

CSEA Unit 9200 Newsletter

FALL 2008

WE NEED YOU!

TO ALL MEMBERS:

Please sign up for **EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS** of the latest **CSEA Unit 9200 Information and Events** so we can keep in contact with you!

Visit the 'Contact Us' page at www.CSEA9200.com to be added to the list!

Member Participation

Members Attend "1,000 Days Without a Contract" Rally and March Held on September 16th

More than 500 Unit 9200 Members and their families attended the "1,000 Days Without a Contract" Rally and March events held in White Plains on Tuesday, September 16th, which ended with an announcement of a tentative contract agreement, showing the power of member solidarity.

The first event was a rally held in front of the Michaelian County Office Building on Martine Avenue at lunchtime. Members walked in front of the office building and chanted their frustrations at still being without a fair contract after almost 1,000 days. The record numbers of members already there cheered when multiple busloads from the Yonkers DSS Office arrived to join the demonstration. We were also joined by members of the Westchester-Putnam Central Labor Body of the AFL-CIO, as well as State Senator Ruth Hassell Thompson, who addressed the members and assured them that she was "four-square behind them."

The second event was a march in the evening beginning at the County Court House and ending at the County Office Building with another demonstration, which concluded with an announcement by Unit 9200 President Jack McPhillips that a Tentative Contract Agreement had been reached with the County. "Given the economic climate, this is a worthwhile, acceptable deal," McPhillips said.



GET INVOLVED! UPCOMING EVENTS:

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP OPEN MEETING Tuesday, December 2nd

CSEA Local 860 Office
595 West Hartsdale Avenue (Route 100A near intersection with Route 100B)
White Plains (across from Mighty Joe Young's Restaurant)
Light dinner is served @ 5:30PM / Meeting starts @ 6:00PM

Unit 9200 Holiday Party Friday, December 5th

Surf Club, Davenport Avenue, New Rochelle
Cocktails at 7:00PM / Dinner and Dancing 8:00PM to 12:00AM
Members \$35 / Non-Members \$65
Reservation Deadline: November 28th

-- Please call the Unit 9200 Office at (914) 995-2151 to RSVP and for more information --

Highlights

- Tuition Reimbursement
- Union Stewards
- CSEA Activist Profile: Grace Ann Aloisi
- Educational & Governmental Employee Federal Credit Union
- CSEA Workshops: Shop Steward
- Medical Insurance: You Have Choices
- AFSCME Scholarships
- '1,000 Days Without a Contract' Rally and March
- Unit 9200 Holiday Party

In Each Issue

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| FEATURE STORY | 1 |
| Your Benefits | 2 |
| Your Union | |
| CSEA Profile | |
| At Your Service... | 3 |
| Your Rights | |
| Member Participation | 4 |
| UPCOMING EVENTS | |

Communications & Public Relations Committee:

- Kimberly Gotzen (DSS)
- Chair / Designer
- Teresa Rella (DPW)
- Co-Chair
- Kathryn McCoach (DSS)
- Editor
- Gwen Hill (Health)
- Secretary
- Keturah Hadley (Probation)
- Contributing Editor
- Elio Giuliani (Finance)
- Unit Board Liaison / Contributing Editor

Our Union Represents Over 3800 Employees of Westchester County Government

'Our **MISSION** with this Newsletter is to reach out to Unit 9200 members to provide union-related information, updates and resources to empower us to make informed decisions that strengthen the membership as a whole.'

CONTRACT UPDATE

NEW 6-YEAR CONTRACT RATIFIED BY THE UNIT 9200 MEMBERSHIP

YES - 2,659

NO - 226

Highlights*:

Contract Length:	6-Year Agreement from January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2011 (including Retroactive Adjustment)
Salary Raises:	2006 - 3% ; 2007 - 3% ; 2008 - 3% ; 2009 - 3.25% ; 2010 - 4% ; 2011 - 4%
Longevity:	Increases by \$200 starting January 1, 2010
Dental/Optical Benefit:	Increases by \$200 on January 1, 2011
Employee Contributions for POMCO Health Benefits:	NONE
POMCO Drug Co-Pays:	ELIMINATED for GENERIC Drugs ; Increase in Non-Generic Drugs (Be certain to insist that your doctor find a suitable generic when possible)
Sick Bank:	Deficit is removed and all Sick Days contributed by members are available for use for retroactive reimbursement to those previously denied, as well as for future use
Retirement Medical Insurance Window:	Opportunity for employees with 15 years of County service , and eligible to retire with a non-reduced pension per NYSERS rules , to retire with 100% Single and 80% Family Health Insurance Coverage through POMCO. Window closes December 31, 2010.

The Unit 9200 Negotiation team considered the effect on all 3,800 members in insisting on an agreement that did not involve contributions for POMCO health insurance, that included compounded salary raises each year, and that recognized the high cost of living in the Westchester County area.

All members were given a full month to receive and send in the contract ballot. Ballots were counted November 3rd at 10:00 AM at the offices of American Arbitration Association by AAA staff and overseen by CSEA Unit 9200 Officers Jack McPhillips, Karen Pecora and Noel De La Cruz, and our CSEA Labor Relations Specialist Larry Sparber. **Over 83% of the eligible voting members cast a vote.** (CSEA Union Members are eligible to vote for Contracts and Election of Union Officers).

