

# IMPACT

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## UNIONS FILE LEGAL ACTION ON CITY'S HEALTH PROGRAM RFP

**The Municipal Labor Committee (MLC) recently filed in the Supreme Court of the State of New York a breach of contract action against the City and Mayor Michael Bloomberg, stating that the City has violated a validly enforceable agreement. The action also seeks to obtain injunctive relief to prevent the City from moving forward with a planned RFP to change health benefit services for City employees.**

"The City's rush to judgment on the RFP results in two mistakes in the process by the City: first, taking action by itself, and not including in the decision making the views of the recipients of the service — the City's workers; secondly, making a \$7 billion spending decision for services beginning six months after his last day in office stops any accountability for this important decision," said New York City Municipal Labor Committee Chairman Harry Nespoli.

Local 246 President Joe Colangelo agreed that although City unions support efforts to reduce health care costs, the City approached the situation the wrong way. As recently as 2009, the MLC came forward and helped the City realize \$400 million in health care savings. Now, instead of sitting down and listening to us in good faith, the City is going at it alone and pretending that unions are standing in the way.

The truth is that for months the City and outside consultants secretly crafted an RFP without our knowledge. Then in June,



with little warning, they dropped a 1,000-page, highly-technical RFP on us and demanded we sign off without giving us sufficient time to review. New York is not Wisconsin. In New York, we don't unilaterally abolish the negotiating rights of unions. New York is a labor state and as such, labor takes these issues very seriously.

"The way the City went about issuing this RFP was a huge slap in the face to labor," Colangelo said. "However, since that has been the way the Bloomberg Administration has treated labor for quite some time, I guess we shouldn't be surprised. There are a ton of problems with this process and we will continue to work with other unions to get the courts involved."



Scholarship Winner

5



FDNY Recognizes Members

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Labor Rally

10-11

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# Message from President JOSEPH A. COLANGELO



I hope everyone had a good summer and was able to get some rest and relaxation. Every year it seems as if the summer months fly by faster than the rest of the year.

However, the final summer of the Bloomberg administration has been anything but rest and relaxation; it's been lawsuits and court dates for most of the summer.

You all are probably familiar with the prevailing rate lawsuit that unions were successful in winning both at the State Supreme Court and the Appellate Court. The Court of Appeals granted the City's leave to appeal and the City's brief is due October 28, 2013; our brief will be due later. Oral arguments may be in January 2014, after a new City mayor is in office.

The next big issue we dealt with was the attempt to put out a Request for Proposal (RFP) for our health insurance. The health contract premium is close to \$7 billion and the Mayor is attempting to have this contract awarded by December 31st, the last day of his term of office. As you read on the front page of this newsletter, this could impact the new Mayor who would need to address the contract that could start on July 1, 2014. That new Mayor, whoever he or she is, would have not even been a part of the process. I am sure you are all aware this has been Mayor Bloomberg's playbook lately — awarding multi-year contracts that go on long after he is gone.

The other item associated with the health RFP is the dependent audit. This, too,

## DEPENDENT VERIFICATION AUDIT DEADLINE

**The deadline to provide proof of eligibility of dependents must be submitted by October 4, 2013.** This was extended from September 20, 2013. A letter was sent to all Local 246 members explaining the resolution reached with the City and informing everyone of the October 4 deadline.

If an employee or retiree self report dependents who must be removed by October 4, 2013 that employee or retiree will not be subject to recoupment of monies from premiums or claims incorrectly paid; or disciplinary charges.

It's important for all members to read the entire story in this newsletter on page 8.

was done without any discussion with unions. Because the process was so flawed, the Municipal Labor Committee again went to court to address our concerns about the audit process. We all agree the cost of health care is a major concern across the country and absolutely should be addressed. However, there is a right way and a wrong way to tackle the issue. As this Mayor has shown us repeatedly, he believes it's his way or the highway. Therein of course lies the problem — Mayor Bloomberg's sense of entitlement.

As far as labor is concerned, December 31, 2013 can't come soon enough. Each of the issues I just wrote about all have gone to court, and have cost both sides thousands of dollars that could have been better spent elsewhere.

