

LOCAL 237 NEWSLINE

Vol. 55, No. 4

Winter 2021

Happy Holidays

This year, as the holidays near, the traditional question to help ensure a visit from Santa is not "have you been naughty or nice?". Rather, how have we survived yet another year from a viral enemy so destructive that its impact has been felt not only in our nation but throughout the world. At Local 237, we have certainly experienced the horrors of this pandemic war: We've been on the frontline every day and paid the price. Some of our members became ill. Some lost their lives. We think of them and their families often. We also applaud our active members who continue to give dignity and honor to the title: "Public Employee". We thank them for helping to maintain a quality of life for all New Yorkers that could not be achieved without them. Their efforts may not be known to many, but their work has been felt by all. **Enjoy the holidays!**

— Gregory Floyd, President, Teamsters Local 237



Local 237 Member Services

UNION HEADQUARTERS

212-924-2000
216 West 14th Street
New York, NY 10011-7296

LOCAL 237 DIVISIONS

CITYWIDE, 2nd Fl.
212-924-2000
Donald Arnold, Director

LAW ENFORCEMENT, 2nd Fl.
212-924-2000
Derek Jackson, Director

HOUSING, 2nd Fl.
212-924-2000
Carl Giles, Housing Director

SPECIAL PROJECTS, 2nd Fl.
212-924-2000
Debbie Coleman, Esq., Special Projects Director

LONG ISLAND
631-851-9800
100 West Main Street, Babylon,
New York 11702
Benedict Carenza, Director
Long Island Welfare Fund:
For information on the various
funds call 800-962-1145

RETIREE, 8th Fl.
212-807-0555
Provides a variety of pre- and post-
retirement services, including
pension and health insurance
counseling to members. (Pension
counseling by appointment, Thurs-
days only). General retirement
counseling and retirement plan-
ning series during spring and fall.
Julie Kobi, Director

LOCAL 237 DEPARTMENTS (Citywide and Housing)

SKILLED TRADES, 2nd Fl.
212-924-2000
Donald Arnold, Director

HEALTH AND SAFETY, 2nd Fl.
212-924-2000
Donald Arnold, Director
Susan McQuade, Coordinator

MEMBERS HEALTH, 2nd Fl.
212-924-2000
Susan McQuade, Director
smcquade@local237.org

MEMBERSHIP, 3rd Fl.
212-924-2000
Jean Stokes, Director
Provides membership services and
records, including address changes.

WELFARE FUND, 3rd Fl.
212-924-7220
The Fund administers the eligibility,
enrollment, disability, optical and
death benefits directly by the Fund's
in-house staff, as well as prescription
and dental programs indirectly.
Mitchell Goldberg, Director
Jean Stokes, Director of Collections

SOCIAL SERVICES, 3rd Fl.
212-924-7220 ext.7562
The Local 237 Social Services Depart-
ment features free social work
services that are available to all
members. Social workers connect
people to much needed assistance
and resources. The union knows that
its members have tough jobs and
that when encountering tough per-
sonal challenges, learning about pos-
sible solutions to those challenges
would make things that much easier.
Contact us to learn about the many
service we can provide.
Ayana Ali, Director

LEGAL SERVICES, 4th Fl.
212-924-1220
Lawyers advise and represent
members on covered personal
legal problems, including do-
mestic relations (family court pro-
ceedings, divorce and separation),
purchase and sale of a primary res-
idence, wills, adoptions, credit and
consumer problems, tenant rights
and bankruptcies.
Mary Sheridan, Esq., Director
Kenneth Perry, Esq., Deputy Director

EXECUTIVE OFFICES, 5th Fl.

212-924-2000
Gregory Floyd, President
Ruben Torres,
Vice President
Donald Arnold,
Secretary-Treasurer

PERSONNEL, 5th Fl.
212-924-2000
Donald Arnold, Director and
Chief Negotiator

**POLITICAL ACTION &
LEGISLATION**, 5th Fl.
646-638-8501
Local 237 protects members'
rights by helping to sponsor
legislation that is important
to members, and by communicat-
ing with and supporting elected
officials serving our best interests.
Phyllis S. Shafran, Coordinator

**GRIEVANCES/DISCIPLINARY
PROBLEMS**, 7th Fl.
212-924-2000

For grievances and job related
problems, first contact your
shop steward and/or grievance
representative. If they can't
resolve the issue, contact your
business agent.

Mal Patterson, Director of
Grievances and Hearings
Diana Doss, Esq.,
Grievance Coordinator

CIVIL SERVICE BAR ASSOC.

7th Fl., 212-675-0519
Saul Fishman, President
Aldona Vaiciunas,
Office Administrator and
Grievance Coordinator
Abbott Gorin, Esq.,
Business Representative
CSBA Welfare Fund
Alicare 866-647-4617

COMMUNICATIONS, 5th Fl.
646-638-8501
Phyllis S. Shafran, Director
Local 237 Newsline and
Retiree News & Views, Editor
Website: www.local237.org

EDUCATION AND TRAINING
8th Fl., 212-807-0550
Provides a variety of training
and educational advancement
opportunities for members.
Bertha Aiken, Director

USEFUL NUMBERS FOR PRE-RETIRES

NYCERS (New York City Employees Retirement System)

By Mail:
335 Adams St., Suite 2300,
Brooklyn, NY 11201-3751

In Person:
340 Jay Street, Mezzanine,
Brooklyn, NY 11201

Gen'l Information:
347-643-3000

Outside NYC toll-free:
877-6NYCERS

NYCERS Internet
www.nylink.org/html/nycers

NYC Department of Education Retirement System

65 Court St., Brooklyn, NY 11201
718-935-5400

**Social Security
Administration**
800-772-1213

**NY State and Local
Retirement Systems**
518-474-7736

A message from the President



No Poetry, No Prose, Just Straight Talk

By Gregory Floyd

President, Teamsters Local 237 and Vice President-at-Large on
the General Board of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters

On the eve of his victory, with camera lights glaring, the media's microphones strategically placed and an enthusiastic crowd in full view, New York City Mayor-elect Eric Adams, in a reference to the first Black Mayor of this City, David Dinkins, whose inauguration speech famously spoke about New York's "gorgeous mosaic", said: "We are so divided right now that we are missing the beauty of our diversity." He then went on to declare: "Today we take off our intramural jersey and put on one jersey: Team New York."

Another elected official known for his graceful speaking style that brought thought-provoking meaning to his words, was Governor Mario Cuomo. One of his often-quoted remarks was: "You campaign in poetry. You govern in prose." Cynics have come to interpret this as justification for making campaign promises just to get elected, but as the former governor himself explained, it means that there is an idealism and enthusiasm felt in a successful campaign that is often difficult to reproduce in its purest, fullest form. In other words: Although politics and governance are intertwined and have a symbiotic relationship, institutionalizing and codifying the two into policy or law that benefits the people they serve, and meets the public's expectations, presents tremendous challenge.

