

# THE WORK FORCE

## RETIREE BENEFITS UNDER ATTACK!



*See Page 3*



## Photo of the Month

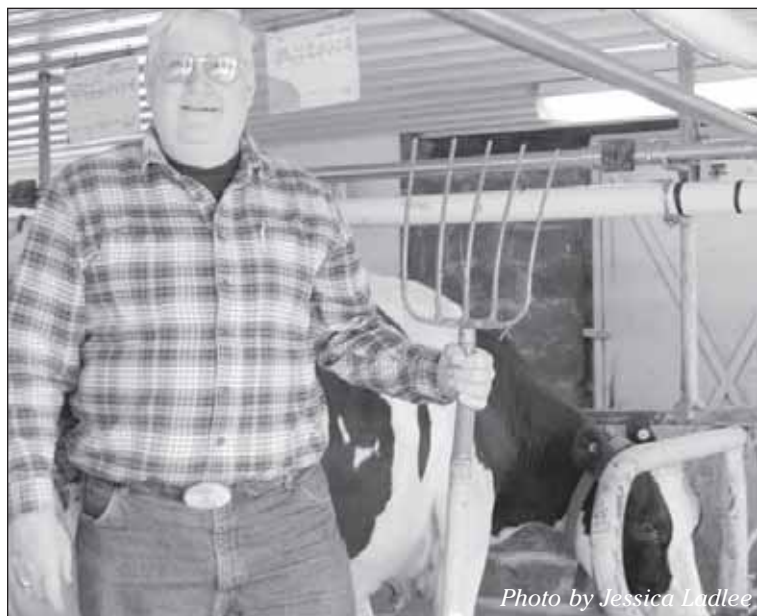


Photo by Jessica Ladlee

Driver Reggie Hillriegel poses with a tool of the trade at the Sullivan Correctional Facility's dairy farm. *More on Page 8.*

## Rockland ratifies pact

After lengthy negotiations, members of the Rockland County Unit have overwhelmingly approved a four-year contract.

The contract is retroactive to Jan. 1, 2007 and includes wage increases in each year of the contract. The agreement also includes the addition of a health insurance buy-out. Members with dual insurance coverage are eligible to receive 25 percent of the county cost for the employee health insurance program. The deal includes no increases in health insurance costs to members.

"The contract keeps the promises we made to members, of no givebacks, no compromises on health insurance, and a reasonable pay increase," said Unit President P.T. Thomas. "The members showed their faith in our efforts and trusted us to deliver a good contract for them."

"Our members stood strong during a long contract fight and are being rewarded with a fair deal that recognizes the contributions they make throughout Rockland County," said Southern Region President Billy Riccaldo, a county employee himself. "Their solidarity, along with support from our county legislators, made this happen."

— Jessica Ladlee

### Note to readers

The *Work Force* will be combining the July and August editions into one summer edition. The July-August edition will be in the mail during the first week of July. The next edition will be the September edition, which will be mailed Aug. 25.

# CSEA, courts reach contract

ALBANY — CSEA has reached a tentative agreement with the New York State Office of Court Administration on a new contract covering more than 6,000 non-judicial employees in the state's Unified Court System.

"CSEA and the Unified Court System have reached a fair and responsible agreement that recognizes the value and importance of the court employees who make the system work every day," said CSEA President Danny Donohue. "These were challenging negotiations and I am extremely proud of the focus and commitment of the CSEA bargaining team."

The four-year agreement retroactive to April 1, 2007 includes salary increases in every year of the agreement, improved downstate and Mid-Hudson Valley location pay, enhancements in longevity bonuses for long term employees, improved payments to the Employee Benefit Fund and Labor-Management programs, and increased funding for body armor for security personnel. There were no significant changes to health insurance

provisions. CSEA also agreed to a salary increase deferral for employees earning more than \$115,000 annually until a judicial pay raise is enacted. Employees at or above that level will have their salaries held harmless but will receive the contract provisions once the judicial pay raise issue is resolved. If it is not resolved by the end of the contract, the employees will receive all of the contract cost of living adjustments retroactively.

This issue would affect about 500 individuals out of the bargaining unit's 6,000 members.

### CSEA/Unified Court System Contract Ratification Schedule

- June 3, ballots mailed
- June 13, replacement ballots available (Call 800-342-4146, ext 1279 or 518-257-1279)
- June 24, deadline to return ballots, 5 p.m.
- June 25, ballot count, results announced on [csealocal1000.org](http://csealocal1000.org)

## Former CSEA Director Joseph Dolan, 73

ALBANY — Former CSEA Executive Director Joseph Dolan Jr. died May 7 at 73. Dolan began his career at CSEA in 1965 as an Albany field representative, working his way up to executive director, a job he left in 1982.

In a 2003 interview, Dolan recalled his early years working for CSEA meant joining a lot of bowling leagues and going to a lot of clambakes in order to meet with the membership. But with the advent of the Taylor Law in 1967, and CSEA's affiliation with AFSCME in 1978, Dolan saw the transformation of CSEA from an association into a union with full collective bargaining rights.

Dolan also served as Department of Correctional Services assistant deputy commissioner, was elected to the Albany County Legislature serving from 1970 to 1990, and also served on the Albany zoning board of appeals, serving as its chairman from 1987 to 1990.

From 1980 until his death, Dolan was



Former CSEA Executive Director Joseph Dolan, left, and former Gov. Hugh Carey.

board chairman and CEO of the Irish American Heritage Museum, an organization he worked tirelessly to promote. He was a Navy veteran of the Korean Conflict.

# Corporate hacks on the attack

CSEA recently ripped the Empire Center and the New York State Association of Counties for their attempts to mislead the media and the public over legislation to protect local government retirees' health care benefits.

The Retiree Health Insurance legislation (S. 6457a/A.9393a) would prohibit the state, counties and municipal employers from shifting health care costs to retirees and prohibit them from diminishing health insurance benefits for one year while a study is completed to determine how to provide health insurance in the most cost-effective manner.

"Media coverage of this issue has been outrageously one sided and does not accurately present the full story on what is at stake," said CSEA President Danny Donohue. "NYSAC has its own narrow agenda on this issue to pursue unrestricted unilateral action in this case regardless of who gets hurt. But

the Empire Center, which is a front for corporate fat cats, is even more reprehensible in their manipulation of the facts."

"This legislation is about what is right and fair in making sure that localities live up to their responsibility to retirees that their promised health care coverage will continue to be there," Donohue said.

"CSEA will not apologize for standing up for our members but in this case it is also appropriate public policy," he said.

The CSEA leader pointed out that the public sector should be setting a good example in living up to its moral obligations rather than aping the excesses of the corporate world which increasingly has walked away from its obligations to its employees at great public and human expense.

The Empire Center's hypocrisy in challenging public employee health care coverage



is galling at a time when many irresponsible businesses benefit at taxpayer expense under programs like Family Health Plus and Child Health Plus. Public employees do not qualify for these state programs, yet families of four

earning nearly \$85,000 annually can qualify and provide incentive to business to avoid providing health care coverage and its associated cost. At the same time there are too many New Yorkers without health coverage at all.

"Retiree health coverage is just one of many real problems that New Yorkers face," Donohue said.

"CSEA and other unions believe keeping promises to retirees and doing what's morally right is in the best interest of New Yorkers as a whole. But we also believe that our governments at all levels should be stepping up to issues like ensuring health care for all Americans rather than letting the public policy agenda be dictated by those who are not acting in the broader public interest."

## Facts misrepresented in the media

- The bill does not prohibit employers from making appropriate changes in retiree health insurance. Instead, it stops them from making unilateral changes.

- The bill does not increase employers' responsibilities under GASB Rule 45, an accounting requirement whose importance has been greatly overstated by employer organizations. In fact GASB 45 is a recent accounting requirement put in place because private sector employers routinely under funded and misstated their own pension and health insurance obligations.

- The bill is modeled after an existing, successful law that has applied to school districts since 1994. Last year the governor called for the creation of a task force and this

bill simply complies with that request.

- Contrary to recent editorials on this matter, this bill does not affect any public pension fund in any way. Public employee health benefits are not funded by the pension system.

- NYSAC's position that this bill limits an employer's ability to lower property taxes is shortsighted and inaccurate. This bill will prevent retirees from being forced into more expensive Medicaid and/or other socially funded health care, which would only increase local property taxes.

- The effort on part of employers' and big business is yet another example of the race to the bottom mentality and how to vilify public employees rather than address the real problems that our local communities face.



# 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](http://www.csealocal1000.org)

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## Retirees don't deserve broken promises

**T**hey're at it again.

The Empire Center, a lobbying operation that's a front for big business, has launched a new offensive aimed at taking away your rights and benefits.

To make matters worse, the New York State Association of Counties and the New York State Business Council are playing along, too. The media either doesn't understand the facts or doesn't want to, and the public is being fed a line of misinformation.