Local 246 is also dealing with many issues regarding fleet consolidation, another quickly assembled plan full of problems that came with absolutely no input from those who do the work on a daily basis. Whether it's the problem of purchasing and installing washers and dryers that went on for far too long and continues to linger, or the private parts contract that appears to be faltering since providing truck parts in a timely manner has become a problem, Local 246 has had a very busy summer.

Reports we have received from several of our members indicate that inexperienced employees of the private parts contractor have had difficulty identifying simple, everyday parts that we require in order to keep New York City vehicles running. This is the exact type of problem that the Union would have been able to identify had the City bothered to include us in negotiations or at least discuss outsourcing with us prior to just doing it.

We've said this so many times before, but no one does our job better than we do. We are trained Mechanics and Machinists who work on vehicles every day. We know what parts we need, and without them, our productivity is reduced. It doesn't take much forethought to figure out who will take the blame down the road when productivity drops because NAPA is holding up providing us the parts we need.

If all of this wasn't trouble enough, add on the new Asset Works program and all its recurring problems, and Local 246 has an even larger headache. Again, the City didn't bother to get our input and now we are being required to input information into a computer system that makes us more clerks than Mechanics. All of this computer time will simply take away from our official repair time, once again leading to reduced productivity that is out of our control.

All of this craziness has to end, and hopefully will with the end of the current mayoral administration.

One final issue we had to face head on this summer was a major safety concern at DEP Tullman Island Plant. The private contractor hired to upgrade the plant caused an asbestos exposure incident that was serious enough that the Union filed a PESH complaint and the job site was temporary shut. We continue to monitor the location and address safety issues that arise. When visiting the plant it became clear that DEP and the contractor were not communicating on a daily basis and that became the recipe for disaster.

Election Day is not that far away. If you are not registered to vote in the General Election on November 5, please be aware that the deadline to do so is October 11. It's vital that we all head to the polls to cast our ballots so we elect the right person as Mayor of New York City, as that will be the one we will be negotiating our contracts with.

Our first meeting after our summer recess is on September 19. I'm encouraging everyone to attend, as there are many updates vital to members that will be discussed at that time. I can go into more detail, and obviously answer questions, at the meetings than I can get into in our newsletter.

As you can see, our summer was very active, but not dealing with good things. I hope your summer on the other hand was active dealing with only good things.

## VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINES

### GENERAL ELECTION

Date: November 5, 2013

Registration Deadline: October 11, 2013

Absentee Ballot Request Deadlines

In Person: November 4, 2013

By Mail: October 29, 2013

For more information, go to:

[www.rockthevote.com/election-center/state/new-york-city.html](http://www.rockthevote.com/election-center/state/new-york-city.html)

## GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Thursday, **SEPTEMBER 19, 2013**

6:00 p.m.

St. Stanislaus Church

61-17 Grand Avenue

Maspeth, NY 11378

- ▶ 50/50 Raffle
- ▶ Door Prizes
- ▶ Refreshments





# GOOD WELFARE

## IN MEMORIAM:

**Lennox Cooper**

Auto Mechanic Diesel — San

**Victor Coronato**

Ret. Auto Mechanic — Police

**Edmond Kenny**

Ret. Auto Mechanic — DOH

**Selwyn Lakhan**

Ret. Auto Body Worker — Police

**John Latanzio**

Ret. Auto Mechanic — San

## IN MEMORIAM FAMILY:

**John Calestini** (Father)

Auto Mechanic — Police

**Anson Carter** (Mother)

Auto Mechanic Diesel — Parks

**Edward Clas** (Brother)

Auto Mechanic — Correction

**Edward Debone** (Wife)

Ret. Auto Mechanic — San

**Anthony Donadio** (Father)

Ret. Auto Mechanic — San

**Joseph Reichert** (Father)

Auto Mechanic — San

## RETIRING MEMBERS:

**Robert Alfieri**

Auto Mechanic — San

**Mark Bennett**

Auto Mechanic — San

**Frank Capasso**

Auto Mechanic — San

**Louis Deleo**

Auto Mechanic — Police

**Giorgio Dessi**

Shop Steward  
Machinst — DEP

**William Dones**

Auto Mechanic — DOT

**Bernardo Pereira**

Auto Mechanic — Police

**Angel Torres**

Auto Mechanic — San

**Thomas Woodland**

Rubber Tire Repairer — DOT

## NEWBORN CHILDREN:

**Charles Caffarone** (Boy)

Auto Mechanic — Police



Congratulations to Charlie and Hillary on the birth of their son Charles Joseph, Caffarone, Jr. on August 8, 2013 at 3:25 p.m. Charles was 7 lb. 8 oz. and was 19 1/2 inches long.

