

OCTA Advocate

A newsletter for members, retired members, friends and supporters of the Oswego

Classroom Teachers Association

SUMMER 2019



Members are the strength of the union

By Matt Smith msmith@nysutmail.org

During the first NYSUT Representative Assembly since anti-union forces attempted — but failed — to use the U.S. Supreme Court to deliver a blow to the nation’s labor movement, labor leaders urged delegates not to take anything for granted and continue fighting for their economic futures and rights on the job.



“We have avoided significant drops so far (in membership) here in New York,” said NYSUT President Andy Pallotta. “But our enemies are just getting started. ... We’ve got to stay vigilant.”

Addressing an Albany Capital Center packed with nearly 1,700 NYSUT delegates, alternates and guests, Pallotta urged members to look to — and never forget — the past as they fight for the future. Pallotta pointed to past strikes — strikes that NYSUT’s newest members are perhaps too young to remember or know of — in New York City, Nyack, Orchard Park, Eastchester and one in North Syracuse led by the late Sylvia Matousek.

Those actions, Pallotta said, “built the foundation of this great union.” Pointing to the recent U.S. Supreme Court Janus decision — which ruled public-sector unions cannot impose mandatory dues on members — Pallotta acknowledged the last handful of years have been tough as labor worried about its future. “But I am happy to report that the state of our union is strong,” he said. “Anti-union forces wanted to destroy us, but this challenge made us stronger. Stronger because we did the right thing. We organized. We knocked on doors. We built relationships. “And our membership numbers are up, our members are more engaged than ever ... and they’re sticking with our union.”

American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten agreed. In her address to delegates, she said that NYSUT and AFT members ultimately fended off deep, adverse Janus-related damage through education and engagement. “NYSUT is alive and well,” she said. “At the end of the day we survived Janus, and we will thrive in spite of it.” Still, Pallotta warned, “we are not out of the woods. (*READ THE REST IN THE MOST RECENT ISSUE OF [NYSUT UNITED](#)*)



Dedicated Educators in the JUNE OCTA Spotlight!

Michelle Cooper is a counselor at the Oswego Middle School where she works primarily with 8th graders. Her office is busy throughout the day as she regularly meets with students and parents to help support them through the very busy and often turbulent middle level years. Michelle is intricately involved in every aspect of the building and goes above and beyond in all she does. Michelle can be found at all school events chaperoning, participating, helping out and generally supporting all of our students, their families and the OMS and OCS D community. She does this ALL with a smile on her face. Michelle is responsible for coordinating all of the efforts related to P-Tech, the Student Youth Summit, and the Coordination of our Quarterly Student Recognition Program. She also works closely with SUNY Oswego personnel to recognize our GEMS (Girls who Excel in Math and Science) each year. The Oswego Middle School is lucky to have Michelle on the Team and she deserves to be in the Spotlight!



Tom Weigand not only works to ensure a positive work environment for his students, he is a valuable resource for educators both new and seasoned. Tom serves on many district and building committees, and is always collaborating on the best approach to serve our students.

SPECIAL SHOUT OUT TO THE OHS PROM COMMITTEE - Tai Jackson, Jen Smith, Mary Koskowski and Josh DeLorenzo!! You all did such amazing work this year!!

Congratulations, Michelle, Tom, and this year's high school PROM COMMITTEE! Enjoy the OCTA spotlight ---you earned it!!

SAVE MONEY ON YOUR DENTAL BILLS!

Choose a dentist who's part of the Delta Dental Network!

Choosing a dentist who is IN NETWORK will lower YOUR out of pocket costs. The Plan saves too! Lower costs to the plan results in lower premiums for everyone. Listed below are dentists who are part of the Delta Dental network and make it on to the list for our most utilized providers. If you are looking for a new dentist, considering one of the dentists on this list will save both you and the plan money.

PRV Full Name	Specialty
SHELDEN SACKS	General Dentist
JUAN LOPEZ-ROSARIO	General Dentist
JENNIFER MERRY	General Dentist
FRANK FRUCE	General Dentist
THOMAS BUNKER	General Dentist
BARBARA PANKO	General Dentist
YAMILKA SERRANO	General Dentist
CHRISTOPHER ROZHON	Pediatric Dentist
EVAN GROSS	General Dentist
SHEILA SOLTANI	General Dentist
ALFONSO MEROLA IV	General Dentist
CHRIS PATERAS	General Dentist
SUZANNE SHAPERO	General Dentist
IMADEH NOSEGBE	General Dentist

Don't see your dentist on this list? It may mean that they are a non-participating provider. If you want to check to see if your dentist or orthodontist is part of the network, go to www.deltadentalins.com and look on the right hand side for Find a Dentist and enter the location, name, or network or [CLICK HERE](#)... **We participate in the PPO and Premier networks.**

OCTA Volleyball Tournament 2019!!!

