



# Unit 9200 Newsletter

Spring 2007 Volume 2, Issue 2

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## Communications & Public Relations Committee:

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

## Our Union Represents 4,000 Employees of Westchester County Government and Westchester Community College

'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 NEGOTIATIONS UPDATE

Since our last newsletter there have been 3 very crowded monthly meetings where the main topic of discussion is the continuing contract effort. As is documented on the Contract Update page of our website (see the March 13 Statement), **the reason that we are now at impasse is our refusal to accept a settlement that is less than equitable; that is less than the 2006 and 2007 inflation rate; that is less than the tax increases in Westchester; and that is filled with costs to our members.**

**Our stance is simple: the demand by the Administration that our members accept a settlement that puts us in a step back position is NOT acceptable.**

We hear of the many advances and programs being conducted in Westchester at the State of the County address, but we continue to NOT HEAR that **we, the members of Unit 9200, all 4,000 of us, are the reason that Westchester is able to accomplish all these programs in our County.**

We have had 3 contract rallies so far, on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, April 10<sup>th</sup>, and April 19<sup>th</sup>, which are also documented on our website. The April 19<sup>th</sup> rally was at the Rye Hilton location of Andy Spano's birthday party celebration. We will obtain permits for more rallies to continue the message that an equitable settlement is required for the CSEA backbone workers of Westchester government.

**The participation of more and more members (that means you!) is required at future rallies to continue the message.** For notifications of future events, please submit your email address to the union office for regular updates.

We have heard from various members that we should not accept any more givebacks...and we are NOT!!! BUT, why should we settle for 3%'s when the other unions got 4% and 4.25%? Again, why should we settle for less when there is no reason for us to do so?!?! **There was, and is, \$\$ for them - why not for US - the CSEA 9200 EMPLOYEES?!?!**

## What Does A Contract Mean to Me?

### Sick Leave Benefits

The New York Times reported on December 26, 2006, "Only half of workers in the US earn paid sick days, and only 1/3 receive paid time to care for sick children... Many risk losing their jobs should they take any sick time at all" \*

Westchester County CSEA Unit 9200 employees receive paid Sick Leave (SL) as a benefit of our contract. **Sick Leave** is a benefit that is only available to us because it was negotiated by **our union**. These defined benefits are part of the legally binding employment contract that covers all workers represented by CSEA Unit 9200.

All of our earned SL accumulates with no limit for every month we are employed. Sick Leave (as well as Personal and Annual

Vacation Leave) may also be used due to illness of a family member.

**Upon retirement**, the accumulated SL days in excess of 50 days will be paid in cash at a rate of 50% not to exceed payment for more than 125 days in cash. Retirement is defined as eligible to retire per the NYS Retirement System regulations.

**Extended Sick Leave:** With approval, Extended SL is granted at 1/2 pay for one Pay Period for each year of County service (for example, a 10 year employee would be eligible for 10 pay periods of ESL at 1/2 pay).

Sick Leave is important, as it affects every CSEA Member and family at one time or another. Thanks to our union, we all enjoy these benefits.

\*Full text of this article available on Benefits page of [www.CSEA9200.com](http://www.CSEA9200.com)

## What About CSEA 9200 Employees?

The Board of Legislators appreciates their employees with salary increases. The increases for many are above the inflation rate.

### WHAT ABOUT CSEA 9200 EMPLOYEES?

The Board approved annual salary increases for 181 members of the County Administration. For example, Legislative Aide's salaries were increased from \$58,865 to \$68,000.

### WHAT ABOUT CSEA 9200 EMPLOYEES?

The County Executive's salary jumped from \$143,535 to \$160,760. The County Clerk's salary soared from \$136,700 to \$153,105.

### WHAT ABOUT CSEA 9200 EMPLOYEES?

Pay hikes were also approved for the District Attorney's staff.

### WHAT ABOUT CSEA 9200 EMPLOYEES?

## DID YOU KNOW...

...that you can request a **Site Visit** at your location?

A CSEA Unit 9200 Officer, **Jack McPhillips** (President) **Karen Pecora** (1st VP) or **Noel De La Cruz** (2nd VP) will visit your work location and answer any questions that members may have.

Members will be asked to use their lunch hour, and arrangements need to be made with a supervisor for a time period and meeting room prior to the visit.

Spread the word to all interested co-workers, and contact the Union Office at **(914) 995-2151** to arrange a Site Visit.

**UNION LEADERS**

**JACK MCPHILLIPS**

**PRESIDENT OF LOCAL 860**



Since 1947 **CSEA Unit 9200** has proudly represented 4,000 Unionized Westchester County Employees.

