I've never worked with a better bunch of guys than this. We miss our families, but it's a small sacrifice we have to make, and we're glad we're able to help out here," Walaszewski said.

Seeing the amount of

damage could have a demoralizing effect, but instead, Walaszewski said it energizes the workers and encourages them to persevere, adding that the Broward County supervisors and traffic signal department have been extremely friendly and helpful.

The thanks seem to go both ways. The workers recently received a call from the Broward County transportation commissioner commending the New York crews for their dedication, expertise, and the amount of work they've accomplished.

**— Mark M. Kotzin
— Photos by
Daryl Henderson**

Grounds crew is booster club of its own to school teams

AMSTERDAM — CSEA members working in school districts across the state are often the biggest supporters of their schools' athletic teams.

That's especially true for custodial, maintenance and grounds crew employees who keep fields, courts and school grounds in top condition to maximize the teams' ability to compete.

At the Greater Amsterdam Central School District, where pride in the school's athletic teams is legendary, CSEA members maintain seven different fields.

Unit President Robert Minkler said CSEA members' tasks extend far beyond minor maintenance duties.

"These guys put everything together before a game," he said. "As soon as the game is over, the workers are getting things ready for the next day's practice."

Minkler said keeping

the fields in the best shape requires expertise in many areas. "Our members do everything," he said. "They are electricians, carpenters, masons; whatever it takes."

District employees are also excited about the school's new AstroTurf football field.

"It's state of the art; the best you can get," said Robert Szczepank, a maintenance staff member.

The AstroTurf and the crew's hard work has already paid off for the hardworking football team, the Rams. Within a year of getting the new field, the Rams swept the sectionals and recently won the high school football state championship at the Carrier Dome in Syracuse.

CSEA supports championship tournaments and sports programs in public schools across the state through sponsorship of the New York State Public



Members of the grounds crew from Greater Amsterdam Central School District, home of the Rams, the 2005 New York state Class A football champions, work hard at maintaining their schools' athletic facilities. In back row, from left, are Dave Szala, Wayne Satas, Charlie Hassfurter, Unit President Robert Minkler, and Unit Vice President Pete Tambasco. In the front row, from left, are Dave Pakenas, Robert Szczepanik, Stan Posluszny, Rich Somers and Vito Damico.

High School Athletic Association, which oversees 20 varsity sports held across the state each season. Just as with Amsterdam sports, CSEA members employed at school districts play a vital role in maintaining the schools' athletic

facilities.

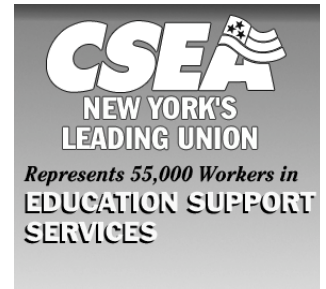
"We're proud of the vital role our members play in public schools and sports programs all over New York," CSEA President Danny Donohue said.

— Therese Assalian



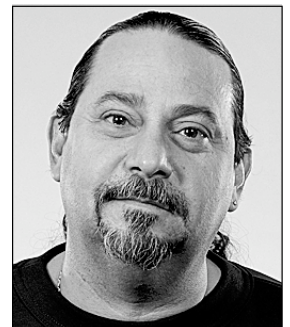
Chuck Borowiec, a maintenance employee at the Cleveland Hill School District, sweeps the floor in preparation for a game in the Cleveland Hill High School gym. CSEA members employed at school districts across the state are vital to running the schools smoothly. "We pull the bleachers, set up tables and chairs for the scorekeepers," he said. "We make sure the floor is clean and dry, especially in winter so people don't fall and get hurt."

(See more about CSEA's support of student athletes on Pages 10-11.)



"Our members do everything. They are electricians, carpenters, masons; whatever it takes."

CSEA *Voices*



"It was very interesting to see how they go about something like this and all the behind-the-scenes stuff. I had no idea how these types of things were put together and all that goes on to make it happen. The people on this shoot were great. They made me feel right at ease and the crew was great."

— Ed Figueroa, 1st Vice President, Finger Lakes Developmental Disabilities Services Office Local, speaking about his involvement in CSEA's new advertising campaign (more on Page 3)

INSIDE THE WORK FORCE

Building champions

Across the state, CSEA members on and off the job help to support high school athletes in many ways.

Some members coach and many attend games. Members working in school districts support athletes daily. Nutritious meals, clean classrooms, and safe transportation are some of the things that help foster a positive learning environment that ultimately helps athletes succeed.

Maintenance of athletic fields and facilities is also key to a sports team's success. Featured here is some of the work CSEA members in the Levittown and Connetquot school districts on Long Island perform to keep facilities in top shape. Scheduling and transportation of students to and from games are also important jobs CSEA members perform.

CSEA supports championship tournaments and sports programs in public schools across the state through sponsorship of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association, which oversees 20 varsity sports held across the state each season. (For more information visit www.nysphsaa.org).



Levittown School District member Scott Torrance fixes the padding in the gym.



Connetquot school bus driver Barbara Sakaris is ready to pick up some students.



Maintenance worker Scott Torrance makes sure that the basketball net and backboard are secure for play.



Levittown Electrician Joe Carbonaro checks the power source for the remote bleachers in the gym.



Connetquot Chief High School Custodian and Certified Pool Operator Joe Siciliano, front, works with Richie Hargis and Kevin Fox to put the swim lanes in the pool for a meet.



Cleaner Nick Benischek inspects beneath the bleachers to make sure they're safe and in good working order.



Connetquot School District Operations Unit President Bill Softy helps custodian Joan Berini roll out a mat for the wrestling team.



Sometimes it takes teamwork to set up for a function at school. Here, custodians and maintenance workers install the diving board for the Connetquot swim team.



Nick Benischek and Scott Torrance setting up the bleachers for a game.

State ignores potential safety hazards at Bear Mountain Inn

BEAR MOUNTAIN — The Bear Mountain Inn's rustic setting has long made it a favorite spot for locals and tourists to sit by its enormous fireplace, a cup of hot cocoa in hand, after skating at the state park's ice rink or visiting the bears in the adjacent Trailside Museum.

The possibility of many potential safety hazards inside the walls of the historic inn, built in 1915 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, recently forced CSEA's Safety and Health Department to bring park workers' involvement in renovations to a halt.

"It turns out there's a chance we've been handling asbestos, lead and mold without any safety protection for the last few years we've been working on the inn," said Palisades

Interstate Park Local President John VanWagner, an electrician involved with renovations.

A visit from CSEA Safety and Health Specialist Gary China led to CSEA members being pulled from the work site. Private contractors hired to work on the inn followed suit after learning of CSEA's concerns.

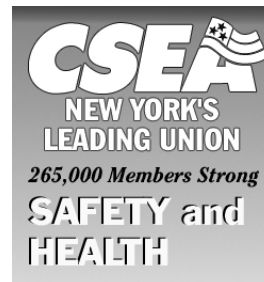
China said management did not complete a required survey of the building's materials before starting renovations. As the Bear Mountain Inn was built long before regulations on asbestos and other toxic materials were instituted during the early 1980s, China said there is good reason for workers to be worried.

VanWagner said his members did not realize they

were working in hazardous conditions because they weren't trained to recognize asbestos. The state requires workers to attend annual asbestos and right-to-know training, but VanWagner said he's attended only one such training session during his eight years working for the state.

"Not only have the workers not received proper training, they're also not supposed to handle asbestos because New York state requires a license to handle asbestos," China said.

For now, work at the inn has stopped until an assessment of the materials is conducted. CSEA is investigating filing a mass worker's compensation



claim on behalf of union members involved in the renovations.

More importantly, the union is putting pressure on the state park's management to clean up their safety and health practices.

"It's appalling that New York state seems to have such trouble following its own rules," said Southern Region President Diane Hewitt. "Their laziness could not only have possibly hurt their workers' health, but also that of the many thousands of tourists who visit Bear Mountain each year. It's time that management clean up their act."

— Jessica Stone

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Stay informed about what state government is doing through

INSIDE ALBANY

CSEA is a longtime, major underwriter of this award-winning public television program. See the times below for the 2006 broadcast schedule in your area.

Day	City	Station	Time
Saturday	Binghamton	WSKG	2:30 p.m.
	NYC	WNET	1:30 p.m.
	Rochester	WXXI	5:00 p.m.
Sunday	Albany	WMHT	12:30 p.m. 11:30 p.m.
	Buffalo	WNED	10:00 a.m.
	Long Island	WLIW	6:30 a.m.
	NYC	WNET	6:00 a.m.
	Plattsburgh	WCFE	9:00 a.m.
	Syracuse	WCNY	1:00 p.m.
	Watertown	WPBS	7:00 a.m.
Monday	Long Island	WLIW	12:00 noon

Want the latest on safety and health in the workplace? Visit the CSEA Occupational Safety & Health page on CSEA's web site at www.csealocal1000.org!

Union members mark season by giving



Left, CSEA members in the Capital Region, including Region President Kathy Garrison, joined other volunteers two days before Thanksgiving to assist Equinox with its annual Thanksgiving meal for Albany-area people in need. Volunteers helped with tasks that included cleaning, peeling potatoes and prepping turkeys. From left are Kim Wallace, Lori Jubic, Garrison, Jay Ingoldsby and his daughter Lauren.