But the concept of being on a team that delivers its promises is certainly not new, unfamiliar or objectionable to most union members. We get it. We know that unions bring voice to the voiceless and power to the powerless. America's labor movement

history is rich with "before" and "after" examples of how our advocacy and perseverance improved working conditions — thereby substantively enhancing the lives of working families. The 40-hour work week, health and vacation benefits, safety requirements and the "fight for \$15" are just a few of the countless campaigns that labor leaders, throughout decades of hard work, have fought and won. More recently, unions' response to Covid-19 and its variants, have resulted in yet another line in labor's resume. By and large, labor unions were at the helm where other leadership was lacking. We provided help and hope to our members — many of whom were victims of the disease. Clearly, among many of labor's leaders, the standard rule is to try and avoid poetry and prose, and substitute them with Spike Lee's advice to just "Do the right thing!"

With this in mind, labor unions and their members might find themselves in the unique position of having the best fit for that team jersey the New York City Mayor-elect mentioned, and so many other newly elected leaders echoed, on election night. Nearly every victory speech contained calls for unity among all New Yorkers as well as a public acknowledgement that labor played a large role in helping them achieve the office sought. The two are inseparable. New government leaders need labor leaders and their membership not just to wear symbolic apparel, but as significant participants sitting at the key issues table, talking and being heard. No poetry, no prose. Just straight talk from those in the know. ■



You're not in Newsline? Why not?

YOU ARE NEWSWORTHY!

We want to hear from you!
Send us your photos, stories and ideas.
We're interested in you: On the job,
special accomplishments, family news, etc.

Email pshafran@local237.org or call Phyllis Shafran at 646-638-8501

During this time of national crisis, our members served Above and Beyond the Call of Duty

So many of our members go above and beyond the call of duty, performing acts of heroism, ingenuity, kindness and generosity that demonstrate their professionalism and heart. They were willing to go that extra mile, and by so doing, made a difference in someone's life. Here are some of the pictures and stories they want to share:

Promotions at Jacobi Hospital



(l-r) Lt Orlando Badillo (from Sgt to Lt), Officer Adam Suarez to Detective, Captain Moses Suero, Officer Tristan Hammonds to Detective, and Lt Rafael Hued (from Sgt to Lt)

HHC Graduation



(l-r) Charlie Cotto, Business Agent, Law Enforcement Division at the HHC Hospital Police Graduation 12-10-21 at Jacobi Hospital.

Food Service Managers



District 18, School Food Service workers, and an SSA with Food Service Manager Dawn Lanzaro (third from the right).



School Food Service Manager Cherise Neal, Cook Tanis France, Senior School Lunch Helper Brent Lyons and School Lunch Helper Yolanda Maldonado.

Carter's Hospital Police Supporting Breast Cancer Awareness



(l-r) Captain Alago, PO Farrow, Sgt. Jusino, PO George and Director of HP Victor Hart.

UNION LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE GRADS



Shavelle Knox (left) and Derek Short (center) have completed a rigorous course at Cornell University Union Leadership Institute.

SSA Manhattan South Command Toy Drive



FORSYTH SATELLITE H.S. AGENT'S
SSA-1 Downing,
SSA-1 Rivas
SSA-1 Manhattan South
Community Outreach
Liaison Garavino

CUNY PO Food Drive



An update on the Community Affairs Department of CUNY Peace Officers from the College of Staten Island. **Michael Lederhandler**, Chief of Public Safety reporting: On Tuesday November 23rd, the CSI Public Safety Department completed its 1st annual Food Drive, which began on 11/3/21. With the help of the CSI staff, faculty, and students, we were able to collect and donate over 320 items for families in need. We were able to coordinate with some great individuals who do this work all year round and they helped us in distributing all of the items we collected. Thank you-Gregory Brown from our college food pantry, Gloria Novoa from Project Hospitality, and Paula Aguliara from The Salvation Army. This is one of the many events our department has planned as we are looking forward to doing our part in helping the community. Next up we are planning a toy drive that will benefit children who are spending part of the holiday season in the hospital.

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216 West 14th St., New York, NY 10011

646-638-8501

Website: www.local237.org

e-mail Newsline: pshafran@local237.org

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Special thanks in the preparation of Newsline to:
Gisela (GiGi) Reyes, Executive Administrative Assistant

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Love on the block



(l-r) DHS officers PO Theresa Gregg, Det. Vanessa Cooper, PO Erica Wilcox and PO Carmen Solar.



(l-r) PO Christian Glover, Captain Natasha Dunmeyer and PO Theresa Gregg.



(l-r) DHS officers PO Rostislav Zhelenyak, Sgt Santos, and PO Barbee.



30th Street Coat Drive



Lt. Rosa, P.O. Roy Amiker, PO Mercury and P.O. Jephthe Perez. Approx 45 coats have been donated to date for the coat drive, as well as shoes and sneakers.

City Council Recognition Award



DHS Deputy Commissioner Anthony Notaroberta, Sgt. David Santos, Sgt. Tracy Finnerty, Det. Steven Mann, P.O. Teresa Gregg and City Councilman Fernando Cabrera.

DHSPD Paying Forward 200 turkeys for families in need



P.O. Cecil Payne

Auburn Arts and Craft



Det. Vanessa Cooper, P.O. Kerry-Ann Glanville, PO Theresa Gregg, and P.O. Tasha Diaz

Veterans Parade



Sgt. Tracy Finnerty and P.O. Malik Forbes, PO Barksdale, PO Jackson, and PO Nunez, PO Beato and a veteran from Borden Ave Shelter.

Atlantic Brunch



Brunch sponsored by DHSPD Community Engagement Program. (l-r) Capt. Natasha Dunmeyer, Lt. Ebony Chance, P.O. Teresa Gregg, P.O. Jonathan Brumfield and P.O. Harmoni Blueford

DHS Promotions



Capt. Natasha Dunmeyer: 14 years of service — 3 as Det., 1 as Sgt., 7 as Lt.
Lt. Darnell Pair: 8 years of service — 5 as Sgt.
Lt. Nadirah Brown: 9 Years of service — 4 as Sgt.
Lt. Amy Kelly: 9 Years of service — 5 as Sgt., Acting Site Commander, Parkview & Henry St.
Lt. Kashena Stukes: 8 years of service — 5 as a Sgt.

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Staten Island SSAs Give Back

A special thank you to CO Sherrord and XO Torlone for putting it together to help Agents who have had a rough time for various reasons.



SSA PAVIA shown in pic with husband receiving her Thanksgiving day basket to show her love from the Staten Island Command.



SSA Scamardella (right) shown in pic receiving her Thanksgiving day basket from SSA ROSA (left) to show her love from the Staten Island Command.



SSA RAISLEY shown in pic receiving his Thanksgiving day basket to show him love from the Staten Island Command.



SSA Isreal gives SSA BEL-LIA his Thanksgiving basket donated to him by the Staten Island Command.



SSA HAMILTON was overcome by tears of joy when SSA 3 Gonzalez and SSA Isreal hand delivered a Thanksgiving meal basket filled with all fixings for a Thanksgiving meal.



SSA Richard Juan holiday food distribution.



Staten Island SCA SSA Moran - MCKEE HS donating canned foods to project hospitality. Thanks to SSA Rivera and SSA 3 Digoia for transporting goods



Staten Island School Safety to the rescue. Ms. Clarke and her family were stuck with a blown out tire on the side of the road this morning. Thank you to SS Agent Rosa & Agent Bellia for pulling over and lending a helping hand.