## VISIT THE UNION'S WEBSITE

[www.nyclocal246.org](http://www.nyclocal246.org)

for the most up-to-date information

## ALDO & FAMILY AT IT AGAIN

Aldo Lorelli (Retired Doorstop Maintainer), his wife Patricia and daughter Jennifer took another of their around-the-world trips, this time visiting Italy. "We promised my daughter a trip to Italy where I was born while she was ill for the past two years. She is now doing well and I myself am doing well so this was the perfect time to go," Aldo reported in to Local 246.

"We had a wonderful time learning about Italy's history, culture and art."

Aldo and his family viewed the amazing sites of the Colosseum, Treve Fountain, the Forum, St. Mark's Square and Rialto Bridge. They got to see firsthand how wine, olive oil and fresh mozzarella are made. They visited Aldo's home town of Amantea in Reggio Calabria, where they got to visit aunts, uncles and cousins. Their upcoming trips include Las Vega, Arizona and Canada.

"Once again we are all living vicariously through you Aldo," said President Joe Colangelo. "Keep the photos coming; they allow those of us not yet retired to see different parts of the world."



## NEW MEMBERS:

### **Anish Babu**

Auto Service Worker — Fire

### **David Bishop**

Sheet Metal Worker — Parks

### **Joseph Castro**

Auto Service Worker — Parks

### **Gabriel Gordon**

Auto Mechanic — Fire

### **Kevin Heaney**

Sr. Auto Service Worker — Fire

### **Michael Johnson**

Auto Mechanic — Fire

### **Christopher Jones**

Auto Service Worker — Parks

### **Walter J. Koschak**

Auto Mechanic — Fire

### **Nikolaos Koutsoulidakis**

Auto Mechanic — Fire

### **Rex Lam**

Auto Service Worker — San

### **Robert Morfat**

Machinist — DEP

### **Imran Massiah**

Machinist — DOE

### **Clarence Matthews**

Machinist — DEP

### **Kurt Miller**

Auto Mechanic — Fire

### **Juan Minchala**

Rubber Tire Repairer — DOT

### **Jose Moran-Espinoza**

Rubber Tire Repairer — DOT

### **John Morrell**

Machinist — DEP

### **Daniel Ortenberg**

Machinist — DEP

### **Jacques Parisot**

Auto Mechanic — San

### **Frank Renda**

Auto Mechanic — Fire

## KOMNICK SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

Congratulations to this year's Lawrence Komnick Scholarship winner, Shaminy A. Manoranjithan. She received a \$1,000 scholarship toward her college tuition. Shaminy is the daughter of Kandiah (Auto Mechanic-Police) and Shanthini Manoranjithan.



Shaminy graduated from Saint Francis Preparatory School in Fresh Meadows, Queens. She was Vice President of the Model United Nations club, Features Editor of the Seraph (school newspaper), lector and morning prayer reading in Campus Ministry, peer counselor for the drug and alcohol prevention program, peer tutor and was an attorney in her school's "trial of the century" (mock trial). She was also a member of the National Honor Society and Spanish Honor Society. During her high school years, Shaminy volunteered at the Queens Village public library, YMCA Cross Island summer day camp, YMCA After School Program, and was involved in a research internship at Queens College.

Shaminy is attending Stony Brook University, majoring in Chemical Engineering on a pre-med track.

"Congratulations to Shaminy and her family on receiving this scholarship," said President Joe Colangelo. "Shaminy sets an outstanding example of what it means to excel in high school. I'm sure her perseverance and determination will take her far in college. We wish her all the best as she pursues her academic dreams."

## NEW DEP SHOP STEWARD

Congratulations to new DEP Shop Steward Michael Tsangarakis, who is taking over for Giorgio Dessi, who recently retired. Michael started with the City in 2003.

Michael can be reached at 718.461.2969 and members are encouraged to contact him with any problems or issues at the shops.

"We look forward to working with Michael and having him represent the members in DEP," President Joe Colangelo said.

