

LOCAL 237

NEWSLINE

Vol. 57, No. 3

Fall 2023

“UNION STRONG” WE’RE A MOVEMENT NOT JUST A MOMENT



In this edition of Newsline, we mark the end of summer and the onset of Fall. For some of us, the change is met with a little sadness—some hating to see the sun set so early and the baseball season drawing to an end—while for others, Fall is greeted with enthusiasm from the excitement of Halloween, to planning the Thanksgiving menu and stockpiling the Christmas gifts. It is also the time that we celebrate the labor movement, not only with a day off from work, but with parades and tributes to our union brothers and sisters and the labor leaders across the nation who have fought for equality and dignity in the workplace.

Local 237 would like to thank our members for their tireless efforts on behalf of so many New Yorkers, whose lives and livelihoods depend on municipal agencies operating seamlessly despite the challenges. As former President Barack Obama said: “When times are tough, we don’t give up. We get up.” That’s precisely what you did and continue to do. Whether during the height of the pandemic, a time of sudden, unimaginable grief that rocked the entire world and our own personal world, or the present, with historic challenges from Mother Nature, and a migrant crisis sputtering out of control, union members — and especially public sector workers — didn’t give up; they got up and went to work. These essential municipal workers keep the City and the State running, and are owed a gigantic: “Thank You”.

Unfortunately, union membership across the nation has declined from its peak year of 1954 at around 40% to only 10.8% currently. New York is among the states with the largest number of union workers — nearly 24% — and about 70% of the union workforce is in the public sector. This is consistent with the national percentage of public sector union membership being approximately five times that of the private sector — with African Americans making up the largest component of that group. But today, after a decades-old decline, union membership in both the public and private sectors is slowly increasing. The Covid-19 crisis played a role in this factor, when so many workers, scared and frustrated by a perceived lack of assistance from our government and medical institutions, turned to their unions for help. The remarkable win by Amazon workers in Staten Island to unionize is an example. No small feat — just three years ago, this newly formed

“Amazon Labor Union” did not exist. A Staten Island Amazon warehouse worker, Christian Smalls, led a walkout in protest of deplorable, Covid-related workplace conditions. Amazon general counsel’s meeting notes said of Smalls: “He’s not smart, or articulate, and to the extent to which the press wants to focus on him versus us, we will be in a much stronger PR position.” WOW! They not only dismissed Smalls as insignificant, but arrogantly condescended that an unpolished young Black man could be used to unionize. Amazon fired him, but their strategy backfired, and the repercussions have been felt throughout the nation.

Even though Ralph Chaplin wrote the song “Solidarity Forever” in 1915 for the Industrial Workers of World War I, its refrain is as relevant and important today as it was more than 100 years ago: “When the union’s inspiration thru the worker’s blood shall run, there can be no power greater anywhere beneath the sun, yet what force on earth is weaker than the feeble strength of one, but the union makes us strong. Solidarity forever, solidarity forever, solidarity forever, for the union makes us strong.”

So as you pack away the beach ball and swim suit and start to think about your Halloween costume, let’s not forget that in the Fall we traditionally acknowledge the work of the worker... especially those in the public sector. And, when you see the words “Union Made”, that means “Union Strong”. We’re a movement not just a moment.

There was a time, not long ago, when the Democratic Party was considered the political party of the working class and the Republican Party was aligned with big business and the wealthy. Yet a recent New York Times/Siena poll — for the first time ever — revealed results that indicated a reversal. The Republican Party is trending toward a multi-racial working-class coalition, while the Democrats had a larger share of support among white college graduates. Many wonder what conclusions can be drawn. Do we now have an establishment progressive party and an anti-establishment conservative party? Making matters even more complicated are recent findings that many voters are not affiliated with either major party, with polls indicating that 62% of Americans favor having a third party.

All of this should make for a very interesting 2024

Presidential election! Questions abound: What will the candidates look like? What will they need to feature to get our vote? With so many of the usual guidelines and guardrails gone, what’s the pitch? And how will it be communicated? That has changed too. Stump speeches on the back of a railroad car are a relic of the past. Even huge, televised rallies have their limitations — great for optics, but mostly “preaching to the choir” without really picking up many new converts. X (formerly Twitter) and other social media platforms are the bumper stickers of today... less costly, no car needed, and having the ability to reach millions with one click of a cell phone by influencers who make adding followers a game. And, with baby boomers, who now dominate the politically savvy voting population, starting to decline in number, this medium of choice will become a legitimate, powerful tool — a king- or queen-maker.

But with so much change—and so much of it of questionable positive value, there is one change that offers some real hope for the future. After years of declining numbers, union membership is now on the rise. Currently, there are many examples of workers in industries throughout the nation previously thought to be un-organizable or showing little interest in the union movement—from Amazon to Starbucks to McDonalds — now signing-up members. And the union drive comes from within. Workers talking to their fellow workers. They know the problems. They see the solutions. And their co-workers listen. Talk about “influencers”!

So, perhaps in this great time of change — this time of altered dictionary definitions and role reversals — labor unions, which have remained steadfast in what they represent, are now presented with a path from which they had lost their way, and a newly created vacuum they can fill. We span all the demographics, political ideologies and have the communications network and skills—new and old—to make impact. As the old adage says: “The more things change, the more they remain the same”. When applied to labor unions, that says it all. We have endured the union bashers, the union busters, the unfavorable court rulings and anti-labor appointees, but workers instinctively know that we are on their side. Our task ahead is to make all Americans know it too. ■



SEE THE CENTERFOLD FOR ADDITIONAL PHOTOS

Local 237 Member Services

UNION HEADQUARTERS

212-924-2000
216 West 14th Street
New York, NY 10011-7296

LOCAL 237 DIVISIONS

CITYWIDE, 2nd Fl.
212-924-2000
Donald Arnold, Director

LAW ENFORCEMENT

, 2nd Fl.

212-924-2000
Derek Jackson, Director

HOUSING

, 2nd Fl.

212-924-2000
Carl Giles, Housing Director

SPECIAL PROJECTS

, 2nd Fl.

212-924-2000
Debbie Coleman, Esq., Special Projects Director

LONG ISLAND

631-851-9800
100 West Main Street, Babylon,
New York 11702

Benedict Carezza, Director
Long Island Welfare Fund:
For information on the various
funds call 800-962-1145

RETIREE

, 6th Fl.

212-807-0555
Provides a variety of pre- and post-
retirement services, including
pension and health insurance
counseling to members. (Pension
counseling by appointment, Thurs-
days only). General retirement
counseling and retirement plan-
ning series during spring and fall.
Julie Kobi, Director

LOCAL 237 DEPARTMENTS

(Citywide and Housing)

SKILLED TRADES, 2nd Fl.
212-924-2000
Donald Arnold, Director

HEALTH AND SAFETY

, 2nd Fl.

212-924-2000
Donald Arnold, Director
Susan McQuade, Coordinator

MEMBERS HEALTH

, 2nd Fl.

212-924-2000
Susan McQuade, Director
smcquade@local237.org

WELFARE FUND

, 3rd Fl.

212-924-7220
The Fund administers the eligibility,
enrollment, disability, optical and
death benefits directly by the Fund's
in-house staff, as well as prescription
and dental programs indirectly.
Mitchell Goldberg, Director
Jennifer Jackson, Asst. Director

SOCIAL SERVICES

, 3rd Fl.

646-638-8608
The Local 237 Social Services Depart-
ment features free social work
services that are available to all
members. Social workers connect
people to much needed assistance
and resources. The union knows that
its members have tough jobs and
that when encountering tough per-
sonal challenges, learning about pos-
sible solutions to those challenges
would make things that much easier.
Contact us to learn about the many
service we can provide.
Karla Steinberg, Membership
Social Worker

LEGAL SERVICES

, 4th Fl.

212-924-1220
Lawyers advise and represent mem-
bers on covered personal legal prob-
lems, including domestic relations
(family court proceedings, divorce
and separation), purchase and sale of
a primary residence, wills, adoptions,
credit and consumer problems, ten-
ant rights and bankruptcies.
Mary Sheridan, Esq., Director
Kenneth Perry, Esq., Deputy Director

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, 5th Fl.

212-924-2000
Gregory Floyd, President
Ruben Torres,
Vice President
Donald Arnold,
Secretary-Treasurer
Jeanette Taveras,
Recording Secretary

PERSONNEL

, 5th Fl.

212-924-2000
Donald Arnold,
Director Citywide Division
and Chief Negotiator

POLITICAL ACTION & LEGISLATION

, 5th Fl.

646-638-8501
Local 237 protects members'
rights by helping to sponsor
legislation that is important
to members, and by communicat-
ing with and supporting elected
officials serving our best interests.
Phyllis S. Shafran, Coordinator

GRIEVANCES/DISCIPLINARY PROBLEMS

, 2nd Fl.

212-924-2000
For grievances and job related
problems, first contact your
shop steward and/or grievance
representative. If they can't
resolve the issue, contact your
business agent.
Mal Patterson, Director of
Grievances and Hearings
Diana Doss, Esq.,
Grievance Coordinator

CIVIL SERVICE BAR ASSOC.