The next step is for the Contract to be approved by the County Board of Legislators. Please watch for updates on www.CSEA9200.com for notification of Contract Approval, and for information as it becomes available on the time frame for raises to go into effect and retroactive salary payments.

* As fully described on the Fact Sheet mailed to ALL Union members in Unit 9200

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NEW 6-YEAR CONTRACT RATIFIED BY THE UNIT 9200 MEMBERSHIP

CSEA
Civil Service Employees Association
Local 860
UNIT 9200
Westchester Employees
112 East Post Road
Suite 428, 4th Floor
White Plains, NY 10601-3311
PHONE: (914) 995-2151
FAX: (914) 995-5629
E-MAIL: newsletter@csea9200.com
We're on the Web!
www.CSEA9200.com

Visit us on the web at www.CSEA9200.com

Save on Holiday Shopping!

The Buyer's Edge

CSEA members are eligible to participate in this 35-year old consumer buying service that

GUARANTEES THE LOWEST PRICES ON MOST MAJOR PURCHASES,

including Major Appliances, TV's, Cars, Furniture, Jewelry, Travel, Luggage and much more. Visit:

www.BuyersEdgeInc.com

User Name (Group #): **1811**

Password: **member1**

Your Contract Benefits as a Union Member

Tuition Reimbursement

One of the negotiated benefits in our Union Contract is a yearly Tuition Reimbursement fund for CSEA employees. For the 2008 calendar year, the County will reimburse \$350,000.00 for tuition to CSEA applicants. Only Tuition for Credit Courses (20 hours or more) is eligible for reimbursement; other expenses, such as books, fees, supply costs, etc., are not eligible. Applicants are required to achieve a grade of C or higher (2.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale) for each course, and reimbursement above \$5,250.00 in one calendar year is required to be taxed per Federal Law H.R.1836. This is a CSEA negotiated benefit. Your department has no say on which courses you must take. Applicants must be on County payroll continuously while enrolled in the courses, and when the reimbursement checks are issued, usually in June for the previous calendar year.

For courses completed in **2007**, a total of **\$436,107.00** in tuition expenses were approved by the Committee for **105** CSEA applicants, which when divided by the \$350,000.00 available for reimbursement resulted in a **80%** reimbursement rate to each applicant (up to \$7,000.00).

The Tuition Reimbursement Committee is comprised of members of the County administration, CSEA Unit 9200 and other unions, and meets several times to review all applications. The application and filing regulation document is available on the [Benefits](http://www.CSEA9200.com) page at www.CSEA9200.com.

The filing deadline is JANUARY 8, 2009 for courses completed in 2008.

Your Union Working For You

Union Stewards

Union Stewards, committee members, delegates and grievance representatives make up an extraordinary group, estimated at more than 250,000 men and women, in 53,000 local unions across the United States. Union stewards represent departments, shifts, and work sites. They monitor collective bargaining agreements, advise employees on contract provisions, present employers with safety issues, and represent employees in grievance proceedings. (A grievance is a union action against a contract violation by the employer.)

The first commandment for a Steward is KNOW YOUR CONTRACT! They protect the jobs and welfare of fellow employees and use leadership skills to build the union. Stewards point out management actions that violate the collective-bargaining agreement, or threaten the health or safety of employees. To prevent reprisals from management, Stewards must be well prepared, and union rights are their most valuable tools. These are determined by three factors: **Union Solidarity** - Stewards that are supported by the membership have a greater ability to be effective; **Contract Rights** - A strong union contract forbids discrimination against union activities and guarantees time for union business; and **Labor Law Rights** - Federal and State labor laws prohibit interference with legitimate union activities, protect union representatives in presenting grievance actions, force employers to supply grievance information, and require employers to bargain before making changes that affect employees.

Stewards need to have a strong union behind them if they are to be able to represent the members and handle grievances effectively.

- Kathryn McCoach

CSEA Activist Profile



Grace Ann Aloisi started her career as a Public Employee in 1966 at the Town of Harrison, assigned to the Police Department. In 1969 she became involved in CSEA as a local activist, including serving as Unit President for over 20 years. She also served as a Vice President of Westchester Local 860 and was a member of the CSEA Statewide Board of Directors representing Westchester.

In 1997, she was the recipient of the CSEA Mission Achievement Award for Local Government Division. This award is given to a CSEA activist who exemplifies the CSEA Mission Statement Spirit: "to represent our members as best we can in any way we can; and to continue our role as a leader among labor unions."

Grace Ann retired in 2002, yet she continued her commitment by joining the Westchester Retirees CSEA Local 921 and is currently serving on the board along with other retirees previously employed by Westchester County, as 2nd Vice President. In addition, she currently works part-time in the Unit 9200 office as a clerical employee.