Make a New Year's resolution to buy union, buy American

The CSEA-endorsed *Buyer's Edge* is a buy-by-phone consumer buying service designed to save you money on most major purchases including cars/trucks, large appliances, TVs, furniture and much more. Through the convenience of the toll-free numbers, you can call our vendors direct and talk to a "live" specialist who has product and service expertise, knows inventory availability, and, in many cases, can arrange delivery direct to your door as soon as possible.

For appropriate toll-free numbers, simply visit the Buyer's Edge web site* at www.buyersedgeinc.com.

*Important information: **CSEA Username: 1811**, and your **Password: member1** available for access to the web site.

Here are some SPECIALS for CSEA members valid through Dec. 31, 2005. Call **1-800-377-3700** and give your **CSEA group number, 1811**, for the following great deals and more!

AUDIOVOX 15" FLAT SCREEN LCD TV: MODEL #1505
15-inch 4:3 LCD TV with built-in speakers, table stand and NTSC Tuner
SUGG. RETAIL \$439.00..... **B.E. PRICE \$279.00***

EMERSON 3 CD SHELF STEREO: MODEL #MS3105
3 CD changer system can be wall-mounted, set CDs for programmed or random order, and color-changing digital tuner display
SUGG. RETAIL \$129.00..... **B.E. PRICE \$78.00***

HOOVER UPRIGHT BAGLESS VACUUM: MODEL #U5260
Bagless, 12.0 Amp Upright Vacuum, Hepa air filtration, on-board tools, adjustable height, power boost button
SUGG. RETAIL \$129.00..... **B.E. PRICE \$75.00***

* Tax and Delivery not included.



Right, Saratoga Springs City Hall Unit member Karen Whipple helps Saratoga Economic Opportunity Council Community Services Director Lillian McCarthy collect canned foods to benefit the council's programs, including Head Start, WIC and local food pantries. CSEA members teamed up with local police and firefighters for the drive during the recent Saratoga Springs Victorian Street Walk.



Help rebuild lives by building CSEA Street

The victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita greatly appreciate your help during the early relief effort, but they continue to need your help in rebuilding their communities and lives.

CSEA is working with Habitat for Humanity to build "CSEA Street" as part of Habitat's Operation Home Delivery rebuilding initiative. For as little as 25 cents a week over the next year, you can help Gulf Coast residents rebuild their homes.

For more information or to donate, visit CSEA's web site at www.csealocal1000.org. From CSEA's home page, follow the link to Habitat for Humanity's CSEA donor pledge page.





1987

19 years ago ...

Former Gov. Mario Cuomo proposed in the 1987-88 state budget to close seven state Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities developmental centers and replace them with community-based residences. While CSEA and OMRDD had already been working together for years to make this transition, the union fought hard in 1987 to ensure the agency's consumers continued to receive the same level of services in their own communities.

Through CSEA members' hard work and dedication, the community residences proved successful. Not only did the consumers continue to receive high levels of care, but their quality of life improved. Today, highly trained CSEA members provide quality, personalized care to thousands of consumers in a home-like environment.

CSEA and OMRDD's ongoing partnership continues to yield strong results. OMRDD Commissioner Thomas Maul, during a recent labor-management summit with CSEA activists, said not only is the state's developmental disabilities system a model for such care across the United States, but the agency's relationship with CSEA is a model for labor-management working together for quality care.

CSEA-OMRDD talks intensify



This article from the March 23, 1987, issue of *The Public Sector*, CSEA's predecessor to *The Work Force*, detailed CSEA's fight to ensure the state establish community residences that would provide high quality services and improve consumers' quality of life.

Also in 1987 ...

- * Lt. Col. Oliver North testifies before Congress on his role in the Iran-contra weapons scandal. President Ronald Reagan and various officials in his administration come under fire by lawmakers and the public over the issue.
- * British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher wins a third term.
- * U.S. Supreme Court Justice Lewis F. Powell Jr. retires. The U.S. Senate rejects Robert H. Bork as his replacement.
- * The drug AZT wins U.S. Food & Drug Administration approval for the treatment of AIDS.
- * "Platoon" wins the Academy Award for Best Picture.
- * The New York Giants defeat the Denver Broncos in the Super Bowl.

Shoppers turning away from Wal-Mart

ALBANY — American consumers are increasingly shunning Wal-Mart and its “everyday low prices” because of their increasing awareness of the company’s anti-worker business practices, according to a recent Zogby International poll.

Wake-Up Wal-Mart, formed by the United Food and Commercial Workers union, which has been trying to form a union with Wal-Mart workers, sponsored national telephone surveys with 1,000 respondents each in January and November. The polls gauged the public’s opinions about Wal-Mart and other discount retailers.

In January, a poll conducted by Lake, Snell & Perry found that 76 percent of the respondents viewed

Wal-Mart favorably, while 20 percent viewed the company unfavorably.

By November, in the wake of publicity about continuing Wal-Mart attacks on its workers, suppliers and communities, the Zogby poll found that only 58 percent of respondents viewed the company favorably and 38 percent of those surveyed now view Wal-Mart unfavorably. In both cases, the poll showed an 18 percentage point change from the January poll.

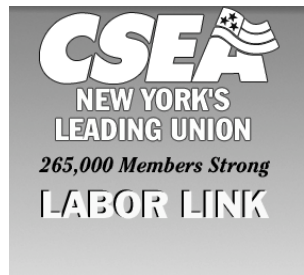
The Zogby results also seem to point toward a shift in Americans’ shopping trends. Fewer respondents are shopping at Wal-Mart frequently, and more shoppers are turning away despite the low prices.

Wal-Mart, the United States’

largest employer with 1.3 million workers, has a record of violating fair labor practices and employee rights, including gender discrimination, substandard pay and health benefits and union-busting activity.

The company has a “union-free toolbox” available to store officials, who are encouraged to call a hotline at the first sign of any employee interest in a union. Wal-Mart also threatens, intimidates and fires any workers management suspects of favoring forming a union.

In the few cases when Wal-Mart



employees successfully formed a union, the company has responded through phasing out departments and closing stores. Wal-Mart eliminated in-store meat-cutting departments across the United States in 2000, shortly after

meat cutters organized at one Texas Wal-Mart. The company closed a store in Canada after workers there formed a union.

For more information, visit Wake Up Wal-Mart’s web site at www.wakeupwalmart.com.

— Janice Marra

CSEA calling all veterans for new veterans committee newsletter

The CSEA Veterans Committee is launching a statewide newsletter for members who are veterans of all U.S. military branches.

The newsletter will address issues that are important to you as a public employee who proudly served your country.

If you are interested in being on the newsletter’s mailing list, complete the newsletter sign-up form on this page and mail it to the Veterans Committee at CSEA

Headquarters at 143 Washington Ave., Albany, N.Y. 12210.



CSEA leads drive to rename highway



From left, State Sen. Dale Volker, CSEA members Jeanne Kreavy, Ron Kreavy, representatives of the color guard, Assemblyman Jack Quinn II, CSEA member Neil Hodgson and Bob Lennartz celebrate the recent renaming of an Erie County highway as the “Erie County Veterans Memorial Highway.” The Western Region Veterans Committee collected more than 800 petition signatures from the community to rename the section of Route 219 stretching from West Seneca to the Hamburg/Boston exit.

CSEA Veterans Committee newsletter sign-up form (Please print clearly)

CSEA Member’s Local or Unit Name: _____

CSEA Member’s Name: _____

CSEA Member’s Address: _____

Phone Number: Work: () _____

Home: () _____

Last four digits of Social Security number: _____

Branch of military served/dates: _____

Please mail this form to the following address:

**CSEA Veterans Committee
Attn: Membership Department
143 Washington Ave.
Albany, N.Y. 12210**

You can also fax this form to (518) 465-2382.

Fight national origin discrimination at work

Editor's Note: This is the fifth in a series of discrimination articles appearing regularly to provide valuable information regarding important areas of protection available through the CSEA Legal Assistance Program. The Legal Assistance Program covers employment and labor issues involving disciplinaries, contract grievances and arbitrations, court litigation and agency proceedings. Get more information about legal services in the Legal Assistance Program by calling CSEA headquarters at (800) 342-4146, extension 1443, or by visiting www.csealocal1000.org, and clicking on the legal programs and services menu item.

This article provides an overview of "national origin" discrimination in the work place. In future articles, other areas of discrimination will also be dealt with in more detail.

Both federal and state law prohibit discrimination against an employee because of his or her national origin, i.e., the country where the employee was born or the country where the employee's ancestors came from,

or because of the employee's physical, cultural or linguistic characteristics stemming from a particular national origin group.

The prohibition against national origin discrimination addresses discrimination based on: a) marriage to or association with persons of a particular national origin group; b) membership in, or association with an organization identified with or seeking to promote the interests of national origin groups; c) attendance or participation in schools, churches and temples generally used by persons of a particular national origin group; and d) name or spouse's name which is associated with a particular national origin group.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunities Commission will presume a work rule requiring employees to speak only English at all times at work constitutes national origin discrimination. However, when the employer can show that an "English-only" rule is justified by business necessity, the employer can require employees to speak only English at certain times.