**CSEA** is one of the major labor unions in the United States. We are the largest affiliate of **AFSCME** (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees) which, in turn, is one of the largest affiliates of **AFL-CIO** (American Federation of Labor - Congress of Industrial Organizations).

**Your Benefits as a Union Member**

**CSEA Legal Programs & Services**

The **CSEA Legal Services Program (LSP)** is designed to provide union members and their families with legal representation in four distinct areas: **Taking Care of Business** (formerly Elder Law); **Workers' Compensation/Social Security Disability**; **Personal Injury** and **Personal Legal Matters**.

The **CSEA Legal Assistance Program (LAP)** is designed to assist union members through various work-related issues (other than Workers' Compensation or Social Security Disability). LAP covers employment and labor issues involving: **Disciplinary**; **Contract Grievance Arbitrations**; **Court Litigation** and **Agency Proceedings**.

The program administrator for these services is Fine, Olin & Anderman, LLP in Newburgh, NY. The CSEA Legal Department serves an oversight role for these services, to insure that all standards and needs are met.

To find out more about this benefit, you may call **1-800-342-4146**, or visit [www.CSEALocal1000.org](http://www.CSEALocal1000.org). Select **LEGAL SERVICES** under the **YOUR CSEA BENEFITS** section in the left hand column. You will need to complete a free registration process for access to the CSEA Local 1000 website, and to get specific information about your area of need.

**CONTRACT BENEFIT**

**Current CSEA Members and Agency Shop Fee Payers who take Promotional Exams shall pay only \$15.00.**

**For each \$15.00 exam fee current CSEA employees may take a maximum of two (2) Promotional Exams on the same test date.**

**The customary \$25.00 fee still applies for each Open Competitive exam.**

**Be certain to pay the appropriate fee.**

**The County Human Resources office might not inform you when applying for an exam!**

*"I am grateful and thankful that I have a union to protect my job, my health insurance benefits, my pay, and my well being. I personally have been able to utilize many of the benefits the union has negotiated for us such as tuition reimbursement, bereavement time, and job protection. I am grateful to those that serve in the union who look out for the rest of us. I'm sure not too many people come by to say thank you. So...THANK YOU."*

**- Candace Intervallo**  
CSEA Unit 9200 Member  
Department of Corrections

**Your Union Working For You**

**Union Intervention Prevents Hazard to County Workers**

A contractor was hired by the County to make roof repairs to 112 East Post Road in White Plains. In early December 2006 the construction began during daytime working hours. Numerous members contacted the CSEA union office with complaints of noxious heated tar fumes seeping into the offices of 112 East Post Road and concerns for their health and safety. The official verbal response to employees of one major department headquartered in that building was to 'take a break and go outside for some fresh air if they felt they could not tolerate the fumes.'



Knowing that they would be reprimanded if their required work loads were not maintained, our members demanded that the roof repairs not be performed during the daytime work hours of 8am to 5pm. CSEA made calls regarding this issue to the Department of Public Works, but to no avail.

On December 13<sup>th</sup>, CSEA 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, **Noel De La Cruz** spoke to **Legislator Jose Alvarado (Yonkers 17<sup>th</sup> District)**, **Legislator Mike Kaplowitz (Somers 4<sup>th</sup> District)**, and other County Legislators regarding the seriousness of this matter. The following day, December 14<sup>th</sup>, Legislator Alvarado called Noel to notify the union that the County Executive's Office authorized the immediate cease of work by the contractor that day, and instructed them not to perform any tar heating and applying work until after 5pm. Relief was finally obtained for the dedicated workers at in 112 East Post Road. This Is Your Union at Work.

- E. Giuliani

**Officer's Corner - Kwabena Manu, Union Representative**



**Kwabena Manu** currently works as a full time release Union Representative for CSEA Unit 9200. Mr. Manu represents members at disciplinary hearings and files grievances on their behalf. **The Departments that Mr. Manu represents are Health, Environmental Facilities, Parks, Recreation and Conservation, Emergency Services, County Clerks Office and Public Works.** His other duties include interpretation of the union contract and advocating for members with management for the purpose of obtaining a lesser penalty for members who are accused of wrong doings.

Kwabena was hired as a Social Caseworker for the Department of Social Services in October 1990. He has been a Union Representative since November 1999. Kwabena's seventeen years of employment with Department of Social Services and

CSEA brings a wealth of experience and commitment to his position.

Kwabena is a native of Ghana, West Africa and speaks English and two ethnic dialects (including Ashanti). The cultural diversity of our union representatives is conducive to member participation and unity.