Derek Short, Business Agent, Law Enforcement Division, presents a plaque to SSA Annette James who has completed 20 years of service to Brownsville section of Brooklyn.



As the 2021-2022 school year is in full swing we would like to welcome Founding Principal, Christian M. Britton, Public School 384 / Hunters Point Elementary School we look forward to your partnership in your new and beautiful building. Also pictured in photo is School Safety Agent Stephanie Guzman. Check out the holiday decorations compliments of Agent Guzman.

A 7 year old student at PS 196x/MS 123 Annex began choking on a piece of apple while eating lunch. SSA Agent Sindhu performed the Heimlich maneuver and successfully removed the apple.

An SSA's Quick Reaction at Roosevelt HS



School Safety Sargent Anthony Williams observed a verbal dispute between two students in the cafeteria. He separated the two parties at detected a hard object in one of the student's waist band. A search of the student was then conducted which resulted in the recovery of a loaded .32 caliber firearm.

NYPD Shout Out Ceremony



SSA Lvl III Denise Pabon
SSA Marc Worrell
SSA Nicola Scipio
SSA Antwaun Dunson,
SSA Anthony Baisden,
SSA Tawana Bassett
SSA Anaja Harris
SSA Azande Foster
SSA John Feeley
SSA Melinda Osorio
SSA Suzy Jackson

SSA Desiree Christopher
SSA Lvl III Paulemon Jean
SSA Brenda Batista
SSA Josue Bueno
SSA Ja'Qia Powell
SSA Edwardo Delgado
SSA LVL III Louis Smith
SSA LVL III Patrick Williams
SSS William Lance
SSS Taheen Oliver
SSA Austin Hunter

SSA George Gayle
SSA Shanice Roberts
SSA Jonathan Henry
SSA LVL III Lacita Polite
SSA Michael Mitchell
SSA Robin Johnson
SSA Laquanda Bell
SSA LVL III Monica Morales
SSA Duane Isles
SSA Level III Desean Scobie
SSA Alix Denis

SSA Level III Anthony Williams
SSA LVL III Charles Greene
SSA Xavier Lewis
SSA Cherisse Wilson
SSA Evan Jacobs
SSA LVL III Pressie Tyner
SSA Sandro Moran
SSA Bipul Biswas
SSS Sherina Green

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ACS Police Awards Ceremony December 2, 2021



MEDAL OF VALOR
Sgt. Tremaine Hayward

SUPERVISOR OF THE YEAR
Sgt. Sherrod Stewart
Sgt. Julian Martinez
Lt. David Inshiqaq

OFFICER OF THE YEAR
PO Lisa Moore-Harris
PO Tanya Johnson

ROOKIE OF THE YEAR
PO Sonjoy Mojumder
PO Manuel Jackson
PO Junior Coicou

SILVER SHIELD RECOGNITION
PO Geovanny Arnaud
Sgt. Tremaine Hayward
Lt. David Inshiqaq
PO. Tanya Johnson
PO. James Jordan
PO. Michelle Molette
PO. Lisa Moore-Harris
Sgt. Sherrod Stewart

INNOVATION AWARD
Lt. Carlos Delarosa

PROACTIVE AWARD
Sgt. Juana Morales-Isley

COMMENDATION
PO. Shawn Smith
PO. Xenia Diaz
PO Crystal Dela Cruz
PO Geovanny Arnaud

EXCELLENT DUTY
Sgt. Tremaine Hayward
PO Michelle Molette
PO Jean Rene
PO Lorraine Saunders

MERITORIOUS DUTY
Sgt. Michael Higgins
Lt. David Inshiqaq

EXCEPTIONAL MERIT
PO Sonjoy Mojumder
PO Luquan Lloyd

APPRECIATION AWARD
Awarded for their dedication and hard work throughout the pandemic.
All ACS Police Staff

UNIT CITATION
Presented to the ACS Police Staff at the Nicholas Scoppetta Children's Center.

PO Quentella Burwell
PO Junior Coicou
PO Christal DeLa Cruz
PO Xenia Diaz
PO Latrell Dickerson
PO Frank Esposito
PO Donna Francis
Sgt. Michael Higgins
Lt. David Inshiqaq
PO Monirul Islam, MD
PO Lanequa Jackson
PO Manuel Jackson
PO Tanya Johnson
PO Luquan Loyd
PO Robert Mitchell
PO Sonjoy Mojumder
PO Kenyetta Patterson
PO Jean Rene
PO Dawn Rolon
Sgt. Rogelio Sampson Jr.
PO Shawn Smith
Sgt. Troy Smith
PO Jasmine Spann
Sgt. Sherrod Stewart
PO Tasha Stewart

CUNY Medal Day Awards Ceremony November 30, 2021



Among those in attendance: **Jeanette I. Taveras**, Recording Secretary Teamsters Local 237; **Andre Brown**, University Executive Director; **Quchee Collins**, Deputy Director; **Michael Ferrandino**, Operations Director; **Demetrius Barkoukis**, Academy Director; **Francis Vargas**, Lieutenant; **Jose Torres**, Lieutenant; **Arnaldo Barnabe**, Director Hostos Community College; **Donald Wenz**, Director, Brooklyn College; **Michael Lederhandler**, Director College of Staten Island; **Steve A Katz**, Director, Queens College; **Pat Morena**, Director, City College; **Hector Batista**, Executive Vice Chancellor & Chief Operating Officer and **Vincent Boudreau**, City College President.

Queens College Commendation Medal Award



Sheri Grant, Sergeant Queensborough College with Local 237's Recording Secretary **Jeanette Taveras**.

Brooklyn College Excellent Duty Medal Award



Nicacio Mota, Jr., Campus Peace Officer; **Director Donald Wenz**, Brooklyn College; **Andre Brown**, University Executive Director; **Vincent Boudreau**, City College President

CCNY II



Roy Gumbs, Sergeant; **Jeffrey Pawell**, Sergeant; **Michael Ruggieri**, Specialist and **Timothy Gramprey**, Specialist with Local 237's Recording Secretary **Jeanette Taveras**.

Hostos College Excellent Duty Medal Award



Curt Caesar, Sergeant; **Raymundo Valentin**, Campus Peace Officer with Director of Public Safety **Arnaldo Bernabe**.



Derek Jackson, Director of the Law Enforcement Division (I) and **Charlie Cotto**, Business Agent, Law Enforcement Division, visiting **Corporal Hardy** at Hunter College.

Captain Edward Santiago Retirement — October 29, 2021



Captain **Edward Santiago** with Director of Hospital Police **Juan Toranzo**.



Local 237 President **Gregory Floyd**, **Captain Edward Santiago** and Business Agent, Law Enforcement Division **Charlie Cotto**.

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NYCHA Workers: A Day on the Job



Mario Santiago, Caretaker J, Breukelen Houses. Takes pride in his job and providing service to residents.



Michael Johnson, Caretaker J, Breukelen Houses. Enjoys assisting on grounds and helping coworkers.



Leighton Phillips, Caretaker X, Breukelen Houses. Takes pride in making location look good.



Rodney Golden, Caretaker G, Breukelen Houses. Enjoys working on grounds equipment.



Shauneil Rochester, Caretaker G, Boulevard Houses. Takes pride in cleaning grounds.