Like racial and sexual harassment, workplace harassment on the basis of national origin constitutes a form of illegal discrimination. Ethnic slurs and other verbal or physical conduct relating to national origin may constitute illegal harassment when it is found to create a hostile work environment that interferes with an employee's work performance.

An employer can be held responsible for the existence of a hostile work environment when an employee's work place is filled with national origin based intimidation, ridicule or insult that creates a hostile or abusive work environment. To prove national origin-based harassment, an employee must show many incidents of discriminatory comments or conduct. One or two, or even a handful of infrequent, unrelated such events most probably will not rise to the standard necessary to be actionable.

As part of CSEA's commitment to inclusiveness and building a stronger union, all activists, representatives and staff are expected to conduct themselves

in a manner that respects the ethnic diversity of CSEA's entire membership.

To read more about the services offered by the Legal Assistance program, visit the members-only area at CSEA's web site at www.csealocal1000.org/legal/laparticles.php.

Local 1000 Members **CSEA** LEGAL SERVICES PROGRAM AFSCME, AFL-CIO

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!



This members-only benefit program provides attorney representation for **WORKERS' COMPENSATION; SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY; PERSONAL INJURY and PERSONAL LEGAL MATTERS** for members **AND** their dependents.

Quality legal representation at little or no out-of-pocket cost for injury/illness related matters. Also, representation is available at pre-negotiated, pre-published fees for other personal matters.

Call 1-800-342-4146
and Follow Prompts for
CSEA Legal Services Program

Break in membership affects eligibility for union office, voting privileges

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Your Insurance Service Team at JLT Services Corporation is now...



PEARL · CARROLL
& ASSOCIATES

1-800-697-2732

**Same people, same great service
and now with in-state ownership!**

Visit <http://www.cseainsurance.com> for more information on available programs.

Protecting Your Benefits

Prescription drug reminders for Empire Plan enrollees

The CSEA Health Benefits Department would like to remind State Empire Plan enrollees of the following change to their prescription drug benefit:

Beginning Jan. 1, 2006, Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield will insure and jointly administer The Empire Plan prescription drug program with Caremark, its pharmacy benefits manager.

It is important to note, while your prescription drug benefits are not changing, there will be some differences.

Enrollees are encouraged to review the Empire Plan's 2006 preferred drug list as the benefit is based on whether a drug is generic, preferred brand name or non-preferred brand name drug. Enrollees are also advised to check with their local pharmacies to see if they will participate in the Caremark/Empire Plan network beginning in January.

If members are currently using the Express Scripts mail service pharmacy and have refills remaining, prescriptions (except for compound drugs and controlled substances) will be automatically transferred to the Caremark mail service pharmacy as of Jan. 1, 2006. Prescriptions for compound

drugs and controlled substances cannot be transferred between retail or mail order pharmacies. In those instances, enrollees will need a new prescription from their doctor.

Co-payment amounts stay the same in 2006

In accordance with the CSEA—New York state contract, the Empire Plan prescription drug co-payment amounts will remain the same for 2006:

- Up to a 30-day supply from retail pharmacy or mail order: generic \$5, preferred brand name \$15, non-preferred brand name \$30
- Up to a 90-day supply from retail pharmacy: generic \$10, preferred brand name \$30, non-preferred brand name \$60
- Up to 90-day supply through mail order: generic \$5, preferred brand name \$20, non-preferred brand name \$55

When a brand-name prescription drug is dispensed and a U.S. Food and Drug Administration generic equivalent is available, the member continues to have the right to request a generic appeal, or they



will be responsible for the difference in cost between the generic drug and the non-preferred brand-name drug, plus the non-preferred brand name co-payment.

A list of the most commonly prescribed generic and brand-name drugs included on the 2006 Empire Plan preferred drug list is available on the state Department of Civil Service's web site at www.cs.state.ny.us. On the site, click on the "employee benefits"

link, and then click on the "you should know" button. The list is not a complete list of all prescription drugs covered under the Empire Plan. For specific questions about how much your prescription will cost or information about the mail service program, please contact the Empire Plan prescription drug program toll-free at 1-877-7-NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447).

Empire Plan hearing aid benefit to increase for state employees in 2006

The following information is intended for CSEA-represented state Executive Branch enrollees 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.

In accordance with the CSEA-New York state contract, the following health insurance change affects active, CSEA state division members enrolled in the Empire Plan.

Effective Jan. 1, 2006, the hearing aid reimbursement increases to \$1,500, per hearing aid, per ear, once every four years, not subject to

deductible or co-insurance.

For children 12 years old and under, the same benefits can be available after 24 months when it is demonstrated that a covered child's hearing has changed significantly and the existing hearing aid(s) can no longer compensate for the child's hearing impairment.

If you have any questions regarding your health benefits, please contact your agency's health benefits administrator, usually located in the personnel office, or the CSEA Health Benefits Department at (518) 785-4774, (800) 286-5242 (JCHB) or by e-mail to healthben@cseainc.org.

March 31 is Empire Plan claims deadline for 2005 expenses

Empire Plan enrollees have until March 31, 2006, (90 days after the end of the calendar year) to submit medical expenses incurred during the 2005 plan year to the addresses listed below.

**United Health Care Service Corp.
P.O. Box 1600
Kingston, N.Y. 12402-1600**

For the Empire Plan basic medical program, the Home Care Advocacy Program (HCAP) and for non-network physical therapy or chiropractic services.

Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield

For help with the claim filing process of inpatient or outpatient hospital services, contact Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield at 1-877-7NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447).

**ValueOptions
P.O. Box 778**

Troy, N.Y. 12181-0778
For non-network mental health and substance abuse services received in 2005.

**Express Scripts
P.O. Box 1180**

Troy, N.Y. 12181-1180
For prescriptions filled at non-participating pharmacies or at participating pharmacies without using your New York government employee benefit card.

As a reminder: Beginning Jan. 1, 2006, Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield will insure and jointly administer the Empire Plan prescription drug program with Caremark, its pharmacy benefits manager.

Enrollees can call the Empire Plan

at 1-877-7NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447) with questions or to get claim forms. As a reminder, when using the Empire Plan's toll-free telephone number, pay extra attention to the choices offered by the automated system.

Network providers and pharmacies will submit claims on your behalf directly to the appropriate insurance carrier. If you have a non-network claim submission, make sure you complete the requested subscriber information on the claim forms, include the original billing or receipt, if requested, and sign the claim form.

Promoting Good Health

Leading Edge

The more than 1,250 CSEA members employed at Taconic Developmental Disabilities Services Office provide quality care every day, but it's during the holiday season that the workers truly shine. Strong labor-management cooperation results in a bevy of festivities that provide merriment for developmentally disabled consumers. Aside from smaller group activities at their community residences, Taconic DDSO consumers enjoy the chance to get dressed up for a holiday dance and do some Christmas shopping. In addition, the workers enjoy some well-deserved quality time with their families during an annual party thrown for workers' children.

The Work Force's Jessica Stone recently spoke with CSEA Taconic DDSO Local President Debbie Downey and Treasurer Nancy Welsh, who are both involved in some of Taconic DDSO's holiday events.

WF: How much does Taconic DDSO do to help consumers celebrate the holidays?

DD: Not a day goes by in December that there isn't something going on here in Wassaic (Taconic DDSO's headquarters) or at one of the community residences. Our members do Christmas crafts with the consumers, take them to the mall, or to holiday events in the community. Walk into any of the houses this time of year and they are decorated for the holidays. There is always something going on.

WF: How does the staff ensure the consumers have as normal a holiday season as anyone else?

DD: The things Taconic DDSO plans for its consumers are just like any other event you and I would go to. The workers help the consumers get dressed up for the Christmas luncheon at the Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel. They even do hair and nails for some of the women. They also held a

Christmas dance at a country club nearby. The focus is just on fun, not on disabilities.

WF: Is there anything unique you do for the consumers?

NW: We have a sidewalk sale here where the consumers can do their Christmas shopping. A lot of workers bring in items they no longer need so the consumers can shop for themselves and their families. The gym is decorated like the department stores from years ago. It's something the consumers look forward to every year.

WF: What does your local do for the members?

NW: Instead of holding a party for the members themselves, we hold a party for the children of members. We start planning in the summer. We plan on what toys we're going to buy for the kids and what we're going to have to eat. Each child gets to have their photo take on Santa's lap and then gets a toy. We have crafts and face painting. It's a way of saying thank you to our members.

WF: Of all the holiday events Taconic DDSO holds each year for the consumers, which is the favorite?

DD: Probably the sidewalk sale, because the consumers can come in and pick out gifts for themselves, their family members, and the other consumers they live with. It's a real big deal for the consumers because most wouldn't be able to afford to exchange gifts otherwise.

WF: Why do your members go above and beyond to make sure the consumers have a happy holiday?

DD: Because we care about them. The consumers are like our family. We're with them constantly, as much as we are with our own families. It takes a very special person to do direct care and we have many talented people in our local.



