

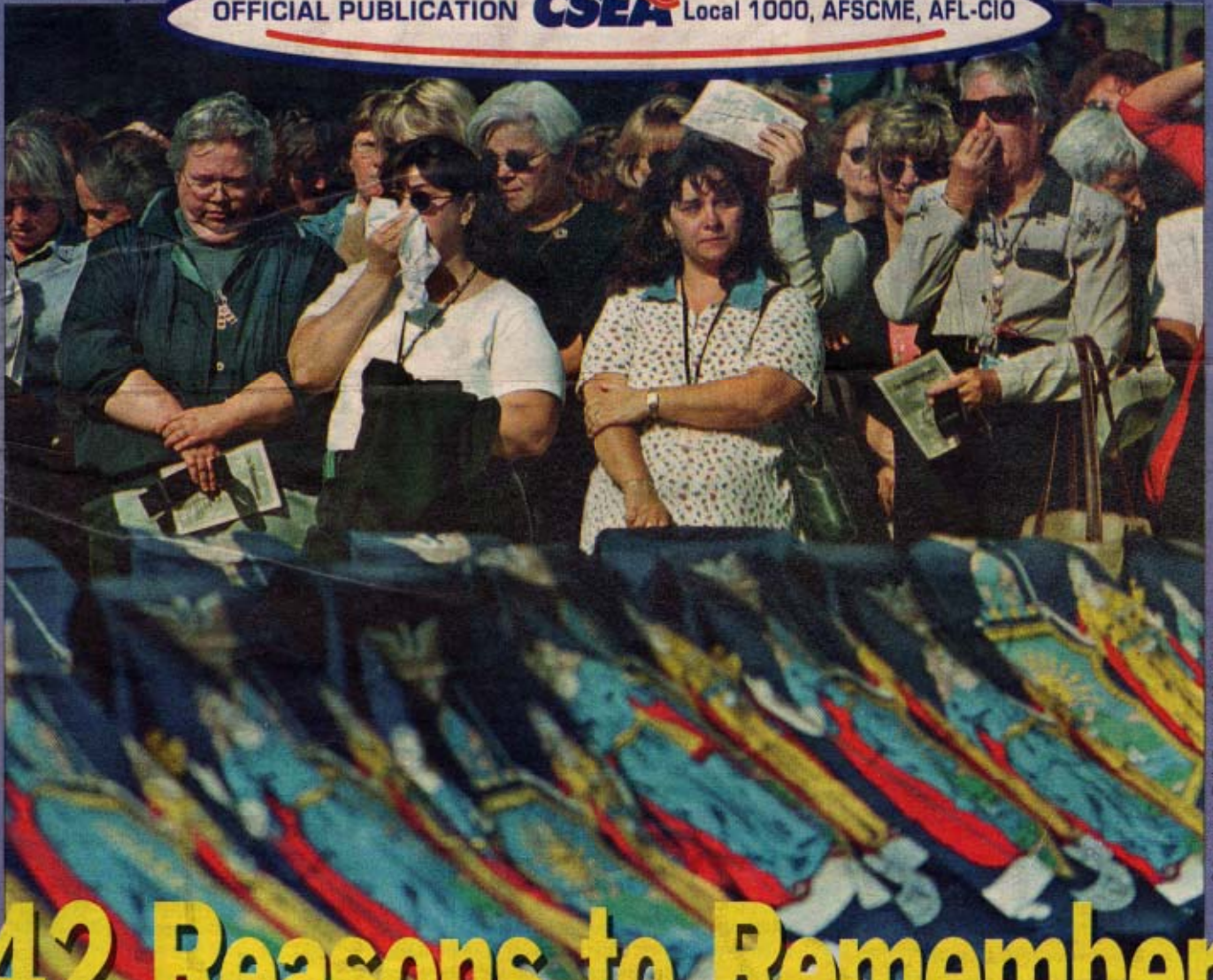
Complete coverage of CSEA members' involvement in the aftermath of Sept. 11 — See Page 2 for the story index

Vol. 4 / No. 11

NOVEMBER 2001

THE WORK FORCE

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



Schenectady Daily Gazette / Mario Schultz

42 Reasons to Remember

Photo of the Month



Onondaga County Aging and Youth Services CSEA member Phil Graham and his wife, Amy, comfort each other as they take in a memorial gathering in Syracuse's Clinton Square recently. The ceremony "brought us some community awareness and a feeling that we're all in this together," Graham said.

In this issue:

Complete coverage of CSEA members' response to Sept. 11 attacks

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Note: The comprehensive coverage of World Trade Center-related news in this edition left little room for The Work Force's regular coverage. Readers can visit CSEA's Web site at www.csealocal1000.net for more union news.

Pataki warns of \$3B gap, proposes hiring freeze

As this edition went to press, Gov. George Pataki outlined plans for saving the state \$3 billion the next 18 months in the aftermath of the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center.

Among the governor's proposals:

- A "hard" hiring freeze in state employment;
- An early retirement incentive for state employees;
- Directing all state agencies to develop plans for reducing spending;
- Eliminating all non-essential discretionary spending;
- Restructuring the state debt.

Numerous local and county governments are also facing fiscal difficulties under the baseline state budget state lawmakers adopted this summer.

"These are times of unprecedented difficulty and CSEA is highly concerned about the ability to deliver essential services at every level of government in this state — especially at a time when needs are likely to increase," said CSEA President Danny Donohue.

"It is our expectation that all state agencies, as well as localities and other public employers, will seek ideas and suggestions from their front-line employees on ways to better do the job rather than simply imposing top-down cutbacks and demands," Donohue said.

State government officials said the hiring freeze and early retirement plan would be designed to cut 5,000 jobs from the state work force.

Pataki said he would try to avoid any forced layoffs or tax increases, although he didn't rule out delaying some already approved tax cuts scheduled to take effect over the next several years.

State Comptroller H. Carl McCall said the state's general fund receipts were already about \$528 million lower than expected for the first six months of the state fiscal year that started April 1.

(See related story on the Fiscal Policy Institute's report on the economic fallout, Page 15.)

Anthrax exposures demand careful handling of mail

The state has issued these precautions for handling mail in the wake of recent exposures to anthrax.

General:

- Every business and organization should assess and review their protocols for handling mail. Common sense and care should be used in inspecting and opening mail or packages.
- Examine unopened envelopes for foreign bodies or powder.
- Do not open letters with your hands — use a letter opener.
- Open letters and packages with a minimum of movement to avoid spilling any contents.
- Each organization should assess whether it is a possible target for criminal acts. Based on this assessment, you may wish to take additional precautions such as wearing gloves and restricting the opening of mail to a limited number of trained individuals.

What Types of Letters May be Suspect:

- Any letter or package that has suspicious or threatening messages written on it.
- Letters with oily stains.
- Envelopes that are lopsided, rigid, bulky, discolored or have a strange odor.
- Envelopes with no return address.
- Unexpected envelopes from foreign countries.
- No postage or non-cancelled postage.
- Improper spelling of common names, places or titles.

More information may also be obtained by calling the state **Health Department, Bureau of Communicable Disease Control: 518-472-1730** (day); **518-465-9720** (after hours).

In **New York City**, call **New York City Department of Health: 212-788-9830** (day); **Poison Control Center 212-764-7667** (after hours).

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS TOPIC:



Visit the CSEA Web site at www.csealocal1000.net.

New benefits for relief workers

CSEA marshals resources, members to handle World Trade Center attack

CSEA continues to marshal its resources and mobilize its members to help relief and recovery efforts for the families of the victims of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center.

Five CSEA members, all at the state Department of Taxation and Finance who worked in the trade center, are reported missing.

The union is working closely with the state Governor's Office of Employee Relations (GOER) and other state and local agencies to help state workers who are affected by the devastation and speed relief efforts.

"There are thousands of dedicated state employees who are working to help make sure everyone's needs are met," said Gov. George Pataki.

"New Yorkers have been strong and courageous throughout this horrific ordeal, but I want everyone to know they are not alone during these troubling times," the governor added.

CSEA President Danny Donohue lauded the governor's "strong leadership" during the tragedy.

"It is at times like these when all New Yorkers must come together, be strong and defend our state and nation," Donohue said in letter to Pataki.

"Your actions have encouraged and strengthened the resolve of all New Yorkers and we are grateful," Donohue said.

Tighter security at state offices

Recovery and relief efforts continue as Pataki announced stricter security measures for state buildings and offices.

Donohue praised the heightened security measures, saying: "These are unprecedented events and we need to take every measure we can to ensure safety and security."

Donate vacation days

State and local government workers can donate either a half day or one unused vacation day to the state, which will convert the time to cash and donate the sum to the relief effort.

As much as \$37 million could be raised if each state worker contributed one



On the Cover

Union members grieve during a memorial service Oct. 11 at the state Office Campus in Albany for state Department of Taxation and Finance and Department of Transportation workers who were killed or remain missing in the World Trade Center.

vacation day to the fund, union leaders said. CSEA insisted local government

See **RESOURCES**, Page 18

Disaster funds

Two disaster relief funds have been set up to help families of the victims of the World Trade Center terrorist attack.

Checks may be made payable to:
AFSCME September 11 Fund

or
NYC Central Labor Council Disaster Fund.

Send checks to CSEA Headquarters, 143 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12210 ATTN: Disaster Relief Fund

MOURN
for the dead



Fight for the Living!

Metro Region staff recall terror

By David Galarza
CSEA Communications Associate

As I emerged from the subway station the morning of Sept. 11, I walked into a nightmare.

The sight of the World Trade Center on fire was beyond comprehension.

Crowds of people stared in disbelief while others waited on long lines for public telephones to call their families.

I immediately raced to the CSEA Metropolitan Region office just down the street.

I recalled the many CSEA members I had met on the 86th floor of the South Tower during an information day about a month earlier. I hoped they had been evacuated.

From the 22nd floor of my CSEA office only a few blocks from the World Trade Center, union secretary Evelina Fernandez and office assistant Denise Baker watched the second plane crash into the Southern Tower.

"When we saw the second one explode we knew it wasn't an accident," said Fernandez. "You saw people fly out of the building with that explosion. It was horrible," she recounted.

Get everybody out

Just emerging from the clogged midtown tunnel, CSEA office manager Yolanda Colon was frantically calling the office.

"I just wanted to get to the

office and get everybody out," said Colon. While Colon's husband, a New York City detective, raced to report for duty, she managed to get a call through to the CSEA office and ordered everybody to evacuate.

After evacuating our office, I walked with Evelina on Fulton Street toward the subway station. We were again overcome by the sheer magnitude of the disaster. We

See **STAFF**, Page 18



Galarza

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Danny Donohue, President

STEPHEN A. MADARASZ
Communications Director & Publisher
STANLEY HORNAK
Deputy Director of Communications
RONALD S. KERMANI, Executive Editor
LOU HMIELESKI, Associate Editor
CATHLEEN HORTON
Graphic Design & Support Services
RALPH DISTIN, Graphic Artist
JANICE M. KUCSKAR
Communications Production Coordinator
BETH McINTYRE
Communications Secretary

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Readers:

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

COMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATES

ROLANDO INFANTE	Long Island Region (631) 462-0030
DAVID GALARZA	Metropolitan Region (212) 406-2156
JANICE MARRA	Southern Region (845) 831-1000
DAN CAMPBELL	Capital Region (518) 785-4400
MARK M. KOTZIN	Central Region (315) 433-0050
RON WOFFORD	Western Region (716) 886-0391
ED MOLITOR	Headquarters (518) 257-1272

The Publications Committee

LONG ISLAND REGION *John C. Shepherd*
METROPOLITAN REGION *Lamont "Dutch" Wade*
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IN TOUCH WITH THE WORK FORCE

CSEA President Danny Donohue



There is nothing more profound that can be said about the aftermath of Sept. 11 than the message delivered by the actions and labors of CSEA members.

CSEA members stand tall among all those who serve and all those who care.

The pages of this edition are filled with outstanding examples of professionalism, generosity and humanity that speak volumes about your character and resolve. No one can ever take that away from you.

All of us are affected by these horrific events in so many ways. Every day I hear new stories of personal tragedy and loss from members of our CSEA family.

We must continue to remember that five CSEA brothers and sisters – **Yvette Anderson, Florence Cohen, Harry Goody, Marian Hrycak, and Dorothy Temple**, all employees of the state Department of Taxation and Finance, remain among the missing.

I have seen the devastation at ground zero. I have met and talked with members who escaped with their lives and those whose heroic actions in the aftermath have saved lives and strengthened our security.

It is hard to imagine what some of our brothers and sisters have experienced.

