



# LOCAL 237

# NEWSLINE

Vol. 58, No. 4

Winter 2024

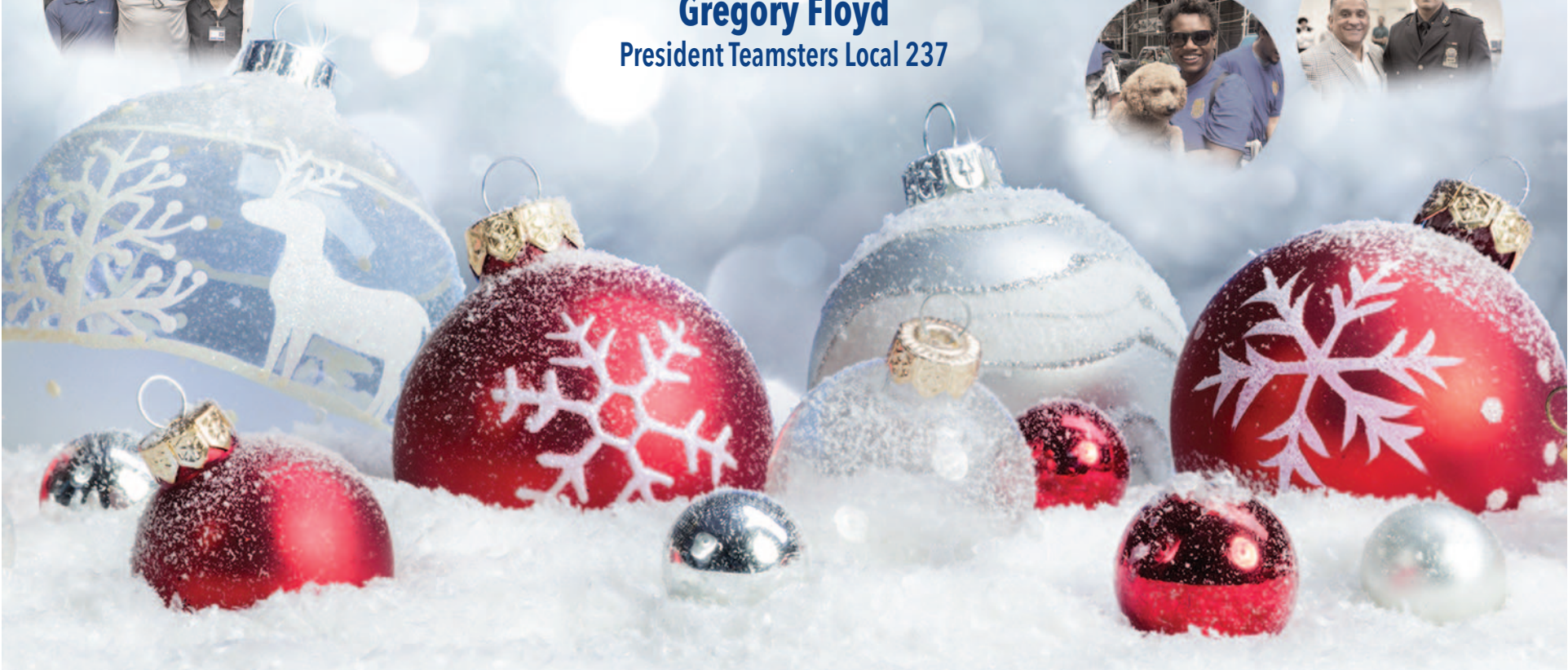
## Happy Holidays

This year, the big question Santa will ask is not "have you been naughty or nice?" but rather, "how have you and your loved ones fared with so many challenges, facing so many?"

