

# IMPACT

VOL. 12

NO. 3

NOVEMBER 2015

## SHOP STEWARD TRAINING & EDUCATION CONFERENCE



**Local 246 Shop Stewards and Officers met recently for their annual training and education conference geared toward developing the leadership skills of those involved on the front lines of keeping the local in the forefront of New York City organized labor.**

"The job of a Steward is one of the most challenging and most rewarding jobs in our union. That's because Stewards are on the front lines of our fight to develop a strong, active union in the workplace — one that can make a real difference in the lives of

our members," said President Joe Colangelo in addressing the crowd.

"Shop Stewards have an enormous impact on our members' faith and belief in the union. You have the power to energize and mobilize the source of our union's strength: the membership," he said.

Shop Stewards assume a number of roles in the union, including providing leadership in the workplace; organizing co-workers to take collective action; communicating with workers, officers, and management; and representing members when needed.

Colangelo said that by performing these tasks, Stewards earn

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Good & Welfare



Columbus Day Parade



Honored As Labor Leader

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# Message from President JOSEPH A. COLANGELO



Two current events have piqued my curiosity lately — one has a direct connection to unions and the labor movement and the other an indirect one.

Let's start with the indirect connection. Speaker of the House of Representatives John Boehner announced that he was stepping down from his position. Immediately, rumors started to swirl about why at this time in his political career he would suddenly quit. Congressman Boehner had recently met with Pope Francis, which left many wondering if it was something in his conversation with the Pontiff that impacted him so greatly or if it was just a coincidence.

The other speculation was that the Freedom Caucus, made up of mostly Tea Party members, had finally gotten to him and Boehner felt he was no longer able to govern effectively; the entire process was too much for him to overcome. These speculations and many more about why he made the decision continue to swirl around, but let's face it, no politician will ever divulge their true motives; they only speak in generalities of how and why.

The next "circus," if you will, was the question of who would replace Boehner to become the next Speaker. After weeks of drama about who was running and who was not, the question was answered. Congressman Paul Ryan announced he was willing to accept the nomination, but only on his terms.

Congressman Ryan repeatedly had said he didn't want the job because he wanted to be able to spend adequate time with his family. However, he finally agreed but with caveats. One of his demands is that he travels back to his family in Wisconsin on the weekends. This is both admirable and something no one could argue with,

## BACK PAY IN DECEMBER 4 CHECK FOR MAJORITY OF TITLES

Back Pay for Auto Mechanics et al (Auto Mechanic, Auto mechanic Diesel, Auto Machinist, Electrician (Automobile), Machinist, Machinist's Helper), Letterers and Sign Painters, Rubber Tire Repairers, Sheet Metal Workers and Carriage Upholsterers working in any Mayoral agency will be in the December 4 payroll.

Outside New York City Auto Mechanics also will be receiving their back pay now that they ratified their contract and will be fully merged within the NYC consent determination as of May 31, 2017. Back pay also will be in the December 4 payroll.

Anyone covered in these titles who does not receive their back pay in the designated check should contact their Shop Steward immediately.

if it was just that simple. Paul Ryan is by all measures a staunch conservative, from his fiscal policy stances to quality of life issues. Ryan voted against the Federal Employees Paid Parental Leave Act, which would have allowed federal employees to substitute up to four weeks of available paid leave to take parental leave. Interesting twist how now that he wants his cake and be able to eat it too, Ryan is demanding to take the time to be with his children that he previously denied to new parents.

Union leaders have always recognized the value of putting family first, hence the fight for weekends off that was one of the many wins we achieved. Unions fought for and won the five-day work week. Most union contracts, including those of Local 246, require employers to pay premiums for work on weekends. We realize that a worker's time is valuable and that time off with family is important to everyone. Unions also understand that we work to provide for our families, to buy a home, to save money for our children's education, or to earn extra income for a vacation with our loved ones. We also fight for healthcare benefits to protect our families. That's why the simple request by the leader of Congress to spend time with his family is really the bedrock of what unions have always strived to accomplish. That's what makes his request so ironic, especially coming from a politician whose policy stances have traditionally reflected something different.

On a totally different topic, the recent contract between the United Automobile Workers and Fiat Chrysler, covering 40,000 workers, provides for raises for veteran workers but also closes the gap of entry-level workers whose salaries were reduced some years back when the auto industry was struggling in America. The first contract the union negotiated was rejected but the threat of a strike pressured the two parties to reach this agreement.