We can never make it better for many of them — it is unlikely that the pain will ever fully go away. But we must do our best to share their grief and offer our support.

My sincere thanks and admiration to all of you, who are making that unselfish contribution every day.

42 empty chairs, thousands of heavy hearts

ALBANY — "On September 11, many lives changed forever. Mine changed with the loss of my mother, Diane Moore Parsons."



Tatum

CSEA state Tax and Finance department member Frank Tatum said, his voice choked with emotion.

Thousands of workers and union leaders who packed an outdoor memorial service for the 42 state workers, 39 from the tax department and three from the state transportation department, killed in the World Trade Center attack listened in church-like silence.

They heard from one of their own — a fellow worker who lost someone dear. He shared his pain. They heard his wisdom.

"My mother was my inspiration," Tatum told the hushed crowd.

"She worked hard, lived honest and always put others first," he said.



Sullivan

Forty-two empty chairs, each draped with the state flag, framed the stage where Tatum spoke, a grim and silent reminder of the loss that has touched millions.

CSEA Executive Vice President Mary Sullivan remembered the five CSEA members who worked at the World Trade Center the day of the attack and remain missing.

"This day, September 11, would be different for them and thousands of others," Sullivan said.

"They were mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, friends and family. Part of us died with them.

"But a larger part of them lives on with us today and every day," Sullivan said.

Bagpipers delivered "Amazing Grace" into the crisp fall air. Men and women wept.

"The world will never be the same again," Tatum said softly.

"It's up to us to decide what kind of world we want it to be. We'd be doing a disservice to the memories of our loved ones lost if we allowed ourselves to be cold or hateful.

"We owe it to them to do good things."

— Daniel X. Campbell

Voices of the Work Force



"I feel horrible for all the families of our CSEA brothers and sisters who died in the Sept. 11 tragedy."

— Carmela Pinto, cook, East Williston School District, Long Island



A little table

It's a little table in the lobby of the state Department of Taxation and Finance building in Albany.

Two or three employees at a time stop by and stare silently at the table, whispering reverentially.

"Two children ..."
 "Great guy."
 "What a laugh he had."
 "I can't believe it."

The table is decorated with mementos of their 39 co-workers who are reported missing in the World Trade Center attack.

There's a bright red teddy bear about to give a loving hug, a small crèche celebrating a family Christmas never to be.

There's a prayer card, a computer drawing and a small array of photos from happy times — weddings, parties and birthdays.

No eulogy can better say what that little table quietly proclaims: They were loved.

— Daniel X. Campbell



Union leaders discuss World Trade Center aftershocks with CSEA metro members



CSEA's top statewide leaders met with more than 100 Local and Unit leaders from New York City shortly after the World Trade Center attack to listen to their concerns and see how the union can help members cope with the disaster.

President Danny Donohue, Secretary Barbara Reeves and Treasurer Maureen Malone met with union activists and leaders to discuss the aftershocks of the terrorist attack.

"These are extremely difficult times for our members and their families in New York City, and CSEA will do all it can to help them with the stress and anxiety this terrorist attack has created," Donohue said.

Hundreds of union members who work for state government offices in and near the World Trade Center have been relocated to other offices in the metropolitan area.

These relocations have created problems with child care, commuting, and related workplace issues, union leaders said.

"These trying times will again test the strength and resolve of our union," Donohue said.

"All CSEA members are profoundly affected by the attack, and we're committed to helping rebuild New York in any way we can," he added.



Ads, commemorative poster honor heroes and lives lost

A CSEA tribute honoring the victims of the World Trade Center attack — including the five CSEA members who remain among the missing — and those who have responded is airing on radio and TV stations statewide.

The television spots are being broadcast in every major city around the state and the radio spots are being broadcast during the morning drive time on the top news and information stations in every market.

Additionally, a print ad was published in *The Chief* and the *Legislative Gazette* newspapers.

The print ad uses CSEA's award-winning staff illustrator Ralph Distin's rendering of the World Trade Center which graced the cover of the October edition of *The Work Force*.

Copies of Distin's *Work Force* cover are being reprinted as a commemorative poster for distribution at the CSEA annual delegates meeting in Buffalo.

The posters will also be sent to the six CSEA regional offices and will be available in mid-November.



Voices of the Work Force

"As a new immigrant, I feel both frustrated and scared. Living in fear is not the version of the American dream I came seeking."

— **Richard Fernandez**, groundskeeper, Nassau County Department of Parks and Recreation



Clockwise from top left: CSEA President Danny Donohue meets with CSEA member Cecilia Richards; CSEA Metro Region President George Boncoraglio and Donohue meet with CSEA members; CSEA Treasurer Maureen Malone, right, meets with NYC Local President Vincent Martusciello; CSEA Secretary Barbara Reeves, center, meets with Tax and Finance activist Wanda Simmons, left, and CSEA Labor Relations Specialist Barbara Moore, right.

Pataki consoles CSEA tax members

Gov. George Pataki made several trips to New York City to survey the World Trade Center destruction, the recovery efforts and meet with CSEA members who work at the state Department of Taxation and Finance.

Five CSEA members from the department's World Trade Center office are listed as missing. Dozens of other tax department workers are also unaccounted for.

Pataki told CSEA Metropolitan Region President George Boncoraglio and other leaders and members at a recent meeting he was proud of the state work force and CSEA members' continuing efforts to help the families of victims.

"As we direct our prayers and thoughts to the victims of these catastrophic events, thousands of men and women from state agencies and local governments across the



Gov. George Pataki meets with state Tax Department workers in New York City.

Empire State continue helping their friends and neighbors in New York City," Pataki said.

CSEA members rise to crisis, keep lines open

The Japanese embassy was calling with \$5 million.

An Australian rescue team was on the line, begging to help.

A 6-year-old girl called, her words muffled by sobs.

"My mother works at the World Trade Center, and she hasn't come home yet."

More than 350 CSEA members who work in the state Department of Taxation and Finance's call center immediately started handling emergency calls from New York City after the terrorist attacks, as part of the State Emergency Management Operation (SEMO).

During the seven days after the attack, union members fielded more than 160,000 phone calls, with more than 30,000 calls one day.

Emergency workers were requesting more heavy equipment, work gloves, body bags and a list of funeral directors, among other necessities for the rescue efforts.

"Our members went above and beyond the call of duty," said CSEA Local President Ed Wysomski. Realizing tax department co-workers were

killed when two airliners slammed into the World Trade Center, union members focused on the task at hand — helping the state's emergency network come up to speed.

"We were distraught at the loss of our co-workers, but when the phones began ringing, we realized we were part of it, part of the state emergency response effort, part of the effort to fight back," said CSEA member Andy Vanbuskirk, a phone operator.

Wysomski and department officials applauded CSEA members' selfless dedication to their important jobs on the phone banks.

"They're giving up their time with their own families to take care of the tax and finance families and the families of all the victims," Wysomski said.

"That's typical of what the tax and finance workers often do, and they go unnoticed and unrecognized," Wysomski added, noting union members worked 16-hour shifts.

— Daniel X. Campbell
(See story about SEMO effort
on Pages 10 and 11)



Vanbuskirk

A legacy for the future

As we at the state Tax Department begin to move forward in the wake of the tragedy at the World Trade Center, let us reflect on the seeds of goodness that have been left behind.

For there has been much goodness in the wake of this horror, as we have responded with kindness, courage, generosity and determination.

I've been struck with awe at the courage of the employees directly affected by this terrible event.

I've been overwhelmed by the generosity of employees who made contributions of all kinds of disaster relief.

I've been inspired by the skill, compassion and dedication of employees throughout the department in providing services to the victims and their families, and in staffing the State Emergency Management Office phones.

Just as importantly, I am grateful to those who have so calmly and competently kept our operations afloat in the midst of this crisis.

And as I list just a few of these extraordinary contributions, I know there are many, many more.

The 39 men and women from the Tax Department who were lost in this tragedy have left behind a legacy that we dare not squander, and I invite you to join me in celebrating their lives with the gift they have given us.

We have bonded together and learned to care about and support one another in a way that we never have before.

We have put aside petty differences and worked together as one, and have learned to focus on things in life that are really important — the love we have to share, our health, our children, and each other.

Our lives have been changed forever, but it's less about airport security and Wall Street than it is about becoming the best that we can become.

As we move forward — for we must — we have an obligation to those we have lost to embrace the future with renewed vigor, unity and compassion for one another and those we serve.

Arthur J. Roth
Commissioner
New York State
Department of Taxation and Finance

Voices of the Work Force

"We were preparing to receive survivors from the World Trade Center, but the wait made it clear to us that the loss of life was going to be great."

— Jeanine Gutt, operating
room surgical technician, Nassau
University Medical Center



MOURN
for the dead



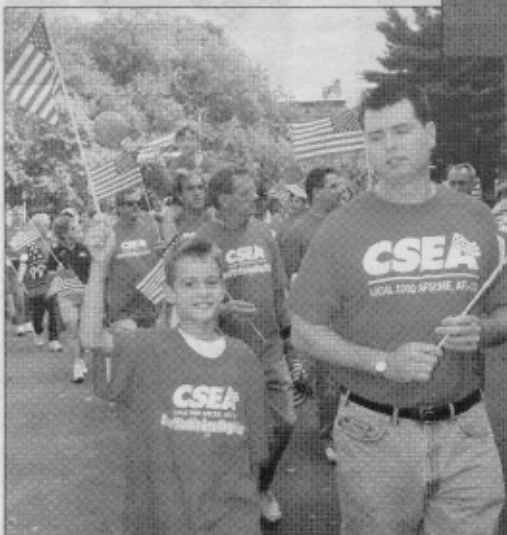
Fight
for the
Living!

Labor marches to remember, honor NYC victims and heroes



America the beautiful...

Patriotism was abundant at the Memorial March in Albany on Sept. 22 as union members came out to honor the victims of the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11. Above, a marching band played music appropriate for the day.



CSEA President Danny Donohue lead a memorial march in late September in Albany to honor the victims of the New York City terrorist attack.

Hundreds of CSEA members joined union members from across the Capital Region to remember those who died in the World Trade Center attacks and honor those who toil in the recovery and relief efforts.

"The march was originally scheduled as a labor parade showcasing the accomplishments of labor in the Capital District," explained CSEA Capital Region President Kathy Garrison, parade organizer.

"But we promptly refocused the meaning of the parade to honor those lost in the horrific events of Sept. 11," she added.

"I'm proud of our Capital Region CSEA members who turned out in force to honor the workers killed in the attack and pay tribute to the thousands who are involved in the relief efforts," Garrison added.

Led by Donohue, the parade marshal, the throng marched past cheering spectators who waved flags and sang patriotic tunes.

"There is much left to be done," Donohue said about the recovery efforts in New York City which CSEA members are helping with.

"CSEA members stand ready, willing and able to help in any way we can. Together we can rebuild and heal this great state," Donohue added.



Originally intended as a labor parade, organizers quickly turned the Sept. 22 event into a memorial march. CSEA members and their families responded by joining their union brothers and sisters from across the Capital Region

in a display of patriotism, to remember those who died in the attacks and to honor those who work in the recovery and relief efforts.



At right, CSEA President Danny Donohue talks with CSEA member Willie Terry, center, of the state Tax and Finance Department in Albany and another parade marcher.

Below right, Local 660 was one of many Capital Region Locals that marched.

Below, a member assists CSEA Statewide Secretary Barbara Reeves with an armband worn in remembrance of victims of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.



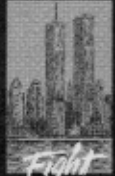
Decades later, it's still true

"I know that America will never be disappointed in its expectation that labor will always continue to do its share of the job we now face and do it patriotically and effectively and unselfishly."



— President Franklin D. Roosevelt, in a speech on Sept. 23, 1944, three months after the Allied Forces landed in Normandy

MOURN
for the dead



*Fight
for the
Living!*

Voices of the Work Force

CSEA member Sharon Majkut, a clerk at the state Office of Family and Children Services in Albany, volunteered to work in the State Emergency Management Office (SEMO) support staff.



Majkut has worked with state forest rangers and finds the SEMO work busy, tiring and worthwhile.

"I definitely think people feel proud of America and that they want to do what they can and give what they can," Majkut said.