Hector Rosado, Housing Assistant, from Morrisania Air Rights Houses retired after 26 years.



Adams Houses' staff welcome their new Shop Steward, **Andrés Gonzáles** (front center)

NYCHA WORKERS' NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS



My New Year wish is to continue being the example of teamwork on the job as well as continuing to show others that I care about them!

Sonji Logan, Assistant Housing Manager assigned to Baruch Houses.



My New Year wish is for everyone to remain safe and well during this time of a global pandemic!

Ralph Rivera, Supervisor of Grounds assigned to Bronx River Houses.



My New Year wish is to have good health and succeed in my career journey!

Gloria Lopez, Assistant Housing Manager assigned to Leased Housing Department Project Based Voucher Unit.



My New Year wish is to continue to stay healthy, move forward, and grow personally and professionally.

Edwin Sierra (l) Catetaker X assigned to Eastchester Gardens



We work together, we uplift one another, and we empower each other. (l-r) **Shakeena Alexander, Iesha Drew and Stephanie Ervin**. Baruch Houses Maintenance Women.



This has been a rough year dealing with this pandemic. I have pushed through and will continue to service the residents as a 237 Member in my new title.

Waydell "June" Johnson Manhattan Borough Plasterer Helper



Wishing all of Teamsters a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Emmanuel Rentas Supervisor of Caretakers at Riis Houses



I am hoping that the new year brings new beginnings, positive outcomes, and joy for everyone.

Amado Santos, Baruch Houses Caretaker X

My New Year wish is to be promoted as a Supervisor of Caretakers!

Monique Burrwell (r) Plaster P assigned to the Bronx Borough.



It's been hard work for me this year with a lot of people sick and being out of work. I will continue to be proud of my job and do my best.

Kareem Hughes Caretaker X, Wagner Houses



Wishing a Happy Holidays to our Teamsters Brothers and Sisters! (l-r) **Iesha Drew, Shakeena Alexander, Stephanie Ervin, Grace Watson, Ali Graves and Ngozi Miles**.



I hope for a safe and productive year.

Lawrence Harrison Assistant Superintendent at Riis Houses



Miguel Delarosa, Maintenance Worker assigned to Edenwald Houses.



This year has been challenging, but we have been able to push through by working as a team and supporting one another. (l-r) **Ramelle Fleming, Richard Lectora, Robert Habermann and Orlando Godwin**.

Auld Lang Syne

Being Resolute About Resolutions

As the New Year approaches, we look to a fresh start and a new beginning. It's a tradition held by many to spend some time reviewing the last year and making a resolution or a wish for the New Year. Lose weight, stop smoking, spend less money, listen to your spouse more are just some of the most popular resolutions. We know when we make resolutions that, at best, they are wishful thinking that hold no penalties if they don't last. For sure, the most resolute thing about New Year's resolutions and wishes is that, although we make them with sincerity and plan to keep them in earnest when made, there's the sense that there's always next year to make them again. In fact, 88% of New Year's resolutions fail—80% of them are over, forgotten or just abandoned by March of the new year.

New Years is indeed a time when many reflect on their lives—sometimes with regret—sometimes with anger about what went wrong—but more often with thanks and with hope for a better year ahead. There are always celebrities who have weighed-in with their new year hopes, predictions, aspirations, and advice. Oprah Winfrey famously said: "Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right." Albert Einstein advised: "Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow." Maya Angelou noted: "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." Mark Twain suggested that: "New Year's Day is the accepted time to make your regular annual good resolutions. Next week you can begin paving hell with them as usual." Rita Moreno told her fans to "Smell the roses. Smell the coffee. Whatever it is to make you happy." John Lennon said: "Count your age by friends, not years. Count your life by smiles, not tears." Michelle Obama encouraged youngsters to: "Choose people in your life who lift you up." Muhammed Ali gave this advice: "I hated every minute of training. But I said, don't quit. Suffer now and live the rest of your life a champion." Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. counseled his followers to "Take the first step in faith—you don't need to see the whole staircase, just the first step." Frank Sinatra sang: "The best is yet to come babe and won't it be fine. You think we've seen the sun but you ain't seen it shine." And even Dr. Seuss chimed in with this philosophical thought: "Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory."

Two years of the Coronavirus and its variants have changed many things. The new normal is anything but normal. The devastating and continuing impact on lives and livelihoods would probably be on everyone's list of what went wrong. The universal desire to end the stranglehold that this crisis has had on us and wish to move on will, no doubt, be part many predictions, resolutions, and prayers for 2022. Some may question if the pandemic could possibly have had a "silver lining"—such as more time with family members—or perhaps even produced a profound sense of thanks or a reinvigorated feeling of joy for the simple pleasures that had been previously taken for granted or ignored.

Few would say that 2021 will be missed. Looking forward to the new year, members of Teamsters Local 237—and a special guest—have sent us their predictions, resolutions, and prayers for 2022.

At a time when social distancing has become the new, socially accepted and science based social order--albeit meant to protect people from the spread of disease --what has evolved is much more than 6-foot markers on the floor. Yuval Levin, a Director of the American Enterprise Institute, wrote in response to a recent study on the Covid-era American family, that there now exists a "social inertness" due to the breakdown of traditional social order and the loss of "life scripts", which he fears will be particularly harmful to young Americans who "are less sure of where to step and how to build." And, with the growth of remote learning, remote work, remote healthcare and remote shopping, human interaction has been largely overtaken by the Internet. Yet, despite the declining use of so many of our venerable institutions, one has not just survived, but has thrived: organized labor. Union membership, nationally, is on the rise. While there could be many causes for this increase, surely the uneven and often disappointing leadership exhibited by so many in government and healthcare created a void that unions filled. Local 237 members worked throughout the toughest times of the pandemic. Their workplace health and safety, and care for their families when they became ill or died, became our priority, just like so many of unions did across this nation. So, among my hopes and prayers for 2022, is the full resurgence of unions to resume their much-needed place as guardians of working families. We are about jobs, and we certainly rise to this job, not only in times of crisis, but also as providers of a steady, even hand of traditional social order, without which both this generation and generations to come, will be lost.

Gregory Floyd

President, Teamsters Local 237 and
Vice President-at-Large on the General Board of the IBT



As the New Year approaches, I am honored to join Teamsters Local 237 in offering my resolution for 2022. The past two years have been defined by unprecedented challenges and great uncertainty for families across our state. In typical New York style, we have responded with our trademark resiliency. Our values have remained constant and our ambition unchanged. With renewed optimism, my vision for New York's future is bold. And as we continue to combat the pandemic, my resolution is moving New York forward by making transformative investments in our middle class and laying the foundation for an equitable recovery that lifts up every New Yorker.

In this work, we must honor New York's long and proud tradition of union membership. My administration recognizes that unions are not only the single greatest factor in the rise of New York's middle class but will also be the pathway to more a prosperous future. Organized labor will create, and recreate, the underpinnings of safe communities and a vibrant economy. We are in this work together. I wish everyone a safe and happy New Year.

Governor Kathy Hochul

57th Governor of New York State



Here's to a bright New Year and farewell to the old; here's to the things that are yet to come, and to the memories we hold.