Unsettling events – some made by man – others by Mother Nature, brought catastrophes suffered both world-wide and right here at home that have surely had their impact felt with a devastating blow to the body, soul and spirit. Yet, we at Local 237 have been on the frontline and fighting through it, bringing a sense of normalcy and peace of mind to the lives of all New Yorkers. As municipal workers, we're counted upon, and we delivered. You have given dignity and honor to the title: "Public Employee" and be assured, Santa has you on his list! 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**, 6th 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

**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.  
Diana Nappi, Director  
Len Proctor, Deputy Director

**SOCIAL SERVICES**, 3rd Fl.  
646-638-8608  
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  
services we can provide.  
Karla Steinberg,  
Membership Social Worker

**LEGAL SERVICES**, 4th Fl.  
212-924-1220  
Lawyers advise and represent mem-  
bers on covered personal legal prob-  
lems, including domestic relations  
(family court proceedings, divorce  
and separation), purchase and sale of  
a primary residence, wills, adoptions,  
credit and consumer problems, ten-  
ant rights and bankruptcies.  
Mary Sheridan, Esq., Chief Attorney  
Jennifer Hudson, Esq.,  
Assistant Chief Attorney

**EXECUTIVE OFFICES**, 5th Fl.  
212-924-2000

**GREGORY FLOYD**  
President

**RUBEN TORRES**  
Vice President

**DONALD ARNOLD**  
Secretary-Treasurer

**JEANETTE TAVERAS**  
Recording Secretary

**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**, 2nd 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.  
Diana Doss, Esq.  
Grievance Coordinator

**CIVIL SERVICE BAR ASSOC.**  
6th Fl., 212-675-0519  
Saul Fishman, President  
Aldona Vaiciunas,  
Office Administrator and  
Grievance Coordinator  
Lee Gordon, Esq.  
Business Agent  
CSBA Welfare Fund  
Alicare 866-647-4617

**COMMUNICATIONS**, 5th Fl.  
646-638-8501  
Phyllis S. Shafran, Director &  
Editor Local 237 Newsline and  
Editor, Retiree News & Views

**EDUCATION AND TRAINING**  
6th Fl., 212-807-0550  
Provides a variety of training  
and educational advancement  
opportunities for members.  
Shanell Grayson, 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

General Information:  
347-643-3000

Outside NYC toll-free:  
877-6NYCERS

**NYCERS Internet**  
www.nyclink.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



*Where do we go  
from here?*

**By Gregory Floyd**

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

So much has already been written and no doubt there'll be countless volumes to come. The "talking heads" have been out in full force—TV, radio, podcasts, X—and every other media outlet on Earth. There's been a mix of commentary, depending on where you tune in, that ranges from joy to despair. Yes, the 2024 election is over, but the burning question remains: "Where do we go from here?"

All sides of the aisle have offered advice, speculation and arguments made.

For example, David French, a New York Times columnist recently wrote: "The election is over, but our democracy endures. The end of the campaign signaled the beginning of the next phase of the fight to preserve the American experiment. We can grieve the loss, but the period of mourning should be short. There is work to be done." And, Peggie Noonan, the renowned speech writer for Republican President Ronald Reagan, and currently a Wall Street Journal columnist wrote recently: "All defeat carries a gift. You get to figure out what you're getting wrong."

So, again, there's the question: Where do we go from here?

To help figure that out, a good place to start might be to look at an item that is already receiving a great deal of attention in this time of election postmortems: How could so many professional pollsters get it so wrong? Their findings were supposed to not just predict who would win, but also to identify what voters cared about that would deliver the win. Campaigns pay millions of dollars for their findings and more millions are paid to those individuals tasked with developing and implementing strategies based on that information. Clearly, there's no shortage of excuses to offer disappointed voters, but there's surely a simple warning for everyone to keep in mind. It was found in a study by psychologist Philip Tetlock. He evaluated several decades of predictions about political and economic events, and he summed up his findings best: "The average expert was roughly as accurate as a dart-throwing chimpanzee." It's too easy to conclude that "people lie to pollsters" and therefore their findings are often flawed. Maybe the better conclusion is to not rely heavily on polls but instead, find better ways to know what's on voters' minds...and what really matters to them.