INSIDE THE WORK FORCE

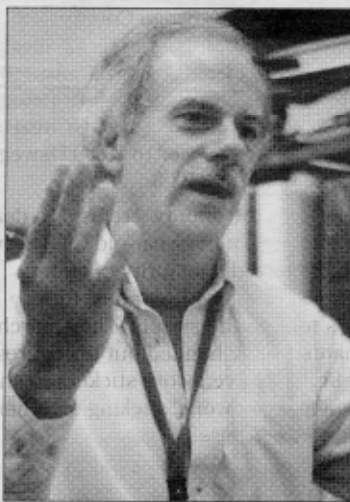
At ground zero and 150 miles away

ALBANY — There's a second ground zero in New York State.

Strategically buried under yards of concrete and steel near the State Police headquarters, the state Emergency Management Office (SEMO) may be 150 miles from ground zero at the World Trade Center, but it was the nerve center of the state's response to the terrorist attack.

CSEA members who work at SEMO have handled natural and man-made disasters over the years, but their feverish work that started at 9 a.m. Sept. 11 was unparalleled.

Gov. George Pataki lauded the hundreds of SEMO workers who hunkered down for restless shifts, saying they responded "heroically to a horrific situation."



Ken Bergmann

Weeks after the attack that changed New York City's landscape and the nation's psyche, CSEA members continue to coordinate relief efforts for emergency workers at the World Trade Center.

"We're winding down, but not winding up," said Ken Bergmann, the CSEA Capital District Local president, his voice flat but with a sharp edge of deep resolve.

"We've got to begin planning for the next one. There will be a next one — a flood, a hurricane, an ice storm, something unexpected, someplace, somewhere, at sometime," the SEMO planning section chief said.

SEMO coordinates the response of 22 state agencies to make sure the most

appropriate resources are dispatched to the disaster.

SEMO works with the local governments, volunteer organizations and the private sector throughout the state to develop disaster preparedness plans and provide training and simulated disaster response exercises.

The unexpected arrives at New York's door with unhalting regularity.

Since 1995, SEMO workers have shepherded New York State through 15 federally declared disasters or emergencies.

The \$247 million in federal and state aid distributed by

SEMO during these emergencies before Sept. 11 will pale when compared to the billions of dollars SEMO will administer and oversee as the New York City skyline is rebuilt.

First response

"I was an hour out of Westchester County heading for a training session when I first heard that an airplane had crashed into one of the WTC towers," Bergmann said.

"I saw the second plane smash into the other tower on a TV at a rest stop. I traveled on to the Westchester County Emergency Management Office and helped there."

Heavy with sadness, Bergmann recites the blur of dates and times which are burned into his memory.

"The New York City Emergency Management Office was right next to the World Trade Center. It was gone when the buildings collapsed. Westchester County was sending in volunteer firefighters to help the New York City fire department which had suffered losses of over 300.

"Everybody (at SEMO) knew they had lost friends, family, co-workers, but they knew that a system was in place to respond and they knew they were the ones trained to do so. And they did," Bergmann said.

Inside the bunker

Inside the SEMO operation is the State Emergency

Coordination Center, the state's 9-1-1 emergency response dispatch unit staffed by CSEA member Dan Searless.

"The first call was about an air hijacking and the second was about the plane crashing into the building," Searless said about the first official notice of the attack.

Searless and his colleagues in the fortified subbasement began calling the 22 state agencies representatives, which are the SEMO front line.

Kevin Kraus, the CSEA Local treasurer, is normally an associate planner in SEMO but his role changes to operation section chief in a disaster.

"I'm a pit boss. I get a call requesting 1,000 cots. I tell the floor where the 22 agency reps sit what I



Kevin Kraus



DANNY DONOHUE
STATEWIDE
PRESIDENT

The world changed for all of us on Tuesday Sept. 11. An event of this kind

brings us all closer as Americans. For those of us in the CSEA family, it was especially meaningful.

Even in the early days following the attack, the response of CSEA members, like all of the labor movement, was tremendous.

There were blood drives, monetary contributions and let us not forget the many CSEA members who were involved either directly or indirectly in the rescue and recovery efforts. The outpouring of self-sacrifice and generosity to the victims of this horrific tragedy was inspiring.

In light of events of this magnitude, everything else pales in comparison, but life is more powerful than death. Little by little we must all get on with the business of living.

To paraphrase the great labor organizer Mother Jones, as we mourn for our dead we, as unionists, must turn this tragedy into an opportunity to renew and redouble our commitment to fight for the living.

This time last year CSEA had a lot to celebrate. It was our 90th anniversary and a year in which CSEA members were mobilized like never before throughout our 90-year history. Because of member mobilization, because of member participation because of SHEER MEMBER POWER we won a good state contract, a COLA for retirees and sweeping pension reform that benefits all our members.

That was last year.

We must build on our past successes and strive to build a better, even more effective union.

Activism Matters

We have seen what member power at the grassroots level can do so we have to tap into that member power even further.

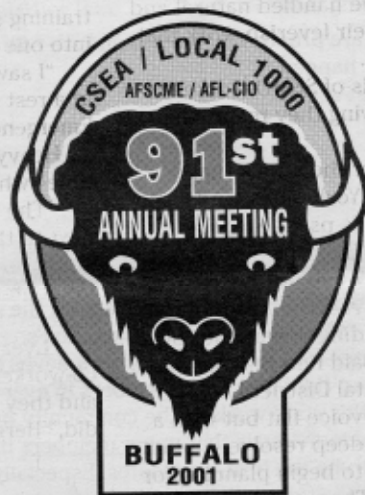
Our goal is to have the best trained group of union activists you can find to ensure that we can pursue CSEA's priority areas of organizing, representation and political action.

Our future depends on getting our membership — the rank-and-file — to take

**CSEA's 91st
Annual Delegates Meeting
Buffalo, NY from
October 29 - November 2, 2001**

*Complete coverage of the convention
will be featured in the December edition
of The Work Force*

ownership in their union. We have to change the way CSEA members view, think, feel and care about their union. That means we as leaders also have to change. It cannot be business as usual. We face new and unprecedented challenges as workers and unionists and must confront them in new ways.



With the launch of the Leadership Development Institute earlier this year, we have already begun to lay the foundation for a more powerful, more effective, more inclusive CSEA. With the Leadership Development Institute, CSEA leaders are gaining the next generation of skills they need to confront the critical challenges we face as CSEA evolves as a union.

So far, nearly 100 CSEA activists and staff have participated in this intensive, week-long program, and every one has emerged with new-found energy and enthusiasm about the new direction this union is taking.

That new direction is a CSEA that grows and thrives on maximum member participation, a CSEA that offers something of value to every member and a CSEA where members have the power to set the union's agenda based on the issues that matter to them.

CSEA OFFICERS' REPORTS

Mobilizing Around Issues

CSEA must have maximum member participation because our strength comes not from the number of members we can count, but from the number of members we can count on.

Size does matter, but CSEA's power comes from the commitment and passion of our members, not just numbers alone. So we have to find new ways to engage our members in activities and around issues they care about.

For instance, there are about 700 members in CSEA's Oswego County Administrative unit. It is not our smallest unit, but by no means is it our largest either. When the county chose to ignore a pay equity issue that was close to their hearts, it seemed there were closer to 7,000 Oswego County members than 700.

Angry over the county's refusal to deal in negotiations with a five-year-old Civil Service study that showed a majority of county workers deserved pay upgrades, the members took to the streets. They marched, they chanted, they handed out brochures to the public. They even wore stickers to show management they were "sticking together" in their fight for fairness.

They had already been without a contract for more than a year because of this issue, but they did not care if it took another year more. They were united, they were empowered and they were committed to the fight.

It didn't take another year, of course. The county saw our members' resolve, saw public opinion firmly on our side, and today these members have a new five-year contract that includes pay upgrades. They made a difference by standing up for what they believed in.

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MARY E. SULLIVAN
EXECUTIVE VICE
PRESIDENT

The world has changed a lot since the last time

we met in Buffalo for our Annual Delegates Meeting in 1997. Certainly in the last two months it has changed in ways that cannot be considered for the better.

But we must accept the challenge of these unspeakable acts to become stronger and more united than ever before. As union leaders, all of us gathered here must rededicate ourselves to building a better, more inclusive and effective union that can truly represent the hopes of working people on and off the job and to building a stronger America.

When we met here in 1997, we were just beginning to define a new level of consciousness in the labor movement. We were just opening our eyes to how we in CSEA could rise to the challenges before us.

The facts were clear – mobilize and grow or face an inevitable decline in membership and clout.

There is still much work to do but we have made tremendous strides! We're building a union that's more relevant to its members. Change doesn't come easy, but in the last four years, we have changed a lot. Look around you and see how different things are from 1997.

Consider the Leadership Development Institute — a brand new initiative designed to help develop the talent and skills of a new generation of activists. They represent the new lifeblood of our union.

Those who have participated in the initial programs have enthusiastically embraced the message of taking ownership of their union and passing that message of ownership on to the rank and file members.

How do we make the union more relevant to our members if we don't spend the time with them to find out what is relevant and work to get them active?

There is no substitute for activism – getting out and getting results – and CSEA is making progress in doing just that in representation, political action and organizing.

Representation

We have activists and rank-and-file members taking active roles in contract negotiations like never before – bringing to the table what they need and bargaining directly for it and walking picket lines when management doesn't listen.

We all took to the streets two years ago in an unprecedented state contract fight and look how it paid off – the state contract, the COLA for retirees and pension reform for all our members.

Your brothers and sisters in places like Oswego, Onondaga and Cortland counties know what mobilization meant for them in the past year, in terms of getting members involved and producing results at the bargaining table.

We are proud, we are loud and we can make it happen.

Political Action

Time and again CSEA has demonstrated its ability to mobilize its members across the state when it comes to supporting the union's candidates for elected office. That's never been truer than right now with members in every part of this state working the community on behalf of individuals that union members have judged to be the best candidates. Especially in local races, it does make a difference who we elect and the involvement our members have will make a big impact.

Organizing

Our members have long been involved in community activities but we have stepped up our efforts to proudly remind those communities and organizations that we're from CSEA, and we care about the cities, towns and villages we live in. It's time for everyone to recognize all the good things that unions and union members do for their neighborhoods and for their communities. When you collect

donations for the disaster fund, when you give blood, when you do all of the good work you do, wear your CSEA T-shirt and let your community know that union workers are and always will be the backbone of America.

Activism and union pride send an important message in our efforts to organize workers, that message is essential to show them the benefits of union membership and solidarity. We, as union leaders, need to speak up and speak-out, encouraging unorganized workers to join us.

The most effective union organizer is a union member. CSEA has established an apprenticeship program that helps to develop the skills of CSEA members who want to speak to workers about what it means to be empowered through union involvement.

It's not easy, but it's worth the effort. Just ask your brothers and sisters at Fisher Bus in the Buffalo suburb of Hamburg, a relatively new Local in the private sector. Faced with extremely difficult negotiations, they came together with a singular purpose and that solidarity produced a great contract, a stronger union and inspiration for all of us.

They found that speaking with one voice can produce tremendous power... union power. We need to see that more and more in our Units and our Locals, new and not so new, as we work to solve work place problems.

CSEA is truly New York's leading union because we go out and prove it every day, in every worksite, in every part of this state. God bless our great union and our great America. ■





BARBARA REEVES
STATEWIDE SECRETARY

The first Labor Day, according to one account, occurred in 1882 when workers marched up New York's Broadway with signs that read: "Eight Hours for Work, Eight Hours for Rest, Eight Hours for Recreation!"

Such protests might seem quaint at this distance, but people still want to have their concerns heard. And one major concern I hear all the time is the need for quality, affordable health care for all.

The day of horror, when the World Trade Center was attacked, is a testament to our solidarity. People in both the public and private sectors responded. The situation was extraordinary and it prompted an extraordinary response.

While we often exalt individualism, we learned human beings grow and achieve fulfillment in community. The needs of the injured were addressed because people worked together. The common good and well-being of all was primary. The sense of community gave us a common purpose.

The same principle — working together for the common good — best defines CSEA. All working people need economic security, social justice and human dignity. And, when health care is inadequate or even non-existent, the message sent is no one cares when we get sick or old.

It is our responsibility as union members to lift up working people. And the best way to accomplish this goal is through organizing unorganized workers.

Labor once spoke for one-third of the work force. Today, we speak for 15 percent of all workers. We must do better. We must: Organize! Organize! Organize!

The CSEA Agenda for health care makes a powerful statement that is especially relevant for both organized and unorganized workers.

Our goals are thus:

*All people should have access to quality health care. No one should be denied access because of their ability to pay or their sickness.

*Prescription drug costs must be regulated. Otherwise, insurance premiums and co-pays will continue to skyrocket. (Pharmaceutical companies spend more on public relations and marketing than on research and development.)