Donald Arnold

Director of the City Wide Division
and Secretary-Treasurer on the
Local 237 Executive Board



My hopes are getting brighter. I am proud of each and every member who has grown in the past 23 months. I have accomplished many good things, including good community work. We have and more members all of the time, but I am looking forward to a safe and healthy year.

Benedict

Director of
and Trustee

It's that time of year again, bright with all the Christmas decorations. A New Year is ahead of us, and we are still going through a challenging time, but I am hopeful that the year 2022 will bring good fortune to our lives. Wish for a Safe and Prosperous New Year.

Gisela Reyes

Local 237 Executive Board
Administrative Assistant

Live life to the fullest.

Charles

Business Development
Local 237 Executive Board
Enforcement

As I think about the year 2021, I am in with great friends and family. The pandemic--people have suffered and enjoyed--there have been lessons shown by colleagues and friends. I have had many telephone conversations and conversations with family members. I am doing well...and everything I have done from home has helped me. I have more done without it. I am happy if I wore mascara! Zoom calls require adjustments to this new normal. And, getting back to work, the adjustments to change were still open but the doors were still open. Hot Chocolate did not melt. And the tradition starting with this year the show was on for months, watched it. I am proof of vaccination. I am a lobby for popcorn.

So, for me, to really matters? Does it really matter for the New Year? I have taught me what really matters. That lesson.

Phyllis S.

Director of

and dreams for 2022 in part is past the pandemic that has members and their families. These have been really hard on all of those who lost loved ones. We learn to overcome, adapt and do anything that comes our way. That Long Island Division is extremely proud of every member. Long Island has done so much in the past few years and has accomplished things for the members, including contracts, superior representation and truly caring for each other. We have evolved into a family type of atmosphere with more members involved every day. We can't make everyone happy, but we sure do try. From the Business Agents to the liaisons and stewards, we have an army of willing and able members on a daily basis. I can't thank them enough for the support and forward to a bright future here on Long Island. Stay strong in 2022!



Michael Carenza, Jr.
Business Agent of the Long Island Division for Local 237
Member on the Executive Board

again when the streets are lit with Christmas lights and decorations. Approaching and although through the pandemic, we are confident 2022 will bring some normalcy and wishing everyone a Healthy and Happy New Year. Gigi.



Gigi
Business Agent
Assistant

to the fullest!
Die Cotto
Business Agent,
Local 237 Law
Department Division



But the last year, I must admit that mixed with sadness caused by what was lost due to the pandemic, places and things previously admired were also much I did adore. The goodwill from friends and even strangers, who started every conversation, email or text with: "Hope you're doing well with 'Take care.'" Working remotely and its advantages too---I could get a lot out of a three-hour commute and who cared? Less time was spent on that too. Only minor cosmetic improvements. Of course, the new normal felt like anything but normal. No semblance of normal means adhering to many requirements and making changes brought about by the pandemic. Yes, our favorite birthday celebration place changed ownership, and the long-held "secret recipe" for their renowned Frozen didn't elicit the usual guessing any longer. I knew what it was this time: it lacked the magic. Then there's the fabulous Christmas Spectacular at Radio City Musical Hall, a family tradition with my own grandmother taking me to see it as a child. After a one-year closure, it resumed and my little grandsons Mason, age 5, and our new addition, Teddy, 11-month-old, were in awe as the Rockettes kicked away. But there were five separate check points for masks and masks in-place from the entrance to the seats, making a trip back to the restroom or any other essential item---out of the question. To make a New Year's wish, an old year's question must be answered first: What does not enough chocolate really matter? While the answer is obvious, so is the wish. The pandemic remains a killer. It took lives and livelihoods. But at least for me, it really matters are family and friends. My wish for the New Year is that we all learn



Mason and Teddy at Radio City Music Hall

Shafrahan
Communications and Political Liaison for Local 237

One year ago, as we were bidding "good riddance" to 2020 - the worst year of our professional and in many cases personal lives, having stared serious, life-threatening illness in the eye, as well as the boredom and isolation of shutdowns and quarantine, we hoped that 2021 would be significantly better. Instead, 2021 proved to be more of the same, even if lockdowns have been lifted for now, and there are relatively effective vaccines and boosters.

What does 2022 hold for us, both personally and as CSBA members working as Agency Attorneys, Attorney Interns, Attorneys-at-Law, and Student Legal Specialists and Assistants? Whereas no one knows for sure, our goals are clear:

- Achieving a new collective bargaining agreement with a significant wage increase and retroactive pay from when the old one expired (April 17, 2021).
- Obtaining the ability to perform a substantial amount of our work from home ("telework" or "telecommuting"), which we proved we could effectively perform for approximately eighteen months, until it was unilaterally ended on September 13, 2021. Our members have spoken loudly and clearly, via our survey (published on our website www.csbanyc.org and on our FB page CSBA Attorneys): the vast majority of us want the ability to telework at least 2-3 days per week, and our morale and desire to stay with our agency will be substantially reduced if we do not obtain it. This is consistent with the expectations of professionals nationwide. Employers who do not offer same will not be competitive in their recruitment and retention efforts, as they are demonstrating, consciously or otherwise, that they do not care what we want and reasonably expect.
- Once and for all, eliminate any residency restrictions for our titles, which has now been the status quo for our colleagues at Corporation Counsel, NYCHA, the Transit Authority and ACS FCLS for years.
- Keeping us as safe as possible from COVID variants and other airborne illnesses at the office and during our absolutely essential commutes, and also safe from a perceived increase in crime and increasingly aggressive homeless population.
- Helping more members achieve relief from crushing student debt.
- Doing all we can to make our union, our employer and our communities welcoming to all, free from the burdens of racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, sexism, agism, homophobia, transphobia and all other prejudice and barriers to full and equal opportunity.
- Creating or substantially increasing participation in key CSBA committees, including Legislation and Political Outreach.

None of this is easy or guaranteed, but together, with your participation and support, and a bit of luck, this could be among our best years in recent memory. Here's to a very happy, healthy and safe 2022 for all of us and for our families, friends and colleagues!

Saul Fishman
CSBA President



Auld Lang Syne

This year has again been very challenging due to Covid. Through it all, my members have persevered. It hasn't always been easy. Although things were chaotic, we were able to work with management to take care of both of my areas and get them new contracts. At Jakes 58, we actually reopened (for the second time) the contract. We were able to finalize a contract that was all about the members. They received great wage increases, decrease in medical benefits and two paid holidays. The contract was ratified overwhelmingly. Over at the other area of Suffolk Off Track Betting, we were able to negotiate a contract that gave the members increases over the duration of the contract and kept all their other benefits intact. I am proud to be the business agent for these members! Wishing all the members and their families Happy Holidays and A Healthy and Happy New Year!

Cathy Rice
Trustee on the Executive Board



This is my "hope to see happen in the near future." Some of our other daily duties entail: Working with parents and Community to implement healthy lifestyles at the home, presenting at PTA meetings and other school/ community functions to advocate for health and nutrition.

Before the Pandemic we were able to advocate more on nutrition/ healthy lifestyle within our communities.

I am hopeful that the near future will enable managers to have more time to promote and educate the community on Health and Wellness and demonstrates how, The Office of Food and Nutrition Services, contributes and provides to that Health and Wellness in our schools.

Dawn Lanzaro
School Food Service Manager, District 18





LONG ISLAND REPORT



Brentwood food service workers hard at work feeding the thousands of children.