Another idea that was pursued, but maybe not to its fullest during the election, and should not be dropped now or minimized going forward in the quest to engage, grow and preserve voter participation—is the importance of reaching out to new and first-time voters. The voting population in America is changing. Baby Boomers used to make up the largest voting bloc in the nation. Today, it's people under 30 who made up 16% of the vote, while in 2020, they were only at 13% of the vote. And there is another group that has skyrocketed in voter numbers: 36.2 million Hispanics are now eligible to vote which more than doubled their numbers from 14.3 million in 2020. Of course, the challenge becomes how to appeal to these groups—and many more emerging voter groups, as well as the huge number angry voters who decide to just sit this one out. Some have pointed blame on the expansion of concern to what has been termed: "cultural boutique issues" while at the same time, concerns of perhaps more hard-core, "can't-live-without" issues from housing to hunger seem on the backburner.

What's there to do...where do we go from here?

Charles Blow, New York Times opinion columnist, in one of his takeaways from this election, suggested that we go back to the con-

cept of Martin Luther King Jr. before he was assassinated. He had already embarked on the Poor People's Campaign, which he called "the beginning of a new cooperation, understanding and a determination by poor people of all colors and backgrounds to assert and win their right to a decent life and respect for their culture and dignity." Although it's a question if that title would be welcomed without controversy today, the coalition concept does have merit. Certainly, unifying in common interests for common gains is something that working people — and union members — understand and subscribe to. Blow ends his column with wisdom and advice: "It's hard not to think that some Americans don't see others' oppression as their problem". And there's something more to consider: When we look in the mirror, is ours the only image we see? Maybe part of the way to find the answer to "Where do we go from here?" is to unify and in so doing, the image in the mirror is not just of one person, but of many. ■

**When we  
look in the  
mirror, is  
ours the  
only image  
we see?**



**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](mailto:pshafran@local237.org)

# MEMBERS IN THE NEWS Above and Beyond

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:

## KEEPING THE COMMUNITY SAFE

Kings County Hospital Law Enforcement helping to keep our community safe, recently recovered an illegal firearm. (l-r) **Captain Borden, Sergeant Fenelon and PO Ross.**



## SAVED A LIFE

**Hospital Police Officer Tomlinson (l), Detective Campbell (not pictured) and Captain Sampson (r)** responded to an emergency inside the Emergency Room at Woodhull Hospital. Upon arrival they realized a patient had taken his fist and punched through the glass door severing two arteries in his right arm. Officer Tomlinson and Captain Sampson put gowns on and began to hold the patient while the medical staff attempted to stop the extensive bleeding coming from the patient's right arm.



## COMMUNITY CHAMPION AWARD

Congratulations to **SSA Robertha Saunders** on being honored with the Community Champion Award by Uniquely Me Creative Arts, which is an organization that focuses on improving sensory processing for special needs children through creative arts while supporting their family with resources. SSA Saunders is also an Explorer Advisor for Post #2818 and has always been involved in community outreach, giving back, and advocating for young people.



### Local 237 NEWSLINE

216 West 14th St., New York, NY 10011  
646-638-8501  
Website: [www.local237.org](http://www.local237.org)  
e-mail Newsline: [pshafran@local237.org](mailto:pshafran@local237.org)

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#### Executive Board

<b>Gregory Floyd</b> President	<b>Ruben Torres</b> Vice President	<b>Donald Arnold</b> Secretary-Treasurer	<b>Jeanette Taveras</b> Recording Secretary
<b>Curtis Scott</b> Trustee	<b>Benedict Carenza, Jr.</b> Trustee	<b>Catherine Rice</b> Trustee	

**Phyllis S. Shafran**  
Editor

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

IF YOU MOVE – Please send your change of address in writing to **Membership** to ensure that you continue receiving your newspaper.



# Shop Steward Shoutout

## HOUSING DIVISION



**Nigel Dickson**  
Caretaker,  
Van Dyke  
Houses

**Mr. Dickson** has served as a dedicated Shop Steward at Van Dyke Houses for about three years. He maintains constant communication with his Business Agents, keeping them informed and asking pertinent questions. Mr. Dickson is committed to helping staff, addressing issues and concerns, and promoting union-friendly practices. He also provides valuable information and assists with safety issues and concerns.