6th Fl., 212-675-0519
Saul Fishman, President
Aldona Vaiciunas,
Office Administrator and
Grievance Coordinator
Lee Gordon, Esq.,
Business Agent
CSBA Welfare Fund
Alicare 866-647-4617

COMMUNICATIONS

, 5th Fl.

646-638-8501
Phyllis S. Shafran, Director &
Editor Local 237 Newsline and
Editor, Retiree News & Views

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

6th Fl., 212-807-0550
Provides a variety of training
and educational advancement
opportunities for members.
Shanell Grayson, Director

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By Mail:
335 Adams St., Suite 2300,
Brooklyn, NY 11201-3751

In Person:
340 Jay Street, Mezzanine,
Brooklyn, NY 11201

General Information:
347-643-3000

Outside NYC toll-free:
877-6NYCERS

NYCERS Internet
www.nyclink.org/html/nycers

NYC Department of Education Retirement System

65 Court St., Brooklyn, NY 11201
718-935-5400

Social Security Administration

800-772-1213

NY State and Local Retirement Systems

518-474-7736



By Gregory Floyd

*President, Teamsters Local 237 and Vice President-at-Large on
the General Board of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters*

It's not so easy to find a holiday that crosses so many boundaries: racial, religious, ethnic, generational and gender lines. Your political party, favorite color, married or single, home-owner or renter, blue collar or white collar workers, years of education, driving an SVU or compact car—all matter very little. For sure, it's not easy to find a holiday which most Americans celebrate in similar ways—usually involving a hot dog or two...whether it's all beef or tofu, yes, Labor Day is a rarity: A holiday we can agree upon.

Congress created Labor Day in 1894 by making the first Monday in September a national holiday. But it only did so in response to the death of 34 striking Pullman workers from the American Railway Union at the hands of U.S. Army soldiers and Marshals. And then there's the Labor Day Parade. It's not held on Labor Day. That's usually when so many of us are sad about the summer's end and reserve the day to get in those last rays of summer sun, a swim at the beach, flipping burgers on the BBQ, watching the US Open tennis match on TV or hunting for "Back to School" sales. Instead, the parade is held a week later.

New York City's Labor Day has some major distinctions: It's not only the largest one in the nation, but also the oldest. The parade was organized by the New York City Central Labor Council in 1882, when an unheard of number of workers—25,000—took off from their jobs in celebration of worker solidarity and pride, and marched from Union Square to City Hall. Through the years, Labor Day and the parade have come to symbolize the long-lasting presence and indestructible power of the labor movement, despite the efforts by many in corporate America who decry unions as contributing to driving up production and service costs—and affecting their bottom line. They, and some others in power who fear the power of our unity, are simply trying to do us in. And it's working. Currently, union membership is at an all-time low of only around 10.7% nationwide (equaling one in 10 workers) as compared with peak years of the mid-1950s, when membership was 40% of all American workers (or four out of every ten workers). New York State leads the nation with the highest percentage of union workers, nearly 24%. Of that number, nearly 70% are public sector workers, with African-Americans making up the largest component of that group.

At Teamsters Local 237, we understand the value of unity. And our commitment to it is both practical and moral. We know, for example, that non-union workers earn on average 20% less than union members. We know too, that the 40-hour work week, health benefits, paid vacation and family leave, and the \$17 an-hour minimum wage are just some of the hard fought—and won—battles. We also know that workers' rights and civil rights are unquestionably intertwined. Let's

A message from the President

**Skip the greeting card.
No presents needed.
Labor Day
A holiday like no other
whose importance
lasts beyond one day.**

not forget that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in 1968 in Memphis, when he joined striking sanitation workers—men who made \$1.65 an-hour and were treated by their bosses like the garbage they collected. Dr. King believed that: "The labor movement did not diminish the strength of the nation but enlarged it. By raising the living standard of millions, labor miraculously created a market for industry and lifted the whole nation to undreamed of levels of production. Those who attack labor forget these simple truths, but history remembers."

It seems that many average Americans are starting to agree—again. In fact, the approval rating of labor unions has recently been on the rise. Some have speculated that the Covid crisis helped with this current trend. Too many Americans learned the hard way, that many of our government institutions and leaders were ill-prepared for the catastrophes so many endured. They came to rely on their union to distribute the face masks, to provide health benefits, and to lend them and their families a sympathetic, compassionate ear.

This increase may also have a link to the elusive quest of achieving the "American Dream." Coined by historian James Truslow Adams during the Great Depression, the phrase symbolizes the desire for a better future that could be obtained in this country through hard work. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, in his 1933 inaugural address, famously declared about the challenges of troubling times: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself," and continued in his speech to emphasize the spiritual qualities underlying the "American Dream," by saying: "Happiness lies not in the mere possession of money; it lies in the joy of achievement." However it is defined, for some, the "American Dream" remains just a dream; for others, especially many new immigrants in the current surge of migration, the "Dream" has become a nightmare. Interestingly, in 1997, 72% of Americans thought the "American Dream" was possible. More recently, studies indicate, "not so much."

And, here's where labor unions come in. Just like our role in helping to build the middle class in America, we are both the ramrod and equalizer... and the bridge to the "American Dream." We fight for the rights of workers while helping to create a level playing field where the "American Dream" is not the sole property of the corporate 1%. We help give everyone a chance. We help give everyone hope.

This is why we march. We joined our union brothers and sisters in the Labor Day Parade to send a strong message to our elected leaders and to the public at-large: **"You can bash us. You can try to bust us. We are not going away. Be our friend, not our foe. We have a voice and a vote. We're labor strong, celebrating our solidarity and pride on a day unlike any other."**

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS Above and Beyond

So many of our members go above and beyond the call of duty, performing acts of heroism, ingenuity, kindness and generosity that demonstrate their professionalism and heart. They were willing to go that extra mile, and by so doing, made a difference in someone's life. Here are some of the pictures and stories they want to share:

Hospital Police Save A Life



(l-r) Officer Bonifacio, Sgt. Justino and Officer Borno.

On Wednesday, August 23rd, 2023, Hospital Police were asked to help an unconscious man inside a van on Park Ave. and 122nd St. Officer Bonifacio immediately called 911 EMS, and Officer Borno together with Sgt. Justino administered 2 doses of Narcan and saved the life of the victim.

Saving Stabbing Victims



SSA Kristopher Tobias, SSA Adonis Jenkins, SSA Sharae Ellis, Deanne Scarlett, L3 Loretta Taylor-Johnson and Supervisor Jason Weir, all did a phenomenal job to help save three victims stabbed outside of Brownsville Academy H.S./ AIM/ Aspiration sin PBBN Command, where the students attend school. With a rapid response they tended to the students, called patrol, locked down the school, while still protecting the entire building.

Keeping Our Members Safe

Ms. Gwendolyn Bell, Superintendent from Marlboro Houses in Brooklyn, was presented with a plaque of appreciation for her hardwork and skills that keep our members safe. Pictured with Public Housing Business Agent Ken Franco.



Iron Person's Competition

DHS PO Lt. David Santos challenged his colleagues from the Department of Homeless Services to the "Iron Person's Competition" that included a one-half mile run; five 60-yard sprints and a one-quarter mile "Farmer's Walk" with kettle bells.



1st Row: Lt. David Santos, DI Natasha Crothers, Dep. Director of the Law Enforcement Division Charlie Cotto, Officer Paul Sosa, Sgt. Cecil Payne.

2nd Row: Capt Samantha Cruz, Sgt. Preston Irby, Officer Selena Keitt Spencer, Officer Jeff Hyacinthe, Asst. Director Anthony Stasi.

3rd Row Officer Duane Simmons, Director of DHS Academy Herb Williams, Officer Jewell White, Officer Niema Feliciano, Lt. Dion Beckett.

4th Row: Officer Tyrone Saunders, Officer Labuan Williams, Captain Jason Wilson, Captain Miguel Martinez and Sgt Steven Burgos.

Medal For A Real Hero



(l-r) Recording Secretary Jeanette Taveras, CSA Pascal Williams from York College and President Gregory Floyd.

CSA Williams was at the York College parking lot, when two perpetrators trespassed onto the property, brandishing a firearm. He bravely engaged the perpetrator. CSA Williams was instrumental in the apprehension of one of the assailants, coordinating efforts with the local police. CSA Williams was honored for his heroic efforts.

Meritorious Duty Medal For Extraordinary Valor



(l-r) Recording Secretary Jeanette Taveras, President Gregory Floyd, Corporal Cyrus Dieudonne and Director of Law Enforcement Division Derek Jackson.

Corporal Dieudonne was assigned to the Louis Armstrong museum at Queens College when a 23 year old assailant drove his vehicle on the curb with several people on the sidewalk. The assailant parked his car and proceeded to run. He knocked down Assemblyman Jeffrion Aubry. Corporal Dieudonne gave chase and seized the assailant, sustaining cuts, scrapes and bruises. Corporal Dieudonne received the Meritorious Duty Medal Award for his valor.

Local 237 NEWSLINE

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Phyllis S. Shafran
Editor

Special thanks in the preparation of Newsline to:
Gisela (GiGi) Reyes, Executive Administrative Assistant

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IDENTITY THEFT

THINK YOU'RE A VICTIM?