### **Jonathan Rosa**

Auto Mechanic — Fire

### **Dyquan Starling-Roner**

Auto Service Worker — Police

### **Robert Urso**

Auto Mechanic — Fire

Send us announcements for our Good & Welfare Page about family births, awards, graduations, honors, special trips and other family special occasions, along with photos, for our newsletter.

# NEWS & NOTES

## **SANITATION 50th ANNUAL DINNER**

— The Department of Sanitation's 50th Annual Retirement & Reunion Dinner is scheduled for Monday, November 4 at 5:00 p.m. at La Bella Vita, 106-09 Rockaway Blvd. in Ozone Park. Local 246 invites all members to join in fellowship at the dinner. Cost per ticket is \$55. Each table seats 10. Please call Jim Grillo at 212.233.0616 for tickets and table reservations.

## **COLLEGE LETTERS NOW DUE FOR RETIREE DEPENDENTS**

— RETIREE members with dependents ages 19 to 23, who are attending college full time, must submit proof each semester – fall and spring. A letter that is signed dated and bears the seal of the College Registrar, stating that the dependent is a full time, matriculated student is required as proof of eligibility for the prescription Welfare Benefit. Prescription claims for dependents that letters have expired will not be honored. They will be terminated.

## **CITIZENS RX PREFERRED FORMULARY**

— The 2013 Citizens Rx National Preferred Formulary is now available on the Local 246 website at [www.nyclocal246.org](http://www.nyclocal246.org). This list contains the most commonly prescribed drugs. For specific question about your coverage, please call the phone number printed on your ID card. If you do not have internet access, or cannot download the list, please contact the Union office at 212.233.0616.

**COBRA APPLICATIONS** — If you are no longer in active pay status you may not be eligible for health benefits and/or welfare benefits. You must purchase these benefits directly through the COBRA program for welfare benefits you should contact the union office. For health benefits you should contact the agency benefits coordinator. You must enroll within 60 days from the qualifying event.

**UPDATE YOUR BENEFIT CARD** — It's important for the Union office and to you that we have the correct information on your beneficiary card. Please call the

Union Office at (212) 233-0616 to advise us of any changes to name, addresses, births of children, or who you want listed as your beneficiary. Don't put your family in a position of not collecting benefits because you didn't have updated information on file. Benefits can only be issued to the person you have listed, even if that person is an ex-spouse.

## **MEDICARE-ELIGIBLE RETIREES ENROLLED IN APPROVED HMOs**

— NYC Local 246 will prepare the first half of 2013's reimbursement payments for those Medicare eligible retirees currently enrolled and/or who have opted to purchase their drug rider through deductions in their pension checks. In order to receive reimbursement from the Retirees Welfare Fund, eligible retirees must forward to the Union office copies of their pension stubs for the period January 1- June 30, 2013.

## **OPTICAL VOUCHERS**

— When requesting optical vouchers from the Union office, members are asked to please use them within 45 days of requesting them. Too often members are holding on to the vouchers and they are expiring. This is resulting in undue costs to the Union. Again, please make sure to only request an Optical Voucher if you plan to use it within 45 days.

## **COPE RAFFLE WINNER**

— Winner of the 50/50 Cope Raffle for June 2013 was Stanley Fera (Auto Mechanic-Sanitation). Pictured presenting Fera his winnings are Business Agent Tom Graziano (left) and Treasurer Ray Schacor.



# UNION ROUNDUP

**The Genuine Parts Contract** that was implemented in Parks, the Department of Correction, FDNY Ambulance Shop and Sanitation 5th Floor CRS and most recently Department of Transportation Webster Avenue garage is continuing to have many problems. As always, we ask members to keep records and take daily notes if possible on how this contract is affecting your ability to perform your duties. We need to establish a history and timeline in order for us to build a base of knowledge to answer the questions that we're sure will arise.

## **To date we have had no response**

from the Police Department on pay compensation for our Auto Body Workers. As you know, the Director did agree that the compensation should be looked at, so we will keep you informed as the situation progresses.

## **Local 246 has been in contact**

with DCAS and agencies about moving the hiring and promotional lists for our members. We are happy to report that movement is finally taking place. We had a meeting with DCAS to discuss our frustration with the entire process, and were told names are starting to be called off the previous lists. This will hopefully be good news for our many provisionals.

