

IMPACT

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LOCAL 246 PRESENTS AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED TO TWO



For the first time in the history of the Lawrence Komnick Scholarship Award, Local 246 presented the honor to two graduating high school seniors.

And what makes this year's awards even more special is that one of the proud fathers has a special connection to Lawrence Komnick. William Thomas said his father David (Auto Mechanic — Police) worked with Komnick on the job.

"This award has extra meaning to me because my dad actually worked with Larry for quite a few years and he is also doing roadside repair, which is what Larry did," the younger Thomas said.

William graduated from Massapequa High School earlier this year, where he was in the National Honor Society and very involved in the community through scouting. He was a member of Boy Scout Troop 776 and Venturing Crew 577, where he held

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Good & Welfare



5 June Membership Meeting



10 Visit to the Shops

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Message from President JOSEPH A. COLANGELO



I hope everyone enjoyed their summer and had a chance to get some quality time with friends and family.

As I'm sure you are all aware that as the temperature starts to cool down, the presidential election will be heating up. Most agree that the average American really starts to pay attention right after Labor Day.

As most of you know, we have never had two candidates running for the highest office in the land, the Presidency of the United States, who are more disliked and distrusted. One theme both parties focus on is the suffering in the middle class, which are working folks like you and I. Both candidates have differ-

ent approaches as to how they are delivering the message, but the message is all the same. Instead of trying to speak about the pros and cons on each party's approach, I would rather focus on the issues facing middle class families like us.

We need to start with the decline in union membership and its effect on working men and women, all of which began nearly four decades ago, in the mid 1970s-early 1980s. The 1970s began with the end of the Vietnam War, a war that lasted more than 10 years; it was much like the wars we have entered into after 9/11. The 1970s also had the oil embargo when the Middle East cut off oil shipments to the U.S. and it was not uncommon to see people waiting on lines for gas for blocks on end. At that time, union membership was still strong with most having pension and benefits, something uncommon in today's world.

Shortly after Ronald Reagan was elected president in 1980, there was a strike by the air traffic controllers. The government declared it as an illegal strike and the President ordered everyone back to work. If they did not comply, they would be

MEDICAL PLAN CHANGES

EMBLEM HEALTH/GHI-CBP BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD

Effective July 1, 2016, enhancements were made to NYC Emblem Health/GHI-CBP Blue Cross Blue Shield Plan Medical Plan. All active and non-medicare eligible retiree members enrolled in this plan should have received the letter detailing the changes and announcing that new cards would be sent out. You can view the letter on the Local's website under Benefits and/or News. The changes are regarding \$0 co-payments for certain services and \$0 co-payments for birth control prescriptions and other preventive prescriptions as listed on emblemhealth.com/city. As of that date, GHI is required by New York State to cover these Affordable Care Act prescriptions and OTC items. These changes do not affect any of the other health plans the City offers.

fired. The membership stuck together and President Reagan followed through with his threat and fired everyone on August 5, 1981.

Most of us in labor refer back to that event as the start of the decline in the labor movement, which was the time that gave businesses the green light to treat their employees the same way government was. It was then that corporations began aggressive anti-union campaigns. That's when we started to see the slow decline of defined pension benefit plans.

I like to share some of my own labor story so you can understand why I am so passionate about protecting our membership.

At around the same time, I was working in an auto parts store/warehouse that had about 12 employees, and I was in a Teamsters local. I had a medical plan and dental coverage that I did not pay for at the time. When I started work for the City, the medical coverage was not the best. In fact, it was hard to even find a doctor willing to take the plan, but by sticking together we improved health care throughout the years.

So what changed? The answer I give is that the world has changed. As the private sector lost manufacturing jobs in part to horrible trade deals like NAFTA, union membership in this country began its steep decline as well. The free trade agreements tied with the support from both parties was supposed to be good for our economy. As companies moved manufacturing plants outside of the United States, so too went good-paying union jobs with them.