As a past Unit President, Grace Ann believes that each member can make an impact on contract negotiations by going out to support the Union, especially at rallies and other planned events. During her tenure, unionized groups in Westchester (CSEA, Police, Fire and Teamsters) would band together to demonstrate during contract disputes, and she attributed changes in the tone of negotiations to the turnout by the membership. When members unite and show their support, contract negotiations can take a new direction.

Thank you Grace Ann for your years of dedication to the members of CSEA in the Town of Harrison, Westchester Local 860 and Unit 9200.

UNION LEADERS

GERALD W. MCENTEE
PRESIDENT
AFSCME



The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees,

is the largest union for workers in the public service with 1.4 million members nationwide. AFSCME organizes for social and economic justice in the workplace and through political action and legislative advocacy. AFSCME represents a diverse group of service and health care workers in the public and private sectors, and is the international union affiliate of CSEA.

AT YOUR SERVICE...

Educational & Governmental Employee Federal Credit Union

The Educational & Governmental Employee Federal Credit Union is a unique, not-for-profit and member-owned financial institution. Unlike banks that are strictly profit-driven, they return excess earnings to members in the form of lower interest rates for loans, higher yields on savings and investment accounts, friendly and personal service, and by adding new financial products and services. To get an idea of what is offered, including rates, check out their website at www.EGEFCU.com.

Why join a credit Union?

Because a credit union is not profit driven, and all profits are returned back to the institution for members. Also, the staff that you speak with are local, and will be there when you call again.

The credit union is a full-service financial institution serving more than 8,000 members. It was established in 1937 to help promote thrift and to provide low-cost credit to members. Members receive better loan and savings rates, as well as the personal attention they deserve.

All member deposits are insured to at least \$100,000 and backed by the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA), a U.S. Government Agency. Insurance coverage increases to \$250,000 on retirement accounts over \$100,000.

To join the credit union you must open a shared Savings Account with a deposit of \$30.00, which consists of a \$25.00 initial deposit into your account, and a \$5.00 non-refundable membership fee. With this deposit, you're immediately eligible for the many benefits of membership. Family members can also become members of the Credit Union.

An online application can be downloaded from the website.

CSEA Workshops

Shop Steward Workshop

The strength of our Union rests with the recruitment and education of new activists, often in the role of Steward. This **two-part** CSEA Education & Training Department Workshop is free to CSEA Members, and provides the skills that are needed to carry out the responsibilities of the steward, including: communicating, organizing and leading employees in the workplace.

TO REGISTER: Please call the CSEA Southern Region 3 Office at **(845) 831-1000**

DATE: **Monday, December 8, 2008 AND Tuesday, December 9, 2008**

TIME: Sign-In and Light Dinner: **5:30PM** / Program: **6:00PM - 9:00PM**

LOCATION: CSEA Local 860 Office, 595 West Hartsdale Avenue, White Plains

Your Rights as a Union Member

How Can I Avoid Completing the Health Survey and High Insurance Co-Pays?

Did you Know...You Have Choices. During the period November 1, 2008 through November 30, 2008 you will be allowed the opportunity to change from the health benefit plan in which you are currently enrolled to one of the other three plans offered. **The effective date of your new health benefit option would be January 1, 2009.**

Currently there are 3 HMO Medical Plans that are available in addition to POMCO; **HIP, Aetna and Oxford**, and if selected, will **not** require the employee to complete the Health Survey. You can also save money on Co-Pays and Prescriptions.

The Finance Department is in the process of sending out Health Benefit Option Comparison Sheets and information directly to employee's homes. You can also check out the details of each health plan on the company's website, or contact the **County Health Benefits Office** at **995-4715** for more information.

Your change of option request **MUST** be received by the Finance Department Benefits Office no later than **Monday, December 1, 2008.**

PLAN:	HIP	AETNA	OXFORD	POMCO
Payroll Deduction (per pay period)	Ind.: \$13.84 Fam.: None	Ind.: \$55.36 Fam.: \$119.44	Ind.: None Fam.: None	Ind.: None** Fam.: None**
Physician's Co-Pay	None	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$16.00 [2010-\$18 / 2011-\$20]
Prescription Co-Pay	Generic: None Brand: None	Generic: \$5.00 Brand: \$5.00	Generic: \$5.00 Brand: \$10.00	Generic: \$0 Preferred: \$20.00 Non-Pref.: \$40.00

**unless non-compliant with survey/coach call per CSEA agreement

AFSCME Union Benefit

Available Scholarships

AFSCME FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP

Do you have a child or grandchild who will be a graduating Senior in High School in 2009, and could use \$2,000 in financial support to help with college expenses? This Family Scholarship Program will provide at least 13 scholarships.

To be eligible for this scholarship you must:

- Be a graduating High School Senior in 2009
- Be the daughter, son or financially dependent grandchild of an AFSCME member
- Be an applicant to an accredited college or university

To apply you must meet all eligibility requirements as listed above, and submit an application, providing all documentation (essay, transcripts, letters of recommendation, SAT / ACT scores, proof of AFSCME membership, etc.), mailed together in one envelope, and **POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 31, 2008** to:

AFSCME Family Scholarship Program
Attention: Education Department, 1625 L Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036
For more information call (202) 429-1250 or go online to: www.afscme.org/members

- Keturah Hadley