## **Cleaning of DEP equipment**

sent for repair still has been causing some headaches, but the Union is on top of the situation and addressing problems immediately. If a vehicle does not meet your standard for cleanliness, send it back to be done properly and contact your Shop Steward or the Union office.

## **The 220 Trades Coalition**

has requested information on the progress of the Op-x program. The concern is that this program does not lead to the same outcome we saw at HHC when Johnston Controls was brought in to manage the facilities and one of their first actions was to lay off half the trades staff. That is also part of the reason for our JOC's legislation that would require all contracts above \$500,000 to be broken out by specific trade construction requirements.



# JUNE MEMBERSHIP MEETING



## FDNY RECOGNIZES 246 MEMBERS

President Joe Colangelo attended the FDNY Employee Recognition Day Ceremony on June 7, at which time several Local 246 members were recognized for their commitment to the job.

"I'd like to congratulate our members for the recognition of dedicated service to the FDNY and the citizens of this great City," Colangelo said. "We know the commitment our members and all civil servants perform each and every day to keep New York City rolling and I commend the Agency for celebrating that commitment."

Pictured from left with Colangelo: Auto Mechanic Louis Salazar (35 years), Auto Mechanic Eshwar Mangal (25 years), Auto Machinist Joseph Sargent (25 years), Auto Mechanic Paul Allwright (25 years), Auto Mechanic Anthony Reyes (25 years), Auto Mechanic Stefan Murk (25 years), Auto Mechanic Martin Lewis (25 years), Auto Machinist Raymond Toborg (25 years), and in the middle Welder Joseph Inesta (25 years).



# UNIONS & CITY AGREE ON DEPENDENT VERIFICATION AUDIT

The Municipal Labor Committee (MLC) and the City of New York — after months of battling — finally reached an agreement on terms regarding the Health Insurance Dependent Verification Audit.

The Audit the City sent out to employees and retirees was challenged by the MLC because the City failed to negotiate with the MLC over certain mandatory subjects of collective bargaining. Members from all unions had been notified not to submit any paperwork until the dispute was resolved.

Earlier this summer, the MLC obtained a Temporary Restraining Order from the New York Supreme Court against the City prohibiting further implementation of the Audit. The Agreement permits the audit to continue under the following conditions:

1. The deadline to provide proof of eligibility of dependents must be submitted by October 4, 2013. This was extended from September 20, 2013.
2. If an employee or retiree self report dependents who must be removed by October 4, 2013 that employee or retiree will not be subject to recoupment of monies from premiums or claims incorrectly paid; or disciplinary charges.
3. If an employee or retiree submits proof of dependent eligibility by the October 4, 2013 deadline, and their dependent's eligibility is denied, there is a three-step appeal process that ends with an expedited arbitration. During the appeal process no dependent will lose coverage. If after the appeal process a dependent is ultimately deemed ineligible, the

City has indicated that it would not seek recoupment when there was reasonable disagreement or a misunderstanding(s) to eligibility.

4. Further, the confidentiality and privacy of the proof that is submitted is protected in that once the proof is accepted, it will be destroyed and the City's consultant will verify the destruction of the submitted proof. If there is any breach of confidentiality or privacy, the MLC, the individual, or his/her employee representative will have a right to file a lawsuit against the City's consultant or its subcontractors that will be receiving the submitted proof.
5. In addition, the City will support legislation that will ensure no criminal charges will be brought against any employee/retiree if that employee/retiree self reports dependents who must be removed by October 4, 2013.

Once the Agreement is fully executed by the City, the MLC, and the Board of Collective Bargaining, it will be submitted to the Court to order the settlement.

President Joe Colangelo said members are now being notified to gather the required information and submit it prior to the OCTOBER 4, 2013 DEADLINE. "While there is still ample time, we are recommending that members do this right away as to avoid any problems down the road," Colangelo said. "Our concerns have been addressed so we are now comfortable having members submit confidential and personal information, knowing it will be properly destroyed once it has been verified."

## MACHINISTS GET CONGRATULATIONS FROM DEP COMMISSIONER STRICKLAND



New York beaches offer an escape from this summer's sweltering, record-breaking heat wave. Some Local 246 members help make this possible for millions of New Yorkers by providing waste water treatment to keep the ocean clean for all beach goers.