The issue involves legislation we support to protect local government retiree benefits. There is a similar law already in effect protecting school district retirees. The legislation would place a moratorium on unilateral action by localities to diminish or eliminate health coverage for retirees for one year while a study of the issue is done. It would not prohibit localities from negotiating change or taking other appropriate actions to control costs.

Of course, when the Empire Center presents the issue as the "big bad CSEA" trying to lock in benefits forever no matter what the cost to taxpayers, the public doesn't like it. But the facts are otherwise.

We believe that when the public understands the truth — that we are simply trying to make sure that benefits promised to retirees will continue to be there for them — they will have a much more sympathetic reaction.

CSEA will continue to do everything we can to tell our side of the story accurately and effectively no matter what outsiders do to try to manipulate the truth.

You can help, too. Call your state legislators and tell them not to be intimidated by those who misrepresent the facts.

# Activism spares school counseling program

SYRACUSE — CSEA activists beat back a proposal to contract out their jobs and in the process gave a textbook example of how to fight city hall or, in this case, a county legislature.

“We were worried that if any of our students failed to receive the services we offer, it could have had a tragic impact upon them, their families and our whole school community,” said Student Assistance Counselor Marcy Weed.

The Onondaga County Mental Health Department’s acting commissioner announced in early April he was seeking to contract out its School Based Support Program, which the county has run for the last 17 years.

The program places 11 counselors into six area school districts to provide full-time mental health clinical services throughout the school year, with an emphasis on substance abuse prevention, suicide prevention and anger management and relationship issues.

The workers didn’t have much time to fight back.

## Fighting the plan

Workers met with CSEA staff and Central Region President Colleen Wheaton to develop a strategic campaign. Union members couldn’t understand why such a



**Central Region President Colleen Wheaton addresses the Onondaga County Legislature at the public hearing.**

successful, well-received program was on the chopping block in the first place, especially considering the county’s share of funding was only 5 percent — the rest comes from the state and the participating school districts.

CSEA reached out to union-supported county lawmakers on the legislature’s Health Committee to slow the process. A handout was printed for legislators dealing with the unanswered questions regarding the proposal.

At the Health Committee meeting, workers and union representatives were on hand to witness legislators grilling the acting commissioner over his plan. The committee put the resolutions on hold and unanimously voted

for a public hearing. At the next meeting of the entire legislature, the vote was again unanimous to hold a public hearing.

CSEA-represented county workers reached out to other unions, community groups and those who benefit from the program’s services. Union representatives also met with county administrators to try to resolve concerns the county and participating districts had regarding the program.

## Victory for workers

In the end, everyone’s efforts paid off. During the public hearing, dozens of teachers, students, principals, administrators, parents, union activists and officers, including Onondaga County Local President Phil Graham, guidance counselors and

the counselors themselves spoke in favor of the program.

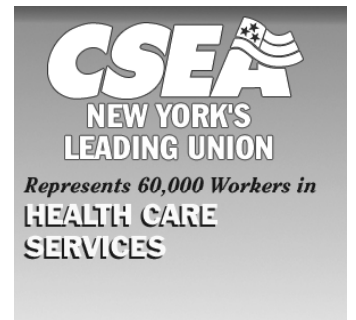
The only speakers in favor of contracting out were the companies who were bidding on taking over the program.

The following day, the Health Committee was scheduled to again take up the resolutions transferring the program’s operating funding. Instead, CSEA and a county official were brought to the table to explain how they were working together to mitigate the county’s and districts’ concerns.

The county agreed to pull the resolution and its proposal to contract out the program after receiving a warning from several legislators not to waste their time with issues that can be worked out through cooperation rather than legislation.

“We have a great program, with great employees and some minor issues that we could work out cooperatively,” Wheaton said. “We didn’t need contracting out to address people’s concerns, and we’re glad the legislators and the county recognized that.”

— Mark M. Kotzin



**“We were worried that if any of our students failed to receive the services we offer, it could have had a tragic impact upon them, their families and our whole school community.”**

**CSEA** *Voices*



**“Now I know I’m not the youngest CSEA member out there. I know I’m not alone. I would like to educate more people at work about safety and health. It’s also my safety. I work there too, so I want to be educated.”**

— Thanyania Morris, cleaner, Buffalo State College, on CSEA’s Occupational Safety and Health Conference (see pages 10-11 for more).





# Food, training and income harvested at prison farm



**Farm Manager Mike Walter, who is responsible for supervising the entire farm operation, tends to the fields adjacent to the facility.**

## CSEA Voices



**“We learn many new skills on a variety of topics, such as how to deal with stress in the workplace and how to avoid heat exhaustion. That’s important for the cleaners working in the dorms. It’s also a good opportunity to discuss safety issues with people from other locals and to look for solutions.”**

**—Ken Penski, 36-year painter, University at Buffalo, on CSEA’s Occupational Safety and Health Conference (see pages 10-11 for more).**

FALLSBURG — The dairy farm off Route 52 is like any other. Cows are lined up in the barn for milking, pasteurizing equipment whirrs nearby and a mixture of homegrown feed is piled high in a bunk silo.

The only difference? This farm is one of 13 operated by the New York state Department of Correctional Services, charged with providing dairy for inmates at about a dozen state correctional facilities nearby.

Prison farms have a long history in New York, but remain largely unknown to the public. While the farm in Fallsburg has been around since the 1940s, it’s been the responsibility of Sullivan Correctional Facility since 1985.

### Source of income

Staffing the farm are six CSEA members who supervise the farm operation, along with two corrections officers who supervise inmates working on the farm.

“Working on the farm is a vocational program for the



**Reggie Hillriegel, a driver at the farm, with a week-old calf born at the facility.**

inmates,” said CSEA member Duane Hannold, who supervises the pasteurization plant at the farm. “They start by earning 32 cents per hour.”

Prison farms in New York state serve several purposes. They provide a cost effective way of providing dairy, meat and produce to the inmate population, they are an occasional source of

income when products such as cream are sold to outside vendors and they serve as a source of job training for minimum security inmates.

“The inmates know nothing about farming when we get first get them,” said Hannold, who like his co-workers has a background in dairy farming. “We teach them everything from milking to pasteurization. When they leave the facility, they go out of here with a trade.”

CSEA members keep the farm staffed seven days a week. Drivers such as CSEA member Reggie Hillriegel make deliveries to neighboring prisons. Farmers like Jeremy Hubert man a small greenhouse that provides vegetables for the inmates and flowers for community projects

inmates undertake. Farm manager Mike Walter supervises the entire operation, from breeding to growing the crops that provide feed for the cows.

While dairy farming has seen a decline in downstate New York, the farm at Sullivan Correctional Facility, where 54 cows produce about 89 pounds of milk each day, remains busy as ever.

**— Jessica Ladlee**



**Farmer Jeremy Hubert cares for a poinsettia plant in a greenhouse at the farm. The plants are used for local beautification projects.**



**Right, Duane Hannold with one of the Holstein cows used for milking.**

# Ulster fight settled

KINGSTON — Solidarity was the key to a fair contract for members of the Ulster County Unit, who recently overwhelmingly approved a three-year deal offering fair wage increases to accommodate the rising cost of living.

Strengthened communication within the unit allowed unit leaders to share details of negotiations in a quick manner, enabling better member input throughout negotiations.

“Getting as much information on negotiations out to our members as quickly as possible was a priority for us,” said Unit

President Terry Gilbert. “Doing so allowed the members to give us instant feedback, which we took into account in future negotiating sessions. The members made it clear that they were holding out for a fair deal. That solidarity paid off. This was and is an ongoing coordinated effort to build our union”

The improved communication, which included an e-mail network, increased mailings to members and use of an already strong shop steward network, contributed to a historic high voter turnout at ratification, Gilbert said. It

also helped counteract misinformation that circulated once a tentative agreement was reached.

“Unfortunately, a number of incorrect contract details were printed in a local newspaper article on the tentative MOA (memorandum of agreement),” Gilbert said. “It caused a lot of upset, understandably, but we were quickly able to counteract that damage by getting the word out to our members about what was really in the proposed contract. We wound up with terrific turnout at our membership meetings reviewing the agreement

and lots of positive comments on the deal our negotiating committee worked out.”

In addition to wage increases, the contract includes a jump in longevity payments and the opportunity for employees to apply unused sick time toward health insurance premiums when they retire.

The Ulster County Board of Legislators is expected to vote on the contract in early June.

— Jessica Ladlee

*Read a detailed analysis of the fight at [www.csealocal1000.org](http://www.csealocal1000.org).*



**“This was and is an ongoing coordinated effort to build our union.”**

# Onondaga County workers demand respect

SYRACUSE — CSEA members in Onondaga County are taking on the county executive, charging that she is showing a lack of leadership and respect in not moving their contract talks forward.



Graham

CSEA's Onondaga County Local represents 3,351 Onondaga County workers whose contract expired in January. Local leaders say County Executive Joanie Mahoney has failed to deliver on assurances that she would address county workers' concerns and deliver them a fair and timely contract.

Instead, they say, Mahoney has remained an agent of the status quo, with the county continuing to delay negotiations and

failing to agree to any of the union's economic proposals for a four-year contract.