The contract does two things. It stops the downward spiral of wages and lifts the wages of entry-level workers. The broader impact may be its effect on non-union auto plants that dominate the South and right-to-work states. This deal will put pressure on foreign auto makers and parts suppliers that don't have unionized work forces to raise their workers' pay as well.

A *New York Times* editorial says it best: "Therein lies the real power in the new contract: It halts the long downward pull on wages in the auto industry that has persisted even as the industry recovered from the recession. In so doing, it reaffirms the power of unions to use the threat of a strike to demand a fairer share; U.A.W. members at Fiat Chrysler had rejected an initial contract and were ready to walk out, which could have slowed the company's recent progress."

This has been the case for the discussion on the fight for \$15. Some would argue that to single out one industry, in this case fast food workers, is unfair to others. However, what may be happening is that the pressure is intensifying on all industries to raise the minimum wage across the country. We need to not lose sight that the fight for \$15 was started by, and supported by, unions.

Mark Twain was quoted as saying, "Reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated," and has been used to describe the current status of unions in this country. (see related story on page 6). It's too important for society to have anyone's voice silenced, especially the voice of unions, because unions not only effect the lives of the workers we represent, but everyone around us. We all have the same goal in mind — to make a better life for ourselves and our families, and with union support, we can achieve that goal. Those in generations before us did it, and we can, too.

The distribution of wealth in this country is highly disproportionate. We all deserve a chance and with unions, while no one will get rich in their jobs, we will have security and a means to support our families.

By the time you read this newsletter we will be nearing holiday season, a time that excites us and unites us. With Thanksgiving right around the corner, and the December holiday season following quickly on its heels, it is an appropriate time to think about others less fortunate and those serving overseas who cannot be home with their loved ones. After all, it's this type of kind-heartedness that defines those in the labor movement.



## GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Thursday, **NOVEMBER 19, 2015**

6:00 p.m.

St. Stanislaus Church

61-17 Grand Avenue, Maspeth, NY 11378

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

## NEW MEMBERS

**Mark Alexander**

Auto Service Worker — DOT

**Ronald Alveari**

Auto Service Worker — Fire

**Rickey Burgess**

Auto Mechanic — Police

**Keyan Griffiths**

Auto Service Worker — Police

**Anthony Guerrero**

Sheet Metal Worker — DCAS

**Khungie Jaggarsal**

Auto Mechanic — Correction

**Leif Lambertson**

Machinist Helper — DEP

**Kenny Lin**

Auto Service Worker — Fire

**Amar Nauth**

Auto Mechanic — Police

**Seepaul Singh**

Auto Body Worker — Police

**Anthony Spada**

Auto Mechanic — Police



# GOOD & WELFARE

## RETIRING MEMBERS

**Edward Apicella**

Auto Service Worker — Parks

**Steve Cappello**

Auto Mechanic — DOT

**Patrick Foley**

Auto Electrician — Police

**Nelson Perez**

Sr. Auto Service Worker — Housing

**Kenneth Winters**

Auto Mechanic — San

**Abdulhak Zaami**

Auto Mechanic — San

## GIFT CARD WINNERS

Congratulations to gift card winners selected via raffle at the October membership meeting.

**Julio Alverio**

Auto Service Worker — DOT

**Geoffrey Eisenbarth**

Ret. Sheet Metal Worker — DCAS

**Jeffrey Frame**

Auto Mechanic — Housing

**John Matthews Jr.**

Auto Electrician — DOT

**John Shaw**

Rubber Tire Repairer — Fire

## IN MEMORIAM MEMBERS

**John Acocella**

Ret. Machinist — BOE

**Rene Borgella**

Ret. Auto Mechanic — San

**Joseph Frizalone**

Ret. Sheet Metal Worker — M&A

**Jack Goldstein**

Ret. Auto Mechanic — Police

**Adolph Schimmenti**

Former Shop Steward

Ret. Door Stop Maintainer — BOE

**Mario Tempera**

Ret. Auto Mechanic — Police

## DEP EMPLOYEES RECOGNITION DAY



On October 21, 2015, DEP held its Employee Recognition Day Ceremony at DC 37 Headquarters. DEP Machinists Bansraj Sukhu and Mikhail Volodarskiy received awards for perfect attendance. Suku and Volodarskiy, as well as other Machinists at DEP, help keep our oceans and beaches clean.

Vice President Jim Grillo said these two members are true examples of what it means to be a Local 246 member.

"It reflects well upon the Union when our members are recognized for their outstanding service and contributions," Grillo said. "Congratulations to both for a job well done in helping keep New York City rolling."