*Quality care means more staffing and more funding for facilities ranging from nursing homes to hospitals to mental health institutions to community homes.

*We need a Patients' Bill of Rights that guarantees medical decisions are not based on money. It must also protect health care workers who blow the whistle on improper care in their workplace.

After the events of Sept. 11, the world is not the same. It can no longer be "me." It has to be "us." Together, we can lead the way. ■



MAUREEN S. MALONE
STATEWIDE TREASURER

As I write this annual message to you, the AFSCME Organizing Convention is just concluding. Usually the deadline for submitting this article makes it difficult to discuss current topics but union organizing is always timely.

The day-to-day work of being a CSEA officer is important and in many cases, vital to the smooth operation of our union. But, I cannot tell you how great it is to be reinvigorated and re-energized to continue on with the CSEA mission to organize.

Ed Asner, you remember Mary Tyler Moore's boss, Lou Grant, spoke to the assembly and has renewed my faith and continued commitment to our union and the job of bringing worker equity and justice to all.

Organizing the unorganized is a national movement in the realm of labor unions but is an issue vital to each of us as workers.

The gap between the have and the have nots, the wealthy and the middle class, big business and the working families in this country is becoming wider and wider. The shrinking percentage of organized workers is lowering worker salaries, making work sites less safe, increasing the hours of the work week, to name just a few serious issues.

By organizing the unorganized, unions work to stabilize a living wage. Unions give workers, regardless of race, creed or color, a place to rely on for justice in the workplace. Organizing the unorganized gives workers a voice in political action, a voice in job security, a voice in health care issues, a voice in environmental issues, a voice in their lives. Ed Asner reminded me of all this and the fact that union leaders need to work relentlessly to continue the organizing of the unorganized going on in this country.

CSEA has increased the Organizing Department, has worked across New York State to organize home health care workers, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, hospital workers and other groups of employees who need a voice. But the "union" cannot be successful without you.

Each member of CSEA can assist workers who need our help and protection. Organizing workers is a basic one-on-one program where you can share your personal experience at the worksite, the protections you have, the grievance procedure in place that keeps your rights protected.

CSEA needs your help to volunteer just 1-2 hours a week to help fellow workers gain dignity and equity. CSEA needs to move forward and your help is the only way that can happen.

Your voice can make a difference. Talk with your elected officers, volunteer to help. Working to further the organizing drives in your area, supporting your union brothers and sisters, buying goods produced in union shops, made in America is the best way to keep this country strong. We all need to help. ■



**NICK
LAMORTE**
LONG ISLAND
REGION PRESIDENT

Greetings from Long Island Region One!

Congratulations to all Local and Unit Officers on their election to their respective positions.

I especially want to thank those of you in my region for stepping up and getting involved in your union. With your help, we can do great things together. By getting involved, you are the voice for our members on your job. I know you will represent them to the best of your ability. CSEA has a great wealth of resources and training to help us perform our duties. Good luck on making a difference.

I can't believe a year has passed and we are all here in Buffalo for another convention. I know our solidarity will continue to grow while we debate issues and make decisions to strengthen our union. This is the time of year when we all come together from every part of our state to work hard. I hope you get to mingle with others, from different regions and divisions within our union. Network and ask questions of each other and take important information back to your Local. Pick each other's brain and challenge each other on the issues before us on the convention floor. Understand our differences, but be mindful of our common goal. Respect each other's ideas and support them when you can. CSEA is a great union made up of diverse people all working together to raise the quality of life, to give a voice on your job and to help our members pay the rent and raise a family. There is no other union as democratic, nor as tolerant of members who disagree and challenge those in power. This is what makes us GREAT!

We are also a union that cares. With the tragic events in New York City which cost thousands of lives, five from CSEA, we worked together to help. We had volunteers and workers from many CSEA-represented jurisdictions working around the clock at ground zero.

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**GEORGE
BONCORAGLIO**
METROPOLITAN
REGION PRESIDENT

On the morning of Sept. 11, during the most vicious

terrorist attack on the United States, the Metropolitan Region of CSEA lost five members who worked for the State Department of Taxation and Finance on the 86th and 87th floors of World Trade Center Two.

Thousands more, including hundreds of rescue workers, perished as these world famous New York City icons were reduced to rubble before a dumbstruck worldwide audience.

With no time to spare, and even before the soot, dust and debris settled, CSEA members and countless union activists around the country sprang into action. Throughout the state, members raised funds, donated blood, and gathered supplies.

At ground zero, members from the State Emergency Management Office, law enforcement and transportation agencies braved the flames and constant threat of yet another building collapse as they searched desperately for survivors. Sadly, there were so few.

The determination, courage and tenacity demonstrated by so many union members, from all walks of life, during this national tragedy should and will serve as an enduring testament to the labor movement in America for many years to come.

While people were racing away from danger, firefighters and police officers and other rescue workers were racing in. After the unbelievable collapse of both towers even more firefighters, laborers, electricians, welders, and medical personnel hurried in to help those in need.

We should all be proud of these courageous men and women. They represent us and exemplify the ideals that should always govern the trade union movement. We should always be willing to lend a hand to our brothers and sisters. But in a time of crisis, we should be prepared to

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**CARMINE
DIBATTISTA**
SOUTHERN REGION
PRESIDENT

Hello. I would like to welcome all of you to this year's Annual Delegates

Meeting. Unfortunately, we are all gathered here in Buffalo in the aftermath of a tragedy that not only affected our nation, but many of our CSEA brothers and sisters. Our hearts in the Southern Region go out to the loved ones of all of the people killed in these insane and cowardly attacks on Sept. 11, especially to those CSEA members who were killed or lost family or friends on that terrible day.

Despite our shock and mourning for the victims, our members in this region have resoundingly risen to the call to help our nation and our state recover from the World Trade Center attacks. They have contributed mightily to the recovery and relief efforts in the days and weeks following the attacks. Many of our members were at the devastating ground zero site within hours of the collapse of the World Trade Center towers, and they worked day and night to help restore New York City to some semblance of normal. CSEA members in the Hudson Valley, reeling from the attacks, have given to the efforts financially as well. They generously contributed their money, their blood and their professional and personal supplies and resources to the relief efforts. No one had to ask them, no one had to goad them to help the victims and the relief workers. This terrible tragedy has brought out not only the best of CSEA as a whole, but the best of the 40,000 members in the Southern Region. I sincerely thank all the CSEA members who have contributed to the relief efforts. You all make me proud.

While this tragedy has redefined many of our roles as working men and women, the business of labor — as well as its goals — goes on. CSEA fights for working families in any way that we can, and we will continue to fight for the interests of working men and women in the Hudson Valley. The region has had a very active and successful year in working for the interests of working families.

As a region, we have had to contend with issues during the past year that not only jeopardized the financial security of our members, but the security of the communities that surround us. One continuing issue that is at the forefront of the region's priorities is a contract battle for our members in the Ulster County Unit. Our members working for Ulster County are seeking "truth, equity and fairness" from county leaders after the county misrepresented to CSEA the fiscal health

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KATHY GARRISON
CAPITAL REGION
PRESIDENT

Greetings from the Capital Region! The Capital Region has been very busy trying to

make the union relevant to all of our members. Most of this report will focus on some of the new initiatives the region has implemented to encourage member involvement.

Through our Community Outreach Committee, we have signed up more than 125 members to volunteer for different community-based organizations. We have also identified more than 500 of our members who have participated in different fundraising events. The members in the region are very enthusiastic with regard to our involvement and commitment to our neighbors.

The focus of the committee has not been to solicit funding from our own members, but to volunteer our services to help these organizations raise money through their own fundraising drives. Members of CSEA throughout the state already generously donate money to a variety of not-for-profit organizations through the United Way and the SEFA campaigns. The committee is looking to identify all of the volunteer work our members do to help the public.

The committee helped approximately 24 different organizations to raise in excess of \$20,000. The region has also created a database of these organizations and the employees who have asked us to help with their fundraising efforts. CSEA members have always been very generous with both their time and money; and when we need the help of these organizations in some of our own battles, we will call on them for their help.

The Community Outreach Committee has also played an important part in helping our fellow union members. In Warren County, the Finch Prun Company will not negotiate a contract with its employees. The workers have been on strike for several months, and without income those workers have had a difficult time providing some of the basic necessities for their families. CSEA's Capital Region has walked in solidarity with those workers and our committee has collected money, school supplies, food and clothing for those families. Hopefully, by the time this report is published, the workers will be back on the job with the wages and benefits that they deserve.

This past spring the region held its first Local Government and School Committee Workshop. Topics included Civil Service Law, Teacher Aides vs. Teacher Assistants, Charter Schools, NYS Retirement System and Bus Driver Safety. The

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JIM MOORE
CENTRAL REGION
PRESIDENT

And the world will never be the same. Can we ever forget the minutes

following the World Trade Center crashes and the destruction of offices at the Pentagon. The hours that turned into days as we, as a nation, searched for answers to the reasons for such an action. Surely, we have all been touched by this horrible incident. I cannot recall how many times I heard the word hero used. The police, the firefighters, the emergency medical workers, the thousands of professionals and volunteers who searched the ruins day after day with the smoke and dust clouds choking their throats and burning their eyes. Yes, each of them was a hero. All of them performed their responsibilities, proud to be helping out and steadfast in their commitment to show the world that evil cannot win over good. That amid all of the heartache, each of them had a desire to participate in the healing.

I choose to devote my report to the heroes who were not so visible. To the thousands of workers who, without consent or a vote of approval, found themselves part of a cornerstone, a blueprint if you will, for the next generation. Some of them were our union members, all of them were our brothers and sisters. They all entered their workplaces prepared to work. Some with perhaps a keyboard or pen, others with their hands and sweat. I would imagine all were proud of their accomplishments. Each of them leaves friends and family that mourn their deaths. So many have asked, "How can we ever get beyond this tragedy?" As we have so many times in the past, we can look to our history to produce the roadways for the future.

It has not been uncommon for America's workforce to affect our society in positive and productive means. Abraham Lincoln once told a crowd gathered, "All that harms labor is treason to America. No line can be drawn between these two. The strongest bond of human sympathy, outside of the family relation, should be one uniting all working people of all nations, tongues and kindreds."

The solidarity we share with our lost brothers and sisters should be the guidepost in defining our work sites of the future. All workers are heroes. No employee should

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FLO TRIPI
WESTERN REGION
PRESIDENT

It hardly seems possible that another year has passed and it is

convention time again. What is very clear is that this has been a particularly busy year in the Western Region. With the help of our region officers, a dedicated staff, a strong and active committee structure and many dedicated, hard-working activists, The region is on the move. We have held region conferences, a successful Women's Conference, a wonderful region picnic for our members and their families, and have offered training for our members both through CSEA's Education and Training Department and the Workplace Development Institute through our labor councils. Elections for our CSEA Locals and Units were held, and we welcomed all our new officers at our recent Fall Region Conference in Niagara Falls. A CSEA Carnival, which we called the "West Fest," provided a fun orientation for our newly-elected officers followed by officer training. It has been a busy year and we are looking forward to future activities and projects that will keep us just as busy.

With all of the above-mentioned activities, we are ever mindful of the struggles that workers all over the world experience every day. That is why we must organize workers. Even with the protections that our great union provides, we all know how difficult it is to keep those benefits and job securities that we have fought so hard to achieve. Imagine what workers experience who have no union to bargain for them and protect them and have no rights at all! We must continue to spread the word and unionize the unorganized.

On that thought, the statewide officers of CSEA have been meeting to discuss and plan for the future of this great union, CSEA. I have been a part of several dynamic sessions where each of us has shared our opinions and ideas and are beginning to put those ideas into an agenda for the future of CSEA. Many of those ideas came from you, our members, through the surveys that were printed in *The Work Force*, and we will be sharing that information with you shortly. This is an exciting time for CSEA.

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L.I. REGION President's Report continued

We had many more who worked behind the scenes doing clerical and support work to help those of us working or needing relief aid. No one can change the events of that terrible day, but we will be the union that helps rebuild a city and the lives of those devastated.

I have a heavy heart for those of us affected in Region One. I have heard from too many members who have suffered a loss or who know someone close who has. Our prayers went out to Local 919 Retiree President Nicholas Pollicino on the loss of his oldest son and to Local 418 President Jim Wall for his brother-in-law. Words cannot express our sorrow, but our actions will express our determination to move forward and rebuild our lives. It is with this in mind that we as a union work together to make those changes, to never forget our past and build a future for our children and grandchildren that is better than what we now have. May God bless everyone of you and your family. ■

METRO REGION President's Report continued

do whatever is necessary.