“So far the only change we've seen from Joanie Mahoney is her changing her position when it comes to making our contract a priority,” said Onondaga County President Phil Graham, who works for the county Office for the Aging. “We've met with her, but her promises have proven to be empty ones, and the county has been dragging their feet in our contract talks. We're sorely disappointed in her lack of leadership in moving forward with a fair contract for the majority of county workers.”

CSEA has been in negotiations with the county since May 2007 and has made little progress in negotiating a new agreement.

After taking office,

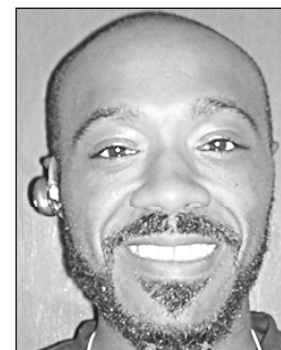
Mahoney retained county Employee Relations Director Peter Troiano as the county's chief negotiator, a decision that frustrated the CSEA leadership.

“We've been repeatedly unable to make progress with Mr. Troiano as their

negotiator, and we were hoping that would have changed with the new administration. Unfortunately, that hasn't happened,” Graham said.

— Mark M. Kotzin

## CSEA Voices



**“I'm joining everything I know, I've got about 26 more years at work. It's important to be active (in the union). Safety and health is the most important thing. At my job, there's a lot of people working there, and more people means more answers, we can try to create a better situation.”**

— Simon Bessick, environmental services worker, Roswell Park Cancer Institute, on CSEA's Occupational Safety and Health Conference (see pages 10-11 for more).

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### Second Quarter Specials

<p><b>CSE-151</b> Long Sleeve Denim Shirt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7.5 oz denim</li> <li>• features an embossed logo</li> <li>• button down</li> </ul> <p>COLOR: blue</p> <p>COST/SIZE:</p> <p>\$25.20 <del>\$28.00</del> (M-XXL)</p> <p>\$32.10 <del>\$35.75</del> (3X-4X)</p>	<p><b>CSE-152</b> Navy T-Shirt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• red embossed CSEA logo</li> <li>• 100% cotton</li> </ul> <p>COLOR: navy</p> <p>COST/SIZE:</p> <p>\$12.80 <del>\$14.25</del> (M-XL)</p> <p>\$14.10 <del>\$15.70</del> (2X)</p> <p>\$15.40 <del>\$17.10</del> (3X)</p> <p>\$16.65 <del>\$18.50</del> (4X)</p>
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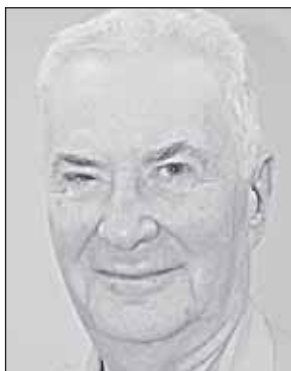




# Sprucing up for summertime

**“We’re thinking with the gas prices (higher) all over the state, it is going to be a busy summer for camping.”**

## CSEA Voices



**“I was startled by the amount of youngsters who are killed every year in unsafe work sites. As a union, it is important to share this information with others and make workers aware of their rights when it comes to safety and health at the workplace.”**

— Arthur Spellman, taxpayer service representative, state Department of Taxation and Finance, Manhattan, on CSEA’s Occupational Safety and Health Conference (see pages 10-11 for more).

DARIEN — Thanks to the efforts of CSEA members, New York’s state parks are ready for summer fun.

CSEA-represented park workers across the state are preparing their facilities for what many are expecting will be a very busy summer season.

In the Genesee Parks Local in CSEA’s Western Region, 70 permanent employees and about 240 seasonal workers have been focusing on preparations such as mowing lawns, clearing out downed trees, and getting campsites ready for visitors. More campers than usual are expected this summer.

“Camping in a state park is a great value,” said CSEA Western Region President Flo Tripi. “Our CSEA members will be there to ensure visitors have a memorable time during their summer vacation.”

### Camping reservations up

Camping reservations are up at Darien Lakes and other state parks in the region, said Genesee Parks Local President Tom Cervone. He speculates higher gasoline prices and other increased costs are fueling camping as an ideal vacation.

“We filled up for Memorial Day very early,” he said. “We’re thinking with the gas prices (higher) all over the state, it is going



**Genesee Parks Local President Tom Cervone looks out over the water at Darien Lakes State Park from the wooden footbridge. Parks crews have been busy preparing the parks for the summer season.**

to be a busy summer for camping.”

And residents aren’t waiting for summer; people are already making their way to the park. On a chilly recent morning, several campers backed their vehicles onto their sites and began to settle in.

“So many retirees are camping now; it’s not just the weekends we’re busy,” Cervone said. “We also fill up anytime there is a concert at the nearby amusement park.”

“I try to talk to all the campers while they are here. It is surprising how many have just started

camping and have purchased a camper for the first time.”

### Early preparation

Darien Lakes State Park has 150 campsites — all with electricity — on its 240 developed acres. Another 1,560 acres remain “wild” and support hiking, snowmobiling and hunting.

Parks crews spent time in the undeveloped acreage removing dangerous tree limbs and grooming hiking trails. Developed areas are manicured regularly.

“We start mowing as soon as we can mow,” Cervone said. “Every picnic table has to be moved. We also cleaned all the grills, pressure-washed the pavilion floors and put fresh mulch in the playground area to cushion it for the kids. There are just two people to clean six restroom and shower buildings.”

Animal control can also

be part of a park’s upkeep. Workers at Darien Lakes strategically installed split rail fencing and chicken wire around the park’s lake in an attempt to keep Canada geese at bay. The birds have taken up residence in many parts of Western New York, soiling parkland and creating a general nuisance.

“With the chicken wire, we try to keep the geese off the lawn,” Cervone said. “If they can’t walk up on the grass to graze, they will leave.”

In addition to Darien Lakes in Genesee County, the Genesee Parks Local includes the 17-mile long Letchworth State Park in Wyoming and Livingston counties; Hamlin Beach in Monroe County and Lakeside Beach in Orleans County.

— Lynn Miller

**W**ant more information about state parks in your region? Visit the state Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation website at <http://nysparks.state.ny.us> for recreation opportunities near you.



# CSEA intensifies contract fight

MATTITUCK — CSEA is turning up the heat on the Mattituck-Cutchogue School District Board of Education in an effort to spur stalled contract negotiations that have dragged on for almost three years.

The union is spearheading a campaign to raise public awareness of the protracted negotiations, which has increased tensions between CSEA and district officials.

“The school board has not negotiated with us in good faith,” said Mattituck-



**Mattituck-Cutchogue School District Unit members and their supporters attend a recent Board of Education meeting.**

Cutchogue School District Unit President Sam Strickland. “It seems they would rather spend thousands of dollars in legal expenses in a mean-spirited attempt to deceive the public and harass our members.”

## Fighting for accountability

CSEA placed a series of advertisements in the local newspaper and mailed postcards to the homes of registered voters living in the school district.

One ad and postcard detailed CSEA’s concerns over the district’s fiscal management practices. The ad stressed CSEA’s willingness to move from a self-insured health plan to the Empire Plan, a move that would save the district \$1.4 million over four years.

“This ad sought to emphasize that the board does not seem to place much value on the fact that CSEA represents the people who provide an ideal learning environment for the children,” Mattituck-Cutchogue School District Unit Vice President Nancy



**Mattituck-Cutchogue School District Unit President Sam Strickland, Long Island Region President Nick LaMorte and Mattituck-Cutchogue School Unit Vice President Nancy Morrow demonstrate for a fair contract.**

Morrow said. “Most reasonable people would agree that there is no way to put a price tag on that.”

Another newspaper ad and postcard focused on the lengthy contract negotiations with the school board and denouncing their failure to bargain in good faith.

## Standing together

CSEA activists from across Long Island also joined Mattituck-Cutchogue unit members in attending a

recent board of education meeting. A stand-alone postcard addressing financial mismanagement and the contentious contract negotiations was mailed to registered voters.

“We won’t stand by silently as the school board makes a mockery of our existing contract and thumbs its nose at the collective bargaining process,” Strickland said. “It’s unfair, and worse, it’s un-American.”

— Richard Impagliazzo



**“We won’t stand by silently as the school board makes a mockery of our existing contract and thumbs its nose at the collective bargaining process.”**

**CSEA Voices**



**“The conference is a great place to share information with others from across the state who may be dealing with similar safety and health issues. Now more than ever, we need to form local and unit safety and health committees to make sure our members are safe.”**

**— Rod Williams, grounds supervisor, Bronx Psychiatric Center, and local treasurer, on CSEA’s Occupational Safety and Health Conference (see pages 10-11 for more).**

## CSEA supports “Students Inside Albany”

CSEA recently co-sponsored the League of Women Voters of New York State’s annual Students Inside Albany conference.