## IN MEMORIAM FAMILY

**Arnold Bevelaqua** (Daughter)

Auto Mechanic — Police

# NEWS & NOTES

**ANNUAL TURKEY RAFFLE** — The Union's traditional turkey raffle will take place at the November General Membership Meeting. Sixty lucky winners will receive a gift certificate that can be used at their local supermarket. You must be present to win, so come and participate. The odds of winning are very good. Good luck to all.

## **STAY IN TOUCH WITH SOCIAL MEDIA**

— Since we launched our Facebook page, hundreds of members, municipal workers, and other labor organizations have liked us. Same goes for our Twitter page. Don't be left out in the cold. If you utilize social media, be sure to **LIKE US** and **FOLLOW US**. Members have provided positive feedback to date about how useful these social media outlets have been in helping keep everyone up to date. It's one of the best ways to get the most updated news from and about your union. Don't be left out in the cold. **On Facebook: SEIU Local 246. On Twitter: @nyclocal246**

## **SEND US YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS FOR UPDATES**

— Local 246 has been collecting email addresses voluntarily from members during the past several months for the Union's new email blast system. By creating this database of personal member e-mails, Local 246 will be able to disseminate important information and event reminders in a very timely fashion. **Those who are interested can sign up to receive the emails by providing the Union with a personal email address, as well as both first and last names.** All addresses will be kept strictly confidential, will only be utilized for purposes of the email blast system, and will not be sold or provided to any outside party. Anyone interested in receiving the blasts should email their personal email address to [nyc246seiu@nyclocal246.org](mailto:nyc246seiu@nyclocal246.org). **This address should NOT be used to contact the Union for anything other than signing up for the email blast.** This program is optional and members can opt out at any time by clicking in the link that will be provided in all emails sent from the Union.

## **FUNDS EXTEND COVERAGE TO ACTIVE MEMBER'S CHILDREN UP TO 26**

— You may enroll dependents at the time they are becoming 19 years old, or at the time they lose benefits from their own or spouse/domestic partner's benefits. There is a time limit of 31 days from reaching age 19, or loss of other benefits. If you miss the time limit, you will have to wait until the following January 1st.

## **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.

## **ALL AUDITS COMPLETED**

— Union Trustees completed their audit in September and reported that all checks and receipts were in order, and that the Union remains in solid financial standing.

## **UPDATE YOUR BENEFICIARY CARD**

— It's important for our office and for you that we have the correct information for each member on beneficiary cards. Please call the Union Office at 212.233.0616 to advise us of any changes so we can send you a change of beneficiary card.

## **ONLY MEDICARE-ELIGIBLE RETIREES ENROLLED IN APPROVED HMOS**

— Local 246 will prepare the first half of 2015'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 of January 1-June 30, 2015.

## **COPE RAFFLE WINNER**

— Winner of the 50/50 Cope Raffle for September 2015 was **Anthony Napolitano** (Machinist Helper — DEP).

# Grace Period ALL MEMBERS NOW GET 5-MINUTE LEEWAY

As part of the new contracts the Union recently negotiated with the City, all members now have a five-minute grace period when starting their shifts. Employees can punch in up to five minutes after their scheduled start time without having to charge lateness, with the punch rounding back to the scheduled start time). If an employee tries to submit lateness for five minutes or less, then an error message is displayed.

President Joe Colangelo said this grace period gives covered members a small amount of breathing room if they are stuck in traffic, their bus is running late, or the trains are off schedule. He said that if the employee is more than five minutes late, then a lateness leave request must be submitted to account for all the late minutes; the grace period does not reduce the lateness.

This change to the grace period is retroactive from July 12, 2015. Where the employee submitted five minutes or less of lateness between July 12, 2015, and October 10, 2015, the lateness should be changed and not charged.

"Agency administrators and timekeepers are aware of this change and should be making necessary adjustments," Colangelo said. "Any member questioning whether their time was reversed should contact their Shop Steward."

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

for the most up-to-date  
information on what's happening  
within the Union

# SUPREME COURT CASE COULD GREATLY IMPACT FUTURE OF UNIONS

The Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) is set to hear in early 2016 a case that could forever change the way labor unions do business.

The case of *Friedrichs v. California Teachers' Association* (CTA) is a potentially ominous development for public sector unions and unions in general, said President Joe Colangelo.

But while many are decreeing it as the death of labor unions, or at least as they have been known in the past, Colangelo said it's too early in the ballgame to declare unions as "dead."