At Local 237 we take your Identity Management seriously. With our partner **ID Resolution** we provide you with a **FREE** comprehensive program should your identity be compromised.

If you have concerns or questions and to learn more about the program, go to <https://idresolution.net/teamsters-local-237>



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We want to hear from you!

Send us your photos, stories and ideas. We're interested in you: On the job, special accomplishments, family news, etc.

Email: pshafran@local237.org

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS Law Enforcement Division

So many of our members distinguish themselves by their professionalism on the job. Here are some of their pictures and stories.

Metropolitan Hospital Police Meet and Greet



(l-r) PO Mendoza, PO McLaughlin, PO Sargent, Sgt Moran, Lt. Collins, PO Donaldson, PO Washington, PO Bilal, PO J. Diaz, PO Gomes, Sgt Morillo, Dt. Lee, Chief Melendez, Capt. Diaz, PO Ross, Det. Almodovar, Sgt. Hewitt, Lt. Blount, Det. King, Sgt. Lewis and Business Agent Kangela Moore.



(l-r) Lt. Diaz, PO Haigler, PO Alamo, PO Hassain, Det. Robinson, Business Agent Kangela Moore, Det. King, PO Bell, Captain Diaz and Chief Melendez.



DC Ira Goldapper, Frank Rella, Captain Laplant, Captain Williams discussing the future of the new TLC Woodside facility.



CUNY Queensborough Community College (l-r) Sgt. Hanif, PO Chavarriaga, PO Rivera, and PO Gachett.



Henry J. Carter Hospital Officers (l-r) Det. Lay, Det. Campbell, Sgt. Torres, PO Brown, PO Boakye, Sgt. Cabrera, PO Smith, PO Borisov and Sgt. Martinez.



At the Auburn Shelter on Theresa Gregg Day is Charlie Cotto (top) and Derek Jackson (bottom).



The officers of DHS Bedford Atlantic had a bake sale, (l-r) Charlie Cotto, Sgt Regina Griffin, Officer Krystal Nixon, Officer Ebony Edwards, and Capt Gregory Adams.



Director of Law Enforcement Derek Jackson visited PS 384, Agent Guzman on the first day of school.



Director of Law Enforcement Derek Jackson visited Hunter's Point Campus and is signed in by Agent Shafiro.



(l-r) Director of Law Enforcement Derek Jackson, Agent Cuzco Agent Shafiro, and L3 Elmore at Hunter's Point Campus.



Staten Island School Safety 2023 BBQ and retirement party for Leonard Krustal.

Baruch's New Five-Year Plan



(l-r) CSA Luis Sanchez; Sergeant Mario Diaz; Corporal Patricia Victor, Mi Madrina; Jeanette Taveras, Business Agent and Local 237 Recording Secretary; Lieutenant Latoya Rodney; Chief Rober Curry; Specialist Melina Jackson; Corporal Danielle Brothers; CPO Alexander Supit; Lieutenant Roseann Pilgrim and Deputy James Francis.

CUNY's Public Safety Medal Day



City University of New York Department of Public Safety Medal Day Awardees with Executive Vice Chancellor & Chief Operating Officer Hector Batista; City College President Vincent Boudreau; University Executive Director Andre Brown; President Gregory Floyd; Executive Board Member and Recording Secretary Jeanette Taveras, Director of Law Enforcement Derek Jackson; and Business Agent Kangela Moore.

Peace Keepers Initiative



On June 20, 2023 SSA Celeste Morrison, PBMN and SSA3 Elmore, PBQN represented The Peace Keepers Initiative at PS/IS 178 in the Ocean Hill section of Brooklyn at the schools Anti-Gun Violence Rally Event. A few of the students were deputized by Agent Morrison as Jr. Peacekeepers as he told them they can become great and that they are not alone.

(l-r) L3 Elmore, student Jr. Peace Keeper and SSA Morrison.

Special Services BBQ



MEMBERS IN THE NEWS Law Enforcement Division *Continued*



CUNY Public Safety Officer Pittman at CUNY Law School.



Jacob Javits Convention Center uses officers in welcoming campaign in their new Automated Sign-in Information Posts, featuring Officers Joe Cariffe and Michael Marmolejos.



CUNY Public Safety Officer Smith greets and helps keep students, faculty, friends and family safe.



(l-r) Sgt. Rafael Corro, PO Samuel and Specialist Rodriguez.



(l-r) CSA's Oumate and Cejourne at Lehman College's main plaza, flanking the site of 'The King', the only official replica of an Olmec head in the U.S., a 1964 gift from Mexico to celebrate the first anniversary of the CUNY Institute of Mexican Studies, which is housed at the College.



CSA Celestin from CUNY NYC College of Technology.

Hostos Community College Hiring Event



CUNY Public Safety Officers (l-r) PO Rodriguez, PO Camacho, PO Butera, Sgt. La Cadre, Sgt. Caesar, Sgt. Theis, PO Consuegra, Lt. Koutsidis and PO Gebrehiwot.



Sgt. Rodriguez and Sgt. Dunlap provided information about employment opportunities to become CUNY Public Safety Officers.



DHS Officer Zhleleznayk informing and interviewing someone interested in becoming a DHS Officer.



Hospital Police Officer Williams, Shop Steward working at Harlem Hospital.



(l-r) Queens Borough Hall DCAS Police Officers Vitale and Galazka.



Queens College Public Safety Officers (l-r) Shop Steward CSA Beckford, CSA Malik, Sgt. Gallego and Grievance Representative Specialist Brooks.



SSA Alston at the West Indian Day Parade.



SSAs at DCAS Job Fair (l-r) Lt. Mark Campbell DCAS Police, Law Enforcement BA Derek Short and SSA Level 3 LaKisha Hockada.



Officers at Queens Hospital protecting the hospital community. (l-r) Det., Lay, Sgt Torres, Captain Padilla, Sgt. Dennis and Sgt. Echevarria.

BASSA presents President Gregory Floyd with Certificate of Appreciation



The Bangladeshi American School Safety Association (BASSA) presented President Gregory Floyd with a certificate of appreciation in honor of his excellence and achievement. (l-r) SSA Mohammad Masum Miah, President; SSA Md Torikul Islam, General Secretary; President Gregory Floyd; SSA Sinwara Islam, Joint Secretary; and SSA Jubayer Ahmed, Executive Member.



The Public Safety Officers at LaGuardia Community College welcome staff, students and visitors and help maintain a safe environment. (l-r) CPL Angaili, CSA Burton, Sgt Rue, CSA Michel, PO Felder, CSA Banik, PO Paul and CSA Brown.

School Safety Division Recognition Day



Awardees were acknowledged for Member of the Year, Finest Award, Dedication to Service, Making a Difference and Agent of the Month Award.

SSA Graduation



(l-r) Charlie Cotto; SSA Reina Jennings, Outstanding Physical Fitness Award; SSA Tyler Ancrum, Outstanding Physical Fitness Award; Tynique Taylor, Outstanding Company Sergeant; and SSA Miriam Milan, Valedictorian.



(l-r) Business Agent Derek Short, Director of Law Enforcement Division Derek Jackson, Keechant L. Sewell, former Police Commissioner, Level III Powell, Level III Winter Ewer and Level III Spence.

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS Public Housing Division

So many of our members distinguish themselves by their professionalism on the job. Here are some of their pictures and stories.

Amsterdam News Hosts Labor Breakfast Features Panel Discussion on Gun Violence

In September, the Amsterdam News, America's largest and oldest Black-run newspaper, located in Harlem, hosted its annual labor breakfast. This year, in addition to its customary salute to labor that highlights the role unions play in helping to provide equity and dignity in the workplace, a panel discussion was also featured. The topic was gun violence and its impact on health, education, and public housing. The panel was moderated by Errol Louis, the esteemed television Political Anchor of NY1. Shavelle Knox, Local 237's Business Agent from the Public Housing Division, participated in the panel discussion and shed light on the challenges of working in NYCHA developments, especially with the current uptick of gun violence throughout the City and at several NYCHA complexes. Shavelle was able to offer important insights as both someone who works for NYCHA and--just like Erroll Louis--was also a former resident. Shavelle, noting that approximately one third of our members working for NYCHA, live at NYCHA housing too, was able to talk in terms of the professional and personal incidents suffered, the on-going fears and the measures workers and residents take to try and stay safe.



Errol Louis, Shavelle Knox, Dedric "be-loved" Hammond - Credible Messenger, and Carmen Quinones - President of Douglass Houses Tenant Association. Dedric is a community activist and gun violence survivor. He now goes by Credible Messenger as he goes around and advocates against gun violence from the perspective of a former shooter himself.



Shavelle and Elinor Tatum - Editor in Chief of the Amsterdam News.



Shavelle and Siobhan "Sam" Bennett - Chief Revenue Officer of the Amsterdam News.

Public Housing Safety Symposium 2023

This is a safety program for NYCHA workers, started approximately 10 years ago. The symposium is an annual event, attended by members from titles in all five boroughs including: HPT; Maintenance; Caretakers J and X; Superintendent; Supervisor of Grounds; and Supervisor of Caretakers. Their hard work to keep

co-workers safe is recognized and honored. This program also strives to identify and inform members about new and innovative solutions to work hazards, as well as encouraging them to find their own ways to prevent accidents on a daily basis.