The union is a longtime sponsor of Students Inside Albany, a program designed to increase high school students’ awareness of their civic responsibility of participating in government. The three-day conference brings students from across the state to Albany to visit the state Capitol, meet their legislative representatives and get a first-hand education about the workings of state government.

CSEA representatives also participated in the conference by

presenting a program about the legislative process.

Before attending the conference, many of the students participated in pilot programs through LeaderSpark, a league leadership development program designed to inform and involve young people in their governmental activities.

CSEA is a strong supporter of LeaderSpark, which is an outgrowth of the union’s involvement with the Students Inside Albany program.

This year’s Students Inside Albany conference marks the first year in which LeaderSpark has been incorporated. LeaderSpark teaches

students various leadership skills including qualities and styles of leadership, working with groups, planning projects, dealing with conflict, and public speaking and interviewing skills.

LeaderSpark volunteers are always needed across the state, and CSEA members are urged to participate.

To volunteer or for more information on the Students Inside Albany or the LeaderSpark programs, contact Stephanie Lopez, program coordinator, at the League of Women Voters of New York State office: 518-465-4162 or via e-mail at stephanie@lwvny.org.



# INSIDE THE WORKFORCE

## Leading the way to worker safety

LAKE PLACID — More than 800 CSEA members attended CSEA's 2008 Statewide Conference on Occupational Safety and Health recently, showing how the union is leading the way to worker safety.

"Occupational safety and health continues to be one of the most important areas of concern for CSEA members and our union as a whole. This year's program provided valuable and practical information and workshops, empowering our members to help make their work sites safer and healthier," CSEA President Danny Donohue said.

Union activists are working to bring greater vigilance for safety and health in the workplace, improve upon existing occupational safety and health strategies and learn about new regulations, methods and procedures. The conference also featured an April 25 Workers Memorial Day ceremony that honored CSEA members who have died on the job over the past two years (*see Page 11*).



CSEA occupational safety and health activist Donald Mulder Jr. of Brooklyn DDSO makes a point during a conference workshop on union strategies to address workplace violence. At right is workshop presenter Jonathon Rosen.



CSEA occupational safety and health activists Anthony Brown and Stacey Pettigrew take part in the collage workshop, giving union members skills to create safety and health posters for their workplaces. More than 150 union members attended the workshop.



### Workers Memorial Day 2008



Above, Don Williams of the Chautauqua County Unit, left, and Western Region 1st Vice President Hank Hoisington place a wreath at the workers memorial during a May 3 ceremony at Erlandson Overview Park in Frewsburg. The Chautauqua County Workers Memorial Committee hosts the annual event, led by CSEA retiree James Kurtz. Ceremonies were also held by the state Department of Transportation Region 4 (Rochester) Local and Western New York Developmental Disabilities Service Office Local. Below, family members of CSEA members who died on the job take part in a Workers Memorial Day ceremony at CSEA's Occupational Safety and Health Conference. Read more about the ceremony and members at right.



At far left, occupational safety and health activists Scott Brown, Susan Thew and Abraham Benjamin represent the union team in the skit's bargaining session. At left, CSEA's OSH mascot, the Canary, flies in to save the day in the collective bargaining session. OSH activists to the right portray injured workers.

### Honoring the fallen



From left, CSEA Standing Committee on Occupational Safety and Health members Frank Cosentino, George Walsh, Paul Blujis, and Jeannette Engle stand as Anthony DeCaro reads the name of a CSEA member who died on the job in the last two years at a memorial ceremony during the Occupational Safety and Health Conference. Committee member Karen Pecora and committee Chair Jim McHugh also took part in the ceremony.

CSEA mourns nine members who have died on the job during the past two years:

- **Dean Norris**, a CSEA-represented Orange County Department of Public Works employee, died June 10, 2006, after being struck by a vehicle when flagging traffic away from a county road crew working to improve sight lines of the road.
- **Robert L. Batt**, 56, a Wyoming County Department of Public Works employee, died on the job in July 2006 after a forklift he was picking up from a job site slid from a flatbed truck and struck him.
- **Michael Len**, 45, a state Canal Corp. worker, died Dec. 7, 2006, after losing his footing and falling into the Mohawk River at Lock 9 of the Erie Canal in Rotterdam.
- **Ryan Thomas Brady**, 31, an Allegany State Park employee and CSEA activist, died Dec., 16, 2006, when the truck he was driving while on a work assignment struck a tree in a remote section of the park.
- **Michael J. Russo**, 47, a Medina Department of Public Works employee and CSEA activist, died Jan. 31, 2007, after falling out of a bucket lift while trimming a tree.
- **John Hollman**, 54, a Town of Hempstead sanitation worker, died Feb. 14, 2007, from a massive coronary while doing a trash pickup.
- **William White**, 61, a garage foreman at the Westchester County Department of Public Works Road Division, died Feb. 14, 2007, from a heart attack while loading salt into a truck.
- **Henry Williams**, 63, a laborer at the SUNY College of Technology at Farmingdale, died June 19, 2007, while operating a tractor on the job.
- **John Doty Sr.**, 57, a CSEA-represented employee at Sullivan County BOCES, died Feb. 29, 2008, after sustaining severe injuries due to falling from a truck while working on the campus in December 2007.



CSEA President Danny Donohue, left, presents the William L. McGowan Occupational Safety and Health Award to CSEA Standing Committee on Occupational Safety and Health Chair Jim McHugh. McHugh is a former vice president of the CSEA Black River State Employees Local in the Central Region, and a longtime CSEA occupational safety and health activist.



# Ergonomic Product Guide is here!

A new safety and health web resource developed by the New York State & CSEA Statewide Safety and Health Committee, titled *Ergonomic Product Guide*, is available on the web.

The guide can help CSEA employees, CSEA leaders and state agency managers learn about:

- The basics of ergonomics in the work environment and how to reduce work-related injuries.
- How to address risk factors through the selection and use of equipment that may eliminate or minimize injury for employees in food service,

groundskeeping/maintenance, laundry/housekeeping, and mail and supply/shipping and receiving positions.

- Examples of ergonomic products available that can help reduce the chances of developing work-related injuries, such as carpal tunnel syndrome, back injuries, and tendonitis.

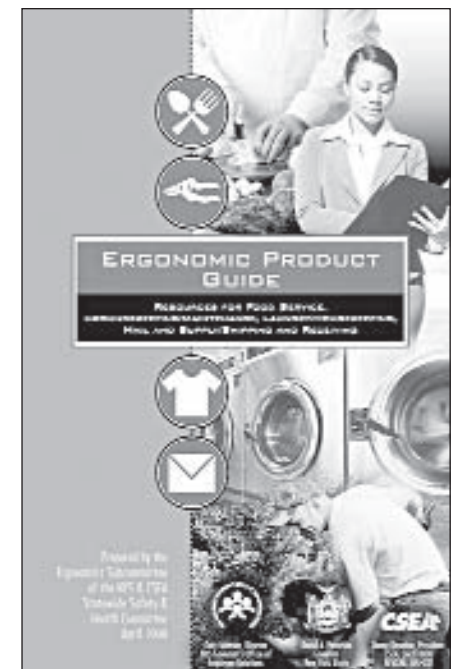
The web guide was prepared through the collaboration of CSEA, the New York state Governor's Office of Employee Relations, and the NYS & CSEA Partnership for Education and Training.

To download your copy, go to the safety and health pages of the Partnership's website at



[www.nyscseapartnership.org](http://www.nyscseapartnership.org).

For more information about ergonomics and the *Ergonomic Product Guide*, call the Partnership at (518) 486-7814 or for areas outside the Capital Region call (800) 253-4332, or e-mail [safety@nyscseapartnership.org](mailto:safety@nyscseapartnership.org).



## AFSCME announces Jerry Clark Memorial Scholarship Program

AFSCME recently announced the 2008 Jerry Clark Memorial Scholarship Program for children of AFSCME/CSEA members.

This scholarship was established in 1990 in honor of Jerry Clark, who was deeply committed to progressive social and economic ideals and who served for many years as AFSCME's political action director. This year, some changes have been made in the terms and criteria for the scholarship, as noted below.

The scholarship will be awarded to two students who are currently sophomores majoring in the social sciences. The winners will each receive \$5,000 per year for their junior and senior years of study, as well as an opportunity to intern with the International Union's Political Action Department.

A selection committee at the International Union will choose winners based on the following criteria:

- The student must be a child or financially dependent grandchild of an AFSCME/CSEA member.
- The student must have a grade point average of 2.5 or better.

- The student must be in his/her sophomore year of study.

- The student must be a social science (i.e., political science, sociology, ethnic studies, communications, etc.) major at an accredited college or university.

- The student must demonstrate a commitment to social justice and political activism.

Applications are available by writing, e-mailing or downloading, as follows:

Write for an application at the following address:

**Jerry Clark Memorial Scholarship, c/o AFSCME Education Department, 1625 L Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036**

You can also get an application by e-mail at [education@afscme.org](mailto:education@afscme.org), or download an application from AFSCME's website at [www.afscme.org](http://www.afscme.org).