In the aftermath, our members have helped survivors and the families of victims obtain the services they need. Members at agencies that include the Crime Victims Board, Department of Labor and Workers Compensation have worked feverishly to supply them with answers, applications and, at times, comfort.

After the recovery effort, it will be time for New York City, and indeed America, to rebuild. You can count on our brothers and sisters in the labor movement to play an integral role in that effort as well. It is a role we know all too well. It is a role we relish. ■

SOUTHERN REGION President's Report continued

of the county. We are seeking earlier implementation of our salary raises, as well as increased health benefits for our workers, to complement what the county proudly gave to its management employees after telling CSEA that it did not have the money for large raises or benefit increases. We are taking to the streets to demand these things from Ulster County, and CSEA will not quit until our workers are treated with dignity. This mobilization effort, however, would not have been possible without the expertise of CSEA Labor Relations Specialist Shayne Gallo, or the leadership of CSEA Ulster County Unit President Kevin DuMond and CSEA Ulster County Local President Sandra Reynolds. I thank them for their tireless and continuing efforts.

CSEA members in the region, however, were not only jeopardized at the local government level. The union also fought hard against two state budget proposals that would have left hundreds of CSEA members without jobs, and thousands of Hudson Valley residents without access to essential services.

Early this year, Gov. Pataki proposed to close Middletown Psychiatric Center and move its patients to Rockland Psychiatric Center, over one hour away. This closure would have left Orange and Sullivan counties, both growing in population, without convenient access to long-term mental health services. The mobilization efforts of Diane Hewitt and her Local members, including a "Day of Rage" and a "Speakout," contributed immensely to the eventual backing that CSEA got from numerous state and local elected officials who opposed the closure. While nothing has been finalized, CSEA helped to rally the entire community against this senseless closure.

Another state proposal that jeopardized the security of CSEA members was the consolidation of Taconic and Capital District DDSOs. This plan called for the facilities' catchment area to span from Putnam County to Warren County, and west to Montgomery County. Not only is this coverage area extremely large, but it put our members at risk for involuntary transfers to work sites hours away from their homes. This proposal also put the community members who rely on these services at risk. For these reasons, CSEA lobbied state leaders against this consolidation, and this proposal has died because of the efforts of our representatives in Albany.

The region has also had a successful year in contract negotiations. When we met at this time last year, CSEA workers in the City of White Plains had been without a contract for three years and there was no end in sight. The continued efforts of former CSEA City of White Plains Unit President Howard Pinchbeck and his members, as well as CSEA Westchester Local President Gary Conley and other Local officers and members, helped the Unit to ratify a contract in late November. Earlier this year, over 2,000 workers in the Rockland County Unit also easily ratified a contract because of the cooperative relationship that Unit President Georgia Gentile and

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CAPITAL REGION President's Report *continued*

region officers and the region's Local Government and School District Committee chairs received positive feedback from the members who attended. Next year the region will hold a one-day event to keep the cost as low as possible so that even the smallest Units will be able to send all their activists and members who want to attend.

In an effort to help minimize costs to the Locals and Units, the region officers and I have made a commitment to keep region workshops within our region. This should save the Locals and Units a substantial amount of money in travel expenses. There are 14 counties in the region where there are a number of locations to hold region meetings.

Through the Political Action Committee, we have formed county coalitions in some of our most northern counties. In Clinton and Essex counties, Local and Unit presidents are meeting periodically to discuss not only political endorsements, but to talk about issues that affect their members. The region has made a commitment to these coalitions to bring the staff and the resources to them so that they are not required to travel long distances to obtain the same information that the region committees discuss at meetings. In many cases it is not always possible for the members in these most northern counties to participate on region committees simply due to the time it would take them to travel. Through a consolidated effort from the officers, the staff and the committee chairs, these counties will have the input and information that is essential to best serve their members.

In August we held our first region Information Day. Every region committee had information available to hand out to our members. The committee chairs and members

SOUTHERN REGION President's Report *continued*

her negotiating team had with county leaders.

The region is continuing to work on several large contracts, including the Dutchess County Unit, which recently declared an impasse with the county over differences in salary raises. CSEA has also recently begun contract negotiations for the Westchester County and Westchester Medical Center Units, both of which are among the region's largest bargaining units.

I am also proud to say that the Southern Region is growing, not only in population, but in representation. This spring, CSEA won an organizing drive for 25 food service workers at the Harrison Central Schools in Westchester County. What distinguishes this win is that the district's food services are managed by the Aramark Corporation, a private sector firm. These food service workers mobilized themselves, and they

CENTRAL REGION President's Report *continued*

give his life in exchange for a paycheck. For over 30 years, I have been proud to serve our membership; and, with very few exceptions, I have enjoyed and have taken great pride in working on issues and projects that affect our members. I have never learned to deal well with the death of one of our members. It is the part of my job that haunts me and leaves me feeling that I have let someone down. I make it personal.

Let us never forget the loss of our fellow employees. Today join me in a pledge that work site safety and health contract language will become a cornerstone in every bargaining unit we negotiate. God bless American workers. ■

of the committees were available to answer questions for approximately 700 of our members who attended. The goal of the committees was to share with the newly elected officers and membership exactly how the region committees could assist the Locals and Units. The Program Committee worked countless hours to coordinate this successful event. There were more than 25 tables with information to distribute which made our information day an overwhelming success. In previous years a similar event was held at the region office. It was an open house which gave members a chance to walk through the offices that are located at the region Headquarters. I believe that "our union house" is an OPEN HOUSE EVERY DAY — not just one day a year. To accommodate every single member who wanted

were determined to join our union. Additionally, they just ratified their first contract. I want to thank those members and the staff who spearheaded this organizing effort, and to welcome our new members to CSEA.

Our region's committees have also been very active this year and are continuing their efforts. The region's Political Action Committee, led by Micki Thoms, has been very busy with CSEA's campaign efforts for the upcoming local government elections. Day and night, our members have been working the phones, meeting with candidates and distributing campaign materials to make a difference in our communities.

The region's Education and Programs Committee, led by Barbara Ritchie, organized an extremely successful region workshop in West Point this August. The committee is again working on more programs for our members, including an upcoming leadership training program and

WESTERN REGION President's Report *continued*

I would be remiss if I did not mention the recent events in New York City that have affected each of us so deeply. We all listened and watched, horrified at what was happening before our very eyes. We watched, we cried and we prayed for those we lost. Then, the realization of what we lost took hold. The realization that each of those victims are members of our family. A family that encompasses more than blood, more than union and brings us together as Americans and as children of God. Let us never forget the emotions we feel, and the toll we paid to experience those emotions.

We in this region are pleased to host the delegates meeting in Buffalo and look forward to seeing many of you here in Western New York. I wish you safe travel and Godspeed. ■

to participate, we moved the event off the premises and primarily focused on the distribution of information.

A special thanks to all of the region officers, the region committee chairs and the members who actively participate on those committees for your dedication and commitment over the past year. Without your help, the many accomplishments that we have achieved as a union would not have been possible. As your new region president, I thank you for making my transition as smooth as possible.

There are still some changes that the region can implement over the next couple of years to make our union more relevant to our members as possible. With your continued help and commitment, we will make those changes together. ■

assisting in women's and school district conferences. The Community Action Committee, led by George Henry, is working actively on raising funds for the New York Central Labor Council Disaster Relief Fund through the sale of flag pins. Additionally, Jeff Howarth and the Corrections Committee are meeting regularly to work on issues that concern all of our members employed in state correctional facilities.

Although the days ahead will be difficult for all of us as members, as well as for all Americans, CSEA is determined to never stop representing working families. The Southern Region is planning to remain active in our efforts to give labor an increased voice at all levels of government, despite our involvement in the disaster relief efforts. As union members work endlessly in relief efforts at ground zero, we are reminded that the business of labor will always go on. ■

Making CSEA More Relevant

To increase member participation in CSEA, we have to make our union more relevant to the lives of each and every one of our members and their families. We have to offer something to every member, not just those with a grievance or a disciplinary problem.

Winning and protecting good contracts will always be important, but we also have to learn how to identify workplace and community issues members are concerned about so they can get involved, come up with solutions and take control of the situation.

Take, for example, the CSEA members working at SUNY Plattsburgh who wanted to make sure apparel being sold to the college is not made by children toiling in Third World sweatshops.

Working in coalition with students, members of UUP and the Northeast Central Labor Council, they pressured college officials to adopt anti-sweatshop guidelines and sign a resolution asking apparel merchants to make sure clothing sold on campus is made by responsible employers and not in sweatshops.

Their efforts, along with those of CSEA members, students and teachers at other schools across the state, paved the way for the historic sweatfree schools legislation Gov. Pataki signed into law just last month.

Likewise, when CSEA members learned of the ill-conceived and short-sighted proposal to close Hutchings and Middletown Psychiatric Centers, they fought like hell.

Lobbying, letter-writing campaigns, phone calls to government leaders, informational pickets and public "speakouts" were among the vast arsenal of weapons used by thousands of member activists, many of whom were getting involved with their union for the first time because of something that mattered to them.

They were not fighting just to save buildings, they were not fighting just to save jobs. They were fighting to save mental health services vital to their communities. They were fighting for a sane mental health policy in New York state and for everyone who cares about that.

While CSEA leaders and activists certainly played a vital role, the majority of those who took on this fight were ordinary, everyday members with a shared cause they could rally behind. As a result of their efforts, patients at

Hutchings and Middletown Psychiatric Centers are still receiving the services they need. CSEA members are still providing those services, and we can all take pride in what they have accomplished.

Setting a Member-Driven Agenda

Key to making CSEA more relevant to our members is encouraging all of us to help set our agenda, to put into writing where we stand on the issues that affect us. I have convened a workgroup of the statewide officers to begin the process of drafting the "CSEA Agenda" to guide this union through the next few years. The agenda will be developed with the input of our activists as well as our greatest resource, our rank-and-file members.

We must learn to listen and to take advantage of the ideas and suggestions the members give us — we must learn to involve and delegate to make CSEA a better union.

Just ask our state DOT members working at the Sign Shop in Hamburg. Proud of the job they do making signs for our state highways, they thought it would be a good idea to sell the signs to other agencies and municipalities throughout the state.

When they discovered they were not allowed to under state law, that did not stop them. As a result of their initiative, the law was changed and now localities can get inexpensive, high-quality traffic signs made in New York instead of paying much more to private, out-of-state companies. It means greater job security for the workers and a better deal for all taxpayers.

But most important is the sense of purpose, the sense of accomplishment and the sense of pride these members have because CSEA listened and helped them make their vision a reality.

Building Our Union

As we commit to these changes to build a better, more effective union, we must not forget our commitment to organizing. Organizing is the life blood of any union, and the future of this union depends on it. With growth comes strength, and with every new member who finds their voice with us, our voice grows stronger.

The bus drivers in CSEA's Fisher Bus Transportation Local are a perfect example.

These men and women belong to one of CSEA's newest private sector locals, having been organized just a few years ago. At the time, a lot of them were not sure they wanted a union. In fact, to put it bluntly and honestly, a lot of them wanted nothing to do with a union and it was a very close vote.

That dissension prevailed throughout their first contract negotiation. Management saw it, and, once again to put it bluntly and honestly, they did not wind up with a great contract to say the least. It, too, was ratified by a very close vote.

Then unionism took hold. With negotiations for their second contract going nowhere but backwards, the members mobilized. They started working together, they got behind their negotiating team, and out of many dissenting voices they forged one unified and powerful voice.

It was a voice that management could not help but hear, and when the workers demonstrated their solidarity by authorizing their team to call a strike if a fair agreement could not be reached, management listened very carefully.

Today they have a contract they can be proud of because they took ownership in their union, and we are all stronger for their efforts.

From Hempstead to Hamburg to Plattsburgh, from Middletown to Syracuse to Oswego, CSEA members have a renewed spirit and a new sense of power. It is up to us to harness that power and help that spirit flourish and grow.

It is up to us to build a better union, one member at a time. ■





Dan Searless

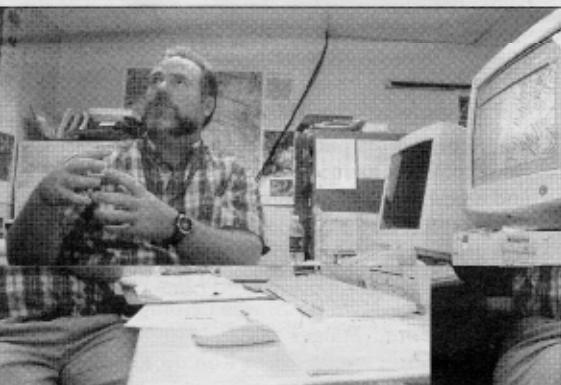
need. They put it together. They find the cots, they find the best way to get them to the location and they tell me it's

done so that I can move on down the list of needs, heavy equipment, gloves, face masks with respirators," Kraus said.