Future free trade deals overseas started some of those same corporations chasing cheaper labor around the world. The cost of goods went down and the consumers benefited, but I would counter that those good jobs and wages also went down. What was the upside for middle class families? Nothing other than a big downward spiral.

The frustration and anger you see in this election cycle has been taking root in the policies that were implanted by both parties. I would say that we in the middle have been pandered

to and not taken seriously except for our votes. The drain from workers' pockets only filled the pockets of the 1%. The disparity of wealth between the rich and poor is now the greatest since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Let that sink in.

It's time to right the ship and it's time for working people to get respected again. I hope this gives you an idea of what is truly going on and I hope whoever is elected will take a position to help the working men and woman of this county to build a better life for all America, not just the wealthy 1%.

Come this November, please take the time to vote. It's a right we all need to exercise.

I'd like to thank everyone who came out to march in this year's Labor Day Parade. It was a huge success once again, with plenty of members showing off their custom cars, trucks and motorcycles. The yearly event is a chance for all New Yorkers to experience what it means to be a part of the labor movement. This year's Grand Marshal James Callahan, General President of IUOE, and Parade Chair Henry Garrido, Executive Director of DC37, were two examples of what it means to make a lifelong commitment to labor.

Local 246 members are always shining examples of just how strong and important labor is in New York. As you can see from the story on page 9 of this newsletter (see the entire story on our website at www.nyclocal246.org), while the labor movement is dwindling across the country, it remains a force to be reckoned with in New York, where numbers remain strong.

That in part can be attributed to the success we as a labor movement have had by staying united and determined in our ongoing efforts to do what is best and deserved for those who keep our city and state running on a daily basis.

Please join us for the first general membership meeting after our summer hiatus to catch up on all the news. I look forward to seeing you all on Thursday, September 15.

BENEFITS NOTICE FOR VISION & DENTAL

Please note that you may opt out of the Vision and Dental benefits provided by the Active and Retirees Funds. If you wish to opt out, please let the Fund Office know in writing by December 1 and your opt-out will be effective January 1 of the following year. This information has also been provided on our website at www.nyclocal246.org, in the Members Only Section, where you can get detailed information on these and other benefits.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Thursday, **SEPTEMBER 15, 2016**

6:00 p.m.

St. Stanislaus Church

61-17 Grand Avenue, Maspeth, NY 11378

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

IN MEMORIAM MEMBERS

Andrew Kille

Ret. Auto Mechanic — DEP

Cleve Knott

Ret. Auto Service Worker — DOC

Edward Kren

Auto Service Worker — Police

Vincent Petrocelli

Ret. Machinist — DEP

Paul Racanelli

Auto Mechanic — DOC

Albert Reid

Ret. Auto Mechanic — DOT

GOOD & WELFARE

SEND US YOUR NEWS

Send us your news on special birthdays, children's graduations, trips, honors, new births and community service, or any other items of interest you would like to share. Be sure to include photos, as well as daytime and evening phone numbers where you can be reached if we should have any questions. Photos will be returned.