Completed applications for the 2008 scholarship must be postmarked no later than **July 1, 2008**. The winner will be announced by Aug. 1, 2008.

## Westchester County Local awards scholarships to members' children

WHITE PLAINS — The Westchester County Local has awarded 13 scholarships to children of local members.

The local awarded 12, \$1,000 scholarships to:

**Shani Cassells**, whose mother, Melonie Cassells, belongs to the Westchester County Unit;

**Domenic Facciola**, whose mother, Marie Facciola, belongs to the Byram Hills School District Unit;

**Desiree Gordon**, whose mother, Winsome Gordon, belongs to the Town of Greenburgh Unit;

**Chris Kaduthanam**, whose father, Baby Kaduthanam, belongs to the Westchester Medical Center Unit;

**Arielle Lhotan**, whose parents, Robert Lhotan and Suzanne Schatzle, belong to the Westchester County Unit;

**Gregory Moy**, whose mother, Janet Moy, belongs to the Pleasantville School District Unit;

**Kristine Olli**, whose mother,

Deann Olli, belongs to the Westchester County Unit;

**Jenny Prakash**, whose parents, Koshy and Leelamma Prakash, belong to the Westchester County Unit;

**Michael Ryan**, whose mother, Giselle Ryan, belongs to the Lakeland School District Unit and father, Donald Ryan, belongs to the Westchester County Unit;

**Andrew Sacchi**, whose mother, Patricia Sacchi, belongs to the Village of Ossining Unit;

**Puja Thaker**, whose parents, Hitesh and Darshana Thaker, belong to the Westchester Medical Center Unit; and

**John Zade**, whose mother, Forogh Shabak, belongs to the Westchester Medical Center Unit.

The Grace Ann Aloisi Scholarship, a \$1,000, four-year renewable scholarship, was awarded to **Taylor Reno**, whose mother, Tina Reno, belongs to the Town of North Castle Unit.

# CSEA-represented emergency responders save infant's life

LEWIS — The coordinated response by CSEA-represented state and county workers in Essex County is credited with saving the life of a 3-month-old baby.

On April 15, daycare provider Jean Brown discovered during a routine check that Nicholas Thompson was not breathing. Brown's mother, Vera Collins, placed a 911 call that was received at the Essex County Public Safety Building.

State Police Communications Specialist and CSEA member Lee Torrance dispatched the call



and heard the terrifying words, "We have a baby that's not breathing."

Torrance quickly turned to an emergency medical dispatch card and began giving instructions on performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation on Nicholas. Torrance spoke with Collins, who then repeated instructions to Brown, who was performing the CPR.

Meanwhile, Essex County 911 dispatcher Max Thwaits alerted the Elizabeth-Lewis Ambulance Squad and the Essex County Sheriff's Department.

Sheriff's Deputy and CSEA member Robert Rice heard the call and raced to the house. When he arrived, the infant was still unresponsive. Rice flipped him over and slapped his back a few times. The child started breathing.

"It was pretty shallow," Rice said. "My biggest concern was what would happen if he stopped breathing again."

The ambulance arrived soon after and rushed Nicholas to the hospital, and he has since made a full recovery. Tests gave no indication why he might have stopped breathing.

On May 5, the Essex County Board of Supervisors recognized the efforts of Torrance, Rice and Brown. Nicholas' parents were also on



**Robert Rice and Lee Torrance outside the Essex County Public Safety Building.**

hand to thank them.

"It felt good to see him, healthy and well," said Torrance.

Legislators praised Torrance and Rice for the calm and professional manner they carried out their duties.

But for Torrance, that's part of the job.

"An emergency to someone is an emergency, regardless," he said. "You don't handle the calls any differently. Everyone gets the same professional treatment."

— Therese Assalian



**Lee Torrance on the job in the Essex County 911 Center.**

## Committee's DVD gifts brightens hospital stays

HAVERSTRAW — Giving back to the community is what keeps members of the Rockland County Local Women's Committee busy.

This year, committee members raised money to buy three portable Sony DVD players, which they recently donated to the spinal cord injury unit at Helen Hayes Hospital in Haverstraw.

Patients from throughout the Northeast who have spinal cord injuries get quality care at Helen Hayes, a state run hospital that employs hundreds of CSEA members.

Hospital workers will be able to loan the DVD players to patients so they will be able to watch a DVD of

his or her choice. The committee also donated a Blockbuster gift card, so patients will have access to recently released films.

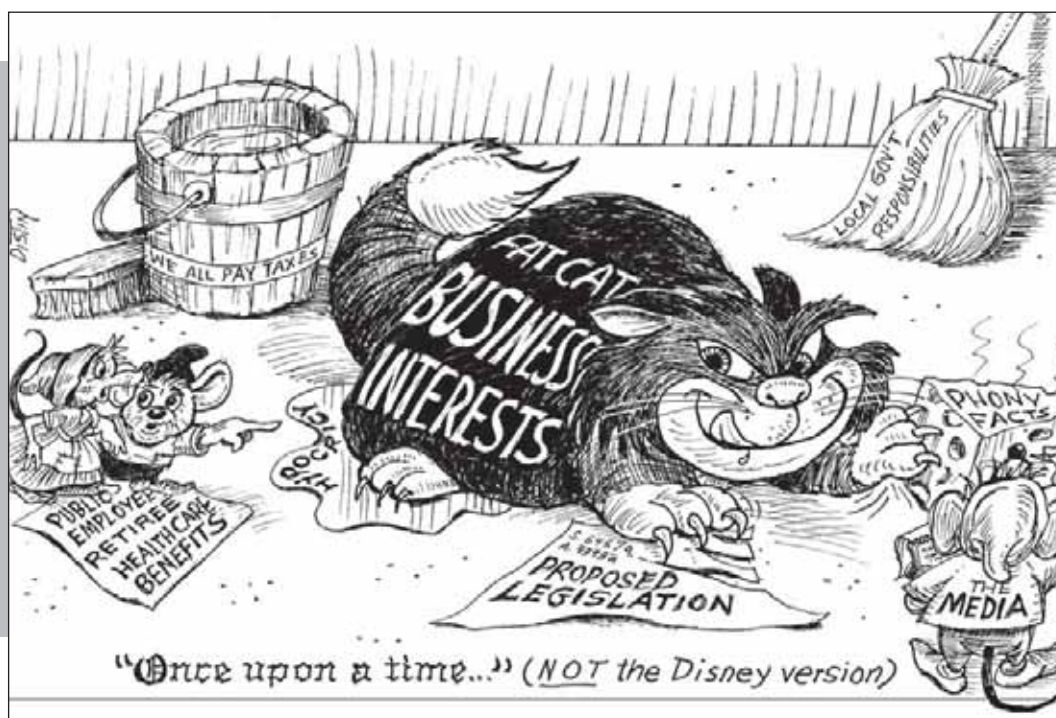
The Women's Committee is chaired by Rockland County Unit members Joan Williams and Vi Martinez. New Rockland County Local President Fritz Ernest joined the committee for the donation.

— Jessica Ladlee

**Right, Rockland County Local Women's Committee members and Rockland County Local President Fritz Ernest at Helen Hayes Hospital in Haverstraw with one of the three portable DVD players they donated.**







## 90 years ago ...

In 1918, CSEA's first President, William Thomas, was appointed to serve on a newly formed Commission on Pensions. The commission's report two years later led to the establishment of the New York State Retirement System, which continues to serve CSEA members to this day, ensuring retirement security. It was the association's most significant early success.

Over the decades, CSEA has worked hard to protect the integrity and stability of the New York State Retirement system to be sure it will continue to provide the benefit. The union has sought to improve the system by legislation, through lawsuits and in the court of public opinion.

At a time when many private sector workers are seeing their pension rights diminished and even losing their promised benefits, the New York State Retirement System is one of the most important benefits that CSEA public employee members have available. It is consistently one of CSEA's top priorities to guard the system from attack.

William Thomas, a native of Ogdensburg, served as the association's president from its founding in 1910 until 1918. He was a stenographer in the Attorney General's office.



**William Thomas served as the first president of CSEA from 1910 to 1918. The union was then known as the Association of State Civil Service Employees.**

## Also in 1918 ...

- \* World War I ends when the Allied powers, including the United States, sign an armistice with Germany on Nov. 11.
- \* After the Russian czar and his family are killed by revolutionaries, a civil war erupts in Russia, leading to the rise of Communism.
- \* An outbreak of Spanish influenza kills nearly 20 million people worldwide, including 500,000 in the United States.
- \* Daylight Savings Time goes into effect.
- \* A New York subway accident kills 92 people and injures 100 others after a train jumps a track in Brooklyn at 30 mph, which was then five times the speed limit.
- \* Pulitzer Prizes in fiction, drama and poetry debut.
- \* The Boston Red Sox defeat the Chicago Cubs in the World Series. The Red Sox would not win another championship for 86 years.

## CSEA sponsors coalition's "Full Circle" conference

LATHAM — CSEA recently co-sponsored the statewide "Full Circle for Economic Justice" conference held by the Labor-Religion Coalition of New York State.

