



Member Newsletter
Volume VII, Issue 2
December 2022

Joe DiTucci, President
Jacquelyn Lanpher, 1st Vice President
Rob Allen, 2nd Vice President
Amanda Van Huben, Secretary
Cheri Hall, Treasurer

President's Message

Building Visits – In November, I had the opportunity to visit each building for informal conversations with our members. I enjoyed the discussions as they give me an opportunity to hear directly from members. I do take all the feedback and discuss with our leadership team and try to develop action steps. One of the pressing issues, especially at the elementary and middle school level, is the substitute shortage issue and service providers needing to cover classes, often at the expense of their own duties. I have asked our elementary and middle school building reps to reach out to teachers to keep track of the number of times they have subbed in their building from Thanksgiving to Winter break. I will be sharing this data with Ms. Swann at our January meeting. My goal is to schedule more visitations in each building before February break.

Teacher Shortage – One of the reasons we have a substitute shortage is that we don't have enough college students entering teacher preparatory programs. Ms. Swann and I have discussed this, and we are in the initial stages of developing a program to develop more interest in the profession. We have engaged in meetings with school districts, local colleges and with Jolene DiBrango, Executive Vice President of NYSUT. Ms. DiBrango has started a program called Take a Look at Teaching. The program provides grant money to help local unions partner with school districts and community organizations to develop programs that generate interest in the teaching profession. Our meeting with Ms. DiBrango on December 19 was a very informative meeting where Ms. DiBrango shared the program and many of the great things that other local unions have put in place in their districts to create interest in the teaching profession. I'm looking forward to continuing the collaborative process with Ms. Swann and will be in touch as we develop a program in Spencerport.

Outreach – Our recently completed Coat, Hat and Mitten drive is a wonderful example how we give back to our community. Jackie Lanpher from the STA and Spencerport Central Schools Office Personnel Association (SCSOPA) president Mary Jean McQuilken joined to organize a wonderful event. We are always looking for ways to support our community and will have more details on a new initiative as we get into the new year.

It certainly has been a busy 2022, and it does not look like things will slow down in 2023. As the year ends, I do hope you get a chance to relax a little and count your blessings, for while things may not all be as we wish, we certainly have much to be thankful for.

In Solidarity,

Joe



Local News

Spencerport Central Schools Office Personnel Association

COAT, HAT & MITTEN DRIVE



Our annual coat, hat, and mitten drive was an even bigger success than it was last year! We were able to donate an entire cargo van to the Dimitri House. (Mary's Place Outreach was not accepting donations this year). MaryJean McQuilkin (SCSOPA President) and I would like to thank everyone that donated, as well as Mr. Beh's Transition class at the High School, for laundering and organizing the donations.

We have an extremely generous staff in each of our schools. THANK YOU!

Ms. Jacquelyn Lanpher

First Vice-President, STA

New Fundraiser Alert!

The STA will be holding a raffle after the holidays!

One lucky member could win two tickets to see Bored Teachers live on February 22, 2023! More details to follow!

Ms. Jacquelyn Lanpher

First Vice-President, STA



NYSUT Women's Committee



In the years since its launch, the 82-member NYSUT Women's Committee has sparked an inclusive women's movement within our union.

Scores of women walked under its banner at women's marches statewide. The committee has established a grant to support inclusive gender justice, and developed resources to support, educate and mentor women. Each time the women gather they try to raise awareness, build capacity and take action on the path toward women's equality.

Co-chaired by NYSUT Executive Vice President Jolene DiBrango, and NYSUT members Aisha Cook and Leslie Rose, the NYSUT Women's Committee has four main goals: encourage more locals to develop in-house women's committee chapters; educate female members about the work of the union; highlight women-specific issues, including inequities in pay, health care and education; and involve more union women in leadership roles.

Locally, the Rochester Area Women's Committee meets monthly to empower women in the Rochester region. If you are interested in joining the committee, the group meets ***the first Thursday of each month at the Rochester NYSUT building at 4:15pm. If you would like additional information, contact high school STA member, Bridget Herrmann.*** Plans are currently underway to celebrate Women's history month in March and a regional gathering in the fall.



Second VP Report: The New York State Retirement System

By Rob Allen

A couple of people have told me that my newsletter entries can be a bit dense to read, and guess what? This one will be no different! Just kidding (kind of...). This edition will be about the New York State Retirement System, and in our next issue, I plan to go into the retirement benefits included in our actual contract, as well as talk a little bit about Roth IRAs and 403Bs. If you have any other retirement questions, feel free to email me and I may include them the next edition.

If you don't feel like reading this whole article, here is the Reader's Digest Version:

1. You can find a ton of valuable information on the NYSTRS web site, and you can also contact them directly if you have any specific questions. They are incredibly helpful.
2. Check your projected retirement benefits by reading over your Benefits Profile, and consider signing up to go paperless on the NYSTRS web site.
3. If you worked in the public sector before joining the NYSTRS, you may be able to purchase that prior service to increase your pension payouts. It's really easy, but do it ASAP because it gets more expensive as time goes on.
4. Social Security is good for now, but unless Congress steps up before 2035, it won't be able to make full payouts.

And for those of you who want a slightly deeper dive, here it goes!

The New York State Retirement System, or NYSTRS as it is often referred to, is our pension system, which is one of the top ten largest pension systems in the country. It's funded partially through teacher and district contributions, but it's mostly funded through investments (about 85%). Joe DiTucci and I are our district's delegates to the NYSTRS, and in early November, we attended the Delegates Convention in Saratoga, where we were given an overview of the pension system, as well as some updates. Below is some information that might be helpful to you, but if you have any specific questions, the people who work at the NYSTRS are incredibly helpful, so you can also contact them.