Resource recovery members **Kito and Anthony** stood strong when another union tried to take them over! They said no way! Teamsters forever.



Lawrence union meeting. Congrats to **Chris, Ed and James** for being elected to Chapter positions.



Great Town of Babylon union meeting. Nice to see newly hired members showing interest. Great discussions and questions from all.



Commack member **Todd Raplee** and **Joe Cassar** keeping the buildings and grounds in great shape!



West Islip Teamsters showing their love for the holidays and their Union. We are honored to represent the West Islip Secretaries and the Building and Grounds members.

“La Bodega gratis de Eileen”

Amanda Sweeney, daughter of Trisha Wade, fills it with food every week who for some time has traded her Floridian afternoons for a life in this community that she adores today. Amanda Sweeney, 31, realized a dream that fueled the pandemic through an old refrigerator that today serves as a community grocery store for hundreds of people suffering from the ravages of food insecurity on Long Island.



Amanda Sweeney

“La Bodega Gratuita de Eileen”, as she named this project, in honor of her late grandmother, was born as a result of her volunteer work at various food pantries in the Bronx in December 2020. Her mission took a course outside of New York City when someone close to her urged her to set her sights on her own community in Brentwood. “I began knocking on doors from February to May and finally the Consulate of El Salvador suggested that we set a table with free food and we did that,” says the young woman, who assures that the experience has been “like a roller coaster because food insecurity has always been there but the pandemic made the problem worse.” According to figures from the Feeding America organization, in 2019, before the start of the pandemic, more than 35 million people, including 11 million children, were experiencing food insecurity. In 2020, the outlook worsened with 45 million, including at least 15 million minors in this situation. So far in 2021 the number has risen to 42 million, of which 13 million are children.

“The fridge”

In order to be able to offer fresh food, Sweeney says she immediately thought about the need for the project to include a refrigerator. Once a spot was secured at the consulate, the next step put her on Facebook Marketplace, a website where used items are bought and sold. There a person fell in love with the project and donated what has become a main character in this community love story. “Now I am always super excited that Saturday will arrive to open the refrigerator and spend time with the community,” says the young woman. “I want to live in a society where more people do things like this.” Her love and dedication for the community comes from a special place. Sweeney is now on the other side of the pantry. She remembers that when she was little, together with her mother, they visited places like the one she now coordinates. For Thanksgiving, the refrigerator was cleaned for donations that brightened the night of November 25 for many families in need. “We are trying to help 50 families with food boxes that will each have fresh vegetables, canned vegetables, potatoes, rice, pigeon peas, and we will be there the night before Thanksgiving delivering these boxes,” Sweeney highlights. If you want to donate food for this initiative, you can search for them as Eileen’s Free Bodega on social networks and if you want to donate you can do it directly through the Venmo Asweeney710 account.

Governor Hochul: Committed to a Strong Union Future

By Kathy Hochul

Governor of New York State

As governor, my administration will always be guided by the fundamental ideals upon which organized labor rests — fairness and unity. The fights that organized labor have led for more than a century are just as critical today. And we know these are not just fights for union members, but for our fellow New Yorkers and fellow Americans.

Through our partnership, we are protecting and creating thousands of good-paying union jobs, building a pipeline for the next generation of union members, and tackling some of the toughest challenges faced by organized labor in our state. This partnership is driven by the values of hard work, equal opportunity, and fair wages and benefits. It's a partnership driven by a desire to grow and strengthen the middle class.

And, I know that, working together, we're going to continue to send a strong message in 2022 that the needs of working families — and especially hardworking union families — matter much more than the wants of special interests. This is our charge.

Whether it's boosting workplace safety, strengthening prevailing wage protections, or combating misclassification, we are standing tall for the rights of workers. I am enormously proud of New York's strong union legacy and fully committed to a strong union future. ■



YEAR-END LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

By Vito R. Pitta, Esq. Member, Pitta Bishop & Del Giorno, LLC

Even as 2021 comes to an end, legislation within the City and State continues to move at a fast pace. The following are several pieces of legislation that have recently been signed into law that impact the lives of our members and their families.

STATE LAWS

Chapter 615 of the Laws of New York by means Assemblymember Aubry and Senator Parker – this legislation which was signed into law by Governor Hochul directs the President of the State Civil Service Commission to publish reports annually relating to diversity within state government. Recently, the state stopped publishing reports with data relating to diversity within the state Civil Service system. The legislation will provide needed transparency to ensure that qualified persons of color and women are hired by the New York State Government.

Chapter 624 of the Laws of New York by Senator Sepulveda and means Assemblymember Reyes – this legislation which was recently signed into law by Governor Hochul directs the President of the State Civil Service to conduct a study on the current civil service examination process. This legislation intends to improve employment opportunities for qualified persons of color in the New York State Civil Service system by studying how to improve racial and ethnic representation among all civil service titles.

CITY LAWS

Int. No. 2426-A by Council Member Treyger – the City Council recently approved a law that requires the Department of Education (“DOE”) to publicly post, daily, on their website, attendance data aggregated citywide and disaggregated by school for the previous day and previous week. The purpose of this legislation is to increase transparency within the DOE on attendance policies for parents and the public-at-large.

Int. No. 2427-A by Council Member Treyger – the City Council recently approved a law that requires the DOE to report on its website, every two weeks, positive COVID-19 cases among administrators, teachers, students, and other school staff in every DOE school. ■



Vito R. Pitta is a partner at Pitta LLP, a firm whose practice consists primarily of traditional union-side labor law, employment law, employee benefits law, and campaign finance compliance law. The firm counts more than forty local and international labor unions as its clients. Mr. Pitta's practice consists of counseling the firm's clients on traditional labor and employment matters, as well as advising the firm's political campaign and political action committee clients with respect to federal, state, and local campaign finance laws. Mr. Pitta

is also a Partner in Pitta LLP's affiliated personal injury firm, Pitta & Baione LLP, which represents victims of the September 11th terrorist attacks; and a member of Pitta LLP's affiliated lobbying firm, Pitta Bishop & Del Giorno LLC.

TEAMSTERS UNITED SLATE ELECTED TO 5-YEAR TERM TO LEAD UNION

The O'Brien-Zuckerman Teamsters United slate has been elected to lead the international union for the next five years. The candidates for General President, General Secretary-Treasurer, International Vice Presidents At-Large, International Trustees and International Vice Presidents in the Central, Eastern, Southern and Western Regions were elected according to results provided by the Office of the Election Supervisor. The term of office begins in March 2022.