As Mark Twain said, "reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated." Yet that doesn't mean that too many elected officials, and even the Supreme Court, are not doing their best to put the nail in labor's coffin.

What Governor Scott Walker did in Wisconsin by making the Badger State the 25th Right-to-Work state, the Supreme Court could do with one fell swoop depending on its decision in the *Friedrichs* case, a lawsuit with major implications for all public employee unions.

The lawsuit challenges the authority of the CTA and other public employee unions to collect union dues. For unions, the consequences of losing the right to collect agency fees are the potential for significantly reduced income, which means a reduced ability to represent members.

Many individuals might stop paying dues on the basis that

benefits are now "free." Half of the states, including California, have adopted laws establishing mandatory "fair share" or "agency" fees employees pay to unions. The remaining 25 right to work states either prohibit collective bargaining by public workers or ban mandatory dues. Although the case directly involves the CTA, a decision could affect all unions representing public workers.

"Basically the outcome of this case means that unions like Local 246 could have to represent all members in the titles we cover whether or not they pay dues," Colangelo said. "For example, there could be two Auto Mechanics working side by side, doing the same job within the same guidelines, yet only one is paying dues. The problem with this is that the diminished resources of the union would have to be utilized to attend to the needs of the same number of members. We would still have to negotiate contracts and benefits for non-dues-paying members, we would still have to arbitrate their grievances, we would still have to manage their benefits — but they would be freeloading."

Colangelo said that's why so many unions and labor groups like the Municipal Labor Committee are closely monitoring this case's progress. The MLC will be filing an Amicus brief with the Supreme Court, as have dozens of other unions.

# SHOP STEWARD TRAINING & EDUCATION CONFERENCE

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the confidence and respect of co-workers and allow them to reach out to members, and encourage them to become active, involved participants in their union. A strong union is better able to protect workers' rights and fight for improvements in wages, hours, working conditions, and quality of life on the job. Stewards were brought up to date on grievance procedures, member representation, Workers' Compensation issues and more.

Guest speakers included Jordan Ziegler, Esq., the Union's Workers' Compensation attorney; Robert Burzichelli, Esq., Local 246 Counsel, who discussed workplace violence; Leslie Williams and Joseph Mathews, Annuity Fund Consultants, who spoke about retirement planning; Kathleen Smith, Emblem Health, and Dan Cassuto, Healthplex, both of whom gave an explanation of benefits; and Lynne Perry from the NYCERS retirement system, who discussed pension plans.

"Good leaders become great leaders by going beyond the call of duty and beyond the basic job description," Colangelo said. "That's what our Shop Stewards do every day, and that's one of the many benefits derived from this training and education conference."

Pictured below from top left, clockwise: Ziegler, Mathews, Burzichelli, and Perry.

"I want to thank all our guest speakers for taking time from their schedules to speak at these educational forums for our Shop Stewards," Colangelo said.



# COLUMBUS DAY PARADE



More than 100 groups involving 35,000 marchers, bands, floats and contingents — and Local 246 President Joe Colangelo — marched in this year's NYC Columbus Day Parade on October 12. The annual event, with an estimated hundreds of spectators, is the world's largest celebration of Italian-American culture. The Columbus Day Parade is a fun-filled parade that gets bigger and better every year. Pictured above left: President Colangelo marches with the Columbia Association. Above right: Dennis Giggins, First Deputy Commissioner, Sanitation, Jose Atkinson, Deputy Commissioner at SWM Operations, Rocco DiRico, Deputy Commissioner/Support Services, Colangelo, Chief John D'Angelo, and Commissioner Kathryn Garcia.



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# IMPACT

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REMEMBER OUR TROOPS & PRAY FOR THEIR SAFETY

## PRESIDENT COLANGELO HONORED AS OUTSTANDING LABOR LEADER

President Joe Colangelo was honored at this year's NIA Community Services Network as "Labor Leader of the Year" for his outstanding contributions to organized labor and his commitment to making a better life for those he represents.

NIA Community Services Network is a not-for-profit community service organization dedicated to addressing issues that impact youth, families, and seniors. Since 1981, NIA has provided cost-free and affordable services to more than 6,000 school children each day through dozens of after-school programs. Their services for seniors positively impact more than 3,000 golden-agers each year. NIA also provides youth and family counseling for dozens of families, in addition to community assistance services. These have included post-Hurricane Sandy assistance for more than 1,500 families



"I was extremely honored to accept the award," Colangelo said. "The Network is a great organization filling a tremendous need in the community."