Unbelievably, the weather held out for our 15th tournament!

Save the date for next year, and plan to play on June 19th 2020!!

OMS - Team EZ Pass took the championship title and the \$915 donation for **Blessings in a Backpack!!**



CER (All Riled Up)

won the **BIGGEST LOSER CONTEST!**

FLS Tickers won the Best T-shirt award!

We would like to try something different next year and will try to run more events.

First - we are looking to set up a **kickball** tournament in the fall. Please contact Carrie Patane or Kyle Brown if you

have any suggestions or want to help. The most challenging issue we face is finding a venue...

Suggestions are welcome!!!

Second - we will plan on our **Bowling** Tournament again for **January 24, 2020.**

Third, we would like **Volleyball** to be 2 separate divisions...unless Cheap Seats surprises us and puts in 2 nets. Teams will pay \$100 to enter the tournament but each team can have no more than 11 players. Save the date for **JUNE 19th, 2020**

...The secondary tourney will run from 2:45 - 4:15 (two teams minimum each school).

...The elementary tourney will run from 4:15 - 8ish.

...Each champion wins half of the funds for their charity of choice.



...Secondary Champs and Elementary Champs can play a final match around 8ish for bragging rights.

Thank you to everyone who came out or helped out! Enjoy your summer and recharge for next year!!!

In solidarity,
Carrie Patane (OCTA President)



NEGOTIATIONS ALERT!!

Our contract expires next JUNE! We will have one more opportunity for members to submit proposals when we return to school in September. Take some time this summer to look through our current contract and note any suggestions you want to make for the Negotiations Team consider.

[OCTA Contract LINK](#) (Scroll down once you are in shared drive).

You can also click on the contract cover shot below for access.

NEGOTIATED AGREEMENT
BETWEEN THE
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

OF THE
OSWEGO CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

AND

THE OSWEGO CLASSROOM TEACHERS
ASSOCIATION

FOR THE SCHOOL YEARS

2017/18
2018/19
2019/20



Legal Service Plan

NYSUT members have access to dozens of endorsed programs available through NYSUT Member Benefits, including a variety of quality legal and financial planning assistance services that can help to protect their loved ones and provide them with peace of mind.

For an annual fee, the **Legal Service Plan** – provided by Feldman, Kramer & Monaco, P.C. – offers legal expertise on a variety of personal legal matters such as dealing with a speeding ticket or handling estate planning. With the base plan, you'll get access to unlimited, toll-free advice from plan attorneys.



Financial Counseling Program

Meanwhile, the **Financial Counseling Program** – provided by Stacey Braun Associates, Inc. – offers unbiased, objective advice customized to your specific financial situation. The full-service program provides you up with to six hours of toll-free phone consultations with a certified financial planner or registered investment advisor.

And unlike with purchasing products available to the general public, there's no need to go it alone when Member Benefits has your back. Member Benefits acts as your advocate for any program you participate in, and we'll do our best to quickly resolve any issues or concerns you may have.

Whether you are participating in one of our legal or financial services; insurance plans; or shopping, travel or entertainment offerings, NYSUT members have the **"Power of the Union"** behind them.

A wealth of financial information -- Now available on the NEW Member Benefits website

Financial Planning Center



To learn more about Member Benefits-endorsed programs & services, visit memberbenefits.nysut.org or call 800-626-8101.



For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits.

Harborfest Volunteers Needed - Training in July!

Please see attached volunteer application (link at bottom of message). The job descriptions are in the application packet. All information is listed in the attached application.

Volunteer training for Park Managers is **July 9th at 5:00**

Training for all other volunteers will be **July 16th at 5pm**

Training for volunteers helping set up fireworks will begin on **Wednesday July 24th.**

Volunteers that wish to help set up for the fireworks should contact Pete Myles directly. This position is not listed in the application packet.

I strongly encourage you to participate and to give back to our community.

Many people ask how they can be involved in the union, and this is just one of the many opportunities our membership has to show solidarity and a commitment to our students. Being present and a role model at local events is a great way to represent our Association.