The 2022-2027 General Executive Board members are:

General President:

Sean O'Brien, President, Local 25, Boston, MA

General Secretary-Treasurer:

Fred Zuckerman, President, Local 89, Louisville, KY

International Vice Presidents At-Large:

Juan Campos, Secretary-Treasurer, Local 705, Chicago, IL

Greg Floyd, President, Local Union 237, New York, NY

Tony Jones, President, Local 413, Columbus, OH

John Palmer, Local 657, San Antonio, TX

James Wright, President, Local 822, Norfolk, VA

Joan Corey, Business Agent, Local 25, Boston, MA

Chris Griswold, Secretary-Treasurer, Local 986, Los Angeles, CA

Canadian Region Vice Presidents:

François LaPorte, President, Teamsters Canada, Laval, QC

Stan Hennessy, President, Local Union 31, Delta, BC

Craig McInnes, President, Local Union 938, Mississauga, ON

Central Region Vice Presidents:

Danny Avelyn, Secretary-Treasurer, Local 554, Omaha, NE

Tom Erickson, President, Local 120, Minneapolis, MN

Avral Thompson, Secretary-Treasurer, Local Union 89, Louisville, KY

Eastern Region Vice Presidents:

Rocco Calo, Secretary-Treasurer, Local 1150, Stratford, CT

Bill Hamilton, President, Local Union 107, Philadelphia, PA

Matt Taibi, President, Local 251, Providence, RI

Southern Region Vice Presidents:

Thor Johnson, Vice President, Local 79, Tampa, FL

Brent Taylor, Secretary-Treasurer, Local 745, Dallas, TX

Western Region Vice Presidents:

Mark Davison, President, Local 162, Portland, OR

Lindsay Dougherty, Recording Secretary, Local 399, Hollywood, CA

Peter Finn, Secretary-Treasurer, Local 856, San Francisco, CA

Rick Hicks, Secretary-Treasurer, Local 174, Seattle, WA

International Trustees:

Willie Ford, President, Local 71, Charlotte, NC

Dan Kane, Jr., President, Local 202, New York, NY

Vinnie Perrone, President, Local 804, New York, NY

Boy Scouts of America, Greater New York Councils, 36th Annual Salute to Labor Luncheon

In recognition of the support that organized labor has always shown the Boy Scouts of America, an annual luncheon is held to express thanks and pay a special tribute to labor leaders who exemplify the mission of scouting: “To prepare young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.” The Oath, which was administered to luncheon attendees, includes the pledge: “On my honor, I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country...” The Scout Law, also administered at the luncheon, requires the Scouts to personify such values as being: Trustworthy, Loyal, Brave and Kind. The honorees and Boy Scout Board members all have demonstrated an unwavering dedication to the mission, oath and law that have helped countless boys become well-prepared and productive men. ■



(l-r) Honoree Christopher Dono, E-Board member, International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Local 4, AFL-CIO, George Meany Award recipient. Honoree Fallon Ager-Norman, Director, Region 1, Northeast, UFCW, International Union, AFL-CIO, CLC, Good Scout Award recipient. Honoree James Slevin, President, Utility Workers Union of America, AFL-CIO, Good Scout Award recipient. Master of Ceremonies, Local 237 President, Gregory Floyd.

"Erase Racism" Dinner



Civil Rights attorney, Benjamin Crump and Gregory Floyd at an "Erase Racism" dinner to raise awareness and funds.

IBT's Public Services Division Conference



Ruben Torres, Vice President on Local 237's Executive Board, addressing the conference.



Bertha Aiken, Director of Education and Training, addressing the audience.

Contracts Ratified



Plasterers contract (l-r) Anthony Demeco, Donald Arnold, Local 237's Secretary Treasurer on the Executive Board and Director of the Citywide Division, Joseph Ballar, Frank Spallino and Martha Bodhnarain, Local 237's Senior Counsel.



Martha and Donald pictured with Andre Jones and Jessie Spinelli marking the ratification of the Elevators Mechanics, Supervisors and Helpers contract.



Keeping you in the know



Your Legal Services Plan in 2021

By Mary E. Sheridan, Esq.

Director of Local 237 Legal Services Plan

Representing members through a pandemic has had its challenges. And yet, your Legal Services Plan has continued to provide intake appointments, attend closings, appear at court hearings and conferences, draft wills for our members, file bankruptcy petitions and commence matrimonial actions.

As with all of us, the Legal Services Plan has needed to be creative and embrace technology as never before. Learning how to conduct a trial remotely has been a challenge and yet we have successfully completed many trials during the pandemic. In the beginning of the pandemic, almost all legal work ground to a halt. We attended real estate closings in parking lots - maintaining more than 6 feet distance from others - over FaceTime and Zoom, and represented many members leaving the 5 Boroughs for the peace and space upstate New York provides. We have conducted intake appointments via telephone and Zoom and struggled with our members with all the technological glitches that come with the new modes of conducting business. We persevere and are assisting members at pre-pandemic numbers with high-quality legal representation.

New York State and City Courts have dramatically changed how cases are managed and heard. We now regularly appear with our members at court conferences via Microsoft TEAMS. Documents are filed electronically, whether through the New York State Courts Electronic Filing System (NYSCEF) or through emails to the Court. Evidence is introduced at trial by sharing documents over TEAMS and witnesses are questioned over video.

There has never been such a drastic change in how law is practiced in such a short period of time. These changes will not disappear with the end of the pandemic. Many of the changes have proven useful and constructive, although some may argue that nothing can replace in-person meetings and trials. Still, video-conferencing has meant that a Legal Services attorney often now appears in 3 different courts, in 3 different counties, for 3 different clients all in one day!

The struggles for our members have been real. Family Court cases stagnated in the system and only recently have petitions been calendared and heard. Some people were prevented from seeing their children for months, others paid child support when an Order should have been terminated.

New York's eviction moratorium is ending January 15, 2022. The end of the moratorium will potentially mean a tsunami of eviction cases in the courts. The Legal Services Plan has worked hard to assist members in applying for rental assistance and we are here to represent members if served with eviction papers when the moratorium ends.

Courts are now requiring in-person appearances for certain trials and motions. We imagine this will continue to pick up if COVID numbers remain low. For now, we continue to meet with our clients remotely and are available for all legal matters covered under the Plan. Please visit the Union's website at www.local237.org for a complete list of our services, contact numbers and emails. Wishing you all a very happy and safe New Year. ▮



Planning For Your Future

By Mitch Goldberg

Director of the Welfare Fund

FINANCIAL PLANNING PROGRAM

Teamsters Local 237 Welfare Fund offers a Financial Planning Program for all Citywide and Housing members. The program is designed to provide you with a personal financial planner to review your finances, to help answer your financial questions and/or assist you with the development of a financial strategy. There is no cost to you, the program is paid for by the Welfare Fund.

Stacey Braun Associates, Inc. is the firm that administers the program and is one of the 500 largest investment advisors in the world. The Financial Counseling Program is intended to provide you with access to qualified professionals, Certified Financial Planners® and Registered Investment Advisors who are available to work with you to provide objective and unbiased advice regarding: *debt management, deferred comp. allocations and decisions, retirement planning, insurance, investing, college planning, budgeting, rollovers, and much more.* Stacey Braun representatives are prohibited from selling investment products or insurance. If you are interested in taking advantage of the **Financial Counseling Program**, please contact **Stacey Braun Associates, Inc. at 1-888-949-1925 or email JLandicho@staceybraun.com.**

PENSION COUNSELING SERVICES

Individual pension counseling is available on an appointment basis for Citywide and Housing members. You can receive advice on pension options, procedures for applying for pensions, how to make the most of your retirement arrangements and other matters relating to your individual pension questions. **You may set up an appointment by calling the Pension Counseling Appointment Desk at (212) 807-0555. Stacey Braun is offering a webinar as well on, Tuesday, January 11th at 6:30pm. Please call 1-888-949-1925 for further information if you are interested.**

A six-week retirement planning series is offered twice a year by Local 237 retirees Division. Topics such as pension, Social Security, health insurance coverage in retirement, and lifestyle adjustments are discussed in different sessions. Citywide and Housing members may call the Retiree Division at 212-807-0555 for more information regarding retirement planning.