NEW MEMBERS

Ozmat Ali

Auto Mechanic — Fire

Wahid Azees

Machinist Helper — DEP

Dale Baboolal

Letterer — DOT

Glen Badoo

Auto Service Worker — DOT

Christopher Bhola

Auto Service Worker — DOC

Christopher Busch

Motor Grader Operator — DOT

Matthew Class

Auto Mechanic — Fire

Salvatore Cucchiara

Auto Mechanic — DOT

Devin Day

Auto Mechanic — DEP

Michael DeBernardo

Auto Service Worker — Police

Douglas DiGiacomo

Motor Grader Operator — DOT

Vincent Falcone

Auto Service Worker — Police

Randy Francis

Auto Mechanic — San

Ivan Garcia

Auto Mechanic — Fire

Kevin Geness

Auto Mechanic — Parks

Catherine Griffin

Sign Letterer — DOT

Ilya Khaimov

Auto Mechanic — San

Azeem Khan

Auto Service Worker — Police

Thomas Longobardo

Auto Service Worker — Police

Joseph Marafino

Auto Mechanic — Police

Richard Masihdas

Machinist — DOE

Peter McGlashan

Auto Service Worker — Fire

Peter McCalla

Machinist — DEP

Kelsang Norbu

Auto Service Worker — DOC

Lewis Paniagua

Auto Mechanic — Parks

Diego Pena

Auto Service Worker — DOC

Navindra Petam

Auto Service Worker — Parks

Steve Perez

Auto Service Worker — DOC

Chandrasekhar Persaud

Machinist Helper — DEP

Cezar Prescurie

Machinist — DEP

Marlon Ramdial

Auto Mechanic — Fire

Rajendra Rajkumar

Machinist — DEP

Eric Rasmussen

Machinist — San

Michael Romano

Auto Mechanic — San

Smith Raymond

Auto Mechanic — DEP

Mark Sandy

Machinist Helper — DEP

Ralph Setteducato

Auto Mechanic — San

Duane Thompson

Auto Service Worker — Fire

Daniel Trezza

Auto Service Worker — DOC

Parmanand Tribhowan

Machinist — DOE

IN MEMORIAM FAMILY

Frank Grasso (Wife)
Ret. Auto Mechanic — San

Thomas Graziano (Father)
Business Agent
Ret. Carriage Upholsterer — Parks

Timothy McNulty (Wife)
Machinist — DEP

Christopher Olsen (Brother)
Auto Mechanic — San

Michael Olsen (Brother)
Auto Mechanic — San

Dennis White (Mother)
Auto Mechanic — San

Thomas Hind (Father)
Sheet Metal Worker — Fire

John Piro (Wife)
Auto Mechanic — Police

WELCOME NEW SHOP STEWARD

Congratulations to new Shop Steward **Yadunath (Andy) Hiralall**, who was elected to represent members in Police. Andy started with the City in November 1999 and since that time has become more involved with the Union, learning the ins and outs of what's important for members.



He was elected Shop Steward in June, replacing Stanley Pirpinias, who became a Union Trustee. Andy can be reached at 718.495.5428.

"The entire Executive Board and all the other Shop Stewards look forward to working with Andy in his new position," said President Joe Colangelo. "We are always glad to have some new faces and know you will make a good member of the team. Welcome aboard."

AM JOHN ZEOLLA HONORED FOR 40 YEARS

John Zeolla started working as an Auto Mechanic at NYPD Shop 2 in the Bronx 40 years ago, and he never left. Those years of service and dedication have now earned him a special honor that he received in mid June at One Police Plaza. "As they say, he found a home," said Vice President Jim Grillo, who attended the event. "It's members like John who make us proud to say we belong to Local 246."



LOCAL 246 SOCIAL MEDIA



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SEIU Local 246



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CONGRATULATIONS



Congratulations to Charlie Caffarone (Auto Mechanic — Police) and his wife Hillary on the birth of their daughter Emma Dorothy on May 18, 2016 at 3:42 p.m. Emma weighed 7 lbs. 4 oz. and was 21 inches. Congrats also to big brother CJ.

RETIRING MEMBERS

Ralph Cerullo
Auto Mechanic — Pol

Michael DePietro
Tractor Operator — DOT

Manuel Figueroa
Machinist Helper — San

James Letohic
Auto Mechanic Diesel — DEP

Frank Manno
Sheet Metal Worker — HOM

Alda Nicholson
Machinist — BOE

Michael Shurland
Auto Mechanic — Fire

Nicholas Teta
Auto Mechanic — San

Joseph Zelinski
Auto Service Worker — San

NEW BORN CHILDREN

Albert Spry (Granddaughter)
Machinist — BOE

Parmanand Tribhowan (Son)
Machinist — BOE

Louis Viggiano (Daughter)
Auto Mechanic — Police

NEWS & NOTES

OPTICAL UPDATES — Members no longer need a voucher for in-network optical vendors — GVS, Vision Screening, and Comprehensive. Just make an appointment; they have all your information on file.