Good labor-management relations allow the CSEA Taconic Developmental Disabilities Services Office Local to pull off successful activities for consumers and workers. Members of the Employee Assistance Program board organize an annual holiday party for workers' families. They are, from left to right, Taconic DDSO Local Treasurer Nancy Welsh (also EAP Chair); Jan Mattern, an incident review coordinator and PEF member; Taconic DDSO Local President Debbie Downey; Dan Palmer, a treatment team leader; and Kevin King, personnel administrator.

AFSCME Family Scholarship deadline is Dec. 31

The deadline to apply for the AFSCME Family Scholarship program is Dec. 31. All applications must be postmarked by that date. AFSCME will award 13 scholarships of \$2,000 each to eligible high school seniors, which are renewable annually for a maximum of four years.

A generous donation from the American Education Services/Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency has allowed AFSCME to increase the number of scholarships from 10 to 13 awards.

Graduating high school seniors who are the children of AFSCME members or whose legal guardians are AFSCME

members are eligible. Applicants must intend to enroll in a full-time, four-year degree program at an accredited college or university. To get an application, write the following address:

AFSCME Family Scholarship Program
Attention: Education Department
1625 L St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

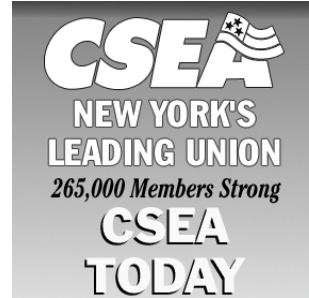
Members can also get an application by e-mail at education@afscme.org, download from the AFSCME web site at www.afscme.org or by phone at (202) 429-1250.

PEOPLE PERSON — The PEOPLE recruiter of the month of November is Candace Noel of the State University of New York at Plattsburgh Local in the Capital Region. She recruited 21 new

PEOPLE members. PEOPLE is CSEA and AFSCME's political action program. It is responsible for raising money and collecting voluntary contributions from the membership so CSEA can effectively promote our interests at the state and federal level ...

ULSTER COUNTY OKS PACT — The Ulster County Unit ratified a recent memorandum of agreement by a vote of 501-296. There were no invalid ballots in the on-site balloting. The two-year agreement includes raises Jan. 1, 2006 and Jan. 1, 2007. There are no other changes. At press time, the county

Legislature was expected to vote on the contract at its December meeting ... **MTA BONUS FOR METRO MEMBERS** — CSEA members participating in the NYS-Ride program are eligible to take advantage of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's holiday bonus program, which runs from Thanksgiving to Jan. 2, 2006. The NYS-Ride program helps state employees based in New York City save money on commuting expenses to and from work. For



more information on MTA's holiday bonus program, visit the MTA web site at www.mta.nyc.ny.us...

CONTRACT VICTORY — The Williamsville Central Schools Transportation Unit

recently voted to approve a tentative agreement that will expire in 2010. The agreement includes a change to a single health care provider with a percentage of the cost to be paid by the employee. It also includes pay increases in each of the five years, including retroactive pay to July 1, 2005. Changes were also made in language regarding longevity, a tool allowance, an attendance stipend, a training allowance and a job security clause. Unit members previously defeated two other tentative agreements ...

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS — The Chautauqua County Local recently awarded its annual local scholarships to three children of CSEA members. Winners are Robert Greenman, son of CSEA Chautauqua County Unit member Sandra Greenman; Elizabeth Panfil, daughter of Carl and Maryanne Panfil, both CSEA members; and Wendy Paddock, daughter of Chautauqua County Unit member Brenda Paddock.

What's In It For You?

Submit prescription drug co-payment claims until March 31

It is that time of year once again. State, Unified Court System and Local Government units that have the CSEA Employee Benefit Fund prescription drug co-payment plan have until March 31, 2006 to submit your claims.

Local government

Local government units that have successfully negotiated the CSEA EBF prescription drug co-payment plan in their agreements have until March 31, 2006, to submit all prescription drug co-payment receipts or a print-out, for a *maximum* reimbursement of \$125 for calendar year 2005. Any claims received at EBF after March 31, 2006 are ineligible for reimbursement.

Town of Babylon employees who have the physician co-payment



benefit can submit your medical co-payments during 2005 for a maximum reimbursement of \$120. Claims must be received by March 31, 2006.

State agencies

CSEA members employed at state agencies can submit for reimbursement by March 31, 2006, prescription drug receipts or a print-out for drug co-payments. The member must have paid *at least* \$300 in co-payments in 2005 to be eligible for a reimbursement up to a *maximum* of \$100.

Unified Court System

CSEA members employed by the Unified Court System can submit a voucher for a maximum reimbursement of \$100 for prescription co-payments. Vouchers must be received no later than March 31, 2006.

If you need a voucher to submit your receipts please call CSEA EBF at (800) EBF-CSEA, or log onto our web site at www.cseaebf.com and download a voucher.

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

Proposed resolutions and proposed amendments to the CSEA Constitution & Bylaws for consideration by CSEA delegates to the union's 2006 Annual Delegates Meeting **must be submitted by May 15, 2006.**

Proposed resolutions and proposed amendments to the CSEA Constitution & Bylaws 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 2006 CSEA Annual Delegates Meeting will be held Sept. 18-22 in New York City.

An Ever Better Future



Our Reputation: New York's Leading Union. We've Earned It!

We're CSEA – a positive force throughout
New York state for nearly a century.

We're 265,000 members strong. Dedicated. Keeping our skills
sharp and our knowledge current. Doing the vital work all New
Yorkers depend on, and doing it right.

We fight for fair pay, decent benefits,
fairness and respect. It's not just the
right thing to do – it's a great investment.

Quality. Effectiveness.

A better community for all.

CSEA
New York's
Leading Union
Local 1000 AFSCME, AFL-CIO
Danny Donohue, President
www.csealocal1000.org

2005 Legislative Summary



Clout. Got it? Get it.

CSEA
LOCAL 1000 AFSCME, AFL-CIO

NEW YORK STATE BUDGET

The state budget is the spending and taxation plan for the coming year. Funding for programs CSEA members administer and operate are determined in the state budget process.

The budget allocates state aid for state government, local government and school districts, directly impacting the number of employees and what services these employers will provide.

The governor introduces a proposed budget each January. The state legislature must act on the governor's proposal and, by April 1, the governor and legislature are supposed to reach a spending agreement. This year, for the first time in nearly 20 years, the legislature and governor did reach an on-time budget agreement.

As it stands, the legislature must pass the governor's budget "as is" or it can make reductions to the governor's spending plan. However, unless the governor agrees, the legislature does not have the power to add to the governor's budget. In other words, if the governor decides to cut funding to various programs, the legislature cannot restore the programs on its own.

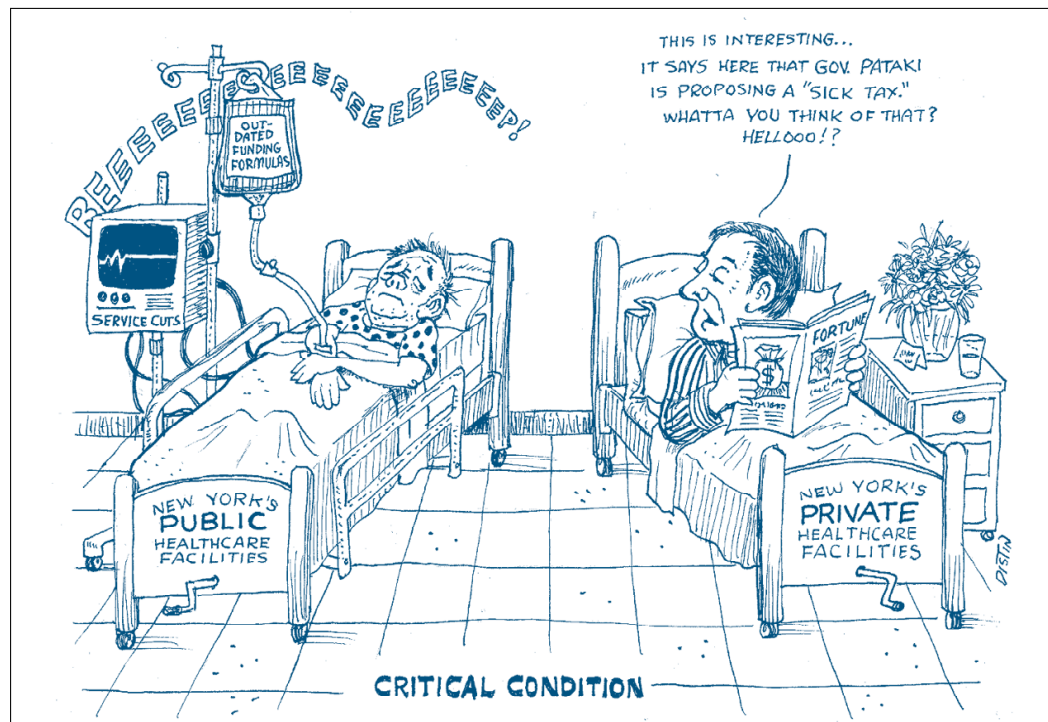
CSEA's Involvement

CSEA represents public and private sector workers across the state. CSEA members perform essential services that keep our state, local governments and school districts running. As union members, we have to be concerned with how the state collects and spends the money to keep services going.

