



**Dedicated to the Preservation and Enhancement of the Retiree Benefits of New York State Community College Retirees**

\*\*\*\*\*



**Report on NYSUT's 42nd Annual Representative Assembly**

Corita Kong, RC39 Secretary and RA Delegate

Along with 2,303 other delegates, RC39 President Pete Herron and I attended NYSUT's 42nd Annual Representative Assembly held on April 4-6, 2014, at New York City. There were four General Sessions, two Candidates Forums, numerous group meetings and speeches.

Among the prominent speakers were US Senator Charles Schumer and NY State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli. Senator Schumer spoke of our nation's need to invest in education to ensure our edge in global competition; he pledged a strong, close, and productive relationship with NYSUT. Comptroller DiNapoli reassured us that our state's pension system is well-funded and sustainable for the long term. He also mentioned that New York has \$12 billion in unclaimed funds, and he suggested that we check to see whether we and/or our relatives are entitled to some of the money. You can do this by going to the New York State Comptroller's website.

More than fifty resolutions were adopted, an election was held for NYSUT officers and election district directors. Most candidates for local offices were unopposed. With the exception of Andrew Pallotta, all the incumbent central officers were challenged and defeated. The incoming officers are: Karen Magee, President, Andrew Pallotta, Executive VP, Catalina Fortino, First VP, Paul Pecorale, Second VP, and Martin Messner, Secretary-Treasurer.

Despite the rather tense and intense contest, it's the prevailing sentiment of the attendees and speakers that NYSUT needs to be united and thus remains a strong organization to confront effectively today's challenges.

**NYSUT Election**

Pete Herron, President RC39 and RA Delegate

Immediately upon arriving at the hotel there was a sense of tension that was not present at any previous RA I attended. There were t-shirts, buttons, signs, pamphlets and people campaigning for candidates. This actually started a week or more before the Representative Assembly when I received in the mail campaign literature on people competing for the central NYSUT positions. Clearly this was going to be a very interesting and competitive race.

One group, "Stronger Together," consisted of all of the current officer holders but one, Dick Iannuzzi-President, Maria Neira-Vice President, Kathleen Donahue-Vice President and Lee Cutler-Secretary/Treasurer. Their message was that the Stronger Together Team is clearly the strong, united team needed to move our union and mission forward.

The second group, "Revive NYSUT," candidates were Karen Magee-President, Andrew Pallotta-Executive Vice President, Catalina Fortino-Vice President, Paul Pecorale-Vice President and (Continued on page 3.)

**Report on ED 52 Meeting**

Joan Prymas, RC39 Treasurer

On March 4th and 5th I attended the ED52 meeting in Albany. First on the agenda was a report from Joan Perini, our ED Director. She introduced Kathleen Donahue, our guest speaker. Kathleen spoke of our legislative successes in achieving a permanent health care moratorium and sorting out the inpatient or "under observation" Medicare hospital issue. We still need to fight diminishing our pensions and stay on top of attacks on retiree healthcare. Susan Klug gave a presentation on Medicare and the Affordable Care Act. She pointed out that NYSUT Social Services would help with health insurance problems at SOCSVCS@NYSUTMAIL.org or by calling 1-800-342-9810 Ext. 6206. Information is free and confidential for all members and their families. The next presentation was by Ani Shahinian from NYSUT Social Services. She talked about happiness and aging. She pointed out that brain cells are not dying as we used to think. We're always experiencing brain cell genesis and we use both hemispheres of our brain. (Continued on page 3.)

## Pre NYSUT Representative Assembly Local & Retiree Council Presidents Conference Report

Pete Herron, RC39 President

The Pre RA consisted of a set of concurrent seminars presented in three separate rounds, one Thursday afternoon and two on Friday morning. The three seminars I attended are:

**Legal and Organizational Challenges for Our Union:** Among the key documents for fiscal accountability presented by Jeffrey Lockwood, NYSUT Manager of Accounting and Reporting, were by-laws, annual budget, periodic financial audit, tax filings, bank statements and written internal control procedures. Thanks to Joan Prymas, RC39 Treasurer, we conform to all of Jeffrey's recommendations.

**Retiree Councils Mobilized for 2014 Elections:** Most retiree councils are geographically defined. RC39, representing community college retirees, is one of the very few retiree councils that is not locally defined and does not have membership meetings and rallies. The following will help you to become politically active by contacting your legislators and elected officials.

To Contact: Governor Cuomo, your New York State Senator or Assemblyperson call toll free the State AFL-CIO Action Line at (877)-255-9417.

To Contact President Obama, call the White House at: (202) 456-1111 or (202) 456-1414, your United States Senators Charles Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand or your member of the United States House of Representatives, call toll free: (866) 327-8670, (866) 338-1015 or (866) 220-0044.