ANNUAL SANITATION RETIREMENT DINNER AND REUNION — The Annual Sanitation Dinner is on Monday, November 7, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at Villa Russo, 118-16 101st Avenue, South Richmond. You are invited to join us in fellowship and hope we can count on your participation. Tickets are \$65/person. Each table seats 10 for tickets and table reservations. Please contact Jim Grillo at 212.233.0616 for more information and to purchase tickets.

HEALTH PLAN TRANSFER PERIOD FOR ACTIVE & RETIRED MEMBERS — The annual health insurance coverage transfer period for ACTIVE MEMBERS is October 1-31, 2016, and for RETIRED MEMBERS is November 1-30, 2016. During this period, members may transfer from their present health plan into another City health plan and add or drop optional rider coverage to your present plan. This annual transfer period is your only opportunity to elect changes in your health insurance coverage. Changes are effective January 1, 2017. Retirees will not have the option of switching for another two years. Watch your mail for information about the plans and how to switch to a different one if you choose.

COLLEGE LETTERS NOW DUE — **Retired** 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.

JOB OPENINGS — Check the Local 246 website News Page on a regular basis for job openings within the City of New York. As we find out about available positions, we are providing the information on our website and posting on Facebook.

UNION WEBSITE — The Union's website contains numerous downloadable forms for members' use, and has various links to useful information. Please visit the site at www.nyclocal246.org regularly for important updates. Please call the Union office if you don't know your username and password.

FUNDS EXTEND COVERAGE TO ACTIVE MEMBERS' CHILDREN UP TO AGE 26 — You may enroll dependent children at the time they are becoming 19 years old, or at the time they lose benefits from their own or spouse's coverage. 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.

SIGN UP FOR UNION PLUS — AFL-CIO Union Plus benefits help current and dues-paying retired labor union members and their families save money and support them through major milestones, celebrations, and hardships. Local 246 members can sign up for Union Plus by visiting www.unionplus.org. Current and dues-paying retired union members are automatically eligible for their local's Union Plus benefits. Family members — including spouses, parents and children — are often eligible for the benefits, too. There is no Union Plus membership, no separate sign up, and no enrollment fee for the programs. Union members are automatically eligible for Union Plus benefits. On the site, you can find discounts on travel and entertainment, home and technology, automotive, health, money and insurance, and so much more. There are even discounts for union-made clothing.

ONLY MEDICARE-ELIGIBLE RETIREES ENROLLED IN APPROVED HMOS

— Local 246 will prepare the first half of 2016'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, 2016.

COBRA APPLICATIONS — If you are no longer in active pay status you may not be eligible for health benefits and/or welfare benefits. To 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 DUES CARD — Members who change title or transfer to another agency are required to fill out a new dues authorization card. Ask your Shop Steward for a new card to fill out or call the Union at 212.233.0616. Please return completed cards to the Union office.

COPE RAFFLE WINNER — Winner of the 50/50 Cope Raffle for June 2016 was **Henry Meckl** (Retired Auto Mechanic — Sanitation). Union Treasurer Ray Schacor presents Meckl with his winnings.



NYS EXTENDS MILITARY SERVICE CREDIT LAW

HONORING OUR VETERANS

In order to honor those who have bravely served our country, and to encourage all veterans to return to New York and continue their public service, the State Legislature this year voted favorably to extend the Military Service Credit Law of 2000 to all veterans who have served in the military.

The new law removed the periods of time in which military service would had to have been rendered in order to receive up to three years of service credit. The new law allows all honorably discharged service members with five years of existing public pension credit to purchase three years of credit for their military service. Previously, state law only allowed World War II, Korean War and Vietnam War vets to purchase pension credits. The new law also deleted other restricting dates.

"Many of our military personnel leave government jobs in order to proudly serve our country. They are our teachers, our police officers and firefighters and our municipal workers," said President Joe Colangelo. "Unions have fought for years to get this bill signed into law allowing all our brave men and women who serve in the military defending our country to purchase this extra time in their retirement plan upon their return to work in New York."