The two-day conference, which drew attendees from CSEA and other coalition supporters, focused on issues including health care, fair trade, organizing workers, political action and justice for farm and domestic workers.

Conference speakers included Patricia Smith, commissioner of the State Department of Labor; Marilyn Clement, national coordinator of Healthcare-NOW and Bishop Howard Hubbard of the Albany Roman Catholic Diocese.

## Wilson Schools Unit members fight for fairness

Right, Wilson School District Aide Lisa Shaffer and Secretary Lisa Gigliotti send their message to passing motorists



during a recent demonstration at Wilson Middle/High School in CSEA's Western Region. The Wilson Schools Support Staff Unit has declared impasse in contract talks with management. CSEA hopes a neutral third-party mediator can help work out issues including health insurance, the disciplinary procedure and the need for fair an equitable treatment of workers throughout the district.



## Summary of April Board of Directors meeting



**Editor's Note:** The Work Force publishes a summary of actions taken by CSEA's Board of Directors. The summary is prepared by CSEA Statewide Secretary Denise Berkley for union members.

ALBANY — CSEA's statewide board of directors met April 17. In official business, the board:

- Designated Rochester as the site for the 2009 Spring Workshop which will be held June 12 to 14;
- Appointed John Shepherd, Lester Crockett, Jack McPhillips and Bob Timpano to the CSEA Political Action Fund;
- Elected Michael Febraio, Jack Rohl, Thomas Moylan, John Shepherd, Abe Benjamin and George Lawson to the Directors' Committee;
- Selected Mary E. Sullivan, Nick LaMorte and Billy Riccaldo as trustees of the CSEA Employee Benefit Fund;
- Recommended the name of Diane J. Hewitt be inscribed on the CSEA Memorial Plaque;
- Approved a three-year lease agreement for a vehicle to be used by the Local 865 president;
- Designated Dawn Smith, Abe Benjamin, Frank Strack, Jean Ahlert, George Lawson and Ron Gillespie to the Budget Committee;
- Appointed Kathy Button, Lester Crockett, Tom Moylan, Jackie Goldsmith, Deborah Downey, Bob Timpano, Betty Thomas, Mark Dotterweich, John

Shepherd and Lynn Wool to the Personnel Committee;

- Elected Rose DeSorbo, Carol Guardiano, Laverne Raguseo to the Charter Committee;
- Selected Ellen Lennon, Ramon Lucas, Sabina Shapiro, Meg Shutka, Michael Flavin and Brenda Facin to serve on the Appeals Committee;
- Assigned Mary D'Antonio, Bill Lebaron, Patty Whiteman, Ron Revers, Brenda Chartrand and Marcia Olszewski to the Publications Committee;
- Named Richard Plumadore, Clarence Russell, Liz Piraino, Ed Russo, Linda Stiefel, Kelly Volpe and Mark Semo to the Committee to Study the Cost of Operating Group Life Insurance;
- Adopted a special election schedule to fill vacancies on the statewide board of directors;
- Retained the services of Pricewaterhouse Coopers to audit the union's 2008 fiscal year;
- Placed into administratorship Albany County Department of General Services Unit 801-6000-05, Nassau County District Attorney's Office Unit 830-7550-35 and Town of Ontario Unit 859-9111-00;
- Designated the following region Political Action Committees:
  - Long Island Region — John Shepherd, Barbara Reynolds, Daniel LoMonte, William Walsh, Alex Bard, Mary D'Antonio, Ron Gurrieri, Catherine Custance, Dominic Ciaramella, Gary Kornova, Rutha Bush, Robert Rauff, Harry Ader, Chris Marshall, Paul D'Aleo, Debbie Nappi-Gonzalez, Pete Collins, Gary Steckler, Jerry Laricchiuta, Thomas Dowdney, Kevin Ray, Sr., Albert Smith, Jeff Peress, Robert Arciello;
  - Metropolitan Region — Joe Aravena, Frank Cosentino, Ken Crosson, Patricia Metzger, Mary Harmon, Lester Crockett, Vinny Martusciello, Charles

Perry, Barbara Rustin, Jacqueline Stanford, Alva Heron, Abraham Benjamin, Linda Williams, Douglas Murphy, Frank Cook, Linda Williams, Crispin Booker, Francis Baxter, Neil Kirby, Reginald Taylor, Barbara Felder, Mary Ellen Hansley;

- Southern Region — Thomas Murray, Deborah Downey, April Shuback, Sabina Shapiro, James Blake, Richard Colson, Toni Elmore, Fritz Ernest, Rose Galieri, Mary Miguez, Carol Newkirk, Lizabeth Piraino, Lavarne Pound, Mark Semo, Barbara Swanson, Brian Spillman, Tanya Watson, Brian Woltman, Franco Zani, Kathryn Bayer, Micki Thoms, Margarita Wilkerson, Anthony Zambrotta, Norma Condon, Emory Smith, Lesly Senatus, Brenda Gamble, Ron Greene, James Schultz, Diane Hansen, Rose Impallomeni, Naomi Kaplan, Dorothy Kilmer, John McPhillips, Julia Mercatili, Yvette Neu, Robert O'Neill;
- Capital Region — Scott Allison, Ron Revers, Jeff Zabielski, George McCroy, Gordon Duprey, Joseph McNally, Joseph Kivlen, Joanne De Sarbo, John Genter, Joanne Brannock; and
- Central Region — Michael Kaiser, David Lee, Janet Jackson, George Lawson, King Davis, Lynn Wool, Lori Nilsson, Theresa Palmer, Anthony Tutino, Betty Thomas, Carmina Russo, Betty Jo Johnson, Nancy Clancy, Casey Walpole, Veronica Diver, Tom Pirozzolo, and Sharon Connor.

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



## Protecting Your Benefits

### Empire Plan enrollees: a reminder about Centers of Excellence

The Empire Plan Centers of Excellence are a select group of providers recognized as leaders in specific fields of medicine.

The Empire Plan offers Centers of Excellence for cancer treatment, transplants and infertility. At the plan's Centers of Excellence, you receive paid-in-full benefits for covered services. No co-payments apply, but you may have out-of-pocket expenses for certain services, like laboratory and pathology tests required by the center and received outside the center.

Remember to ask for an Empire Plan participating provider when you receive services outside a Center of Excellence. When you use a non-participating provider, the basic medical deductible and coinsurance apply.

### Health Benefits



If the center you use is more than 100 miles from the patient's home,

a travel, lodging and meal expenses benefit is available to the patient and one travel companion. Eligible travel expenses may vary by the program and location and are reimbursed in accordance with federal guidelines.

The Centers of Excellence programs are available only when you enroll and receive prior approval from the Empire Plan. Centers of Excellence benefits for cancer and infertility are available to all Empire Plan enrollees, while the transplants centers' benefits are available only to Empire Plan primary enrollees. (Empire Plan primary means that the Empire Plan pays first, before another group health insurance plan, including Medicare.)

Remember, to receive the paid-in-full benefits and the travel benefit, you must call The Empire Plan toll free at 1-877-7-NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447) for approval of these benefits.

Choose United Healthcare for the cancer and infertility programs; choose Empire BlueCross/BlueShield for the transplants program.

### Empire Plan enrollees: Negotiated benefit changes are coming

The following information is intended for CSEA-represented Executive Branch enrollees — enrollees who are employed by New York state covered by one of the following CSEA collective bargaining agreements: Administrative Services Unit, Institutional Services Unit, Operational Services Unit or the Division of Military and Naval Affairs.

The CSEA Health Benefits Department would like to remind Empire Plan enrollees that the first of the Article 9 health insurance changes in accordance with the 2007 — 2011 CSEA — New York state contract will take effect July 1, 2008.

Be sure to check back here next month as we provide Empire Plan enrollees with an in-depth article outlining all of the changes scheduled to take effect on July 1, 2008.

## Promoting Good Health

### CSEA Employee Benefit Fund Legal Reimbursement Plan: Are you covered?

Did you know that the CSEA Employee Benefit Fund has a Legal Reimbursement Plan that can be negotiated for members of local government?

Local government bargaining units can negotiate this benefit into their contracts. The plan provides \$1,000 per calendar year, per family. Members are free to choose any attorney according to individual needs and type of case.

Many services also cover the spouse and dependents. The plan provides for three categories of service: Regular Benefits, \$50 Deductible Benefits and \$20 consultation fee matters.

Regular Benefits include general consultations, document review,



wills and living trusts, real estate closings and adoptions. Examples of \$50 Deductible Benefits include traffic violation representation and debt collection defense.

Consultation fee matters include personal injury and estate settlement matters.

For more information on this benefit, contact EBF at (800) 323-2732, and ask to speak with someone in the Marketing Department, or visit our website at [www.cseaebf.com](http://www.cseaebf.com).

This benefit can be coordinated with CSEA's Legal Services Program Plan. For more information on the Legal Services Program Plan, call (800) 342-4146 and follow the prompts.