Even small cuts in health care, education or transportation funding can mean hundreds of job losses and drastic cuts in services. The state budget is extremely important for county and local governments, where a state spending cut means property tax increases or shifting of funds from one program to another.

CSEA begins lobbying the governor and legislature the day the budget is released. CSEA testifies at public hearings, uses staff and members to lobby legislators in Albany and through our grassroots political action, CSEA members across the state lobby in their districts, write letters and make phone calls on the issues that affect them. CSEA's involvement in political lobbying is one of this union's most vital functions.

The following budget summary highlights the issues in the 2005 budget, including health care, education, transportation and many other issues affecting CSEA members.



HEALTH CARE BUDGET ISSUES

This year, health care funding was the centerpiece of the budget negotiations. County executives across the state complained loudly about high Medicaid costs and demanded reform. The Health Care Reform Act (HCRA), which funds the vast majority of health care facilities in the state, was set to expire.

Because thousands of state, county and private sector jobs that CSEA members occupy are directly funded by nursing home aid, Medicaid and HCRA, CSEA was at the forefront of the health care issue.

MEDICAID REFORM

The legislature and governor agreed to cap county Medicaid increases as shown below. The state will be responsible for increases over the amount of the cap.

Year	County Pays	Cap Adjustment	Total County Share
2006	2005 rate	3.5%	2005 rate + 3.5% increase
2007	2005 rate + 3.5%	3.25%	2005 rate + 6.75%
2008	2005 rate + 6.75%	3%	2005 rate + 9.75%

Each year thereafter, counties pay the 2005 base rate plus 9.75 percent, plus 3 percent yearly increases. In 2008, counties will have the option of continuing their contribution in this fashion or opting for a partial state Medicaid takeover in exchange for a portion of county sales taxes.

The state takeover of Medicaid increases

will help to protect other county services from cutbacks when Medicaid costs rise and will also help ease the burden on county property taxpayers. Local implementation of the Medicaid program will continue as it always has and all employees will maintain their current employment status.

Increased State Aid for Public & Private Nursing Homes

The legislature initially agreed to spend \$80 million for upstate private sector nursing homes only. CSEA's activists and staff lobbied the governor, Senate and Assembly to withdraw the plan and to include public sector facilities that have also been financially strapped.

By the end of session, the governor and legislature could not agree on overall aid for public and private nursing homes. The legislature is expected to return later this year and lawmakers are still working on the issue.

Thanks to CSEA activism, the issue of helping public nursing homes is at the forefront of health care spending talks. CSEA remains at the bargaining table with elected officials and other affected unions and groups.

Nursing Home Cuts

The governor's proposed budget included cuts of \$221 million for the state's nursing homes. CSEA was successful in lobbying our elected officials to restore the governor's cuts to nursing homes and protect these services, jobs and other county programs from budget cuts.

Preferred Drug List (PDL)

CSEA supported and initiated a drive to establish a preferred drug list in Medicaid more than three years ago and this year the governor and legislature agreed to a preferred drug list. The list for Medicaid recipients will save the state and counties millions each year without reducing benefits, slowing the growth of Medicaid costs and easing the burden on county budgets.

Health Care Bonding

CSEA supported passage of \$750 million in bonding authority between the state Department of Health and the Dormitory Authority to update and improve health care facilities and upgrade health care technology. This money will help health care facilities upgrade and modernize technology to increase their revenues and improve their billing systems to reduce cuts in services, jobs and benefits.

Commission on Health Care Facilities in the 21st Century

In this budget, the legislature and governor created a commission to study the state's health care industry on a regional basis. The commission will make recommendations by the end of 2006 about "right-sizing" the state's hospitals and nursing homes, including possible closures, consolidations or other actions to improve the efficiency and quality of health care. The commission was created to address issues of over-bedding and under funding of many of our hospitals and nursing homes.

Closure of Middletown Psychiatric Center – Office of Mental Health

CSEA reached an agreement to close Middletown Psychiatric Center on April 1, 2006, and to use all of the savings from the closure to develop new, state-operated community services. All CSEA-represented employees of the facility will be transitioned into new community services. This closure will result in no layoffs, ensures that the employees will have a job in their industry, that the state will continue to provide mental health services and that those services will be provided in Orange and Sullivan counties. This sets a precedent for the future closure of state facilities that CSEA will ensure is followed and affords our members a more secure career in providing mental health services.

EDUCATION BUDGET ISSUES

State Education Aid for School Districts

The legislature and governor agreed to an

increase in education aid of \$848 million over last year. The increased aid will be allocated across the state on a regional basis with New York City receiving \$327 million more than last year. There was no agreement on a solution to address the Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE) lawsuit, which requires massive operational aid and capital construction aid increases for New York City.

Defeated: Privatization of SUNY Hospitals

CSEA opposed the governor's proposal to give the State University of New York the ability sell the three SUNY hospitals in Syracuse, Brooklyn and Stony Brook, to a not-for-profit owner. CSEA strongly opposed and defeated this shortsighted proposal.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BUDGET ISSUES

Defeated: \$300 Million in State Money for West Side Stadium

The governor proposed and CSEA opposed giving \$300 million in state funding and \$300 million in New York City funding to construct a West Side Stadium. The state faced a \$4 billion budget deficit this year and with a public health care crisis looming as public hospitals and nursing homes have been closing, cutting services and laying off workers, CSEA opposed using state money for a risky stadium plan that would not generate revenue for the state.

Defeated: Attempt to Contract Out Road Maintenance

CSEA defeated a proposal to allow the Department of Transportation and the Thruway Authority to enter into public/private partnership agreements for the financing, operation and maintenance of roadways, highways and bridges.

TRANSPORTATION BOND ACT

The legislature and governor agreed to and CSEA supported a \$2.9 billion transportation bond act, which voters approved in the November election. The overall package evenly divides the money between upstate highway, bridge, canal, rail and aviation projects and downstate mass transportation projects. The agreement protects existing prevailing wage and other labor protections and will mean improvements to our infrastructure and more jobs.

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

After the budget is concluded the legislature and governor focus on passing bills that determine state policy on many



Bonnie Peters and Rose Conti of Chautauqua County stand in solidarity with their Erie County brothers and sisters.

issues like pension rights, civil service rights, workplace safety and labor laws.

To become law, a bill must pass both houses of the legislature and be approved by the governor. The governor can veto a bill he opposes. The legislature can override a governor's veto with a two-thirds majority in each house and the bill will become law despite the veto.

In 2005, more than 9,000 bills were introduced in the Assembly and close to 6,000 in the Senate. Nearly 900 bills passed both houses of the legislature for approval or veto by the governor. Bills that pass both houses of the legislature can be delivered to the governor at any time up until the end of the year.

The governor has 10 days to sign or veto a bill, excluding Sundays and legal holidays, from the day that it is delivered to him by the legislature. If the governor takes no action in those 10 days, the bill automatically becomes law.

The governor has 30 days to act if it is delivered within a week of Dec. 31. If the governor does not sign the bill within the 30-day period it is automatically vetoed, known as a "pocket veto."

CSEA's Involvement

It is essential for CSEA to review each bill that is introduced in the legislature to determine whether our members are affected. For example, bills that infringe on members rights, roll back pension benefits or encourage contracting out are singled out and staunchly opposed by CSEA.

CSEA also drafts its own legislative proposals to improve the benefits of our

members. CSEA will ask legislators to introduce these proposals and work on our behalf to pass them into law. Many of CSEA's proposals are the direct result of requests from CSEA's local, region and statewide political action committees and individual members.

In 2005, CSEA took a position on nearly 3,000 bills in the state legislature. Starting in early January, CSEA staff issues memos in support or opposition to these bills and visits legislators in Albany to make the union's position known. CSEA members are also asked to lobby, write and call their legislators on bills to ask for their support or opposition depending on the issue.

While it is impossible to include every issue that CSEA was involved with this year, the following summary contains many of the legislative highlights for CSEA during 2005.

HEALTH CARE BILLS

**Hospital Infection Reporting
Chapters 284 & 239 of the Laws of 2005 -
Signed Into Law 7/20/05
S.5086A - Hannon / A.8698A – Gottfried &
S.5855 – Rules / A.8950 – Rules**

CSEA supported this law that requires hospitals to report on the number, types and causes of infections contracted by patients after they are admitted to the hospital. The Department of Health will set up a reporting system by July 1, 2006, and hospitals will need to begin submitting reports no later than Jan. 1, 2007.

**Safe Patient Handling Demonstration
Program
S.4929A – Maziarz / A.7641A – Gottfried
Chapter 738 of the Laws of 2005 – Effective
10/18/05**

CSEA supported this law that creates a pilot project to encourage hospitals and

nursing homes to establish a safe-patient handling program, including education and training on proper lifting and care of patients, use of equipment and education about risk factors to reduce worker injuries and improve care. This will encourage hospitals and nursing homes to promote safe policies for their employees, help to prevent injuries and improve patient care.

EDUCATION BILLS

**Health Insurance for Retirees Extender –
School Districts
Chapter 16 of the Laws of 2005 - Effective
May 15, 2005
S.1711 Farley – A.3328 - Weinstein**

CSEA supported this law that extends for one year provisions that prohibit school districts from reducing their contributions or the benefits of retiree health insurance unless a corresponding reduction is negotiated for current employees.