Local 246 President Joe Colangelo visited the plant in July to congratulate members on the fine job they perform and to inform them about the e-mail he received from DEP Commissioner Carter H. Strickland Jr., that read: "I just wanted to give a shout out to the [Machinists] who helped us out at North River overnight and continuing through today. We were able to limit sewage releases to the Hudson and keep the beaches open for folks to get relief from this heat wave. Great job by all."

Pictured from left are: Plant Supervisor Steve Askew, Machinists Elvis Mundell, Mihail Zainea, Tunde Jimoh, Roberto Aldas, Solomon Chee, and President Colangelo.



# COLUMBIA ASSOCIATION COLANGELO SPEAKS AT MEETING

President Joe Colangelo had the honor of addressing attendees at a recent Columbia Association monthly meeting. Colangelo has been a member of the organization for more than 20 years. He spoke about the history of the Italian-American labor movement, whose leaders formed various organizations during World War II, as a way of promoting allegiance to America and putting forth a positive image about Italian Americans during the war.

"It was a privilege to be able to speak to those in attendance about a subject close to my heart," Colangelo said.

Pictured from left are Columbia Association President Ronnie Cohen, Colangelo, Sanitation Worker Paul Gagliardotto (Colangelo's nephew) and Deputy Commissioner of Sanitation Rocky DiRico.



## LABOR-MANAGEMENT MEETING UNION TACKLES THREE MAJOR ISSUES

On July 31, Local 246 held a Labor Management meeting with Keith Kerman, ww to discuss several topics of concern to the Union, including the Asset Works program, the Fleet Management manual, and several health and safety issues.

Asset Works is a new computer based program that all Mechanics are going to be required to use to record work times and replaces the MCMS system currently being used by Fire, Police and some smaller agencies. Sanitation, which never used the MCMS program fully, is now utilizing the Asset Works program; however, members in Sanitation were never provided enough training to be able to effectively input the correct information.

President Joe Colangelo said Local 246 was never notified prior to implementation of Asset Works, nor was the Union given a preview of the system or its requirements.

"We are frustrated that no one thought it was important enough to take union members into consideration in regard to proper and sufficient training," Colangelo said. "The Asset Works system will directly impact the productivity of our Mechanics but requiring them to spend time logging into a computer system, typing in job orders and acting as clerks. We will become the chief cook and bottle washers for the entire district. It's unacceptable."

While Kerman agreed to have a Union official attend training classes, Local 246 has raised concerns about the types of information members are being told to enter. There needs to be clarification on the definition of indirect and direct labor.

At the time this newsletter went to print, Local 246 had a follow up meeting with Kerman's office and OLR set for September 11

where the Union is looking to address ongoing concerns with the Asset Works program.

The two major safety items discussed at the meeting involved the installation of washers and dryers as well as issues at the Sanitation Zerega Avenue Shop.

The installation of washers and dryers, in response to a grievance the Union filed on January 29, 2013, should have already been completed by now. The recent fleet consolidation requires DEP equipment to be repaired at Sanitation garages and DOT is providing towing when necessary. The specific DEP equipment used may come in direct contact with raw sewage, and although some washers and dryers have been installed, others have not.

"The Union has stressed how unacceptable this situation is and wants immediate action taken," Colangelo said. "We are monitoring the situation daily and may take legal action if this problem is not resolved quickly. We are again advising members not to work in unsafe conditions and make sure DEP vehicles are cleaned to our high standards before any repairs are started."

The Zerega Avenue shop had numerous health and safety items and the union submitted a Health and Safety grievance at the meeting and is awaiting a response. Uneven work areas, poor lighting, insufficient space for tool storage are all issues the Local has notified management that they need to resolve immediately.

"The safety of our members is always one of our top concerns," Colangelo said. "We told management that the Zerega Avenue Shop poses too many risks and we want them taken care of."

# GARAGE VISITS FOCUS ON WORKERS' COMP ISSUES



In order to bring Local 246 members up to date on changes to the Workers' Compensation Law, as well as answer questions pertaining to possible cases, Jordan Ziegler, Esq. of the law firm Pasternack Tilker Ziegler Walsh Stanton & Romano, has made three different garage visits so far, meeting directly with members at DOT Fleet Services, FDNY Ambulance Shop and Sanitation CRS. In total, more than 110 members have had a chance to hear firsthand how they may qualify for a Workers' Compensation case.