Public Housing Director, Carl Giles and Business Agent, Shavelle Knox (both on the right), **Business Agent, Jaleesa Moye** (fourth from right) and **NYCHA COO Eva Tremble** (left), were on hand as members received awards for their superb record of safety compliance. Those awardees are (l to r): **Gary Davis, SOG; Desiree Williams, Caretaker J; Wanda Moses, Caretaker J; Kevon Hoyte, Caretaker J; Nicholas Echeverria, SOG; Jannique Bou, HPT, and Luis Quinones, Maintenance.**



Members participating from all five boroughs, and Members' Health and Safety Director, **Susan McQuade** (left, second row).

Tentative Housing Contract Reached



Local 237's Housing Committee. **President Gregory Floyd** (center) and **Public Housing Director, Carl Giles** (left).

The Local 237 Housing Negotiation Committee has approved a tentative NYCHA contract. The agreement includes annual raises, a \$3,000 lump sum payment and maintains benefits with no additional costs to members. The proposal contains retro pay, as well as many differential and allowance increases. The proposed contract went to a vote of Local 237 Housing Division members and the mail ballots will be counted October 25th. The union continues to negotiate contracts for CUNY and skilled trades titles.

Positive Signs

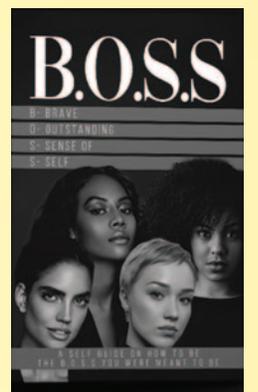


Supervisor of Grounds, Jamar Brown from Jacob Riis Houses has voluntarily started hanging positive and educational signs around the location's grounds. He hopes to be able to brighten the community and make it a better place for both residents and housing workers.

IN THE FAMILY

NYCHA Bricklayer in the Bronx, Eric Blyden's wife wrote a self help book.

Donna D. Brooks, LSW, EIS, CTSS, a therapist, author and certified life coach, wrote B.O.S.S., a self-help guide on getting out of your own way in life. The book is filled with inspiring quotes and positive affirmations, and is relevant to a broad spectrum of people.



MEMBERS IN THE NEWS Citywide Division

So many of our members distinguish themselves by their professionalism on the job. Here are some of their pictures and stories.



School Food Service Managers and Assistant School Food Service Managers at the Department of Education. (l-r) **Martha Bodhnarain, Esq., Senior Counsel**; **Sasha Quinones, School Food Service Manager (SFSM)**; **President Gregory Floyd**; **Andrew Goodman, Associate School Food Service Manager**; **Mal Patterson**; **Frances Collado, SFSM**; **Mark Senape, SFSM**; **Cherise Neal, SFSM**; and **Marie Mirville-Shahzada, SFSM**.



Evidence and property control specialists LIC NY (l-r) **Oscar Houseman**, **Asif Chowdhurg** and **George Wade**, Assistant Director Citywide Division.



Evidence and Property Control Specialists II at OCME Summer luncheon.



OMCE Evidence and Property Control Specialist recognized for over 20 years of service. (l-r) **EPCS II Jose Carbo**, **EPCS Alexander Nunez**, **EPCS II Tammy Nelson** and **EPCS II Henry Rivera**.



(l-r) **Bianca Jones**, **Arthur Scott**, **Victor Rodriguez**, **Jeffery Singletary**, **Rashid Lesane**, **Curtis Scott** and **Mark Duffy**.



(l-r) **Clarence Philbert**, **Curtis Scott** and **Alton Armstrong**.



Stock workers from Staten Island ferry storeroom with **Curtis Scott** (second from left).



(l-r) **Derek Jackson**, Law Enforcement Director; Director of NYPD School Safety Division **Louise Kelly Johnson**, retiring after 38 years; and **Derek Short**, Business Agent.

Added to the Roster of Retirees

Local 237 wants to thank the following members for their years of dedicated service, and wishes them well in their retirement:



(l-r) **Joseph Ragso** retired elevator mechanic after 41 years with **Curtis Scott**, Business Agent and Executive Board Trustee.



(l-r) **BA Curtis Scott**; **Leroy Anderson** retired from Harlem Hospital material management 32 years; and **BA George Wade**.



Charita Jackson, retired 6/30/2023 after 30 years as a Housing Assistant.



CUNY Public Safety Officer **Manuel Sogoni** (c), who completed 25 years of service at York College and wife **Sylvie** (l) with Business Agent **Kangela Moore** (r).

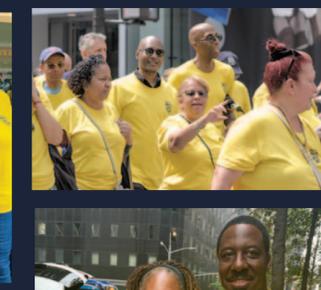


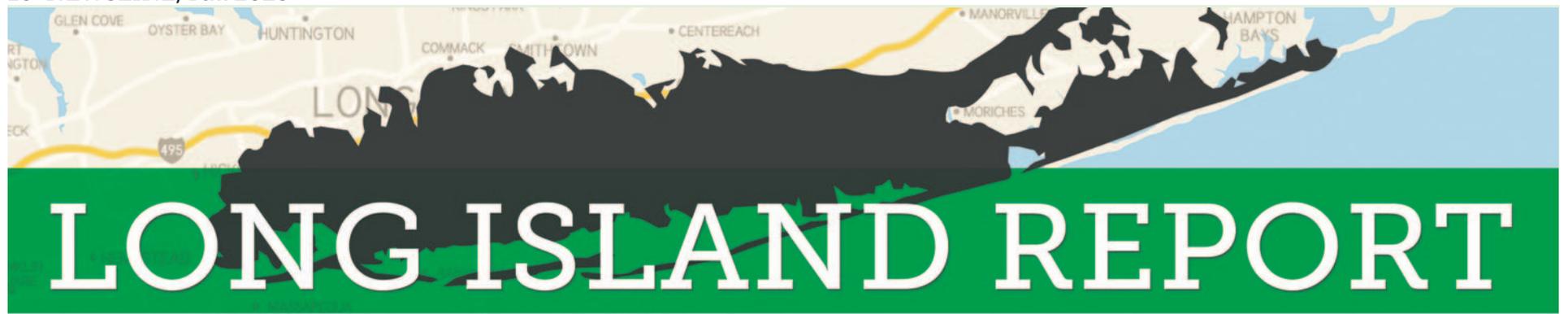
(l-r) **Carl Giles**, Local 237 Housing Director, presenting **Robert Lewis** with his retirement plaque after 27 years of service.



(l-r) **Jeanette Taveras**, Recording Secretary on Local 237's Executive Board, presents a plaque to **Angela Bender**, retired from DOE District Guards. Pictured with her daughter, **Ayanna Williams** and granddaughter, **Blare Johnson**.

SKIP THE GREETING CARD. NO PRESENTS NEEDED.
LABOR DAY – A HOLIDAY LIKE NO OTHER
WHOSE IMPORTANCE LASTS BEYOND A SINGLE DAY.





LONG ISLAND REPORT



Town of Babylon Business Agent **Andy Viegas** (c) presents retirement plaques to **Jimmy Boyle** (l) for over 30 years and **Brent Holloman** (r) for over 34 years.



Town of Babylon Business Agent **Andy Viegas** (l) presents a retirement plaque to **Steve Mikle** (r) for over 35 years of service.



Ann Marie Key (c) retired from North Babylon School with over 40 years of service. Ann Marie did so much for so many, and she will be missed. Enjoy your retirement, you deserve it! Pictured with **Benny Carenza**.



Chris Chase (r) from Lawrence schools and **John Gallagher**. Thanks for all you guys do!



Congratulations to **Peggy Scharf** (l) on her well deserved retirement, from West Islip Schools! Enjoy your free time.



(l-r) West Islip Schools Secretaries Liaison **Luann Dunne** with **Peggy Scharf**.

Brentwood Annual BBQ Was Another Success.



Special thanks to **Britt Antoine** and her crew at Brentwood! Also, congrats to retirees **Joe Seda, Lou Debeneditis, Ray Krumenacker, Alan Dimperio and Ed Cassidy.**



Teamster Plainview Old Bethpage Bus Driver **Aggie Conner-Murphy.** Always happy at the job!



Getting ready for return to school at Half Hollow Hills East. Custodians **Greg Vaccaro, Jr. and Anthony Cosimano** trimming hedges at the entrance.

POLITICAL AND LABOR NEWS

"A Cheerful Giver"

"Let each man do as according as he hath purposed; not grudgingly, or of necessity for God loveth a cheerful giver." — 2 Corinthians 9:7

On September 7, Wheelchair Charities Inc., celebrated its 50th anniversary with an overflow crowd at a reception at Pier 60. In the commemorative journal at each dinner setting, on the page that featured honoree Gregory Floyd's picture and bio, those words from Corinthians were written. And, as Henry Carter, the Founder and Chairman of Wheelchair Charities introduced Gregory Floyd from the podium, that description was most fitting.