"You need it, we get it," he said about his role in disaster response.

The SEMO central command room is flanked with giant projection TV screens, rows of computers manned by one or two workers, and the incoming message center staffed by a cadre of volunteers from state agencies.

"We work 12-hour shifts and we went 10 days straight before we had a break," Bergmann said.



Dan O'Brien

"Actually it's a 13-hour shift because you have to brief your replacement so that takes about an hour. And you really don't want to leave because you know you're doing something that needs to be done," Bergmann said.

Mapping a nightmare

In the command center, several maps reporting the latest hot zones at ground zero hang for all the workers to see.

"This allows us to be on the same page with the police, fire, medic units down there," CSEA member Dan O'Brien, a SEMO geographic information system program manager, said.

By using the latest computer technology and working with a private company, Earthdata, SEMO can share current maps and related data.

"We can put together numerous levels of information in different formats together on a photo or map that relates all the needed information to all the different parties at one time. These



Mapping hot zones using infrared technology

illustrations are worth more than the proverbial thousand words," O'Brien said.

She took the calls

The reception desk at the main underground entrance to SEMO is under the strict control of union member Ginny Collier, a keyboard specialist and an eight-year SEMO veteran.

"This is unimaginable, unbelievable. Our world won't be the same ever again," Collier said.



Ginny Collier

"We watched the planes crash, the buildings crumble. It was so devastating — so horrific," she said quietly.

Moments later Collier and SEMO were thrust into a frenetic race with time.

"The phone was ringing with voices pleading in languages

I couldn't understand," Collier said.

"Is this name on the list? Is my daughter safe? My son works there. Can you help me?" the callers asked Collier.

Her eyes well with tears.

"I left here at 12:30 a.m. on Sept. 12. My husband urged me to go to bed to get some sleep before I had to come back.

"I went upstairs and knelt down and prayed. That's what I had to do.

"I had to pray for the victims. I had to pray for the workers."

— Daniel X. Campbell

DOT crews find ground zero heavy with foul, unhealthy air

Surrounded by death, destruction and bad air, Paul Staiger teased his 72-foot flatbed trailer through narrow Manhattan streets, knowing the 40-ton load of twisted steel

would not be his last on this 22-hour shift.

Staiger and dozens of other CSEA members who are truck drivers and mechanics for



the state Department of Transportation (DOT) helped in the exhausting initial recovery efforts at the World Trade Center.

For two weeks, the DOT crews hauled thousands of tons of twisted steel and car-sized chunks of concrete to nearby dump sites, where federal investigators looked for evidence.

"Hundreds of men and women from state agencies have toiled to move personnel and equipment to New

York City and the surrounding area to help expedite the recovery efforts," said Gov. George Pataki about the DOT crews at ground zero.

"We will continue to do everything possible

to help our friends and neighbors recover from this horrific event," Pataki said.

Unhealthy air

With the air thick with concrete dust, smoke and asbestos, Staiger and his crew wore respirators and protective glasses as they neared ground zero.

"The smoke and the amount of twisted metal was just unbelievable," Staiger said.

"We thought there would be more safety and health problems, and more potential injury to us, but everything worked out fine," said the CSEA member and 17-year DOT big rig driver.

"Health and safety were very important," Staiger said, noting there were two men in a truck to make it easier to jockey the big rigs from the demolished World Trade Center to the dumping ground on Staten Island or a Hudson River pier.

"Everyone did an excellent job and did their best," he said.

"We showed we could drive the toughest assignments. State workers came through — we're always there when we're needed," Staiger said proudly about the CSEA members who drove and fixed the trucks at ground zero.

Staiger's idea of easy driving is a traffic-free interstate. Instead, the narrow Manhattan

"If our drivers had more than six inches of room to spare on either side of those trailers, they were lucky. They probably spent as much time in reverse as they did going forward to get through the streets. These guys did some unbelievable driving. The circumstances were just unreal."

— Jim McHugh, CSEA highway maintenance supervisor at the state DOT; one of two operations chiefs sent to New York City



Photo courtesy of Paul Staiger

Above, CSEA members from the state and Westchester County departments of transportation assist in the recovery operation at ground zero.

Below, CSEA members from left, Paul Staiger, Bob DeJesus, Gary Sharinger and Bob King, all DOT workers.

streets tested his patience and driving skills.

When he couldn't weasel his loaded rig past a parked car on a narrow street one night, Staiger and his partner jumped from the cab, hailed another truck driver and two firemen, and lifted the car out of the way.

"Everybody down there was helping everybody out," Staiger said.

— Ronald Kermani



Out with the bad air

Always use only OSHA-approved filter canisters for your respirator.

Make sure your respirator fits properly and has a tight seal: Cup your hand over the air inlet, breathe in and exhale. The respirator should tighten around its seal and then puff out from your face.

Prolong filter life by covering the filter canisters with duct tape when not in use.

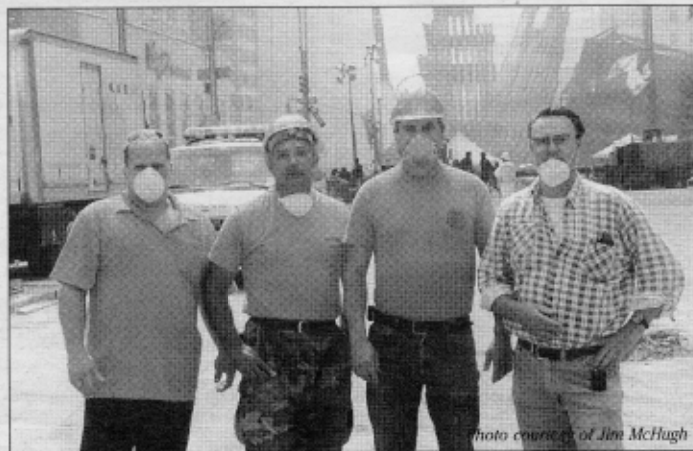


Photo courtesy of Jim McHugh

MOURN
for the dead



Fight for the Living!

Weeping and writing

When the television images of the World Trade Center destruction overloaded the senses, some union members wrote poetry to channel their emotions.



Raising the Flag at the World Trade Center: 2001 The Record (Bergen Co., NJ) Thomas E. Franklin, staff photographer

"I knew what I had to write"

Crying hysterically as the World Trade Center news cascaded over her, Diane Bermudez-Thrush began to write, haltingly at first, on lined paper while laying on her bed.

Bermudez-Thrush, a CSEA member and mental health therapy aide at the Brooklyn Psychiatric Center, let the words flow.

"I wrote it from my heart. It's how I feel," she said quietly.

A personal journal writer for years, Bermudez-Thrush said her "pride just soared when the firefighters raised the flag over the rubble of the World Trade Center.

"That was the most inspiring moment," she said about the New York City flag-raising image that nearly replicated the raising of the American flag by Marines on Iwo Jima in World War II.

"I started crying then, and I knew what I had to write," Bermudez-Thrush said.

To your left,
to your right,
friends and comrades
fell, beneath the rubble,
beneath your feet, gone forever.
Yet through it all,
you banded together,
like your brothers beside you,
many years ago.
You raised what represents to us all,
freedom
you raised her up high,
like an eagle she soared,
her spirits leading you,
through the power of God,
and love of country.

— Diane Bermudez-Thrush

Stronger

Stronger than yesterday,
Stronger than they all think.
You didn't knock me down,
You just stunned me.
I'm picking myself up and
Dusting myself off.
You haven't seen nothing yet,
I'm just preparing to fight back!

The day after has just begun,
But it's a lonely one.

— Janice Marra

Nothing but clouds of dust and
Mountains of rubble in the
streets.
A gloom lingers in the air
People are mad
People are sad
People are scared
What's next?
All we can do is wait.

— Jennifer Baran

Member turns to poetry to deal with tragedy

BEAR MOUNTAIN — Jennifer Baran, a clerk at the Palisades Interstate (Bear Mountain) Park in Rockland County, sat transfixed with her co-workers in front of a radio Sept. 11 listening to the horrifying, unfolding news of the World Trade Center attack.

As the day wore on, her feelings slid from shock to fear to worry, and finally, sadness.

"I was worried about my brother-in-law, who takes a train every day near the World Trade Center," CSEA member Baran said. "The train had stopped after the first plane crash, and he saw the second tower fall."

The next morning, Baran expressed her emotions in a way that had previously been private to her — through poetry.

"When something happens in my life, I write to help me deal with things," she said. "I write when I'm inspired."

Her inspiration found its way to a prominent space in her local newspaper, the Middletown Times Herald Record, where thousands read it a few days later.

Publication of the poem is prompting Baran, 20, to re-examine her career path.

"I'm taking night classes for music right now," Baran said. "Maybe I'm in college for the wrong thing."



Long Islanders rise to the challenge

The skyline view from the Hudson River sucked the breath from CSEA member John Mulligan's lungs.

"I saw flames headed in every direction, the smell of the burning towers, of death from the tremendous loss of life, the smoke billowing," said Mulligan, a Hempstead, Long Island boat operator who piloted his police boat to the World Trade Center as it stood burning.

"It was an unbelievable sight," Mulligan said, shaking his head.

Mulligan and hundreds of CSEA members who work on Long Island responded to the terrorist attack by manning phone banks, coordinating rescue crews, and shuttling emergency workers at ground zero in golf carts from Bethpage State Park.

Glen Cove ferries transported supplies, doctors and nurses to Manhattan and brought back survivors and pedestrians to Long Island, where public and private buses were commandeered to take them home.

Glen Cove city employees, all CSEA members, staffed a makeshift phone bank at city hall.

Also working the phones were the police and fire dispatchers who received calls around-the-clock from across the continent.

"The phone lines were jammed with calls but these CSEA members got the job done,"



Members of the Glen Cove Harbor Patrol, Harbor Patrol Officer Billy Melillo, left, and Mike Salentino.

said union member Kevin Monahan of the Glen Cove Public Works Department.

Bethpage State Park workers set up five weatherproof tents to protect rescue workers in foul weather.

The Jones Beach Parks Department donated a 24-foot boat to patrol the East River and a 'paddy wagon' boat hauled supplies to rescue workers.

"It was a total team effort from our onboard emergency personnel, boat operators, and mechanics," said Hempstead police Lt. Robert Powell.

— Rolando Infante

Members help convert facility into staging area for NY Guard

POUGHKEEPSIE — CSEA members at Hudson River Psychiatric Center opened their doors — and their hearts — to New York National Guard soldiers and legions of supplies shortly after the World Trade Center terrorist attacks.

When Shea Stadium, the Jacob Javits Convention Center and other large facilities in New York City quickly filled with donated water, clothing, medical supplies and toiletries after the attacks, the state needed another facility to store tons of donated items.

Two vacant buildings at the Hudson River Psychiatric Center's Poughkeepsie campus became the next staging facility for relief supplies.

While psychiatric center employees, including CSEA members, handled the initial warehousing efforts, the job was given to the New York Guard, a group of reservist volunteers who have been unloading, storing and transporting supplies for weeks.

"Our members began many of the staging efforts here," CSEA Hudson River Local President Judy Watts-Devine said.

Part of the relief effort

"We were working at these efforts day and night and eventually turned everything over to the soldiers, but our members are still volunteering as

much as possible," she added.

The Local also served the hard-working soldiers food and beverages.

"The soldiers were unloading 16 large trucks per day during those first days," Watts-Devine said.

"They were hungry, and it was the least we could do for them," she said.

And the soldiers involved in the Hudson River effort said CSEA and community volunteers have helped make a difference in their 14 to 16-hour work days.

"We've had up to about 60 local people, most of whom are public employees, volunteering to help us every day," Major Bob Peace, a New York Guard Officer from Rochester, said.

"The people in the Hudson Valley are just wonderful. This area has a lot of people to be very proud of," he said.

Water, clothing, dog food

The facility's two vacant buildings are overflowing with more than 100,000 bottles of water, clothing, medical supplies and even dog food.

"You name it, we've got it in these buildings," she said.

"It looks worse than a war zone." County public works crews dig in

WHITE PLAINS — When terrorists struck the World Trade Center, CSEA members in neighboring Westchester County immediately joined relief efforts.

A day after the towers lay in ruins, county highway and public works employees were sending volunteers and equipment to help New York City sort through millions of tons of debris from the collapsed buildings.