I will note, however, that although **I DO recommend you sign up and volunteer**, I DO NOT advise our members to participate in the Park Crew. Taking care of the garbage etc. is handled by the city workers. We should support our city workers union. If we volunteer to do their job, we take away employment opportunities for them and up until 2 years ago they were paid to do this. It is a city wide event and I would hope that Mayor Barlow would provide city staff to maintain the beauty and the safety of our parks. I don't want my members putting their personal wellness at risk because the city doesn't want to pay their park employees to do clean up - (Carrie Patane OCTA PRES)

[Harborfest APPLICATION 2019](#) or [CLICK HERE FOR HF APPLICATION](#)

Volunteer Jobs/ Descriptions

- **Set-up & Take Down**
General set-up and take down operations. Involves putting up and taking down fencing, moving tables and chairs, and hanging & removing signs and banners. May also involve the repair and painting of fencing.
- **Park Crew**
Assist park manager to ensure parks are safe and clean and maintain supplies for park. Duties will include moving tables and chairs, cleaning picnic tables, picking up garbage, emptying garbage cans, moving garbage bags to the dumpsters, etc.
- **Artist Helper/Children's Workshops**
Assist children & families with art & craft projects such as the t-shirt workshops, building robots, fairy houses boats, etc. out of recycled materials and, painting kindness rocks.
- **Park Management**
Assist with vendor set-up and daily operations of assigned park, including enforcing policies and maintaining a safe and friendly environment.
- **Festival Ambassador**
Distribute programs & lost child tags, and answer questions about the festival, venues/parks, etc.
- **Parking Attendant**
Monitor the assigned parking area to ensure that the parking area is used as designated i.e., only vehicles with handicap license plates or other appropriate designation are allowed into the handicap parking lot and that individuals wishing to park at the west end of the McCrobie building have an appropriate parking pass.
- **Office Helper**
Assist staff by answering the phone, making copies of documents, answer questions concerning the festival and provide general administrative support.
- **Vendor Relief**
Provide relief for vendors so that they may purchase something to eat/drink and/or use the restroom. The volunteer is responsible for watching the "store" while the vendor is away.
- **Floater**
Fill-in for any position as needed.

MUST READS!!! (Explore the latest UNION NEWS)

1. ALBANY, N.Y. June 21, 2019 — **New York State United Teachers today released the following statement on the end of the 2019 legislative session:**

“The legislative session began with a major victory for public education and is ending with significant progress for working people. Thanks to the tireless advocacy of our members, elected officials finally stood up for what is right and fixed the state’s broken teacher evaluation system right out of the gates.” [Read the REST HERE](#)

2. Why Union? Why NYSUT?

Learn more about the value of union membership.

- [» For Your Benefit](#)
- [» For Your Profession](#)
- [» For Your Future](#)
- [» For Your Rights](#)
- [» For a Better World](#)

3. Make a difference right now!!

[Click here to learn more about the NYSUT MEMBER ACTION CENTER](#) (and what you can do to help!)



2018-2019 Professional Development Recommendations

It was requested at our OCTA Rep Assembly meeting that we survey our members about potential professional development offerings.

Please fill out the information below as completely as possible as you identify professional development opportunities you would like to see offered. This will stay open throughout the remainder of the year and will be brought to the EDC for consideration. Submissions are due the last Friday of each month in order for them to be brought forward in a timely fashion.

[Follow this link to submit!!](#)

Have you visited the OCTA website yet? What are you waiting for!!!?

While navigating the OCTA WEBSITE you can:

- Access and read the current [OCTA CONTRACT](#)
- Look up your current [Building President \(and reps\)](#)
- Access the new [OCTA RESOURCE GUIDE](#) - a document full of information that OCTA members WANT and NEED to know
- Access [BOARD OF ED MINUTES and AGENDAS](#)
- Access ALL your benefit accounts including [dental, health and retirement](#)
- View current and past [NEWSLETTERS](#)
- View recent [OCTA photos and read Thank You letters](#) written in response to OCTA donations or volunteer work



A very special THANK YOU to all the OCTA volunteers who helped with HIGHWAY CLEAN UP this year!

OCTA Advocate is published by the Oswego Classroom Teachers Association, West 1st Street, Oswego, NY. **President:** Carrie Patane, **VP Grievance:** Kim LeRoy **VP Negotiations:** Gretchen Coakley **VP Political Action:** Jenn Cahill, **VP Newsletter:** Dan Rose, **Secretary:** Michelle McManus, **Treasurer:** Mike Patane. Affiliated with the New York State United Teachers and the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO.