Helpful union phone and website information: NYSUT - (800) 342-9810, [www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org),

American Federation of Teachers - (800) 238-1133, [www.aft.org](http://www.aft.org), and

National Education Association - (202) 833-4000, [www.nea.org](http://www.nea.org).

**Higher Education Policy Council Meeting:** It was reported that NYSUT's Higher Education Policy Council praised the hard work of NYSUT and its affiliates at the state and city university systems and community colleges for gains in this year's state budget. United University Professions at SUNY and the Professional Staff Congress at CUNY turned out in force during budget negotiations, and the results showed. Several gains paralleled issues NYSUT has championed in its Public Higher Education Quality Initiative, including greater state funding and an increase in the maximum award for the state's Tuition Assistance Program. The Legislature rejected language in the budget that could have opened the door to privatizing SUNY's three teaching hospitals. "It's very good that so many of these achievements are in accord with NYSUT's goals for our public colleges and universities," said NYSUT Board member Ellen Schuler Mauk, the policy council's outgoing chair.

When you contact one of your legislators or public office holder in regard to higher education concerns, keep the following facts in mind:

- \* Over the last five years, SUNY and CUNY have been cut by nearly \$2 billion — driving up tuition and endangering quality affordable higher education for all New Yorkers.

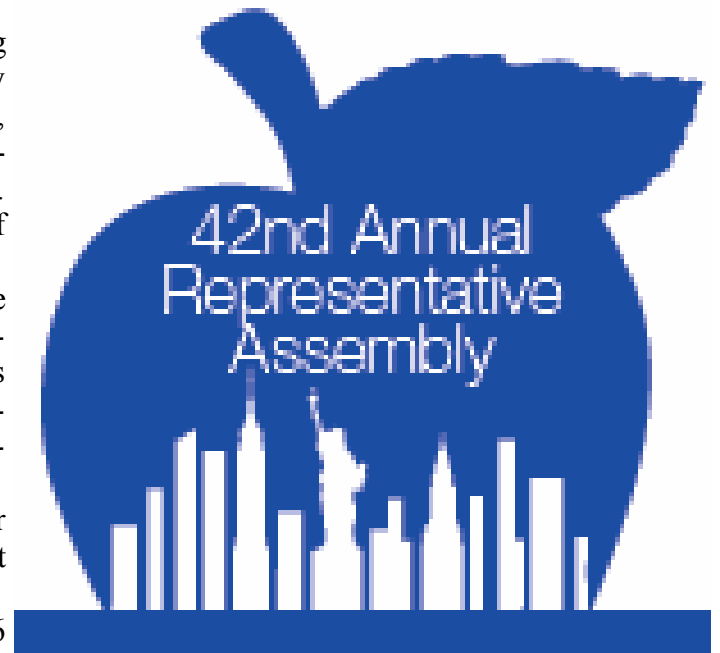
- \* Our public colleges and universities are under intense pressure to eliminate programs and courses, erode quality and slash opportunities for students in need.

- \* Public higher education's mission of teaching, research and health care is key to a bright future for all New Yorkers. New York State must invest now — in faculty, staff and student support — to keep our public colleges and universities great.

### RC39 Encourages its Members to Attend Regional Conferences

Throughout the year NYSUT sponsors regional conferences. Attending one of these conferences is one of the best ways to keep informed and to learn how to get involved in protecting our retirement rights. In order to encourage RC39 members to participate in NYSUT activities, RC39 will pay a member's expenses, up to \$30 for attending a regional retiree conference. To learn about the dates, location, and agenda of conferences in your region, contact the retiree service consultant for your region. To determine who this person is you must know your NYSUT election district (ED). At NYSUT website, <http://www.nysut.org/cps/rde/xchg/nysut/hs.xml/edmap.htm>, is a state map of all local election districts. There is also a NYSUT phone number where you can obtain contact information of your local retiree service consultant. ED52 is RC39's election district. Joan Perrine is the ED52 director.

After attending a regional conference send copies of a short description of the sessions you attended, an official registration form detailing the cost and copies of any other expenses totaling a maximum of \$30 to Ms. Joan Prymas, RC39 Treasurer, 141 Montgomery Street, Ilion, NY 13357.



(Continued from page 1)

**NYSUT Election**

Martin Messner-Secretary/Treasurer. Their message was "Revive NYSUT" stands for a proactive, engaged union, a union our members have been dreaming about. This is the union most of you have been hoping would emerge for the last five years, the union we can all be proud of. It became clear that New York City's AFT was with the "Revive NYSUT" group.

It did not take long to realize that the frustrations of how NYSUT was dealing with the current governor, legislature, Common Core, teacher evaluation and many other issues motivated some for a change at the top of NYSUT. The question for Corita Kong and I was which group would provide the leadership NYSUT needs to effectively confront these challenges. We often consulted with each other during the conference, read all the material distributed and talked to friends who had more familiarity with what was evolving. Our objective was to determine which group would provide the best leadership to NYSUT, which group would be more sensitive and effective to issues of retirees and higher education. We were told the election would be close. The election was held the afternoon of Saturday, April 5. At each ED, in closed and separate rooms, ballots were distributed only to registered delegates. Delegates could only leave after depositing their ballots in the appropriate election box.