"It was such a disaster and we all wanted to help," Assistant Superintendent for Westchester County Road Maintenance and 26-year CSEA member Jim Cole said. "We felt like we all had to do something."

In the days after the Sept. 11 attacks, more than 30 Westchester County CSEA employees worked around the clock clearing debris.

Many of the county workers who went to New York City had not only volunteered for the task, but were allowed to go on county work time.

"We're sending people

down to the site on county time," Cole said. "However, most of the volunteers are staying much later than the normal work day."

And like many volunteer relief workers, Westchester County employees were stunned by the scope of the disaster's carnage and devastation.

"Our guys say that the disaster looks worse than a war zone," Cole said.

"And many of them have actually been in war zones. They're seeing bodies — even body parts — and they're just driving the trucks."

Also horrifying to the relief workers is the odor permeating from the site — a combination of smoke, dust and decomposing bodies.

"It's so bad that many of the guys have been showering and changing their clothes before they go into their houses," Cole said.

— Janice Marra



From left, NY Guard Major Bob Peace, CSEA activist Micki Thoms, NY Guard Capt. Mike Wilson, NY Guard Major Denis Uminski, Hudson River Psychiatric Center Local President Judy Watts-Devine.

"Trucks of supplies have been coming in here from all over the country, especially from upstate New York," Watts-Devine said.

In late September, one eight-story building was so packed with supplies that not one more item could be crammed into the structure.

The donations have ranged from large-scale supply shipments from corporate donors to small boxes of items donated by individuals or small groups.

— Janice Marra

MOURN
for the dead



Fight
for the
Living!

"I wish I could give more"

Members support relief with donations



When their arms weren't outstretched donating blood, their hands were outstretched donating cash.

Nearly \$30,000 was collected by CSEA members in Albany for New York City relief just days after the two

jets crashed into the World Trade Center, killing thousands.

"God bless the USA. I wish I could give more," said a union member as he pressed money into a collection bin at the state Department of Taxation and Finance building in Albany.

CSEA members across the state dug deep into their wallets to help the relief effort.

"People are numb, shocked and frightened, but they want to do something that will help," said CSEA Capital Region President Kathy Garrison.

"Giving is something they can do and will be doing for a long time," she added.

— Daniel X. Campbell

Brothers and sisters help out

Food, clothing, blood and money are some necessities union members across the nation are donating to the relief effort for families of victims of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York City.

While the outpouring of support from unions in New York State continues, union brothers and sisters across the nation are helping the survivors, the families of victims, and rescue and recovery workers.

Hundreds of Ford Motor Co. workers at an Ohio plant donated blood, as did staff and members of national unions in Washington, D.C.

In addition to the blood drives, donations are pouring into the many relief funds national and local unions have established. (See Page 3 of this issue for details on donating to the relief funds.)

Unions continue to provide supplies for the recovery workers.

Workers in more than 50 unionized grocery stores in the metro New York area have set up food and clothing donation bins in the stores.

Union workers in Connecticut organized a fund-raising motorcycle ride, and the New York City Central Labor Council has set up a labor support committee to help working families during the crisis.



AFSCME workers in Washington, D.C., send their support to CSEA members in New York who have been affected by the World Trade Center attacks. At left, CSEA's Capital Region Outreach Committee.

Unions extend hand to AFSCME DC 37

CSEA and other unions in the New York City area are helping AFSCME affiliate District Council 37 with office space and other necessities since the World Trade Center attack.

DC 37's offices on Barclay Street, two blocks from the World Trade Center, are closed. It may be months before they are reopened.

Meanwhile, CSEA and other unions are helping with the relocation and office space for about 500 DC 37 metropolitan staff members who serve about 125,000 union members in New York City.

The Barclay Street offices were quickly evacuated after the first plane hit the World Trade Center.

No one from the DC 37 staff was injured, although four union members were killed in the attack, including a fire department priest, two EMTs and an Off Track Betting employee.

Federal aid sought

CSEA and other unions across the nation are lobbying Congress to pass a broad relief package for workers whose jobs were lost as a result of the Sept. 11 terrorist attack on New York City.

The unions and congressional leaders are developing a worker relief package that responds to the needs of laid-off workers.

"It's workers and their families who are bearing the brunt of the impact from the terrorist attacks — an impact that will also have a rippling, destabilizing effect on the economy unless it is addressed," said AFL-CIO President John Sweeney.

Attacks' effect on state economy could last years

An economic tidal wave of red ink may wash over New York State because of the World Trade Center terrorist attack, a labor-backed think tank has predicted.

The Fiscal Policy Institute (FPI), which is supported by CSEA and other state labor unions, estimates more than 108,000 New York City private sector and public jobs will be lost within the first month after the Sept. 11 attack.

This number is about 2.4 percent of the total local employment in New York City, the FPI survey said.

The hardest hit industries are securities, retail trade and restaurants. Travel and tourism has shrunk dramatically since the attack.

Consumer spending has dropped steadily since the

attack and government forecasters are warning a nationwide recession may be on the horizon.

State and local governments will also be affected by the loss of sales taxes, corporate taxes and other revenues, financial experts said.

The total lost output to the New York City economy from the World Trade Center attack is estimated at \$16.9 billion, the FPI report states.

The total lost value-added factor in the local economy is estimated at \$11.7 billion, or about 3 percent of the total value-added in the city economy last year.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS TOPIC:
Visit
www.fiscalpolicy.org

MOURN
for the dead



Fight
for the
Living!

General Announcement:

Notice of nomination and election of 2002 AFSCME Convention Delegates

Meetings will be held in all CSEA regions to nominate candidates for the position of delegate to the 2002 AFSCME convention, scheduled for June 2002 in Las Vegas.

The region nominating meetings kick off the AFSCME delegate election process, which continues in accordance with the schedule of election that will be presented to the CSEA Board of Directors on Nov. 29.

CSEA delegates will be elected by region by the members in each CSEA region. The number of delegates to which each region is entitled is based on region membership strength, in accordance with the AFSCME and CSEA constitutions.

Who is eligible

Any member in good standing will be entitled to be nominated to be a delegate to the AFSCME convention.

Any member in good standing will be eligible to nominate delegates. Any qualified CSEA member will be eligible to nominate as many candidates for delegates as he or she desires, not to exceed the total number of delegates to be elected from the region. Nominees do not have to be at the nominating meeting.

Nominations may be made by slates of two or more individuals who will appear on the ballot as running together under a particular designation. Candidates nominated as slates will appear on the ballot in the order they are nominated. The ballot will also allow slate candidates to be elected individually, separate from the slate.

Expenses for transportation, room and board at the AFSCME convention will be paid by CSEA.

More detailed information will be available in the December issue of *The Work Force*.

Attention Empire Plan Enrollees

Discounted complementary and alternative medicine program available to state employees

A network of providers who specialize in massage therapy, acupuncture and diet/nutrition is now available to CSEA-represented state enrollees and their eligible dependents enrolled in the Empire Plan.

CSEA negotiated an agreement with the state which established a discount-based program for alternative medicine providers under the Empire Plan.

Effective Oct. 1, The Empire Plan's Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) Program became available to Empire Plan enrollees and dependents.

The CAM Program is a discounted program administered by the Managed Physical Network/ American Complementary Care Network (MPN/ACCN).

The Empire Plan's CAM Program consists of a network of licensed acupuncturists, massage therapists, and dietitians/nutritionists who have agreed to accept a discounted fee from Empire Plan enrollees.

This is an enrollee-pay-all program (affinity product), however, the enrollee receives a 25 percent discount off the provider's normal rates.

There is a network of providers established by MPN/ACCN. However, if an enrollee has a provider they would like to nominate to become a network provider, they can contact MPN/ACCN.

If you would like to find an Empire Plan CAM network provider in your area or would like to nominate a provider, contact MPN/ACCN at 1-888-447-2144.

Provider information and other information can be obtained on the Internet at <http://www.empireplanacam.com>.

Important reminders for state workers from JCHB

November is annual option transfer month

November is the annual option transfer period, when state employees may change their health insurance option and pre-tax contribution status.

Employees who wish to change their plan option must do so during the option transfer period by contacting the health benefit administrator, usually located in their agency personnel office.

Note: When this article was going to print, the 2002 New York State Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP) premium rates were not yet approved by the state Insurance Department.

As soon as the 2002 rates are approved, a Rates & Deadlines Guide will be sent to enrollees' homes so an informed decision can be made about health insurance choices for the 2002 plan year.

As always, members will have 30 days from the date the rate information is released to make changes.

Members who do NOT want to change health insurance plans do not have to take action.

Members who want to change health insurance options must submit a signed Health Insurance Transaction Form PS-404 to the agency's health benefits administrator by the deadline specified in the Rates & Deadlines Guide.

Health Insurance Choices for 2001

During November, agency health benefits administrators will receive a supply of Choices for 2002, the guide to NYSHIP health insurance options.

If you are thinking about changing your option, read the plan descriptions of plans available in the area where you live and/or work and compare the available coverage that is important to you and your family.

The Choices for 2002 publication describes the Empire Plan and the New York State Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP) approved HMO's in your region and can be a very important resource if you are contemplating changing your health insurance option.

If you would like to review your options and the benefits available, you may obtain a copy of the Health Insurance Choices guide from your health benefits administrator.

As a reminder, the HMO offered by United HealthCare will not be offered as an option in NYSHIP in 2002.

For those members currently enrolled in United HealthCare's HMO, contact your health benefits administrator to switch to a new option.

Pre-tax Contribution Program (PTCP)

The pre-tax contribution program (PTCP) allows you to have your health insurance premiums deducted from your pay before taxes are taken out.

This may lower your taxable income and

give you more spendable income.

You were automatically enrolled in this program when you became eligible for health insurance, unless you declined to participate.

Your paycheck stub shows if you are enrolled in PTCP.

Regular Before Tax Health" will appear in the Before Tax Deductions column if your health insurance premium is deducted from your wages before taxes are withheld.

"Regular After Tax Health" will appear in the After Tax Deductions column if your health insurance premium is deducted from your wages after taxes are withheld.

Under Internal Revenue Service rules, by participating in the PTCP you may change your health insurance deduction during the tax year only after a PTCP qualifying event (i.e. change in family status).

Additional information on the PTCP is included in the NYSHIP Health Insurance "Choices for 2002" publication.

If you wish to change your pre-tax selection for the 2002 plan year health insurance premiums, you must see your health benefits administrator and complete a health insurance transaction form no later than Nov. 30.

No action is needed if you wish to keep your current pre-tax option.

Flex Spending Account: A CSEA/NYS employee benefit that puts money in your pocket

The Health Care Spending Account

The Health Care Spending Account (HCSAccount) is a benefit for eligible state employees that saves you money by allowing you to pay for out-of-pocket health care expenses with pre-tax dollars.

The HCSAccount allows eligible CSEA members to contribute pre-tax dollars to pay for medically necessary health-related expenses that are not reimbursed by your health insurance or any other benefit plan (i.e. dental/vision).

The employee determines the amount of pre-tax dollars contributed to the account, after estimating 2002 anticipated out-of-pocket expenses.

The maximum allowable annual contribution is \$3,000 and the minimum allowable annual contribution is \$150.

The open enrollment period began in September and will run through Nov. 9.

If you are enrolling for the first time or re-enrolling in the HCSAccount, your request must be postmarked by Nov. 9.

If you would like to know more about the Health Care Spending Account program or would like an enrollment kit, contact the NYS Flex Spending Account Hotline at 1-800-358-7202 or on the web at <http://www.flexspend.state.ny.us>

You can also contact your agency's health benefit administrator, located in the personnel office.

All Navy hands are on deck in this war

ALBANY — She may be vacating her comfortable office in Albany County Surrogates Court for a stretch of desert, but CSEA activist and Naval reservist Eileen Mathena said she won't mind dressing for the occasion.

"Every day I fumble about in my closet looking for clothes to wear as a civilian, but when I'm on duty, I don't have to make that decision," she deadpanned.

"I look great in earth-tone camouflage."

This dynamo's self-effacing humor glosses the seriousness of her mission.

Mathena is a Navy diesel mechanic who maintains electrical generators on the battlefield. These generators power her Navy unit's communications network, vital to the success of their mission in the Mideast.

Civilian life on hold

Mathena and other CSEA members who are in the National Guard and military reserve units have been placed on active duty, putting their civilian lives on hold for perhaps a year or longer as the United States fights terrorism.

"My life gets put on hold," Mathena said.

"No one looks forward to this, but that's what we've been trained for," she added.