"This is a small price to pay to recognize the training and leadership skills that our veterans received during their honorable military service," he said. "After being passed by the Legislature three times and vetoed twice, the bill was finally signed into law. This credit shouldn't be based on when veterans wore their uniforms, but that they were willing to wear one at all to defend our nation, our freedoms, and our way of life. All veterans deserve this sign of respect."

Colangelo said he encourages any veteran who works for state or local government, or who knows someone who does, to check on this new credit.

Another helpful resource now available to veterans is a mobile app designed to help connect veterans with vital services and programs. Through the New York State Veterans App, users can access a variety of information about state and federal veterans' benefits directly from mobile devices. The app is supported by the New York State Division of Veterans' Affairs and includes sections on healthcare, housing, employment, education, and how to file claims for financial benefits. Veterans or their family members can download the free New York State Veterans App by visiting www.ny.gov/mobileapps.



Distracted Driving

The National Traffic Safety Board (NTSB) has recommended since 2011 for state governments to ban all portable devices except GPS units, without distinguishing between handheld and hands-free sets.

As of earlier this year, City Fleet policy mirrored New York State law that bans handheld cell phone use but allowed hands-free devices. DCAS Fleet's research on the safety of hands-free devices while operating vehicles has lead to a recommendation that New York City take a further step and ban the use of hands-free and Bluetooth devices when actively driving and operating a City vehicle.



According to the Vision Zero, this is already a step being taken by the MTA and TLC for taxis.

"At the most basic level, it is a distraction while driving that reduces the capacity of vehicle operators to drive safely and respond to changing traffic conditions," reads a memo put out by NYC DCAS. "Use of hands-free devices is a distraction and creates unneeded risk and danger."

The report also says that extensive research supports this position. One NHTSA study suggests that operation of a vehicle while using a hands-free phone is the equivalent to operation of a vehicle while legally intoxicated.

Local 246 President Joe Colangelo said members have been notified of this change of policy and are strongly encouraged to abide by the new guidelines.

"I know we all have emergencies while driving. A child calls. A spouse calls. There is always going to be something that requires our immediate attention," Colangelo said. "If you think it is a call

that must be answered immediately, you need to pull your city-owned vehicle to the side of the road and take care of the problem before getting back on the road."

In October 2015, the national fleet management association, NAFA, adopted a policy prohibiting the use of handheld and hands-free devices by its employees, contractors and volunteers.

The DCAS memo states: "We recommend this policy be adopted for the City fleet, maintaining only the emergency-related exemptions as outlined. This policy change will continue our leadership in safe driving practices and serve as an opportunity to further educate all drivers on the dangers of distraction."

Colangelo said the new policy reads:

"Do not operate a vehicle while talking on a phone, including handheld, hands-free, or phones affixed to a vehicle. Don't do anything that will interfere with the safe operation of the vehicle, and this specifi-

cally includes texting or e-mailing while you are driving. Always pay attention to the road. If you must make a phone call, find a safe place to pull over. Consistent with NY State Law governing hand-held use. The only exceptions are for emergency 911 calls or when operating an authorized emergency vehicle in the performance of official duties."

Colangelo said that with this new policy in place, members should live by a rule of thumb that if it sounds questionable, it probably is.

"It's simple — stay off the phone when you are driving unless there is an undisputable emergency," he said. "This new policy is extremely clear cut and well defined."

Conviction of a cell phone use, portable electronic device use or texting violation will also result in points being added to your DMV driving record.

LABOR UNIONS WANING NATIONWIDE

STAY ROBUST IN NEW YORK

Despite all the attention that has been paid to the union-backed campaign for a \$15 minimum wage, the national decline in organized labor has persisted. Still, for three straight years, New York City, the birthplace of the Fight for \$15 movement, has bucked that trend, according to a report that was to be released on Monday.

Nationally, fewer than one in nine workers is a union member, a share that has decreased slowly and steadily for more than 15 years, the report says. But in New York City, more than a quarter of workers are unionized, the highest proportion since 2007, according to the report.