Benefits Profile: Your Benefits Profile is that paper packet you get once a year from NYSTRS that tells you all about your personalized retirement benefits. Each year, I would read mine over once and then throw it in a folder in my desk, only to forget about it. However, I recently created an account on the NYSTRS web site so that I could go paperless and access my information whenever and wherever I wanted, which I found very convenient.

Below is an overview of what the Benefits Profile includes, as taken from NYSTRS.org:

- Salary data as reported by the member's employer(s) for the previous school year.
- A service credit summary and history broken down by school year.
- A review of member contributions (if any) and loan information.
- Benefit eligibility and calculation.
- Projections of retirement benefits under various scenarios.
- An in-service death benefit estimate.
- A list of the member's beneficiaries.
- A summary of all key NYSTRS benefits, including the advantages of attaining key service credit milestones.

Purchasing Prior Service: If you had a job in the public sector before becoming a teacher and joining the pension system, you may be able to purchase that time and add it to your current pension, which would increase the amount of money you would get in retirement. Basically, you fill out a form and submit it to NYSTRS, and they determine whether or not it is eligible. It's a pretty simple process. However, the key word here is "prior." I joined the NYSTRS during my senior year of college while substitute teaching, and then I lifeguarded at a town pool that summer. Since I was already a member of the NYSTRS, that time could not be purchased since it was not "prior" service.

Here are some other key things to keep in mind:

- You have to be in the retirement system for 2 years before you can file for prior service.
- It gets more expensive the longer you wait, so if you are planning to do it, do it ASAP!
- If you are in tiers 3-6, you can't claim out of state service.

Here is a link to the prior service forms: <https://nystrs.org/Forms/Prior-Service-Forms>

Social Security Update: Social Security will only be able to pay out 80% of benefits promised in 2035 without some sort of reform. The reason for this is due to changing demographics, and it won't go away without Congress taking action. Here are some possible ways Social Security could be fixed:

- Raise full retirement age beyond 67
- Raise the cap on wages subject to payroll taxes
- Raise social security payroll tax rate
- Reduce benefits for certain income brackets
- Adjust the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) calculation

If you made it this far, I hope this information was helpful! I also wish you and your families a restful, stress-free holiday break!



Upcoming Events

Executive Council Meetings

January 19th

February 16th

March 16th

April 20th

May 18th

Executive Council
meetings take place at
Cosgrove in Room 626
at 4:00 PM.



Happy News from the STA



After 19 years of teaching in the district, the Hoerner family purchased a home in the Spencerport school district effective January 2023. Their kids will be attending Cosgrove (6th) and Bernabi (4th, 2nd, 2nd). Let's go Rangers! Courtney Hoerner is a science teacher at Cosgrove.



Kelly Placito welcomed a baby girl, Emma Lynn Placito, on born 6.13.22. Emma is such a little love and is enjoying having her mama home this year! Kelly teaches math at Cosgrove.



Caroline Bodensteiner's oldest son, Brett, graduated early from Kent State University on Saturday December 17, 2022. He earned his Bachelor of Science in Flight Technology. He has been hired by Jet Blue airlines as a commercial airline pilot. Caroline teaches 2nd grade at Munn.



Executive Council 2022-2023

Officers:

- President Joe DiTucci
- 1st VP Jacquelyn Lanpher
- 2nd VP Rob Allen
- PAC Chairs Rob Allen and Sue Chatterton
- Secretary Amanda Van Huben
- Treasurer Cheri Hall

PAC Representatives:

- Bernabi Laurie Palmateer
- Canal View Elissa Kingsbury
- Munn Stacy Lonardo
- Taylor Danielle Blossom
- Cosgrove Janeen Henry
- Wilson Dan Pincelli

Delegates to the NYSUT Representative Assembly:

- Rob Allen
- Joseph DiTucci
- Jacquelyn Lanpher
- Laurie Palmateer

Building Representatives:

Bernabi:

- Ryan Ewanow
- Jennifer Ophardt

Canal View:

- Sue Chatterton
- Elissa Kingsbury

Munn:

- Colleen Lachance
- Stacy Lonardo

Taylor:

- Danielle Blossom
- Rob Pursel

Cosgrove:

- Frank Cafarella
- Janeen Henry
- Suellan Morton
- Emmy Thevanesan

Wilson:

- Bridget Herrmann
- Steve Kelley
- Natalie Kirisits
- Dan Pincelli
- Rachel Sherman

Nurses:

- Wendy Corona
- Colleen Goldstone

TAs:

- Tina Pocock

Building Planning Team Representatives:

Bernabi:

- Laurie Palmateer

Canal View:

- Sue Chatterton

Munn:

- Stacy Lonardo

Terry Taylor:

- Danielle Blossom

Cosgrove:

- Emmy Thevanesan

Wilson:

- Steve Kelley

Social Media Coordinator:

- Bridget Herrmann

Newsletter Editor:

- Emmy Thevanesan

Webmaster:

- Bryan Swanson

Political Action:

- Ryan Ewanow

Life is complicated. NYSUT Member Benefits can help.

PEER SUPPORT LINE



The Peer Support Line is a new service available through NYSUT Member Benefits that's offered at no cost to all NYSUT members and their families.



The Peer Support Line can help with:

- Finding mental health services or support groups
- Answering questions about Medicare and Medicaid
- Managing work-related stress
- Providing support to new members
- Sourcing elder care or caregiving services
- Assisting with marital, relationship or child rearing concerns
- Reducing feelings of isolation and loneliness

The Peer Support Line is a partnership between NYSUT Member Benefits and Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care.

For more information or assistance, call toll-free 844-444-0152.

Nov/Dec 2022