Wheelchair Charities is an amazing organization that was sparked by the near-death of a young man, Alphonso Fogle, who was caught in two warring gangs' crossfire on a Queens street corner and was accidentally shot in July of 1972. He was treated at Elmhurst Hospital and four months later was moved to Goldwater Hospital on Roosevelt Island, which treated gunshot victims between the ages of 14 and 35. Henry Carter was a friend and frequent visitor of Alphonso. One day, he was asked by a group of patients if he could help to provide them with things the hospital could not. Henry then had an idea, how about a Gospel and Talent Show? And that was the beginning of Wheelchair Charities. Over 50 years, the non-profit organization Henry helped create in 1973 has donated more than \$30 million to improve and enhance the lives of people in wheelchairs. This year, Wheelchair Charities plans to purchase 110 new, motorized wheelchairs for people in every borough. At an average cost of \$15,000 each, and with additional plans to purchase a new bus to transport wheelchair-bound patients, at an approximate cost of \$400,000. To help reach its ever-expanding goals, an annual fundraising event like this one is held. **Mitchell Katz, M.D.**, President, and Chief Executive Officer NYC Health + Hospitals and Queens District Attorney, Melinda Katz were also among the honorees along with **Teamsters Local 237 President, Gregory Floyd**. WBLS radio personality Dr. Bob Lee; NYS Assembly Members Jeff Aubry and Al Taylor were on hand to help bestow the awards, in addition to Wheelchair Charities recipients. ■



Wheelchair Charities, Inc.
 83-10 35th Avenue, Jackson Heights, New York 11372
 Phone/Fax# (718) 457-5633
 wheelchaircharitiesinc.org

September 12, 2023

Dear Mr. Floyd:

I want to thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to attend our recent 50th Anniversary Gala, and accepting the Community Service Award from Wheelchair Charities.

I am especially grateful that your commitment to our mission was evident by the many tables you sold, and the attendance of your friends and business associates at the event.

The funds raised at the gala will be used to purchase much-needed items for patients at our NYC Health + Hospitals facilities. A high-tech motorized wheel-chair is such a miracle for someone who no longer has the use of their legs. Your commitment to Wheelchair Charities makes the difference in the lives of so many people—men and women who otherwise might be suffering with an ill-fitting or broken-down chair, struggling with a heavy manual wheelchair, or perhaps not even have any mobility device at all.

Our giving has extended to other items such as state-of-the-art medical equipment and devices, computers, and buses to transport the people in wheelchairs. It has truly been a miraculous journey, and I am humbled when I think of how far we have come.

I am thankful to God for connecting us, and for all the time and energy you have put into helping us fulfill our mission of healing through fundraising. I thank you for the blessing of your help, and for being part of the Wheelchair Charities family.

God bless you, and thank you again for all you have done to support Wheelchair Charities.

Very truly yours,

Henry J. (Hank) Carter
 Chairman and CEO



Teamsters Women's Conference



General President Sean M. O'Brien (l) and General Secretary-Treasurer Fred Zuckerman (r) welcomed more than 1,500 Teamsters gathered for the Teamsters Women's Conference in Nashville.

"The only reason why we're successful is because of the support, the courage, and compassion of the rank-and-file members who build this union every single day," O'Brien said. *"Everyone in this audience is a fighter."*

"I'm pleased to announce that this is the biggest Women's Conference we've ever had — more than 1,500 women registered for this year's conference!" Zuckerman said. *"It's women who are leading the way and driving these campaigns. That's how we're able to organize. That's how we're able to fight back against corporate America. Because of you."* ■



(l-r) GiGi Reyes; Jeanette Taveras; General President Sean M. O'Brien; Sobeyda Rodriguez; and Cathy Rice.



(l-r) Sobeyda Rodriguez; Joan Corey, Vice President at-Large; GiGi Reyes; and Jeanette Taveras.



Rally on Bankruptcy Reform fueled by Yellow Cab bankruptcy filing that left Teamster members without jobs including benefits.

POLITICAL AND LABOR NEWS

On the Legislative Front:

By Vito R. Pitta, Esq. Member, Pitta Bishop & Del Giorno, LLC

City Legislation:

As The New York City Council legislative session marches towards its close at the end of the year, the Council will consider the passage of several pieces of legislation. The following bills to monitor that may have an impact on the lives of our members and their families:

Yr	Bill No.	Type	Status	Committee	Prime Sponsor (current)	"Name"
2022	Int 0078	Introduction	Laid Over in Committee	Civil Service and Labor	Brewer, Gale A.	Creating an informational campaign concerning workers' rights under the earned safe and sick time act.
2022	Int 0115	Introduction	Laid Over in Committee	Housing and Buildings	Hudson, Crystal	Minimum temperatures required to be maintained in dwellings.
2022	Int 0276	Introduction	Laid Over in Committee	General Welfare	Ossé, Chi A.	De-escalation and trauma-informed training for dept of homeless services employees.
2022	Int 0293	Introduction	Laid Over in Committee	Transportation and Infrastructure	Stevens, Althea V.	DOT to establish a program schools, arts and cultural institutions and religious institutions to use adjacent outdoor spaces.
2022	Int 0301	Introduction	Laid Over in Committee	Oversight and Investigations	Won, Julie	Establishment of standards and procedures to determine the existence of conflicts of interest and other misconduct concerning city contracts.
2022	Int 0453	Introduction	Laid Over in Committee	Oversight and Investigations	Powers, Keith	Requiring officers and employees of city contractors to report corruption and to cooperate with the DOI.
2022	Int 0508	Introduction	Laid Over in Committee	Health	Schulman, Lynn C.	Requiring family building benefits for city employees.
2022	Int 0554	Preconsidered Introduction	Laid Over in Committee	General Welfare	Rivera, Carlina	Child protective caseloads and workloads action plan.
2022	Int 0555	Preconsidered Introduction	Laid Over in Committee	Transportation and Infrastructure	Rivera, Carlina	Installing safety signs near schools.
2022	Int 0569	Introduction	Laid Over in Committee	Immigration	Hanif, Shahana K.	An immigrant workers' bill of rights.
2022	Int 0641	Introduction	Laid Over in Committee	General Welfare	Williams, Nantasha M.	Maximizing efficiency at department of social services/human resources administration centers.
2022	Res 0068	Resolution	Laid Over in Committee	Public Housing	Kagan, Ari	Increase NYCHA accountability by auditing the responsiveness of NYCHA managers to tenants.
2022	Res 0190	Resolution	Laid Over in Committee	Public Housing	Avilés, Alexa	NYS Legislature and Governor to provide their share of the additional three billion dollars annually, that must be reinvested into NYCHA in order to address capital needs resulting from decades of disinvestment in its building stock.
2022	Res 0257	Resolution	Laid Over in Committee	Civil Service and Labor	Cabán, Tiffany	Expressing solidarity with unionization drives across New York City's workforce and affirming the right to have union elections free from anti-democratic union-busting practices.
2022	Res 0304	Resolution	Laid Over in Committee	Public Housing	Avilés, Alexa	Authorizing the NYC Council to oversee the activities of the NYC Housing Authority. (A.9414/S.5806)

BILL STATUS:

Committee - This bill has been officially introduced and assigned to a committee, which has not yet held a hearing.

Laid Over in Committee - The assigned committee has held a hearing on the bill, taking testimony and feedback from the relevant city agencies as well as other government entities and members of the public who may be affected by the bill.

Mayor Adams Appoints New NYCHA Leadership:

On July 6, New York City Mayor Eric Adams announced significant appointments to the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) leadership. **Jamie Rubin** will serve as NYCHA Board Chair and will oversee the seven-member board, bringing three decades of experience in government, nonprofits, and the private sector. Mayor Adams also elevated **Lisa Bova-Hiatt** to permanent CEO of NYCHA, after spending nearly a year as CEO on an interim basis.

Additionally, First Deputy Mayor **Sheena Wright**, and financial professional, **Greg Belinfanti**, join the NYCHA board, with Teamsters Local 237 member **Pamela Campbell** being appointed to the NYCHA Trust Board. This announcement follows the NYCHA board appointment of James McKay and Raymond Miller in January and the creation of the NYCHA Trust Board in May.

School Safety Agents to Receive Additional Protection:

As the school year began, you may have noticed that our School Safety agents are a bit more equipped than in years past. Prior to the school year, in an effort to increase the safety of School Safety Agents, the New York City Police Department (NYPD) issued bullet-resistant vests to nearly 4,000 agents. This decision follows a disheartening rise in youth-related violence, with younger individuals involved in both shooting incidents and as victims. Notably, 62 of the city's 620 shooting victims this year have been under 18, and 14% of those arrested for shootings were also under 18. Some of these incidents have occurred in close proximity to schools, prompting the increased security measure. In the 2022-2023 school year, 15 firearms were recovered in the city's public schools.