"The laws of Workers' Compensation are complex and diverse, and not always fully understood by municipal workers," Ziegler said. "We are grateful to Joe Colangelo, Jim Grillo and all the Shop Stewards for helping us arrange these garage visits, which directly benefit the members of Local 246."

The New York State Workers' Compensation Law was created to provide injured workers with lost wage benefits and necessary medical care. However, without knowing how to navigate through the system, workers may lose valuable rights and may lose out on collecting all they are entitled to receive. All workers must know how to report a claim, file a claim, and document their disability in order to collect benefits.

Ziegler said it's important for members to know their rights, the time limits involved in filing a claim, the types of claims and injuries, how to file (either in writing or verbally), and the importance of medical reports.

Effective July 1, 2013, the maximum weekly benefit increased to \$803.21 from last year's rate of \$792.07. According to Ziegler, Local 246 Disability Counsel, this is great news for workers who might be injured on the job. While the rate does change every July 1, there is no guarantee the change will be an increase, as it is tied directly to the state's average weekly wage.

In addition to Workers' Compensation claims, Pasternack Tilker Ziegler Walsh Stanton & Romano can help members with hearing loss, personal injury, social security disability and occupational disease claims.

"We've had tremendous feedback from the members after each garage visit," said Recording Secretary Jim Grillo. "The visits give our members a chance to hear an overview, but also talk about cases they might have that they weren't even aware of. While we always hope no one gets hurt on the job, or off, we were happy to work with Jordan on these visits to bring important information directly to our members." Several additional garage visits are being planned in the next several months.

# LOCAL 246 MEMBERS JO PROTESTING



Advertisement



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# IN RALLY BLOOMBERG ADMINISTRATION



Dozens of Local 246 members joined tens of thousands of municipal workers throughout New York City at a massive labor rally outside City Hall this summer to protest Mayor Bloomberg's lack of willingness to negotiate new contracts.

"I want to thank everyone who attended the MLC rally, which sent a message to whomever wins the Mayor's race that labor will not be ignored," said President Joe Colangelo.

"As always, a special thanks to my Officers and Shop Stewards who got everyone to attend.

Joining with dozens of other Citywide unions sends a sign of solidarity as we end the term of an anti-union mayor and hopefully begin to negotiate with one more labor friendly."

The presiding theme of the rally was that Mayor Bloomberg has turned his back on those who keep the City running on a daily basis. The rally closed off Broadway from Barclay Street north to Chambers Street. Even as criticism of his administration has escalated, the Mayor has shown little interest in negotiating outstanding contracts before his term ends. Bloomberg has repeatedly called on unions to contribute to their health care costs in exchange for a contract.

Pictured at top right, Trustee Andrew Weinstein earns his 15 minutes of fame as his photo and comments appeared on a jumbotron set up high above the rally that featured union members talking about the importance of the labor movement and the significance of settling contracts.

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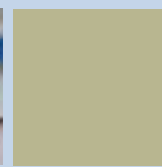
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# PLAQUE FOR PARTICIPATING

John Matthews Jr. (Auto Electrician – DOT) presented a plaque at the June membership meeting to President Joe Colangelo thanking him for all his efforts in participating in the May 8 Annual Career Day at PS/MS 43Q in Far Rockaway, Queens. Colangelo regularly represents the Union at this school's event, which Matthews is personally involved in organizing.

The plaque read: "Local 246: the rewards go to the risk takers, those who are willing to put their egos on the line and reach out to other people, and to a richer, fuller life for themselves. From John Matthews Jr. and Irene Deniston."

The Career Day is a chance for students at the school to hear about the type of work Local 246 members do and ask questions about career opportunities.

Matthews' children attended this school, and his grandchildren currently attend as well. He is very involved in both the PTA and Career Day (he is on the Career Day Committee), where he's played an active role for more than a decade.

"I was honored to receive this acknowledgement from the school and John, although it came as a huge surprise," Colangelo said. "It is such a great honor to be able to participate in this event. It gives us a chance to highlight the great work our members do and the career path we have all chosen to take."