The Trustees of Teamsters Local 237 offer these benefits so that you can secure a stable and successful financial future for you and your family. While many members do take advantage of these benefits, many remain unaware that we offer these services free for you to access and plan for financial success. ▮



Keeping you in the know

HOW TO STAY SAFE WHILE SHOPPING ONLINE



By Anthony Morano

Chief Information Officer

Today, it is rare that someone can go to a store and find all the items they need for their holiday shopping. With the convenience of online shopping, individuals can shop near and far, engaging small businesses to large conglomerates. When you are doing your online shopping though, how do you know which websites are safe?

I am sure you have experienced this... you start to Google search a product to find the best price and you decide you are going to wait until later to make the purchase. You then check your Facebook or Instagram account and suddenly you start seeing ads for the same product you



were just shopping for. This is not a coincidence; social media applications share information among your browsers and device to tailor an experience that drives you to click their ad. Just because Facebook or Instagram is showing you an ad and you trust Facebook and Instagram, does not mean you can trust the ad.

Here are a few tips for you to remember when you start your online shopping experience:

1. Is the website reputable? When/if you click the ad you see, does it bring you to Macys.com or to Staples.com or something like these addresses?
 - a. If you are directed to a website in which the URL does not match the store name you think you are shopping at, it is probably suspicious and fraudulent. Do not buy from this site.
2. When you go to pay for an item, you will have to enter a debit or credit card number. Browsers are now allowing you to save this information for quick convenience later. I would recommend not doing this. Although it might be easier and saves you time later, it opens you up to more vulnerability of your credit card numbers being stolen, if you are a victim of a hack.
3. Continue to monitor your credit card statements, every few days, as you do your online shopping. It is very easy for smaller companies, that you may purchase from, to have a data breach and not realize it until much later. By reviewing your online activity, will allow you to ensure that the purchases you are making were authorized by you and not someone else.
4. If a price or an item seems too good to be true, then it probably is and should be avoided. If you are looking to purchase a new Xbox for someone and you know that generally it costs around \$500, but you find an ad where they are selling it for \$250, that should raise a red flag in your head. Do not be blinded by the amazing savings your just scored because it probably is a fraud. This is the most common way that hackers steal your credit card information and even worse your identity.

Remember that you are the best defense in your online shopping experience. You probably would not buy some questionable goods out of the trunk of someone's car on the street, that same mentality should be used online. If something looks off or does not seem legitimate, it probably is not and should be avoided. ■



How to Access Mental Health Benefits

By Ayana Ali

Director of Local 237 Social Services

Mental Health and how to preserve it is a hot topic. Many organizations have sprung up in the last few years that shine a light on how to better care for your mental health and encouraging people to do so as a part of the overall wellness. Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, Facebook and other social media hubs are full of accounts discussing mental health, encouraging people to go to therapy and to feel no shame in doing so. While this is all very helpful and encouraging, what many of these accounts fail to do is to educate people exactly how to access these needed benefits. If you have found yourself in this predicament, wondering how to go about getting enrolled in therapy, psychiatric or substance abuse rehabilitation services, you are in luck because I am going to provide you with the necessary information.

What you should first understand is that your mental health benefits are administered via your city sponsored health benefits, not via the union. This means that a plan such as HIP or GHI is the entity through which your benefits come.

Secondly, you should know there are different types of providers who can administer those benefits. You may be treated by a psychologist, a social worker, a mental health counselor, a certified alcohol and substance abuse counselor, an art therapist, a rehabilitation counselor, a psychiatrist, or a nurse practitioner. You may also be treated by a combination of providers licensed in any of those disciplines. Regardless of who you work with, to access those benefits according to your plan, you will likely need to attend treatment with someone who is a participating provider of those mental health benefits or someone who the plan has indicated you are permitted to see if they are not on panel.

All insurance plans have mental/behavioral health departments. In order to learn who you are permitted to work with, you should contact that department and inquire. This number is likely on the back of your insurance ID card or can be accessed by calling the plan's main customer service number and requesting to be put in contact with that department directly. The plan will provide you with



specifics regarding providers who are in your area or who are practicing within an area of your specific choosing. By contacting this department, you will also learn how many sessions you are entitled to per year and any other requirements that you may have to initiate treatment. Similarly, you will learn if any relevant processes must be followed to arrange for the services such as the acquisition of a referral or approval.

Additionally, if you want to find providers other than via contacting the insurance plan, there are websites that are designed to help people find providers such as PsychologyToday.com, Therapyforblackgirls.com, Latinxtherapy.com, nqtcn.com (The National Queer & Trans Therapists of Color Network), glma.org (previously known as the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association), asianmhc.org (The Asian Mental Health Collective), and many more. Via these sites and those like them, you can use filters that will search for specific location, accepted insurances, languages spoken, gender, religious affiliation, and many more specifics that may be important to you.

The union, although again not the entity that administers your behavioral health benefits, can be helpful in assisting you with identifying providers. If you need help or resources in relationship to this subject, you have other mental health treatment concerns, or have other Social Services needs, please do not hesitate to contact Ayana Ali, LCSW at 212-924-7220 or aali@local237.org for further assistance. ■

Personal Notes

Effective January 3, 2022, **Carlos Cotto** will be appointed the Deputy Director for City-Wide. His new salary will be \$1481.00 per week (\$77,012 per year).

Effective January 3, 2022, **Norberto Luna** will have a new title, Assistant Housing Director, and will receive an increase in salary. His new salary will be \$806.00 per week (\$41,912 per year).

Resumen En Español

Felices Fiestas

Este año, cuando se acercan las fiestas, la pregunta tradicional para asegurar la visita de Santa no es "¿has sido travieso o bueno?". Más bien, ¿cómo hemos sobrevivido un año más de un enemigo viral tan destructivo que su impacto se ha sentido no solo en nuestra nación sino en todo el mundo? En el Local 237, ciertamente hemos experimentado los horrores de esta guerra pandémica: hemos estado en primera línea todos los días y pagamos el precio. Algunos de nuestros miembros se enfermaron. Algunos perdieron la vida. Pensamos en ellos y en sus familias a menudo. También aplaudimos a nuestros miembros activos que continúan dando dignidad y honor al título: "Empleado Público". Les agradecemos por ayudar a mantener una calidad de vida para todos los neoyorquinos que no se podría lograr sin ustedes. Es posible que muchos no conozcan sus esfuerzos, pero todos han sentido su trabajo. **¡Disfruten de las fiestas!**

— Gregory Floyd, Presidente, Teamsters Local 237



MEMBERS OF TEAMSTERS LOCAL 237 DO NOT FORGET.

Holiday time can be especially difficult for families who have lost a loved one but, to members of Local 237, their co-workers and their friends will forever be remembered, and the memory of their loss during the pandemic will be permanently embedded in their hearts and minds.

On behalf of President Gregory Floyd, the Executive Board and Staff, we offer sincere condolences to the families, and appreciation for sharing your loved one with us.

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