"New York continues defying the law of gravity," said Ruth Milkman, a co-author, with Stephanie Luce, of the annual report, titled "The State of the Unions." Milkman and Luce are professors at the Murphy Institute for Worker Education and Labor Studies at the City University of New York.

The share of New York City workers who belong to unions has risen for three straight years — to 25.5 percent in the past year from 21.5 percent in 2012 — the report says. That is more than double the 10.9 percent of workers nationwide who are unionized. The report's authors attribute the countertrend in New York

to the rebound of traditionally unionized industries weakened by the recession, including construction and the hotel business.

And it has come about despite limited success in organizing the employees of fast-food restaurants and other workers who began the push for a \$15 minimum wage, Ms. Milkman said.

When that campaign started in Manhattan in November 2012, its leaders called for two profound changes: an increase in the minimum wage to \$15 an hour and union representation for the workers. At the time, neither demand seemed like anything more than a sky-blue delusion.

But with the help and financial backing of influential unions, the campaign won converts. In New York, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo, a Democrat, at first balked at supporting the full wage demand. But he eventually embraced it and wound up racing Gov. Jerry Brown, a California Democrat, to sign legislation that would raise the state minimum wage to \$15.

To read the full story as it appeared in the New York Times, go to the news page of the Local 246 website at www.nyclocal246.org or visit our Facebook page.

SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

Continued from page 1

various leadership positions in both. He also participated in the Boy Scout National Jamboree and the Venturing Fest, both held at the Summit Bechtel Reserve in West Virginia. He enjoys cooking, white water rafting, archery and camping.

William is working to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout and recently finished his service project — four wooden storage benches for Last Hope Animal Rescue in Wantagh, NY.

William is attending West Virginia University, majoring in Engineering. He is hoping to join the Air Force ROTC.

"I am looking forward to joining my older sister Amy who will be in her junior year at WVU. She is currently pursuing a BA in Criminology with Minors in Forensics and Psychology. I would really like to thank SEIU Local Union 246 for this award and for helping me along in my journey. I'm excited to see what the future has in store for me and to see all that I can accomplish," William wrote before he left for college.

Also receiving his award at the June membership meeting was Peter DeSantis, son of Thomas (Auto Mechanic Diesel — San) and his wife Jane.

DeSantis, from Raritan, NJ, graduated from Immaculata High School in Somerville, NJ, and is attending Seton Hall University. Peter has three older siblings: Tom (26), Will (24), and Maggie (22).

At Immaculata, he was Vice President of the Spanish Honor Society, a member of the National Honor Society, a varsity shot put thrower, a Youth and Government delegate, and a Campus Ministry volunteer.

Peter plans to get involved in many intramural sports at Seton Hall and volunteer activities through their Campus Ministry program.

"I am very grateful to SEIU Local 246 for awarding me the Lawrence Komnick Scholarship. It is truly a blessing for my family and me, and I am excited to put the award money to good use as I begin my studies this Fall semester," he said.

JUNE MEMBERSHIP MEETING





NEW YORK CITY LOCAL 246 • SERVICE EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION, AFL-CIO

IMPACT

SEIU Local 246 ~ 217 Broadway, Suite 501 ~ New York, NY 10007

Prsrt First Class Mail
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REMEMBER OUR TROOPS & PRAY FOR THEIR SAFETY

246 SIGN PAINTERS/LETTERERS POINT US IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

No one who drives or walks through New York City ever really pays attention to how the street signs are made. We all just know that we need those street signs to navigate the boroughs.

Those much-needed signs are the product of Local 246 Painters and Letterers who work in the Department of Transportation.

This summer, Union Vice President Jim Grillo visited the DOT shop in Maspeth to catch up on latest projects the members are working on and to talk about what transpired within the union during the summer.

Pictured from left: Luis Cabana, Alex Soutanis, Lynn Volini, Catherine Griffin, Dale Baboolal, Ira Altman and Henry Chen.

"It was great to watch them at work and learn about how all the signs throughout the City actually get made," Grillo said.