Kwabena states that the job can be very demanding at times and his form of stress management is to "not take the job home". Kwabena has two suggestions for the membership: 1) members should go to work on time and perform their job duties and 2) read and understand the union contract. If members follow these guidelines, things should go well within the work place.

Mr. Manu can be reached by telephone at (914) 995-2741, or by Email at [kkma@westchestergov.com](mailto:kkma@westchestergov.com)

- B. Robinson

**Important Telephone Numbers**

**CSEA Member Benefits**

800-342-4146

**AFSCME Advantage**

Mastercard

800-522-4000

**Entertainment Discounts/**

**Working Advantage**

800-565-3712

**Pinnacle Auto Club**

800-366-1165

**CSEA/AFSCME Scholarship**

**Programs & Awards**

800-342-4146

**New York State & Local**

**Retirement System**

**General Membership Info.**

866-805-0990

**AT YOUR SERVICE...****The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

FMLA is an important law which can benefit you and your family. Covered employers must grant an eligible employee up to a total of **12 work weeks of unpaid leave during any 12 month period** for one or more of the following reasons:

- Birth and care of a newborn child of the employee
- Placement with the employee and care of a child for adoption or foster care
- Medical leave if the employee is unable to work because of a serious health condition, or to care for an immediate family member (spouse, child or parent) with a serious health condition

For more information on FMLA go to the Department of Labor web site at: [www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla](http://www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla)

**Frequently Asked Questions about the Family and Medical Leave Act:**

**How much notice must Employees give before taking FMLA leave?**

An employee must provide the employer at least 30 days advance notice before FMLA leave is to begin, if the need for the leave is foreseeable, or soon as is practicable. For example, an employee's health condition may require leave to commence earlier than anticipated before the birth of a child.

**Which employees are eligible?**

An eligible employee is an employee of a covered employer who:

- has been employed for at least 12 months,
- has been employed for at least 1,250 hours of service during the 12 month period immediately preceding the commencement of the leave, and
- is employed at a worksite with 50 or more employees within 75 miles of that worksite.

The 12 months of employment need not be consecutive months. If an employee is maintained on the payroll for any part of a week, including any periods of paid or unpaid leave, during which other benefits or compensation are provided by the employer (e.g. Workers' Compensation, group health plan benefits, etc.), it counts as a week of employment.

**How much leave is an employee permitted to take?**

FMLA leave entitlement is limited to a total of 12 work weeks of leave during any 12 month period.

Please contact Human Resources at [www.westchestergov.com/hr](http://www.westchestergov.com/hr) for more information on the FMLA application process.

- K. Hadley

**GET INVOLVED!:**

I would like to thank all the supportive members who came out on March 22nd to rally in solidarity for a fair and respectful contract. As reported, we had over a couple of hundred of you for the First event to show the County we are firm in our commitment to get the best possible contract we can **NEGOTIATE** - not take the County's demands as negotiations!!

- Jack McPhillips, President

**Your Rights as a Union Member****Workers' Compensation**

In the event of a **Work Related Accident** (an event arising out of and in the course of employment that results in injury to the worker) or an **Occupational Disease** (a medical problem or injury resulting from the type of work you do and occurring over a period of time, for example: Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, Tendonitis, Hearing Loss, Asbestosis, or Respiratory problems due to identified chemical or hazardous substance), **Workers' Compensation** is a form of insurance paid for by your employer and provides:

- Full coverage for all medical care for your work-related injury
- Partial wage replacement for temporary or permanent loss of earnings
- Special compensation for loss or partial loss of the use of a limb.

**Steps to obtain coverage:**

- Obtain emergency medical treatment if needed
- Report accident to supervisor within 30 days of the accident
- Place yourself under the care of a physician who treats Workers' Compensation patients.

**How to File a Worker's Compensation Claim:** Call the **CSEA Legal Services Program** at **1-800-342-4146** and follow the prompts for assistance from an Attorney to complete and submit a Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) form C-3 to the Workers' Compensation Board, and to be represented at all hearings. It costs nothing to file a claim.

**Time limit for filing a claim:** Two years from the date of the Work Related Accident or the date you were advised by a physician that your medical problem is related to your work (Occupational Disease).

**Important to note:** Unless the injury necessitates emergency medical attention, the worker must go to a doctor who accepts workers' compensation. DO NOT submit claims to your Medical Plan through the County, unless the physician accepts Workers' Compensation.

Once established, a Workers' Compensation claim entitles you to medical benefits and weekly payments for a minimum of 18 years, and possibly for life.