**Defeated: Expansion of Charter Schools
A.8319 – Benjamin / No Senate Bill
(Killed in Committee)**

Although rumors persist about this topic, CSEA defeated this bill before the legislature adjourned. The bill would have allowed an unlimited number of charter schools to be authorized for operation in the state (currently there is a cap of 100 charter schools).

Charter schools across the state are funded by taking money away from public schools and have mixed results in terms of quality. Until a fairer funding stream that does not penalize public schools is developed and until it is proven that charter schools increase the quality of education, CSEA will oppose expanding this experiment.



State Sen. Dale Volker, second from left, meets with, from left, Erie County Retiree Local members Marie Prince, and Gerry Prince, and Buffalo State Employees Local Treasurer Kathy Atwood. Volker has been a strong ally for CSEA in the ongoing Erie County budget crisis.



CSEA President Danny Donohue, right, meets with Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver.

CSEA/AFSCME Lobby Day 2005



CSEA Westchester Local members, including Westchester Medical Center employees, arrive for Lobby Day.



CSEA Erie County Educational Local President John Stading, left, meets with Assemblyman Paul Tokasz. Tokasz is fighting alongside CSEA in the ongoing Erie County budget crisis.

WORKPLACE SAFETY & HEALTH BILLS

CSEA Worksite Violence Prevention S.5773 – Spano / A.8940 – Rules (John) Veto # 92 of 2005 – 8/30/05

CSEA initiated this bill as the result of continuing violence against public employees in the workplace. The bill would require employers to assess their work sites for potential areas of violence, notify employees of potential threats and work with employees and employee organizations to develop corrective actions. This CSEA bill applied to public employers, including state and local governments, public authorities and public benefit corporations that have 20 or more employees.

The bill also created a complaint procedure for employees to follow if they believed situations of potential violence existed, as well as a follow up procedure with the Department of Labor if employers did not comply with this law. Language protecting employees from retaliatory action in the event a complaint is filed was included.

The governor vetoed this bill claiming that it needs to be negotiated between management and labor and that the costs of the bill were too great.

Employee Safety in Highway Work Zones Chapter 223 of the Laws of 2005 Signed Into Law, July 14, 2005 – Effective November 1, 2005 S.4885B – Libous / A.1691A – Gantt

CSEA supported this new law that creates a new, mandatory \$50 surcharge for violating speed limits in highway construction or maintenance work areas. The surcharges will be deposited in the Highway Construction and Maintenance Safety Education Fund to be used for public service announcements, education and

awareness about safe driving in work areas. The bill also requires a 60-day license suspension for repeat offenders.

RESPONSIBILITY IN CONTRACTING OUT BILLS

Disclosure of State Contracting Out Information

S.1920 – Robach / A.6542 – Lupardo Veto #114 of 2005 – 10/21/05

This CSEA bill required the Department of Civil Service to keep records on contracts to outside vendors including the impact on the state work force, types of services contracted out and whether the contracts are for services similar to existing state jobs.

The governor vetoed this bill claiming that this information can already be obtained through the Freedom of Information Law and this bill would complicate the contracting process and jeopardizes the privacy of private employers.

Contracting Out – Closing Third Party Loopholes

S.3251A – Maziarz / A.6485A – John Passed Both Houses – Awaiting Delivery to Governor

This CSEA bill clarifies that prevailing wages are to be paid for public works projects and building maintenance services that are contracted out by the government employers who use subcontractors and quasi-public agencies to conduct operations. This bill will take away the incentive to privatize public work solely to avoid paying a decent salary and benefits to employees on public works projects and close a loophole that lets employers use other agencies as a front to contract out.

Residential Facility Employers - Check-Off / No strike Agreements

S.3008 – Spano / A.3292 – John Veto #100 of 2005 – 10/4/05

CSEA supported this bill that authorizes employee organizations and employers that operate residential facilities licensed by the Office of Mental Health or Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, to voluntarily enter into agreements to confer jurisdiction to the State Employment Relations Board, rather than the National Labor Relations Board, to provide for a card check agreement and impose a no strike or lockout provision.

The governor vetoed this bill claiming that management and labor can already enter into these types of arrangements and that the bill supersedes the National Labor Relations Act.

Defeated: “Energy Performance Contracts” – i.e. Privatization A.4243 – Tonko / No Senate Bill (Killed in Committee)

This legislation, which CSEA opposed, expands the type of work that private contractors could provide for schools and local governments to allow for the “installation, maintenance or management of other systems or equipment.” Further, this bill would infringe on existing collective bargaining agreements that stipulate the work rules, terms and conditions of current public employees. This bill encouraged the privatization of school and local government maintenance and janitorial services under the guise of “conserving energy.”

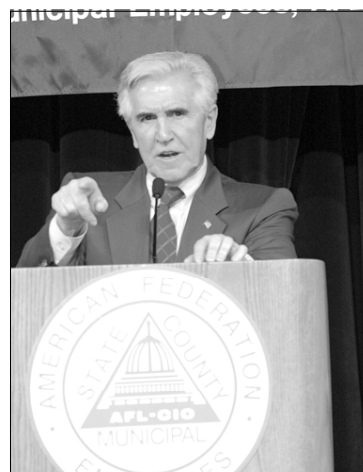
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES IN MILITARY SERVICE/RELATED ISSUES

Patriot Plan III - Death and Disability Benefit Improvements - Military Service Chapters 105 & 150 of the Laws of 2005 Signed Into Law – Effective 6/14/05

A.8291 - Abbate / S.5436 – Marcellino

This CSEA supported law:

- Provides that the survivors of New York public employees killed in active military duty be eligible for the same death and health insurance benefits as if the public employee was killed while still in public service.
- Extends for three years the delay of repayment requirements of pension system loans while members are on active duty.



At left, State Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno helped fire up CSEA during the annual CSEA/AFSCME Lobby Day in Albany.

Below right, Cohoes Department of Public Works Unit Secretary George Hebert, left, and Unit President Bob Pierre present a plaque to Assemblyman Ron Canestrari, center, during Lobby Day, for his service and dedication to New York residents.



Retirement Credit for Public Employees Called into Post 9/11 Military Service Chapter 326 of the Laws of 2006 Signed Into Law 7/26/05 – Effective 7/26/05 and deemed to have been in effect since 9/11/01.

A.5969 – Nesbitt / S.3519 – Wright

CSEA supported this law that allows retirement system members who have been called into active military service from Sept. 11, 2001 to Jan. 1, 2006 to receive retirement credit for that length of service without being required to make their normal contributions.

Make-up Civil Service Exams / Military Personnel

Chapter 425 of the Laws of 2005

Signed Into Law 8/2/05 – Effective 8/2/05

A.8476B – Towns / S.5587A – Leibell

CSEA supported this law that allows military personnel who missed the application deadline for a civil service exam due to a call to active duty the opportunity to take a special military make-up exam as deemed appropriate by the Department of Civil Service.

PENSION REFORM / RETIREE ISSUES

Defeated: Rolling Back Retirement Benefits or Creating a New Tier

With the national trend of privatizing pensions, including the current Social Security battle and California's attempt to move public employees from a defined benefit pension plan to a 401K (defined contribution), the calls for doing the same in New York have already begun.

Many mayors and county executives are blaming property tax increases on their pension costs and business groups are demanding that retirement benefits of public employees be more in line with the private sector. The mayor of New York City even called for creating a new Tier 5.

Early in the year, CSEA made it known to both houses of the legislature that any attempts to roll back retirement benefits or create a new tier would be met with staunch opposition. Thanks to CSEA's clout, none of these proposals were ever introduced or even saw daylight. However, this issue will remain in the public debate and CSEA members need to keep vigilant about protecting our retirement benefits.

Purchase of Retirement Credit / Pre-Tax Payment Plan

S.5153A – Golden / A.8890 – Rules

Veto #107 of 2005 – 10/11/05

CSEA supported this bill that allows retirement system members who purchase

past service credit or military service credit to make their contributions through pre-tax paycheck deductions. This will allow employees to avoid paying taxes twice on their pension contributions.

The governor vetoed this bill claiming the cost is too high.

Health Insurance for Retirees - All Employers

VETO #45 of 2005

S.5758 – Farley / A.3216B – Abbate

CSEA initiated this bill that would have prohibited all public employers from reducing their contributions or the benefits of retiree health insurance unless a corresponding reduction is negotiated for current employees. The bill did not supersede contracts that provided greater protection. The governor has vetoed this many times claiming that there is no evidence that public employers systematically reduce benefits of retirees and that the bill strips management of its ability to effectively manage its benefit programs.

Geriatric Mental Health Act

S.4742B – Spano / A.7672B – Rivera, P.

Chapter 568 of the Laws of 2005 – Effective 4/1/06

This CSEA supported law directs the Department of Mental Health to create a geriatric services demonstration program to provide mental health care to the elderly. Grants will be awarded to providers of services for programs for the elderly, improvement of treatment, coordinating alcohol drug and rehabilitative services and creating more efficient and effective use of the work force and family support programs.