Joan Perrine, ED52 Director was reelected, unopposed. ED52 is RC39's election district. Clearly members of ED52 think Joan is doing a fine job.

At breakfast on Sunday morning we learned that the "Revive NYSUT" won all positions. Now that the election is over Corita and I hope all NYSUT members will unite around the new officers. There are too many adversaries outside our union for us to fight among ourselves.

(Continued from page 1)

**Report on ED52 Meeting**

We're better at reasoning and solving problems. As we grow older our outlook grows rosier. Our priorities are clearer. We have the ability to see the big picture. Her advice: Have a social network, exercise, learn a new skill, get a good night's sleep, meditate to reduce stress, focus on what's working for you, and stay positive. John Aguglia of Member Benefits gave the last presentation of the evening about legal and financial services and discount services and travel. The dinner speaker was Kyle McCauley Belokopitsky, Esq. who is one of our legal representatives. She was so vibrant she kept us awake and aware.

The next morning we heard from NYSUT President Dick Iannuzzi and NYSTRS Trustee David Keefe. David assured us that the NYSTRS pension is safe. Also in New York State wages and hirings can be frozen but pensions can't be touched. Greg Olsen from the NYS Office for the Aging gave a great presentation on trying to keep older adults in their own homes and independent. Madeline Conolly and Tony Desantis gave a presentation on NYSUT's ListServ where retirees fill out a form with their email address and receive updates every other month. To do this online go to NYSUT.org, then Members, then the retiree section to sign up for emails. Finally Floyd Cameron gave a brief presentation on the resolutions being considered at the April RA.

This meeting was informative and helpful. If there are any questions, please feel free to contact me at [jpymas@twcny.rr.com](mailto:jpymas@twcny.rr.com) or 315-894-2541.

**Address Change**

Do not let a new address keep you from receiving NYSUT RC39 newsletters. There are three ways to update your address. Contact NYSUT Member Records at 1-800-342-9810 ext. 6224. Send written changes to: NYSUT Member Records, 800 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, NY12110 or e-mail changes to [memberec@nysutmail.org](mailto:memberec@nysutmail.org). If you are a snowbird, give Member Records a few weeks notice to change its address records each way.

**NYSUT Email Sign-up.**

Subscribe to the NYSUT mailing list for fast and efficient communications from NYSUT and your retiree council president. Go to [www.nysut.org](http://www.nysut.org). Scroll to the bottom of the page. Click **Retirees** in the Members column. Then scroll down this page until you see and then click **Sign Up for email Alerts**. Just fill in the form and you are all set to receive NYSUT email alerts which will keep you informed of issues important to retirees and NYSUT members.

**Retiree Council 39 Board of Directors**

**President, First NYSUT and AFT Delegate, Newsletter Editor and Webmaster:** Peter Herron

**Vice President, NYSUT and AFT Delegate:** Ann Smullen

**Secretary, NYSUT and AFT Delegate:** Corita Kong

**Treasurer, NYSUT and AFT Alternate Delegate:** Joan Prymas

**Director-at-large:** Frances Hilliard

**Director-at-large:** George Wybenga

## **RC39 Newsletter is looking for comments, suggestions and articles from its members.**

Send your comments, suggestions or article to Peter Herron at [rc39pete@optonline.net](mailto:rc39pete@optonline.net) or mail to 98 Rocky Point Landing Road, Rocky Point, NY 11778. Your article will be published when space is available. RC39, NYSUT, and AFT news will be given priority.



## **Address Change**

Do not let a new address keep you from receiving NYSUT RC39 newsletters. There are three ways to update your address. Contact NYSUT Member Records at 1-800-342-9810 ext. 6224. Send written changes to: NYSUT Member Records, 800 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, NY12110 or e-mail changes to [memberec@nysutmail.org](mailto:memberec@nysutmail.org). If you are a snowbird, give Member Records a few weeks notice to change its address records each way.

## **Have you paid your voluntary RC39 contribution for 2014?**

If you have not sent in your voluntary NYSUT RC39 annual contribution, now is as good a time as ever. Just send your check along with the form below to the RC39 treasurer. It is your contributions that enable RC39 officers and delegates to represent you at NYSUT conferences and meetings.

### **Retiree Council 39 Voluntary 2014 Participation Fee form**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code \_\_\_\_\_  
College retired from \_\_\_\_\_ Year of Retirement \_\_\_\_\_  
Please check amount of your voluntary participation fee: \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Send your check, made out to NYSUT RC39, along with this completed form to:  
Ms. Joan Prymas, RC39 Treasurer, 141 Montgomery Street, Ilion, NY 13357