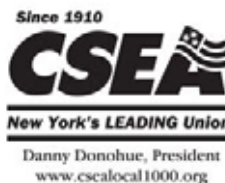
## CSEA Legal Services Program

CSEA members AND their family members can get quality legal representation at little or no out-of-pocket cost for the following matters:

**Workers' Compensation;  
Social Security Disability;  
Personal Injury;  
Personal Legal \***

**Taking Care of Business/Elder Law Matters \***

\*Representation also available at pre-negotiated, discounted rates.



Call **1-800-342-4146**  
Follow the Prompts for  
"Injury/Illness or Non-Injury  
Matters"

# 2008 CSEA Special Board of Directors Election

Candidates who qualify for the Board of Directors special election were given the opportunity to have their picture published in *The Work Force*. Where there is no photo, none was provided.

## Uncontested Board of Directors Seats

### State Division:

#### Insurance

Annie Dora Campbell,  
Liquidation Bureau;

#### Mental Hygiene Region 5 (two seats)

Lori Nilsson, Central New York  
DDSO;

Rose MacBlane, Elmira  
Psychiatric  
Center;

#### Office of Children and Family Services

Michael F.  
Geraghty, Jr.,  
Tryon Limited  
Secure Center;



**Geraghty**

### Local Government Division:

#### Onondaga County

Carmen Church, Onondaga  
County Social Services;

#### Schuyler County

Sandra Rhodes, Schuyler County  
Welfare;

#### Wayne County

Tom Edwards, Wayne County  
Social Services;

## Contested Board of Directors Races

### State Division:

#### Universities (one seat)

Debra P. Nappi-Gonzalez,  
SUNY at Stony Brook;

David W. Lee,  
SUNY at  
Binghamton;

James F.  
Maupin, Jr.,  
SUNY at Stony  
Brook;



**Maupin**

### Local Government Division:

#### Rockland County (one seat)

Brian G.  
Spillman, Town  
of Ramapo;

P.T. Thomas, Rockland County  
Social Services;



**Spillman**

The above "contested" Board of Directors races will proceed subject to the following schedule:

**May 28, 2008:** Drawing for ballot position. L/U Pres. labels available.

**June 11, 2008:** Ballots mailed.

**June 19, 2008:** Replacement ballots available.

**July 2, 2008:** Deadline for receipt of ballots (9 a.m.). Ballot count commences (9:30 a.m.). Election results will be announced after the ballot count is complete and certified. Candidates will be notified by mail of the results.

**End of Protest Period:** 10 days following Statewide Election Committee certification of results.

**September 2008:** Results printed in *The Work Force*.

**Voting Eligibility Date:** Only CSEA members in good standing as of April 1, 2008, will be eligible to vote in this special election.

**Election Oversight:** The union's Statewide Election Committee will oversee the election process.

### 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.

### Important Notice to Current & Former Insureds Under the CSEA Sponsored Group Disability Income Program under Group Policy G-11628 Underwritten by New York Life Insurance Co. and Administered by Pearl Carroll and Associates:

The New York Court of Appeals has recently decided that disabilities due to a preexisting condition, as outlined in New York Insurance Law Section 3234, are to be treated as an extended waiting period instead of a permanent bar from benefit payments. As a result of this decision, New York Life and Pearl Carroll

and Associates will automatically be undertaking a re-examination of claims denied based upon preexisting conditions since June 27, 2004 under the above Group Disability Policy. All Members who had a claim denied due to a preexisting condition since this date will

be notified of the results of their claim review.

If you believe you may have had a disability claim denied by New York Life due to a preexisting condition during the above period, please call Pearl Carroll and Associates Disability Claims Unit at 1-800-697-CSEA (2732).



## Meet your leaders



### Berkley leading the way to change

**Editor's Note:** Throughout this year, The Work Force is devoting the *Leading Edge* to interviews with CSEA's 10 statewide officers and region presidents. This month we feature statewide Secretary Denise Berkley.

Berkley, who has been a CSEA activist and local officer for nearly 30 years, has worked as a developmental aide at the Brooklyn Developmental Disabilities Services Office, a facility operated by the state Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities. Her roles as a volunteer member organizer, assisting with union organizing campaigns, her chairing of the statewide Constitution and Bylaws Committee and her boundless enthusiasm have served her well as she's assumed statewide office.

**WF: How did you get involved with CSEA?**

**Berkley:** I got involved in 1979; I was anti-union. I didn't believe in the union because I didn't like the representation. I was upset about something with management and I decided to run for building rep and I won.

**WF: Why were you anti-union?**

**Berkley:** I didn't have a history. I was like most young people; you don't learn about unions in school. I was a young worker coming into work to get a paycheck. I didn't know about the union and I dismissed it because I had no knowledge about it.

**WF: How did your perspective change about the union?**

**Berkley:** It changed quickly and that anti-union attitude went away completely. I started learning how the union was structured and I learned the local constitution right away. I started learning how to be an advocate and how to challenge management.

**WF: What were some of the challenges you faced as a new union rep?**

**Berkley:** The challenge was trying to convince



members to get involved; they had the same attitude I previously had that the union just wants to take your money. I had to learn how to approach members on a one-on-one basis and convince them that we needed them — we all are the union. I also had to learn how to speak with management, letting them know that we were angry, but not so angry that we couldn't get things accomplished. I had to learn how to walk that fine line.

**WF: What do you say to young people to encourage them?**

**Berkley:** We have to tell them we need them to bring in new visions and ideas to the union movement. We need them because they are the future. We cannot do business as usual. The approach that I've found to work well is the one-to-one, sitting down and listening and making sure that they know that you want them there, that they feel welcome. You also have to approach them with things they like. With some, we used a youth basketball team; with others we used social events. We had to approach them with things they loved to do. That's how we opened the door to bring them into the union.

**WF: You also have done a lot of work as a volunteer member organizer supporting the union's organizing drives for new workers. What have you gained from that experience?**

**Berkley:** It's been a wonderful experience. When I listen to some of those workers, working in the same field (developmental disabilities) as me but without union protection, it really hits you, the conditions; the things they have to deal with. As union members with CSEA, we don't know how blessed we are. I always said that I wished I could videotape all the conversations so that I could show it to members to see what we have and what they didn't have.

I remember that in one agency they talked about young ladies having to do lap dances to get a raise. I almost jumped out of my seat. To hear about how

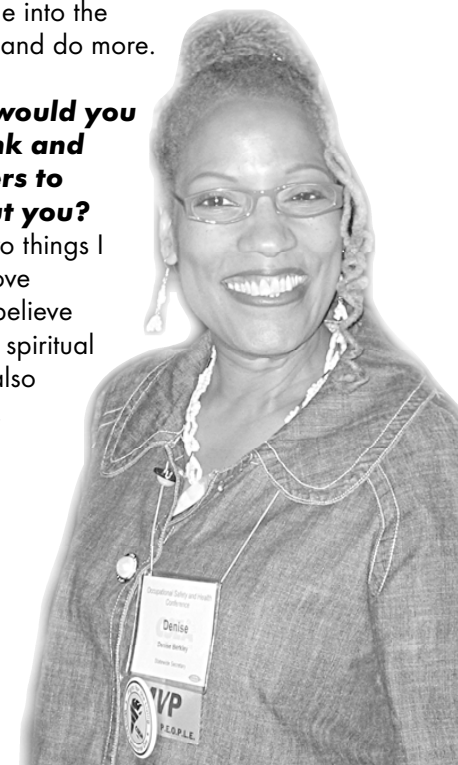
workers were putting in ridiculous hours and not even getting overtime, workers on the night shift being monitored hourly by a supervisor by phone, these are unheard of things for CSEA. Just hearing that makes you understand why we need unions.

**WF: You are the first person of color to hold one of CSEA's four statewide offices. How does that make you feel and what do you want to do with that responsibility?**

**Berkley:** It's a wonderful, humbling experience and I thank God. I think of some of my predecessors; Jimmy Gripper who was the first African American region president; people who mentored and taught me along the way and I feel like I am standing on their shoulders. It is because of them that I'm here. I hope it says to other African Americans, Latinos and Asian members that statewide office is attainable. I can reach and be a major player in CSEA. That belief was my motivation and I hope it will motivate others to come into the organization and do more.

**WF: What would you like the rank and file members to know about you?**

**Berkley:** Two things I love a lot. I love spirituality; I believe union work is spiritual work. And I also love dancing.



## June CSEA calendar of events

### Statewide:

- June 6-8: **CSEA Spring Workshop**, Niagara Falls

### Long Island Region:

- June 4-5: **Defensive Driving**, 5:30 - 8:30 p.m., CSEA Long Island Region Office, Commack
- June 10-11: **Local Government Discipline and Interrogation Workshop**, Registration: 5:30 - 6 p.m.; Workshop: 6 - 9 p.m., Hampton Bays Nutritional Center, Hampton Bays
- June 11-12: **Local Government/Private Sector Grievance Training**, Registration: 5:30 - 6 p.m.; Workshop: 6 - 9 p.m., Oyster Bay Local Office, Syosset
- June 21: **Defensive Driving**, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., CSEA Long Island Region Office, Commack

### Metropolitan Region:

- Check for upcoming events at the Metropolitan Region page at CSEA's website at [www.csealocal1000.org](http://www.csealocal1000.org).