CIVIL SERVICE REFORM

Bump and Retreat Rights for State & Local, Labor and Non-Competitive Class Employees

S.3184A – Robach / A.7057B – Abbate Veto #82 of 2005 – 8/30/05

CSEA initiated this bill to amend the Civil Service Law to ensure that non-competitive and labor class employees have the same bump and retreat rights as employees in the competitive class if budget cutbacks result in layoffs.

The governor vetoed this bill claiming that it circumvents the collective bargaining process and inhibits the ability of management to effectively manage its work force.

Probationary Leave for Promotions - Right to Return



CSEA Executive Vice President and AFSCME International Vice President Mary Sullivan listens during a town hall meeting in Washington, D.C., during a recent AFSCME conference. Sullivan chairs the 21st Century Committee's politics subcommittee.

S.3185 - Robach / A.6384 - Abbate VETO #72 8/23/05

CSEA initiated this legislation that amends Section 63 of the Civil Service Law to require that during the probationary period of a public employee who is appointed or promoted to a position in the classified service, the previous position held by that employee shall be kept open or filled only on a temporary basis. During the probationary period and upon reasonable notice, the employee shall have the right, upon his or her own election, to return to that previous position. Currently, this protection only applies to competitive class employees who accept a promotion.

The governor vetoed this bill claiming that it would hinder the ability of management to efficiently administer the work force.

PERB Reform - Authority to make Employees Whole for Employer Violations S.5379A – Robach / A.7265A – Abbate Passed Both Houses – awaiting delivery to governor

CSEA supported this bill to clarify that the Public Employment Relations Board has the authority to make employees whole for any loss in pay or benefits as deemed by the board as the result of an employer violating a cease and desist order.

Section 75 - Independent Hearing Officer VETO #12 of 2005

A.6343 – Lentol / S.3487 - Spano

CSEA initiated this bill which amends

Section 75 of the Civil Service Law to provide that an independent hearing officer be used in disciplinary cases where the penalty is dismissal from service. The governor has vetoed this bill many times on the grounds that it strips employers of their authority to maintain discipline in the most serious cases and threatens the ability of employers to apply discipline in a uniform manner.

GENERAL LEGISLATION

**Reform of Freedom of Information Law (FOIL)
Chapter 22 of the Laws of 2005 - Effective
5/3/05**

A.6714 – Destito / S.3460 – Spano

This law requires agencies that receive a FOIL request, but cannot disclose such information within 20 business days of receiving the request, to disclose in writing the reason for the inability to respond and a date within a reasonable period when the request will be granted.

**Public Authorities Accountability Act
S.5927 – Leibell / A.9007 – Rules
Passed Both Houses – Awaiting Delivery to
Governor**

This CSEA supported bill includes several reforms and strengthens legislative oversight on the operations of public authorities and public benefit corporations that operate in this state. The bill requires the following:

1. Requires these entities to submit their budgets to the governor and legislature and to the appropriate local government officials.
2. Requires independent and more comprehensive budget and operational reporting.
3. Restructures boards of various authorities and requires financial disclosure of board members.
4. Establishes a new Public Authorities Office in the executive branch to review budgets and operations of existing entities.

Washington watch



House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, Senate Democratic Leader Harry Reid, and U.S. Rep. Charles Rangel, D-N.Y., at far right, form a united front.

Capitol Hill rally

TAKING THE MESSAGE TO CAPITOL HILL — Southern Region President Diane Hewitt, second from left, Hudson Valley DDSO Local President Sara Bogart, Westchester County Unit President Jack McPhillips, and Monroe County Unit President Jim Volpone in Washington, D.C., to protest against the Bush administration proposed Social Security reforms. CSEA leaders and activists joined hundreds of AFSCME brothers and sisters for a Capitol Hill rally against the Bush administration's ill-conceived scheme to privatize Social Security.



CSEA President Danny Donohue introduces Sen. Hillary Clinton.



Sen. Chuck Schumer addresses CSEA activists along with those from AFSCME District Councils 37 and 1707.

CSEA Members Need Political Clout

Many members think that their union should stay out of politics and ONLY negotiate contracts ... but, negotiating contracts does not happen by itself. CSEA's clout at the bargaining table is directly related to securing budget funds to pay for your salary, health insurance and other benefits. Your voice on these issues is through PEOPLE and political action.

The contracting out of services, how your pension is calculated, Social Security, your seniority and civil service rights, worksite protections, PESH and OSHA are all decided in the legislative and budget process, not in contract negotiations! Cuts to these programs mean cuts in your benefits and rights! Your voice on these issues is through PEOPLE and political action.

The vital services government provides and how those services will be provided is determined in the budget process of every school, village, town, city, county and for the state as well. If not for political action, CSEA cannot represent you when these decisions are made! Your voice on these issues is through PEOPLE and political action.

How Can CSEA & PEOPLE Increase Your Clout?

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

BUDGETS & BILLS: CSEA'S LOBBYING CLOUT

- Research, analysis and breakdowns on what government budgets, bills and other proposals mean to you and how they affect your job, benefits and pensions.
- Lobbying for funds to better your contracts and to make sure our elected officials know when their position helps ... or hurts you
- Testimony at public hearings to educate elected officials about how their decisions affect you.

MEMBER EDUCATION & INVOLVEMENT

- Lobby Days, Phone banks, letter writing campaigns, fliers and other important resources to make sure YOU have the tools to fight back when harmful proposals are introduced.
- Member education and information about where candidates stand on the issues that affect your work-life and pension ... so you can be informed when you vote.

ISSUE ACTION

POLITICAL CLOUT is important in passing laws that improve the lives of CSEA members but it is also important in making your voice heard when problems like privatizing services or closing facilities arise. Political Clout can be used to back up stalled contract battles and to back up organizing new members. Whether it's a school, village, town, city, the state or the national government, every CSEA member will need political clout at some time in their career.

ELECTION ACTION

POLITICAL ACTION provides education materials for CSEA members about where politicians stand on issues that affect your work-lives so you can make informed decisions on Election Day. CSEA members also volunteer through political action to provide grassroots, phone bank and financial help for candidates who will fight for you in elected office.



Make Your Voice Heard



Public health care

Public health care reform

Our intensive, months-long campaign for the future of public health care made a difference in the final state budget. All across the state, CSEA members raised awareness about the value of public hospitals and nursing homes. CSEA took to the airwaves, the streets and statehouses to make sure these facilities got the urgent care they needed to survive. For example, we were able to save world-class medicine at Westchester Medical Center by getting lawmakers to extend a one-quarter cent sales tax, which was set to expire, and use it to help secure the facility's finances.



There is still work to be done to save facilities like Golden Hill Health Care Center in Ulster County and Van Duyn Home and Hospital in Onondaga County, but our efforts have allowed CSEA members to continue delivering quality care at public hospitals and nursing facilities across the state. Public health care reform is an ongoing area of concern. We must continue to ensure that all New Yorkers and their families will have quality health care in the communities in which they live.

Erie-sponsible budget fight

There are some hopeful signs for CSEA members in Erie County following a yearlong budget crisis. After a year of massive layoffs and an unprecedented meltdown of community

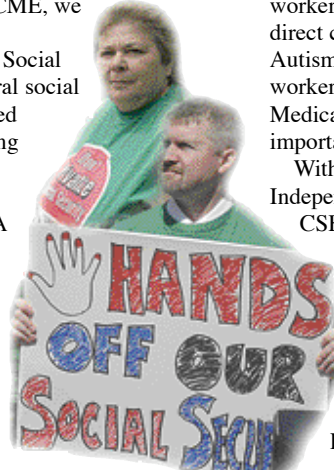


Erie County

services, lawmakers in Erie County have taken steps to add much-needed revenue to the county's coffers for 2006. County legislators recently took responsible action to restore fiscal sanity to Erie County. CSEA has been relentless in its criticism of the recklessly irresponsible county executive and self-serving business groups advocating a dismantling of county government. CSEA mounted an intense campaign for fairness and balance, including an advertising blitz and a spirited rally outside the county office building during CSEA's 95th Annual Delegates Meeting.

Keeping Social Security secure

Working with AFSCME, we fought off attempts to dismantle and destroy Social Security, the one federal social program that has helped millions of hardworking Americans live with dignity and respect in their retirement. CSEA leaders and activists were front and center at a Capitol Hill rally this spring, where hundreds of union members were joined by an impressive united front of



Democratic House and Senate members to say 'no way' to the Bush administration's ill-conceived scheme to privatize the program and take the security out of Social Security.

Organizing for strength

CSEA stood by hundreds of workers who are now able to stand up for themselves because of our help. This year, we are proud to welcome into the CSEA family new members from the towns of Stillwater and Shelter Island, part-time Monroe County employees, food service workers at SUNY Purchase and SUNY Cobleskill and support magistrates in the Unified Court System. In addition, we congratulate the recently organized maintenance workers at Clarkson University in Potsdam, direct care workers at Quality Services for the Autism Community in Queens and food service workers at SUNY Purchase and Westchester Medical Center who stood together to win important first contracts this year.