**Maria Gaviria**  
Caretaker,  
Seth Low  
Houses

**Ms. Gaviria** is known for her friendly demeanor and her dedication to assisting her fellow coworkers. She ensures that staff are well-informed about union dues and other important information. Her helpfulness and commitment have earned her the respect and admiration of her colleagues.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION



**Malcolm Williams**  
Hospital Police Special Officer,  
Harlem Hospital

**Officer Malcolm Williams (r)** has been an officer at Harlem Hospital for over 10 years and he is the Shop Steward at Harlem Hospital. Recently, his Business Agent, **Kangela Moore (l)**, was thrilled to see him back at work after recovering from a brief illness. When asked what advice he would give to someone going through a medical situation, Officer Williams said, "Be positive, believe in yourself, and remember that thinking positively will help you get through whatever you are going through."



**Ramona Brown**  
Campus Security Assistant,  
LaGuardia Community

For over a decade, **CSA Brown** has been a dedicated Shop Steward at LaGuardia Community College. Her passion for supporting and advocating for her fellow members shines through in everything she does.

## CITYWIDE DIVISION



**Sherwin Cross**  
Senior  
Housekeeping  
Supervisor,  
Elmhurst  
Hospital

**Sherwin Cross** is a Senior Housekeeping Supervisor. He is a great asset to Elmhurst Hospital where he is well known. He has always been a visible, active and staunch supporter of Local 237. We truly appreciate how he has supported all the members at Elmhurst Hospital.



**Nicole Taylor-Lang**  
NYPD Photographer, DCAS

**Nicole Taylor-Lang** has recently taken on the role of Shop Steward and has already made a significant impact. She actively engages with her Business Agents and has been a consistent presence at the 2024 General Membership Meetings.

# MEMBERS IN THE NEWS Public Housing Division

*So many of our members distinguish themselves by their professionalism on the job. Here are some of their pictures and stories.*



(l-r) Local 237 Housing Division staff: **Vincent Lattimore**, Business Agent; **Shavelle Knox**, Assistant Director; **Shakera Ebanks**, Local 237's Senior Counsel; **Norberto Luna**, Assistant Director; and **Carl Giles**, Director.



2024 Safety Award Winners at our symposium.



(l-r) **Urian Brown** of Throggs Neck Houses; **SOHC Dashawn Hightower**, Safety Associate of Throggs Neck Houses; and **Taniqua Steele**, Safety Associate of Claremont Houses attended the annual Safety Symposium 2024 presented by NYCHA EHS and Local 237.



(l-r) **Gary Heyward**, Super, Patterson Houses; and **Talese Knight**, Safety Associate, De Hostos Houses.



**Shakeil Knight**, Safety Associate from Pomonok.



(l-r) **Luis Quinones**, Safety Associate of Soundview Houses; **Andrea Rapp**, Safety Associate of Adams Houses; and **Shiesha Badger**, Safety Associate of Pelham Houses stand together in unity after attending the Bronx Safety Congress and representing the safety issues at their assigned developments.



(l-r) **Susan McQuade**, Health and Safety Coordinator; **Christopher Quinones**, Safety Associate and Safety Award winner; and **Carl Giles**.



(l-r) **Delores Hull**, manager from Grant Houses; **Stephanie Jiminez**, Safety Associate from Amsterdam Houses; **Christopher Quinones**, Safety Associate and Shop Steward from King Towers; and **Thomas Gardenhire**, Safety Associate from Rangel Houses.



(l-r) **Victoria Parker**, SOG from Strauss; with Business Agent **Ken Roper**.



**Xanty Canty**, former Safety Associate of Queensbridge Houses did an excellent job at bringing several safety issues to the Safety Congress.



(l-r) **Tina Davis**, Caretaker X; and SOHG, **Joshua Perez** of Monroe Houses.