### Southern Region:

- June 4-5: **Defensive Driving**, 6 p.m. - 9 p.m., CSEA Rockland County Local Office, New City. Call 1-800-942-6894 to register.
- June 7: **Defensive Driving**, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., CSEA Rockland County Local Office, New City. Call 1-800-942-6894 to register.
- June 10: **Labor-Management Committee Training**, Registration: 5:30 - 6 p.m.; Workshop: 6 - 9 p.m., Westchester County Local Office, White Plains
- June 17-18: **Defensive Driving**, 6 - 9 p.m., Westchester County Local Office, White Plains. Call 1-800-942-6894 to register.
- June 21: **Local Government Discipline and Interrogation: Representing Members In Interrogations Workshop**, Registration: 8:30 a.m. - 9 a.m.; Workshop: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., Newburgh City School District Unit Office, Newburgh
- June 28: **Local Government Discipline and Interrogation: Representing Members In Interrogations Training**, Registration: 9 - 9:30 a.m.; Workshop: 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., Carmel Firehouse, 94 Gleneida Ave. (Route 52), Carmel
- June 28: **Defensive Driving**, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., Westchester County Local Office, White Plains. Call 1-800-942-6894 to register.

### Capital Region:

- June 3-4: **Local Government/Private Sector Grievance Training**, Registration: 5:30 - 6 p.m.; Workshop: 6 - 9 p.m., Bureau of Public Safety, Troy
- June 4: **Member Information Day**, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Empire State Plaza
- June 7: **Defensive Driving**, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., CSEA Capital Region Office, Latham. Call 1-800-942-6894 to register.
- June 24 & 26: **Defensive Driving**, 5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m., CSEA Capital Region Office, Latham. Call 1-800-942-6894 to register.

### Central Region:

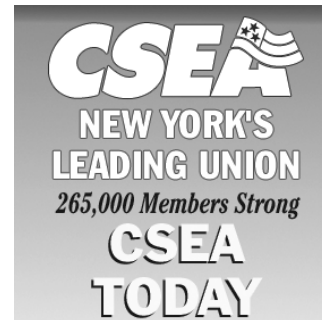
- June 10-11: **State Government Discipline and Interrogation Training**, Registration: 5:30 - 6 p.m.; Workshop: 6 - 9 p.m., CSEA Binghamton Satellite Office, Binghamton
- June 14: **Steward Workshop**, Registration: 9 - 9:30 a.m.; Workshop: 9:30 a.m. - 4 p.m., Herkimer Community College, Herkimer
- June 17-18: **Local Government Discipline and Interrogation: Representing Members In Interrogations Training**, Registration: 5:30 - 6 p.m.; Workshop: 6 - 9 p.m., Holiday Inn Oneonta, Oneonta

### Western Region:

- June 7: **Defensive Driving**, 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., CSEA Rochester Satellite Office, Rochester. Call (585) 272-0800 to register.
- June 11-12: **Local Government/Private Sector Grievance Training**, Registration: 5:30 - 6 p.m.; Workshop: 6 - 9 p.m., CSEA Western Region Office, Amherst
- June 18-19: **Defensive Driving**, 6 - 9 p.m., CSEA Rochester Satellite Office, Rochester. Call (585) 272-0800 to register.
- June 24-25: **Contract Negotiations I: Maximizing our Leverage Workshop**, Registration: 5:30 - 6 p.m.; Workshop: 6 - 9 p.m., Wayne County Local Office, Lyons
- June 28: **Defensive Driving**, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., CSEA Western Region Office, Amherst.

*For more information on the listed events or to participate, contact your region office (phone numbers are listed on Page 4) or visit your region page at CSEA's website at [www.csealocal1000.org](http://www.csealocal1000.org). Please note that additional events may be scheduled in your region, so check your region calendar page on the website.*

**NEW CONTRACT** — CSEA members in the Massapequa Water District recently ratified a new three-year contract. The new pact calls for annual salary raises, a life insurance policy valued at twice the previous amount, an increase in stand-by pay for field personnel and an enhancement of the optical plan ... **MORE 'PEOPLE'** — CSEA now has PEOPLE check-off in the Village of Suffern in Rockland County, and the Port Jervis Central School District in Orange County ... **BRIDGE HERO** — Kudos to Ernie Feeney, a member of the State Thruway Professional, Technical and Supervisory Local. Feeney, a supervisor of the Bridge



Patrol at the Tappan Zee Bridge, was part of a successful rescue effort in April when a distressed motorist attempted to jump off the bridge. Feeney, joined by three others, helped wrestle the man to the ground before he jumped. It was the third jumper Feeney has helped rescue in his years working at the Tappan Zee Bridge ... **PACT REACHED** — Members in the Erie County Local's Town of Aurora Unit voted overwhelmingly to approve a five-year contract from 2006 - 2010. The agreement includes retroactive wage increases and maintains an employee health insurance contribution of 10 percent.

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Did you know that Pearl Carroll represents eight of the leading auto and home insurance companies in the United States? We can search the rates of these companies so that we can provide you with the right coverage for the greatest value to meet your needs. As an independent agent and the endorsed broker for CSEA for more than 70 years, we can offer you the power of choice. Instead of being able to offer the rates for only one company we can offer you the rates of multiple companies, often available with the convenience of payroll deduction. We will do the work for you to find you the best combination of coverage and price. Not only can we take care of your insurance needs, but we can help your friends and family too.

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### Rustin named PEOPLE Recruiter of the Month



**Barbara Rustin, president of the CSEA Metropolitan Region Retirees Local, is the PEOPLE Recruiter of the Month for April. She recruited 34 members at the MVP level. Rustin is dedicated to fighting for working families. In the photo, Rustin, far right, campaigns for Sen. Hillary Clinton's presidential race in Philadelphia shortly before the Pennsylvania presidential primary. CSEA's PEOPLE program protects and improves our jobs, benefits and pensions in Washington, Albany and in your community. Your support and participation in PEOPLE strengthens CSEA's clout in the workplace, in the legislature, in your community and in the labor movement.**



# Retiree Health Care Comparison

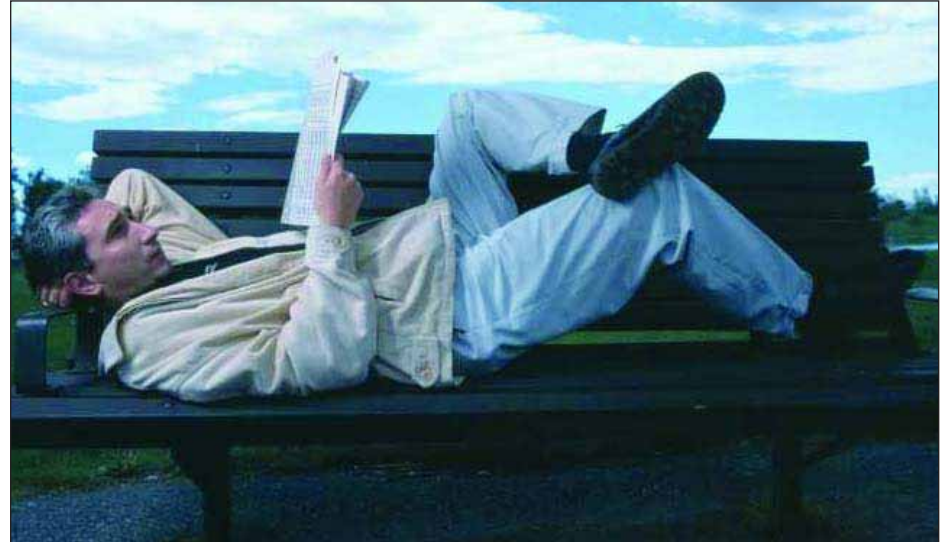
## A CSEA member vs. a wealthy executive



Mary is a retired public employee. She was a member at DMV and retired in 2000.

Pension: \$12,000

Health Insurance Cost:  
\$207 a month or \$2,496  
a year.



### Wealthy Executive

Edmund is a retired corporate executive. His company was in the Business Council, and he retired early in 2000, with a generous buyout.

Average Executive Pension:  
**\$15 million**

Health insurance cost: **\$0**

**C**SEA-backed retiree health insurance legislation (S.6457a/A.9393a) would prohibit state, county and municipal employers from unilaterally shifting costs to retirees

or diminishing benefits for one year while a study is done on how to better address the issue. The New York State Association of Counties and business groups have seriously misrepresented

the issue and misled the public. The real issue is keeping promises to retirees who depend on their health coverage.

## Who's kidding who? Business Opposition is Outrageous! Pass Retiree Health Insurance Protection

**Call you state legislator at 1-877-255-9417. Tell them to pass**

**S.6547-a (Farley) / A.9393-a (Abbate)**

**It's about keeping promises.**