With our VOICE (the Voice of Organized Independent Childcare Educators) campaign, CSEA has also been working with hundreds of family child care providers throughout the state to help improve their profession and the quality of care for the children they serve. CSEA recently hosted a two-day child care advocacy summit where VOICE members testified before a Workers' Rights Board, made up of elected



VOICE

officials and community and religious leaders, about the challenges they face in their efforts to deliver high quality day care to children. VOICE now has more than 750 associate members and is growing.

In the months ahead, CSEA will continue its efforts to support and organize workers employed by human service agencies across the state. Bringing the benefits of a union to these workers will help improve quality of care for the people they serve and ultimately bring better working conditions to all CSEA direct care workers, who will better serve all New Yorkers.

Sweet Success

Throughout the year, CSEA successfully fought to protect workers' rights and benefits and won scores of contracts across the state. These everyday victories, while important, are just too numerous to mention, but a couple of our wins stand out.

Congratulations to our Nassau County Local, which stood together through a decade of struggle, negotiation and grievances to win a landmark pay equity victory for the county's mostly female 911 operators that will ultimately benefit not just these employees, but all public sector workers.

Also, political patience paid off for Village of Suffern workers seeking to organize with CSEA when they worked to oust their anti-union mayor from office in the recent elections. The former mayor, who rebuffed the workers' union forming efforts, changed work rules and ignored a Public Employment Relations Board decision ordering him to restore the work rules, was defeated by a nearly 2-1 ratio thanks to the efforts of village workers and CSEA.

Taking the LEAD

CSEA has been a leading force in the labor movement for nearly a century and we intend to carry that legacy forward. I'm very proud of the



LEAD graduates

32 CSEA activists from across the state who recently completed the first-ever CSEA Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) Program. LEAD is an intensive, months-long program to help emerging activists gain the skills and knowledge necessary to better address the challenges facing our union at every level. Developed by the CSEA Education and Training Department with help from AFSCME, AFL-CIO and the Cornell Labor Studies program, LEAD prepares CSEA activists for the future challenges our union will face. Our LEAD graduates deserve our congratulations and our thanks.

Heart of the union

Despite the many challenges we faced, CSEA members demonstrated extraordinary kindness and generosity in responding to the natural disasters



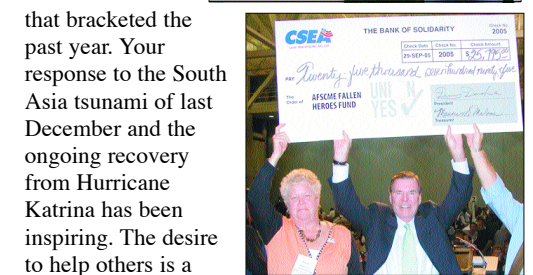
Nassau County 911 operators



Village of Suffern



Heart of the union



that bracketed the past year. Your response to the South Asia tsunami of last December and the ongoing recovery from Hurricane Katrina has been inspiring. The desire to help others is a true reflection of the best in all of us and what CSEA is all about.

Challenges ahead

Whether it's a lesson from our history or something we've achieved during the past year, none of our accomplishments come easy. Our future success will depend on individual effort and collective action on the part of every CSEA member. I thank you for all that you do and challenge you to get involved and help make our union even better in the new year.

Danny Donohue

Working together...



Developmental Aide Tawanna Wright, a CSEA Central New York Developmental Disabilities Services Office Local member, makes a pitcher of iced tea with Snow Hill Individualized Residential Alternative resident Carlton Sessoms.

for Quality Care

Throughout its 95-year history, CSEA has worked long and hard to improve the quality of care for developmentally disabled individuals while improving the pay, benefits and working conditions of the people who work with them.

CSEA has worked hard over many years to help make New York's system of care a model for the nation. *Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Commissioner Thomas Maul recently said the agency's relationship with CSEA is a model for labor-management working together for quality care.*

(continued)

NEW YORK'S LEADING UNION

CSEA Labor-Management relations the model in developmental disabilities

CSEA has a long, proud history. CSEA's representation of workers in the developmental disabilities field is a big part of it.

It was CSEA that ended the 72-hour workweek for institutional employees in the 1930s while seeking fair salaries. It was CSEA that helped support state efforts to improve the facilities that cared for the state's most vulnerable citizens in the 1940s, '50s and '60s. It was CSEA that worked in close cooperation with New York state to fully realize the vision of a community-based system of care to provide a better quality of life for the consumers.

Throughout the 1980s and



CSEA members, like this one pictured in a 1980s photo, have dedicated themselves to taking care of and improving care for developmentally disabled individuals for decades.

early 1990s CSEA played a critical role in coordination with the Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD) to close the institutional developmental centers across the state and transition the consumers into community based group homes to improve their quality of life.

The community transition also provided for a dramatic growth in the development of both public and not-for-profit programs and facilities to better meet the needs of consumers in the most appropriate settings.

CSEA OMRDD workers today

Today, about 16,000 CSEA members provide life skills, medical services and healthy community connections for nearly 10,000 group home residents of all ages and ability levels around the clock. CSEA OMRDD staff deliver care at about 1,200 homes statewide.

Residents at the OMRDD network of group homes have a variety of needs and disabilities, from autism and deafness to behavior and eating disorders. CSEA members receive regular training to best meet the needs of the consumers and share their expertise throughout numerous specialized programs and facilities. CSEA members are rightfully proud of who they are and what they do.

Not-for profit worker turnover affects CSEA members

One of the greatest threats to the overall quality of care in the developmental disabilities system is the high turnover rate

among employees of not-for-profit agencies. **These not-for-profit agencies provide an increasingly higher percentage of the overall services to individuals with developmental disabilities in New York.** Most of the agencies also receive up to 95 percent of their operating budgets from public funds.

Many of these operations have promised to deliver services **cheaper** than state operations. They do this largely by hiring employees at low wages and usually few benefits and prevent the employees from unionizing through fear and misinformation.

Many of these not-for-profit operators have long misrepresented to their employees what unions in general, and CSEA in particular, are all about.

Workers should not be threatened and intimidated

CSEA succeeded two years ago in passing the union neutrality law, which was an attempt to stop the misuse of the public's money – your tax dollars – while setting some limit on employers' ability to intimidate and coerce employees during organizing campaigns. The law was necessary because in reality, many not-for-profit operations use public funding to hire law firms whose sole purpose is to prevent union activities.

Tactics include lying, captive audience meetings to control and indoctrinate, intimidating one-on-one counseling and outright firings intended to send a chilling message to other



Brian Brazee, a direct care assistant at the Hudson Local Intensive Treatment Unit, part of Taconic DDSO, helps one of his consumers, Carl, take a turn on the drums during Taconic's holiday luncheon.

workers. As hard as it might be to believe, this law was overturned by a federal judge earlier this year in a controversial decision.

Many employees of these not-for-profit operations are frequently told by their managers that they can't be paid more because "the greedy public employee unions" siphon away the funding for state operations.

CSEA stands for fairness and respect

The truth is CSEA believes strongly that the workers at these not-for profit operations deserve to be paid better. CSEA also believes that these workers should have the right to choose



Developmental Aide Lori Nilsson, a CSEA Central New York DDSO Local activist, puts consumer Paula Checkosky to bed at the Snow Hill Individualized Residential Alternative, operated by the DDSO.

a union without being threatened by management. CSEA also knows there would be a lot more money available to pay the workers and help improve quality of care through reduced turnover, if the people running these "not-for-profit" agencies weren't taking such good care of

themselves first.

There are numerous examples these not-for-profit executives are being paid far more than the OMRDD commissioner who oversees the entire system! That's just wrong, especially when it's at the expense of the workers and the quality of care.



Developmental Aide Tawanna Wright, a CSEA Central New York DDSO Local member, gets a hug from Snow Hill Individualized Residential Alternative resident Gerry Sobles.



More than 500 workers at the Quality Services for the Autism Community, a not-for profit service provider that helps autistic and developmentally challenged individuals in Queens, gained the advantage of CSEA membership last year.

CSEA also believes greater funding priority should be given to provide resources that ensure quality care.

CSEA — New York's leading union

CSEA has earned its reputation as New York's leading union by

advocating for our members and the services we deliver. We know securing balance and fairness are essential for the future of quality services for the developmentally disabled. We will not back away from that challenge.



OMRDD Commissioner Thomas Maul, center, and CSEA President Danny Donohue, second from left, congratulate Finger Lakes DDSO CSEA officers on their innovative and cost-saving labor-management expedited resolution process. The CSEA initiative, which was recognized as one of New York Gov. George E. Pataki's 2005 Workforce Champions, has saved an estimated \$300,000.



Our Consumers Get The Best Care They Deserve It!

Every day, thousands of CSEA members help developmentally challenged New Yorkers live with dignity, right in their own communities.

We don't compromise on quality of care, because of how much we care.

We're the CSEA Workforce. We keep our skills sharp and our knowledge current, to help us do the job right for our consumers.

And to ensure quality care – to keep qualified workers doing this vital job – means decent benefits, fair pay and respect.

We're CSEA – where fairness and respect aren't just right – they make a difference in people's lives.

Our reputation:
New York's
leading union.

We've earned it.

CSEA
New York's
Leading Union
Local 1000 AFSCME, AFL-CIO
Danny Donohue, President
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