At 38, she's pushed up her wedding date

before she travels on assignment and has stuffed her civilian life into a 70-pound duffel bag and a smaller toiletries bag.

Her job as senior court office assistant in the Albany County Surrogates Court will also be put on hold while she's overseas.

Helping in and out of uniform

Helping others on the battlefield or at work is part of her upbringing, she said.

"I first got involved in CSEA because I thought everyone needs someone to represent them and be their voice," Mathena said, adding she doubles as a career counselor in her reserve unit.

The last decade has been a series of professional and personal twists and turns, taking Mathena to Cuba, Scotland twice, and into the state court system in Columbia and Albany counties.

The mother of two daughters can strip a diesel

engine into parts, put a bullet into a target at 100 yards as a Navy sharpshooter, handle the complex legal matters of Surrogates Court, and mix it up with a male-dominated Navy crew.

"I do not wear nail polish," she quipped about her many skills.

"The Navy prepares you to handle any situation and makes you feel confident about any situation," Mathena said.

Even going to the Mideast, destination unknown.

— Ronald Kermani

"I first got involved in CSEA because I thought everyone needs someone to represent them and be their voice."



Navy Reservist Eileen Mathena of the Albany County Surrogates Court, standing, with Mary Magguilli, both CSEA members.

Voices of the Work Force

"This is the saddest thing I have ever seen — all those innocent people. What is going on? I can't comprehend that hatred. It is just so blind."

— Rudy Bovie, equipment operator and 17-year CSEA member, Nassau County Department of Public Works



"Devastation at its worst — being down there at ground zero really hit home. I lost a good friend from the Levittown Fire Department and my thoughts are with his loved ones and everyone affected by this tragedy."

— Ken Zwerling, retired Nassau County Sheriff's Department employee and member of the CSEA Nassau Retirees Local



MOURN
for the dead



Staff recall horror, sorrow of Sept. 11

Continued from Page 3

had no idea we would soon be running for our lives.

We passed shattered windows along Fulton Street. The nonstop wail of sirens and horns punctuated the air.

Looking up at the towers, against the backdrop of a glorious clear blue sky, millions of sheets of paper mingled with the thick, black smoke spewing from the towers.

We stopped momentarily and joined a small group listening to a radio in front of a store. We heard an indescribable, terrifying noise. We looked up, and ran for our lives.

In the chaos, I temporarily lost Evelina. As I ran halfway down the street, I turned and saw a tremendous, deadly cloud of soot, ash, and debris closing in.

Luckily, I saw Evelina and called to her. She grabbed my hand and with the soot raining on us, we ran together toward the Brooklyn Bridge.

At the time we had no idea that the South Tower had collapsed. We thought we had narrowly escaped another plane strike.

And, while thousands were already walking over the Brooklyn Bridge, we feared a plane would strike that too.

Instead, we continued north and looked back to see the smoky void where the South Tower once stood. Minutes later, the North Tower would meet the same fate.

Resources, legislative action help state cope with disaster

Continued from Page 3

employees also be allowed to contribute vacation days to the noteworthy program.

Military call-up benefits

In other efforts to bolster relief efforts, CSEA and the state have agreed to expanded benefits for workers who are called up for military duty by the federal or state governments.

The leave benefit package is the same as the one provided to workers called to active duty by the federal government for the conflicts in the Persian Gulf, Bosnia and Kosovo.

This benefits package for the World Trade Center detail is available to employees activated by the state or federal government.

Specifically, employees who have exhausted their entitlement to paid military leave will receive an extra 30 calendar days or 22 workdays of leave at full pay, followed by military leave a reduced pay.

Grim realization

Political Coordinator Matthew D'Amico was on a bus on his way to work when a woman with a Walkman reported the World Trade Center was under attack.

"I started to get tears in my eyes because I realized that a lot of people must have lost their lives just from that initial impact," D'Amico said.

Metropolitan Region Executive Director Alan Jennings was stuck in traffic and unable to get into Manhattan. He hurried back to his home and contacted Colon, who was already reaching out to staff.

"Yolanda and I split the duties to make sure that everybody got home safely," said Jennings.

"When we found out that everybody got home safe, that was a moment of relief. But then our emotions turned to the region and our membership because we had members who worked there also," Jennings said.

Labor Relations Specialist Phyllis Babb, who represents the workers in the South

In addition, employees activated by the state in connection with the World Trade Center attack will receive the same family health insurance benefits as provided in their union contracts.

Red Cross disaster leave

Pataki, with the support of CSEA, also recently signed a measure allowing state and local government workers who are trained Red Cross volunteers to take up to 20 days of paid leave during a disaster.

The new program will help disaster response teams mobilize more quickly and put more Red Cross volunteers at a disaster site.

CSEA President Donohue said, "Governor Pataki is leading by example with this initiative. It will enable more people to provide the help that is needed without additional hardship on their families."

Other labor leaders concurred. New York State AFL-CIO President Denis



The view from near the Brooklyn Bridge on Sept. 11, as workers fled lower Manhattan.

Tower, feverishly tried to reach the CSEA regional office.

With telephone lines down and cellular networks overloaded, it was impossible.

"I was depressed and sad because I really didn't know what was going on," said Babb.

She eventually reached her counterparts in the state and a former president of the Local, who gave her the sad news about the missing members. She's been busy helping the survivors.

Hughes said, "Since Sept. 11, Governor Pataki has been front and center in making the city and state whole. This is another example of the governor's leadership, dedication and commitment toward this objective."

Currently, 41 states permit government employees who are trained by the Red Cross to take paid leave from their jobs to volunteer as Red Cross disaster relief workers.

Experience has shown this has helped the Red Cross respond to disasters and provide valuable skills to employees that can readily be transferred to their regular jobs.

MOURN
for the dead



WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?



Reach Out and Touch Us!

In November of 2000, the CSEA Employee Benefit Fund expanded its operating hours to 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. to better serve our membership. Customer Service Representatives can be reached by contacting the Fund at 1 (800) 323-2732 or 1 (800) EBF-CSEA. The fund also has a TDD number for the hearing impaired at 1-800-532-3833.

When calling from a touch tone phone, follow these computerized phone system instructions.

- Press 1 Claim Forms, Provider Listings, Plan Booklets ... then ...
 - Press 1 - To use the Vision Benefit
 - Press 2 - Forms, Listings, Booklets
- Press 2 Dental ... then ...
 - Press 1 - Claims Forms, Listings
 - Press 2 - Personal Assistance
- Press 3 Other EBF Benefits ... then ...
 - Press 1 - Enrollment Mailbox
 - Press 2 - Vision
 - Press 3 - Drug
 - Press 4 - COBRA
 - Press 5 - Miscellaneous Benefits & Personal Assistance
- Press 4 Marketing Department ... then ...
 - Press 1 - Patrick Regan, Marketing Manager
 - Press 2 - Colleen Switts, Member/Provider Liaison
 - Region 1 - Linda Sclafani dial 631-462-5224
 - Press 3 - Region 2 - Chris Wright
 - Press 4 - Region 3 - Colleen Foley
 - Press 5 - Region 4 - Kim Lucas
 - Press 6 - Region 5 - Dave Reed
 - Press 7 - Region 6 - Sarah Scanlon

If calling from a rotary phone, please stay on the line and a representative will help you.

When making inquiries, members should have their Social Security number handy along with claim information, dates of service, provider's name or other pertinent information. If our representatives are unable to take your call at that time, you may be forwarded to our voice mail system.

When faxing materials to the fund, please remember that this is for administrative or enrollment use only and not for submission of claims. The appropriate department fax numbers are:

Administrative Offices: 518-782-1234

Marketing Department: 518-782-9979

Dental: 518-782-7052

Member Services (enrollment, vision, misc. benefits): 518-786-3658

CONGRATULATIONS

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

Town of Smithtown Fire District Village of Malverne

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

Town of Rotterdam City of White Plains
 East Meadow S. D. (Custodians) Town of Cornwall
 Village of Goshen Oyster Bay S. D. (Clerical)
 Byrum Hills S.D.

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

AN EVER BETTER FUTURE!

CSEA • LOCAL 1000 AFSCME • AFL-CIO



LEAVE DONATIONS NEEDED — CSEA

member Cindy Staley is battling esophageal cancer and her co-workers at the Camp Georgetown correctional facility in Central New York need members' help. Staley, a mail and supply clerk at the facility, has had major surgery and is undergoing radiation and chemotherapy to battle the disease, which has left her unable to work. With all her leave accruals exhausted, her co-workers across the CSEA Mid-State Correctional Local, including her daughter and her sister who both work at DOCS' Camp Pharsalia, have already donated many hours to allow her to stay on the payroll. Local Secretary John Trinkaus is asking co-workers across the state to donate leave accruals to keep Staley on the payroll until she is able to return to work. Those wishing to donate time must have at least 10 days left after making their donation. Leave donation forms are available in the agency's personnel office... **ERIE COUNTY MONEY MESS** — About 4,500 CSEA members who work in Erie County are gearing up for a massive county budget fight. Erie County

Executive Joel Giambra said the county faces a budget gap ranging from \$17 million to almost \$40 million, caused by the sluggish economy and the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in New

York City. Giambra proposes slashing pay raises, firing workers, and making other cuts at the expense of workers. CSEA is fighting back, saying Giambra hasn't talked of spreading the burden to all county residents, instead focusing only on its employees ... **UNIVERSITY PACT** — About 120 clerical, bookstore and library workers at St. Lawrence University in northern New York have a new three-year contract. Pay raises and improvements in longevity, pension and disability coverage are included. The pact was ratified by a 10-1 margin. **PEOPLE PERSON** — The PEOPLE recruiter for September was Rose MacBlane of CSEA's Central Region. She recruited 24 new PEOPLE members. PEOPLE is AFSCME's political action organizing program aimed at getting friends of working families elected to Congress.

NYS & CSEA in Partnership for Education and Training

During the last negotiations CSEA and the state established a committee to study education and training programs and services funded in the agreement.

The goal was to develop a plan for their integration and coordination.

Due to the historical development of education and training programs and services over the past 20 or more years, their administration was dispersed among three organizational units: Clerical Secretarial Employees Advancement Program (CSEAP) located in the Department of Civil Service, the Labor Education Action Committee (LEAP) located in CSEA and the NYS/CSEA Labor-Management Committees (LMCs).

The committee developed a plan that promotes the integration and coordination of the education and training programs administered by these distinct organizations into a single new organization — the NYS & CSEA Partnership for Education and Training (Partnership).

Jim Hennerty and Guy Dugas, of the CSEA Contract Administration Department, and Mike McDonald and Jeannine Morell of GOER, have been appointed to a Transition Board of Directors that oversees and directs the partnership.

Ira Baumgarten, longtime director of CSEA/LEAP, and Alan Ross, director of the LMCs, have been appointed partnership

co-directors. "The partnership is a new, exciting opportunity to better coordinate and improve current programs and to create new

programs for our members," said CSEA President Danny Donohue.

"Ira Baumgarten and Alan Ross, both of whom know well and understand the concerns and interests of CSEA members,

will provide dynamic, creative leadership for the Partnership," he added.

Programs and staff are being integrated and programs responsive to CSEA members' and agencies' needs and interests are being developed.

Partnership programs include tuition assistance and educational advisement, training to help members in each of the bargaining units develop their job skills and advance their careers, and safety and health training and technical assistance to improve workplace safety.

Labor-management training and support programs, including contract administration workshops, labor-management committee development, as well as the labor-management grants program and personal development seminars, round out the partnership programs.

During this transition period all of the services and programs of LEAP, CSEAP and the LMCs continue and you may continue to deal with your current contacts in these organizations.



MOURN for the dead

On September 11,
2001 our lives
changed forever.

In the aftermath, thousands of CSEA members have responded in so many ways. Many, such as NYS Department of Transportation workers and Nassau County Ambulance Medical Technicians have been directly involved in the rescue and recovery activities.

Others have had essential work to do in less visible roles in places like the State Emergency Management Office and Metropolitan area hospitals. Many more are helping families and individuals by providing services in workplaces like the Crime Victims Board, Workers Compensation Board, the Department of Labor and numerous other agencies.

Countless CSEA members have also helped in their communities as volunteer firefighters, disaster volunteers or by raising and contributing hundreds of thousands of dollars and donating their blood.

Five CSEA members, employees of the state Department of Taxation and Finance who worked in the World Trade Center remain among the missing.

CSEA mourns for the dead and honors their memory as we say thank you to all who continue to fight for the living.



CSEA

Local 1000 AFSCME AF-CIO
James Garofalo, President

DISTIN

*Fight
for the
Living!*