After a successful pilot program in which 300 agents were outfitted with the durable and lightweight protective vests, the NYPD is allocating funding so that all members assigned to the NYPD School Safety Division will be given access to the increased protection as they maintain the safety of our schools and our youth, fulfilling a request that school safety agents have been longing for since the Bloomberg administration. ■



Vito R. Pitta is a partner at Pitta LLP, a firm whose practice consists primarily of traditional union-side labor law, employment law, employee benefits law, and campaign finance compliance law. The firm counts more than forty local and international labor unions as its clients. Mr. Pitta's practice consists of counseling the firm's clients on traditional labor and employment matters, as well as advising the firm's political campaign and political action committee clients with respect to federal, state, and local campaign finance laws. Mr. Pitta is also a Partner in Pitta LLP's affiliated personal injury firm, Pitta & Baione LLP, which represents victims of the September 11th terrorist attacks; and a member of Pitta LLP's affiliated lobbying firm, Pitta Bishop & Del Giorno LLC.



Anticipating the new CSBA contract and Telework

By Saul Fishman

CSBA President

The deadline for this edition of *Newsline* is earlier than the September 27, 2023 vote count for our tentative CSBA-NYC 2021-2026 collective bargaining agreement. As I truly believe that our bargaining committee produced the best possible contract allowable under the constraints of the pattern established for this round of bargaining, I am both thankful and optimistic that our needs are being considered and that we will soon be allowed to telework on a part-time basis. To briefly recap the highlights contained in the *Memorandum of Agreement*, we will be receiving the \$3,000 signing bonus (less taxes) following ratification, three years of retroactive backpay (or backpay from when you started if more recent), prospective salary increases, increased Recurring Increment Payments ("RIPs") for each year of service (even in years when the City delays a new contract), increased payments by the City to our Welfare Fund (to allow the continuation and possible enhancement of the supplemental benefits we receive for prescription drugs, dental, optical, hearing aid, disability insurance, newborn baby benefit, etc.) and more. *And importantly, the ability to participate in the telework pilot program.*

We all know that nothing worthwhile is either quick or easy to achieve when dealing with the City. There will undoubtedly be delays in the full rollout of this pilot program. Please rest assured that we will be both focused and persistent in doing everything possible to expedite the process and to make it as fair and inclusive as possible.

I am asking that you **keep us informed** about what you are hearing in your shop with respect to the program's start and how it is being implemented in your agency, division and unit. Kindly email us at csbainfo@local237.org from your personal email address and provide us with a cell phone number in case we have any questions. We can keep your identity confidential if that is your desire.

Thank you as always for your patience and cooperation. Best regards to you and yours for a healthy and happy Autumn season. ■

CONTRACT AGREEMENT UNANIMOUSLY RATIFIED



Pictured are the observers of the vote count, flanked by Derek Jackson (l) Director of Local 237's Law Enforcement Division and Donald Arnold (r) Secretary Treasurer of Local 237's Executive Board and Director of the Citywide Division. Present but not pictured was Curtis Scott, Executive Board Trustee and Citywide Business Agent.

Upon the July 31, 2023 tally of votes, Teamsters Local 237 announced the unanimous ratification of four contract agreements with the City of New York which encompasses working for all Citywide agencies — including Health and Hospital Corporation — School Food Service workers, and members working under Local Law 56 and TLC. Among the provisions of these agreements is the protection of healthcare benefits. ■



A Guide to Drafting a Will

By **Mary E. Sheridan, Esq.**

Director of Local 237 Legal Services Plan

Drafting a will is a crucial step in planning for the future and ensuring that your assets are distributed according to your wishes. While contemplating one's own mortality may be uncomfortable, creating a will is a responsible and thoughtful way to protect your loved ones.

A will, also known as a last will and testament, is a legal document that outlines how your assets should be distributed upon your passing. It serves several important purposes:

- **Appointing an executor:** Your will allows you to name an executor who will manage your estate, including distributing assets, paying debts, and handling other administrative tasks.
- **Asset distribution:** You can specify who should inherit your property, assets, and personal belongings.
- **Guardianship and Trustees:** If you have minor children, a will enables you to designate a guardian who will be responsible for their care in the event of your death, along with a trustee who will handle your children's money.
- **Minimize disputes:** A well-drafted will can help prevent conflicts and legal battles among your heirs by clearly stating your intentions.

Before you start drafting your will, gather the necessary information and documents, including:

- **A list of your assets:** Make a detailed inventory of your assets, including real estate, bank accounts, investments, personal belongings, and valuable items.
- **Debts and liabilities:** Document any outstanding debts or financial obligations, such as mortgages, loans, or credit card balances.
- **Beneficiaries:** Determine who you want to inherit your assets and the specific items or amounts you wish to leave to each beneficiary.
- **Guardianship/Trustee preferences:** If you have minor children, decide who you would like to appoint as their legal guardian and trustee.

Selecting the right executor is crucial, as this person will be responsible for carrying out the instructions in your will. Your executor should be trustworthy, organized, and willing to fulfill their responsibilities. Make sure to discuss your choice with them beforehand to ensure they are willing to accept the role.

After having your will drafted, remember to let your executor know where you store your will. You should keep your will in a safe place at home, along with a list of your accounts, deeds, life insurance policies and other assets. Drafting a will is a vital step in planning for the future and safeguarding your legacy. You can ensure that your assets are distributed according to your wishes and minimize potential disputes among your heirs. Don't wait until it's too late; take control of your estate planning today to provide peace of mind for yourself and your loved ones.

Local 237 Legal Services Plan can provide expert guidance and ensure that your will complies with New York State law. As part of your Welfare Fund benefit, we will draft your will at no cost to you. Call (212) 924-1220. ■



A Back-to-School Invitation!

By **David Bonington, CFP®**

Financial Planner, Stacey Braun Associates, Inc.

You will probably agree with me that Summer seemed to pass very quickly this year. School is back in session. Daylight slips away shortly after 7pm, and days are once again technically shorter than nights. Pretty soon the leaves will change color. Surroundings like these mean that time is growing short for any items on 2023's "To Do List" which have not yet been crossed out. However, if one of those items is (or could still be) one or more individual meetings with a Certified Financial Planner™, then please read on.

Because many of you work in school-related capacities, I'll use this column to extend a personal, "Back-to-School" invitation if you want to learn more about any of the topics mentioned below (or any of the related topics which appear on Local 237's Member Benefits webpage under "Financial Counseling").

Before suggesting some topics, I should emphasize three things about the benefit. First, it is a covered benefit: there is no cost to a member. Secondly, everything discussed is private and strictly confidential. Finally, there is never any sales pressure because the firm does not sell financial products to Local 237 members. You will never be required to purchase anything.

Now back to the benefit itself. Because the arrangement allows up to six hours of annual consultation time, you can structure meetings to address topics in the order of their importance to you.

For example:

- You can schedule one-topic-at-a-time "tutorials" on matters such as budgeting or debt and credit card management.
- Discuss saving for a home, and estimating the amount of a mortgage a bank might lend – as well as discussing the process involved in buying a home.
- Learn about a tax-advantaged way to save for college.
- Use 1-2 sessions for a "crash course" in stocks and bonds – learning the key differences and advantages of each and improving your ability to make investment decisions for your retirement account.
- Preview of the Pension election choice which will be placed in front of you at retirement, or learn how Social Security payouts grow each year one waits to draw beyond Age 62.

By the way, these last two matters - whether to share a Pension with a beneficiary, and when to begin to draw Social Security – involve an analysis of one's unique circumstances, and should not be made quickly or without careful review and reflection.

As I think you can see, the benefit is a valuable one, and midday or late-afternoon meetings can be arranged to suit even the most challenging schedules. Why wait to take advantage of it? "School" is Open! ■

Free, confidential sessions with a Stacey Braun planner are available to all active and retired Local 237 members. They can be arranged by calling 1-888-949-1925. No financial products are sold and there is never sales pressure.



JPEG vs PDF

By **Karla Steinberg, LMSW**

Membership Social Worker

As the social worker for the welfare fund, I get requests for assistance with bills, arrears, and other kinds of financial hardship. On occasion, someone gets a document they don't understand, and I'm asked to explain it. Sometimes I need to see these documents, or others (bills, notices from court, landlords, etc.). One way that members can aid in the process is by sending those documents as a PDF, or *Portable Document Format*. A PDF is the highest quality image you can send, and it is printer friendly. There are some free apps for both Android and iPhone platforms that are useful in communicating with outside sources (HRA, Local 237, Housing Connects) and any organization that asks you for documents. More and more agencies are requesting PDFs, specifically.

If you don't have a smartphone but still need to send PDFs, most copy machines have a scan-to-email capacity in PDF.

Whether you have an Android or an iPhone, you can use software that is already on your phone to take a photo and make it a PDF. If you prefer an app, there are several free apps for your smartphone as well. Genius Scan, AdobeScan, and CamScanner are just a handful that offer free versions. iPhone users can utilize the Notes feature, and "scan" from there.

Here are the steps for iPhone:

1. Open "Notes" and select/create a new one.
2. Tap camera, and tap "scan documents."
3. If your phone is on "automatic mode" it will scan automatically. If not, take a "photo" of your document with the camera, and tap "save" or add additional scans as needed. You can email or upload the document to the appropriate party.

Steps for Android phone:

1. Open the Google Drive app and tap on the + button at the bottom right corner of your screen.
2. Tap "scan" option for creating a PDF.
3. Place your document into focus and hit the shutter/photo button to capture the image.
4. Tap "ok," and then "next." It will ask to save it and give you the option of renaming the file.
5. Save and email or text as needed.