**Unit 9200 Member Profile**

**Junio Ismael Alvarado** has been employed by the Department of Social Services since 1986. In December of 1991, he became an Eligibility Examiner II (Spanish Speaking) in the Yonkers District Office. In 1992 he became active and involved with the Cheryl Melton Administration for CSEA Unit 9200. Junio became a shop steward shortly thereafter. In September 1994, he was appointed Labor Representative/Shop Steward. In 1998, he became senior Labor Representative, a release time position with Unit 9200, as well as the

Executive Secretary to the Unit's Executive Board in 2000, during the Jane Fiore Administration.

In April 2003 Junio was recognized for exceptional services to the county of Westchester for Department of Social Services

Junio has worked on several committees to raise funds for Charities such as the American Heart Association, Breast Cancer and Diabetes. His efforts were such a success, that he was appointed team leader for the Breast Cancer Walk in 2005 and the American Heart Association for Westchester in 2006.

Currently Junio is assigned to the Adult Medical (Restriction) - Medicaid Unit as the only coordinator in Westchester County working with the recipient restriction program, in addition to being an active Shop Steward.

CSEA's Political Action organization, PEOPLE, presented an award to Junio for his efforts in recruitment of new members in January of 2007.

**CONTRACT BENEFIT**

**CSEA Test Preparation Booklets** are available **FREE** for download to CSEA Members

Visit the **CSEA Work Institute** website at [www.cseainc.org/wi](http://www.cseainc.org/wi) to register as a CSEA member and download the booklets that apply to your test!

**UNION DISCOUNT**

**YWCA of White Plains 20% Discount on Membership for Unit 9200 Members and their Families** (White Plains location only)

**COUNTY DISCOUNT**

**FREE CHECKING at Citibank for Westchester County Employees when you establish Direct Deposit**



**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](http://www.CSEA9200.com) to be added to the list!

**Member Recognition**

**Public Safety Dispatcher Margaret Miner helps reunite a family separated for 35 years**

On December 6, 2006, Mr. Daniels, a criminal investigator for the City of Morganton, NC, contacted Public Safety and spoke with Ms. Miner, as he was trying to locate his mother. In fact, Mr. Daniels and his family had been searching for his mom for the last 35 years.

Margaret contacted PO Tim Joyce, who followed up and was successful in locating Mr. Daniels' mother, who was living in a Cortlandt Nursing Home. "All I did was take the time to listen and get all the information, then I spoke to PO Tim Joyce who followed up on the information I gave him" Ms. Miner stated.

Due to the efforts of both Margaret Miner and PO Tim Joyce, Mr. Daniels and family are reunited with his mother in North Carolina, and according to Mr. Daniels, 2006 turned into the best year ever.

Thank you both for your actions that reunited the Daniels family.

*Margaret Miner is a CSEA Unit 9200 Union Member, and has also been a member of the Sick Bank Committee for many years.*

**UPCOMING CSEA UNIT 9200 EVENTS at CSEA Local 860 Office:**

**General Membership OPEN Meetings:** June 5, 2007, July 3, 2007, and August 7, 2007 (Tuesdays)

At the CSEA Local 860 Office. Light dinner is served @ 5:30pm and **Meetings start @ 6:00pm.**  
Please **R.S.V.P.** to the Unit 9200 Office at (914) 995-2151

**Please check often at [www.CSEA9200.com](http://www.CSEA9200.com) for information about upcoming contract rallies and events!**

**CSEA LOCAL 860 OFFICE - 595 West Hartsdale Avenue** (Route 100A near intersection with Route 100B) - **White Plains** (across from Mighty Joe Young's Restaurant)

**CSEA MEMBERS ATTEND RALLIES FOR A FAIR CONTRACT**



Hundreds of CSEA Members showed their support and volunteered to attend two Rallies in April, to show the County Administration our displeasure with their lack of negotiating fairly and equitably!!!

< Many Unit 9200 workers from White Plains and other locations showed their disapproval of the County Administration's meager contract offer by rallying at the County Office Building during their lunch hour on April 10<sup>th</sup>. "The Rat" >



Some members also made this Unit's desire for a better contract offer known to the County Executive by rallying outside Andy Spano's Birthday Fund Raiser at the Rye Hilton on April 19th, while other members attended the party. >



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**WE WON'T SETTLE FOR LESS  
...AND NO GIVEBACKS!**

**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](mailto:newsletter@CSEA9200.com)  
We're on the Web!  
[www.CSEA9200.com](http://www.CSEA9200.com)