**Reggie Ambroise**, Caretaker J from Brownsville Houses.



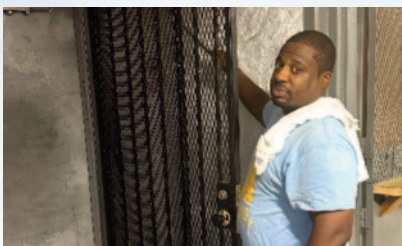
(l-r) **Elizabeth Valentin**, Javits Shop Steward; **Ken Roper**; **Anna Hernandez**.



(l-r) Caretaker J's from Riis Houses, **Andrea Williams** and **Raymel Jant**.



Caretakers from Marcy Housing.



**Jon Jones**, Caretaker J from Claremont Houses is now the Office Caretaker and is a proud Teamsters for 11 years.



**Harold Glover**, Caretaker X from Gunhill Housing.



**Cherise Washington**, Caretaker J from Brownsville Housing.

# MEMBERS IN THE NEWS Citywide Division

*So many of our members distinguish themselves by their professionalism on the job. Here are some of their pictures and stories.*

## SCHOOL FOOD MANAGERS



(l-r) **Bianca Jones**, Business Agent; **Khadija Malajati**; **Lauren Paccione**; **Lucia Solis**; **Stephanie Sze**; and **Windy Martinez**.



(l-r) **George Wade**, Assistant Director; **Mark Senape**, Food Service Manager; **Frances Collado Sabella**, Food Service Manager; **Bianca Jones**, Business Agent; and **Curtis Scott**, Business Agent and Executive Board Trustee.

## HOPE FOR WARRIORS FOUNDATION



The Coalition of Building Trades presented a \$26,000 check to the NYC Fire Department's "Hope For Warriors Foundation". On hand at the presentation ceremony were: (l-r) **Jean O'Shea**, Executive Director, FDNY Hope for Warriors Foundation; **Randy Barron**, FDNY photographer and Local 237 member; **Lt. Richard Cannon**, Ladder Co., #148; and **Donald Arnold**, Local 237's Secretary Treasurer and Director of the Citywide Division.

## LINCOLN HOSPITAL'S RADIOLOGY DEPT.



(l-r) **George Wade**, Business Agent; and **Dieunane Deus** Associate Supervisor Radiologist Level 4 Lincoln Hospital.

## Added to the Roster of Retirees

*Local 237 wants to thank the following members for their years of dedicated service, and wishes them well in their retirement:*



Celebrating **Mary Sheridan's** 35 years of dedicated service to Local 237, were members of the Executive Board including (l-r) **Trustee Curtis Scott**, **Secretary-Treasurer Donald Arnold**, **Mary**, **President Gregory Floyd**, **Recording Secretary Jeanette Taveras** and **Trustee, Benny Carenza**. President Floyd hailed Mary as someone who gives honor and dignity to the term: "Public Sector Employee".

### Mary, in her own words:

*"I am retiring after 35 years at Local 237 Legal Services Plan. I was just out of law school and new to the big city when I started my work at Teamsters 237. What a wonderful career it has been. I have spent these many years doing work for which I am proud, and which has greatly enriched my life.*

*Most people think only of salary contracts and work grievances when they think of a labor union. Since 1975, Teamsters Local 237 has been committed to improving the lives of members with the Legal Services' benefit. We help members and retirees buy and sell homes; protect their parental rights; navigate the end of a marriage; fight for consumer rights; manage debt; and plan for end-of-life decisions. This is all done at no cost to the fortunate members of Local 237. This benefit has meant so much to the thousands of clients we have assisted over my tenure.*

*I want to thank Local 237 for the trust and support given me in managing the Legal Services Plan. I am a better person for having spent my career here. I have had the honor of meeting hundreds of members throughout the years, many who have become friends and who have touched my life in positive ways. I want to thank the membership for allowing me, and our amazing staff, to represent you. Although I will miss my union family greatly, as our Retiree Division says - you can retire from work, but not from the Union!" — Mary Sheridan*



(l-r) Photographer **Linda Morales** retired from Lincoln Hospital after 36 years. Pictured with **Charlie Cotto**.



(l-r) **Business Agent Shavelle Knox** presented LaGuardia houses, SOC, **Alexander Rodriguez** with his retirement plaque.