On either smartphone, you can edit the image (cropping, making it black and white or color, getting rid of shadows, making it lighter, etc.). Once you have the documents you need, you can send in an email or upload to whomever, and the receiving party will be able to look at it and print it as if it were an original document in their possession.

You may be asking yourself, "Why not a jpeg? Doesn't a picture do the same thing?" The short answer is no. Jpeg files get blurry and harder to read as you make them larger, whereas pdfs are of a standardized quality, which means they are received across different platforms in the same way. This means that whether you upload, email, or text it, whoever is receiving it is receiving a standardized (consistent) way, regardless of the platform. Try it out! ■



Domestic Violence Is Never OK

By **Edith Johnston, LCSW**

Deputy Director, Retiree Division

Early in my professional career, I worked at a domestic violence assistance program. I didn't have much experience with people who were abused, but the stories I heard paired with the training I was receiving in school and gave me a better understanding and insight into why some people stay in abusive relationships. However, regardless of the circumstances, it is never okay to stay in an abuse relationship.

According to the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men have experienced some form of violence by an intimate partner. Some people may not even know that what they are experiencing is domestic abuse. Recognizing you're in an abuse relationship can be the key to getting help.

Domestic violence can take many forms, including emotional, sexual and physical abuse and threats of abuse. Abuse by a partner can happen to anyone, but domestic violence is most often directed toward women. Domestic violence can happen in heterosexual and same-sex relationships.

Abusive relationships always involve an imbalance of power and control. An abuser uses intimidating, hurtful words and behaviors to control a partner.

It might not be easy to identify domestic violence at first. While some relationships are clearly abusive from the outset, abuse often starts subtly and gets worse over time. You might be experiencing domestic violence if you're in a relationship with someone who:

- Calls you names, insults you or puts you down.
- Prevents or discourages you from going to work or school or seeing family members or friends.
- Tries to control how you spend money, where you go, what medicines you take or what you wear.
- Acts jealous or possessive or constantly accuses you of being unfaithful.
- Gets angry when drinking alcohol or using drugs.
- Threatens you with violence or a weapon.
- Hits, kicks, shoves, slaps, chokes, or otherwise hurts you, your children, or your pets.
- Forces you to have sex or engage in sexual acts against your will.
- Blames you for his or her violent behavior or tells you that you deserve it.

If you're in a same-sex relationship or if you're bisexual or transgender, you might also be experiencing abuse if you're in a relationship with someone who:

- Threatens to tell friends, family, colleagues, or community members your sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Tells you that authorities won't help you because of your sexuality or gender identity.
- Justifies abuse by questioning your sexuality or gender identity.

Where to find help:

In an emergency, call 911 or your local emergency number or law enforcement agency. The following resources also can help:

- **Someone you trust.** Turn to a friend, loved one, neighbor, co-worker, or religious or spiritual adviser for support.
- **National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800-799-SAFE (800-799-7233; toll-free).** Call the hotline for crisis intervention and referrals to resources, such as women's shelters.
- **Your health care provider.** A health care provider typically will treat injuries and can refer you to safe housing and other local resources. ■

"UNIÓN FUERTE" SOMOS UN MOVIMIENTO NO SÓLO UN MOMENTO



En esta edición de Newline, anunciamos el final del verano y el comienzo del otoño. Para algunos de nosotros, el cambio se recibe con un poco de tristeza — algunos odian ver la puesta del sol tan temprano de béisbol llega a su fin —, mientras que, para otros, el otoño se recibe con entusiasmo, desde la emoción de Halloween hasta la planificación del menú de Acción de Gracias y el acopio de los regalos de Navidad. También es la época en que celebramos el movimiento obrero, no sólo con un día libre en el trabajo, sino con desfiles y homenajes a nuestros hermanos y hermanas sindicalistas y a los líderes obreros de toda la nación que han luchado por la igualdad y la dignidad en el lugar de trabajo.

El sindicato Local 237 desea agradecer a nuestros miembros sus incansables esfuerzos en nombre de tantos neoyorquinos, cuyas vidas y medios de subsistencia dependen de que los organismos municipales funcionen sin problemas a pesar de los desafíos. Como dijo el expresidente Barack Obama "Cuando los tiempos son difíciles, no nos rendimos. Nos levantamos". Eso es precisamente lo que usted hizo y sigue haciendo. Ya sea durante el apogeo de la pandemia, un momento de dolor repentino e inimaginable que sacudió al mundo entero y a nuestro propio mundo personal, o en el presente, con desafíos históricos de la Madre Naturaleza y una crisis migratoria fuera de control, los miembros del sindicato, y especialmente los trabajadores del sector público, no se rindieron; se levantaron y se pusieron a trabajar. Estos trabajadores municipales esenciales mantienen en funcionamiento la Ciudad y el Estado, y se les debe un gigantesco: "Gracias".

Desafortunadamente, la afiliación sindical en todo el país ha disminuido desde su año máximo en 1954, en torno al 40%, a sólo el 10,8% en la actualidad. Nueva York se encuentra entre los estados con mayor número de trabajadores sindicalizados (cerca del 24%) y alrededor del 70% de la fuerza laboral sindicalizada se encuentra en el sector público. Esto es consistente con el hecho de que el porcentaje nacional de afiliación sindical en el sector público es aproximadamente cinco veces mayor que el del sector privado, siendo los afroamericanos el componente más grande de ese grupo. Pero hoy, después de décadas de declive, la afiliación sindical tanto en el sector público como en el privado está aumentando lentamente. La crisis de Covid-19 influyó en este factor, cuando tantos trabajadores, asustados y frustrados por la percibida falta de asistencia de nuestro gobierno y de las instituciones médicas, acudieron a sus sindicatos en busca de ayuda. La notable victoria de los trabajadores de Amazon en Staten Island para sindicalizarse es un ejemplo. No es poca cosa: hace sólo tres años, este recién creado "sindicato de trabajadores

de Amazon" no existía. Un trabajador de los almacenes de Amazon en Staten Island, Christian Smalls, encabezó una huelga en protesta por las deplorables condiciones laborales relacionadas con Covid. Las notas de la reunión del consejo general de Amazon decían de Smalls: "Él no es inteligente, ni elocuente, y en la medida en que la prensa quiera enfocarse en él frente a nosotros, estaremos en una posición de relaciones públicas mucho más fuerte". ¡GUAU! Ellos no sólo desestimaron a Smalls por considerarlo insignificante, sino que condescendieron arrogantemente a que un joven negro sin educación pudiera ser utilizado para sindicalizarse. Amazon le despidió, pero su estrategia resultó contraproducente y las repercusiones se han dejado sentir en toda la nación.

Aunque Ralph Chaplin escribió la canción "Solidaridad para Siempre" en 1915 para los Trabajadores Industriales de la Primera Guerra Mundial, su estribillo es tan relevante e importante hoy como lo era hace más de 100 años:

"Cuando la inspiración de la unión corre por la sangre de los trabajadores, no puede haber poder más grande bajo el sol; sin embargo, qué fuerza en la tierra es más débil que la débil fuerza de uno solo, pero la unión nos hace fuertes. Solidaridad para siempre, solidaridad para siempre, solidaridad para siempre, porque la unión nos hace fuertes".

Así que, mientras usted guarda el balón de playa y el traje de baño y comienza a pensar en su disfraz de Halloween, no olvidemos que en otoño reconocemos tradicionalmente el trabajo del trabajador... especialmente aquellos del sector público. Y, cuando vea las palabras "Hecho en Unión" (Union Made), eso significa "Unión Fuerte" (Union Strong). Somos un movimiento, no sólo un momento.

Hubo un tiempo, no hace mucho, en que el Partido Demócrata era considerado el partido político de la clase trabajadora y el Partido Republicano estaba alineado con las grandes empresas y los ricos. Sin embargo, una encuesta reciente del New York Times/Sienna reveló, por primera vez en la historia, resultados que indicaban un cambio de rumbo. El Partido Republicano tiende hacia una coalición multirracial de la clase trabajadora, mientras que los demócratas contaban con un mayor apoyo entre los graduados universitarios blancos. Muchos se preguntan qué conclusiones se pueden sacar de esto. ¿Tenemos ahora un partido progresista del establecimiento (establishment) y un partido conservador antiestablecimiento (anti-establishment)? Para complicar aún más las cosas, los recientes hallazgos indican que muchos votantes no están afiliados a ninguno de los dos partidos principales, y las encuestas indican que el 62% de los estadounidenses están a favor de que haya un tercer partido.

Todo esto debería dar lugar a unas elecciones presiden-

ciales muy interesantes en 2024. Las preguntas abundan: ¿Cómo serán los candidatos? ¿Qué tendrán que presentar para conseguir nuestro voto? Con la desaparición de tantas directrices y líneas habituales, ¿cuál es el terreno del juego? ¿Y cómo se comunicarán? Eso también ha cambiado. Los discursos de campaña en la parte trasera de un vagón de tren son una reliquia del pasado. Incluso los grandes mítines televisados tienen sus limitaciones: son estupendos para la vista, pero en su mayoría son "sermones al coro" que no consiguen realmente muchos nuevos conversos. X (antes Twitter) y otras plataformas de redes sociales son las calcomanías para los parachoques de hoy en día... menos costosas, no se necesita un automóvil y tienen la capacidad de llegar a millones de personas con un clic en un teléfono celular mediante personas influyentes que hacen que sumar seguidores sea un juego. Y, ahora que los baby boomers, que dominan a la población votante con conocimientos políticos, empiezan a disminuir en número, este medio de elección se convertirá en una herramienta legítima y poderosa: un hacedor de reyes o reinas.

Pero con tantos cambios, y muchos de ellos de dudoso valor positivo, hay uno que ofrece cierta esperanza real para el futuro. Después de años de descenso en las cifras, la afiliación sindical está ahora en aumento. En la actualidad, hay muchos ejemplos de trabajadores de industrias de todo el país que antes se consideraban que no eran sindicables o que mostraban poco interés por el movimiento sindical (desde Amazon a Starbucks y McDonalds) que ahora se están inscribiendo como miembros. Y el impulso sindical viene desde dentro. Los trabajadores hablan con sus compañeros. Ellos conocen los problemas. Ven las soluciones. Y sus compañeros de trabajo los escuchan. ¡Hablando de "influenciadores" (influencers)!

Así que, quizás en esta gran época de cambios -esta época de definiciones alteradas en los diccionarios y cambios de roles- los sindicatos, que se han mantenido firmes en lo que representan, ahora se enfrentan a un camino en el que se habían perdido, y a una organización recién creada y un vacío de nueva creación que pueden llenar. Abarcamos todos los sectores demográficos, ideologías políticas y contamos con la red de comunicaciones y las habilidades (nuevas y antiguas) para generar impacto. Como dice el viejo refrán: "Cuanto más cambian las cosas, más permanecen igual". Cuando se aplica a los sindicatos, eso lo dice todo. Hemos soportado a los que atacan a los sindicatos, a los que los destruyen, las sentencias judiciales desfavorables y a los nombramientos contrarios a los sindicatos, pero los trabajadores saben instintivamente que estamos de su lado. Nuestra tarea por delante es hacer que todos los estadounidenses lo sepan también. ■



CONSULTE EL DESPLEGABLE CENTRAL PARA VER FOTOS ADICIONALES



With Deepest Sympathy

On behalf of
President Gregory Floyd,
the Executive Board and Staff:

We offer sincere condolences to the families of our members who have passed away and to our members who have lost loved ones.

The Education and Training Department celebrates our members and Shop Stewards!

By Shanell Grayson

Director of Training and Education

Labor Day is the time each year that we collectively pause to say 'Bravo!' to working class Americans for a job well done. At Local 237, we strive to celebrate our members not just on Labor Day, but every day of the year. After all, you keep New York City's public schools, college campuses, housing developments, correction facilities, hospitals, structures, and buildings clean, safe and operational. That is no easy task! We appreciate you.

The Education Department's primary function is to support you in these important roles by advancing your personal and professional skills. Through our courses — such as computer classes, technical trainings, and civil service preparatory study groups — we have helped tens of thousands of members reach their goals. With your continued participation and feedback, class attendance has grown tremendously. We hope you will continue to take advantage of this valuable benefit.

One of the courses I'd like to take a moment to highlight is Local 237's yearly Shop Steward Training. These annual meetings reinforce our stewards and liaisons' knowledge of the union contract so that they can disseminate information, report safety violations, and protect our members from unjust discipline. We have spent a considerable amount of time revamping the '23/24 class and we are excited to offer our stewards robust and rewarding training very soon.

There aren't enough words to express how much we value and appreciate our members and shop stewards. We hope that our ongoing dedication to enriching and educating our members can repay but a fraction of what you have contributed to this great city. If any of our members and shop stewards are interested in participating in Local 237's educational classes, we hope that you will register using the QR code provided.

As always, we look forward to serving you!



(l-r) Shanell Grayson, Director; Geraldine Carpentier, Education Coordinator; and Katie Grate, Assistant Director.



Five Benefits For Which You Can Apply Using SSA.gov

By Thomas McMahon

District Manager, Social Security in Downtown Manhattan

We continue to make it easier for you to access our programs and benefits. Our website offers a convenient way to apply for benefits online.

Here are 5 ways you can apply for benefits using ssa.gov.

- **Retirement or Spouse's Benefits** – You must be at least 61 years and 9 months and want your benefits to start in no more than 4 months. Apply at www.ssa.gov/retirement.
- **Disability Benefits** – You can use our online application, available at www.ssa.gov/benefits/disability to apply for disability benefits if you:
 - Are age 18 or older.
 - Are not currently receiving benefits on your own Social Security record.
 - Are unable to work because of a medical condition that is expected to last at least 12 months or result in death.
 - Have not been denied disability benefits in the last 60 days. If your application was recently denied, our online appeal application is a starting point to request a review of the determination we made. Please visit www.ssa.gov/apply/appeal-decision-we-made.
- **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)** – SSI provides monthly payments to adults and children with a disability or blindness who have income and resources below specific financial limits. SSI payments are also made to people age 65 and older without disabilities who meet the financial qualifications. If you meet certain requirements, you may begin the process online by letting us know you would like to apply for SSI at www.ssa.gov/ssi. If you do not have access to the internet, you can call your local Social Security office to make an appointment to apply.
- **Medicare** – Medicare is a federal health insurance program for:
 - People age 65 or older.
 - Some people younger than 65 who have disabilities.
 - People with end-stage renal disease or Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS).
 If you are not already receiving Social Security benefits, you should apply for Medicare 3 months before turning age 65 at www.ssa.gov/medicare.
- **Extra Help with Medicare Prescription Drug Costs** – The Extra Help program helps with the cost of your prescription drugs, like deductibles and copays. People who need assistance with the cost of medications can apply for *Extra Help* at www.ssa.gov/medicare/part-d-extra-help.

Please share this information with those who need it. ■

STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



Lyn-Thina Rush – Caretaker J

Hello, my name is Lyn-Thina Rush. I'm a single parent in this challenging world. Even though I didn't let the odds beat me, I started working for NYCHA. My supervisor at Surfside always encouraged us to take classes to better ourselves. By doing so, I was able to obtain certificates and I even passed the Supervisor of Caretaker exam. Recently, I enrolled in the HPT Certificate Program offered by Local 237. I must admit, before entering this program, I didn't even know what a screwdriver was! Most of my classmates are women, and we are motivated and determined. These classes are very effective and most importantly, the teachers are amazing! The lessons are easy to comprehend. Right now, my classmates and I are feeling confident. I'm sure if we keep going at this rate, we will pass this class with no problem. I believe this is the best program for NYCHA workers. You can climb the ladder and make a career change for the better. I am very thankful for this opportunity to advance my career.

I have a non-profit organization named "Women On The Rise". We encourage women to do any and everything that a man can do. So, I'm feeling confident in my HPT class. It has motivated me and other female co-workers as well. I would like to say thank you to Local 237's Education Department, on behalf of the HPT class, for giving us this invaluable opportunity.



Cristofer Pache - CUNY Sergeant

My name is Cristofer Pache and I'm a sergeant at the Lehman College Campus. I wanted to take a moment to express my gratitude to Local 237 for the remarkable class that was provided to us for the CUNY sergeants exam #2073. I attended the workshop in Hostos Community College every Saturday for the months of April and May and had a great experience.

Our instructor, Public Safety Director Arnaldo Bernabe, was excellent. He prepared us with an abundance of valuable information and in-field expertise relevant to the exam. Not only did I enjoy how informative the classes were but I also appreciated how available the teamsters union representatives are in answering any questions the class had. And although, the class was a two-hour session, it was so informative and well put together that it didn't feel that long.

Thank you Local 237 Educational Staff members, Director Bernabe and Lieutenant Rodriguez for providing the CUNY Public Safety Department with all the available resources to make our experience worthwhile. My colleagues and I look forward to more courses and workshops in the near future.

Interested in any of the Education Department's FREE Courses?

Email: training@local237.org • Call: 212-807-0550

CIVIL SERVICE EXAM PREP CLASSES

- Housekeeper (September)
- Resident Building Superintendent (Oct)
- Sup. of Traffic Device Maintainer (Oct)
- Special Officer (November)
- Supervisor of Stock Worker (November)
- Bridge Operator (December)
- Housing Exterminator (December)
- Heating Plant Technician (January)

SCHOLARSHIPS

- Teamsters International Scholarship
 - > High School Seniors
 - > JRHMS.org
- Union Plus Scholarship
 - > Members and their families
 - > Unionplus.org

COURSES AT PARTICIPATING UNIONS

- GED Prep
 - > 1199: (212) 894-4362
 - > UAW: (212) 228-0041
- English and Spanish Courses
 - > 1199: (212) 494-0525

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSES

- Basic Education/Soft Skills (Sept.)
- Beginning Computer Skills (Sept.)
- Shop Steward Training (Nov.) (For current Shop Stewards)
- Fundamentals of Heating Plant Operations Course (Dec.)
- Advanced Computer Skills (Jan.)
- Technical Skills for Civil Service Employees (Jan.)

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSES

- Defensive Driving NY (August)
 - > 10% off insurance
 - > 4 points off license

Scan the QR Code to register now.



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DATED MATERIAL

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