**Business Agent Ken Roper** (r) presented **Habib Baksh** (l) with his retirement plaque.



(l-r) **Business Agent Shavelle Knox** presented **Baruch Houses, Caretaker J, James Harris** with his retirement plaque.



**Sergeant Douglas** (l) retired from Metropolitan Hospital. Pictured with with Business Agent **Kangela Moore** (r).



(l-r) **Sergeant Anibal Rosado** retired from Metropolitan Hospital. Pictured with Business Agent **Kangela Moore**.

# MEMBERS IN THE NEWS Law Enforcement Division

*So many of our members distinguish themselves by their professionalism on the job. Here are some of their pictures and stories.*

## BARUCH COLLEGE PUBLIC SAFETY CAREER FAIR



On Tuesday December 3, 2024 Baruch College Public Safety held its first Career Fair to try and recruit people to apply for jobs as Campus Security Assistant or Campus Peace Officer. We had 10 applicants that applied for Campus Security Assistant and 1 applicant for Campus Peace Officer. This fair was the project of Chief Robert Curry along with his Administrative team Lt. Latoya Rodney, Lt. Roseann Pilgrim, Lt. Anthony Rosario. Also to help facilitate this event was **Specialist Melina Jackson, Sgt. Mario Diaz, Cpl. Daniele Brothers, Csa. Sanchez** and CUNY Office Assistant **Zoraida Nunez** and Local 237 Benefits Manager, **Len Proctor**, who also came by to speak on some of the benefits offered to all employees. This was our first of hopefully many more events such as this.



**CSA Luis Sanchez** and Baruch Mascot Bernie the Bearcat.



**CPO David Irizarry** with Baruch President S. David Wu.

## IN SUPPORT OF OCTOBER, BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH



Bronx East Office of Medical Examiners. **Special Officer Matiaz, Officer Walters, Lt. Doby, Lt. Paisley** and Shop Steward **Lt. Miller** with **Charlie Cotto** (r), Director of Operations, Law Enforcement and Citywide Divisions.



Staten Island School Safety Outreach Port Richmond HS and Local 237 hosting a "SURVIVORS" luncheon. **Jeanette Taveras** (l) and **Derek Jackson** (r) attended.



**CSA Castillo** and **CSA Harris** at LaGuardia College bringing awareness to Breast Cancer month with their pink patches.



**Sergeant Carter** at Bellevue Hospital is bringing awareness to Breast Cancer month by wearing a pink polo shirt.

## TURKEYS AND SMILES



Staten Island Shares distributed turkeys and smiles to Agents to ensure they we take care of our own during the holidays. As well as random acts of kindness from MTF to show agents we are all in this together.

## A STREET NAMED CUSICK



**SSA Mimi Cusick**, a former Staten Island School Safety Agent was honored with a street renaming at College Avenue & Ohio Place on Staten Island.

## MOVIE NIGHT



Staten Island SSS **Holt-Pate** set up and coordinated a Movie Night at SI Tech HS for the Agents of Staten Island.



**CSA Thompson** (top photo) and **CPO Singh**, working at SUNY Queens EOC. It is a York College Satellite site. They provide safety for the college community.



**Captain Gilbert** and **Hospital Police Officer Williams**. They are all smiles at work at Harlem Hospital.



**Hospital Police Officer Diniz** at Bellevue Hospital creating a safe environment for the hospital community.

# MEMBERS IN THE NEWS Law Enforcement Division *Continued...*

## DHS/HRA/ACS POLICE OFFICER GRADUATION CEREMONY



### ACS GRADUATES

DION BENSON  
 ANIYAH BROWN  
 BRYAN CHAN  
 AISHIA CHARLES  
 RALPH DELOACH  
 IAN DOMINICK  
 RASHAE DUDLEY  
 JERMAINE MAULTSBY  
 RONALD ROSWELL  
 KENNETH STEVENS  
 LASHEA SUGGS  
 SE'LAHH WHITE



### DHS GRADUATES

NAOMI BAILEY  
 SHAKEYMA BANKS  
 WILMA BARTON  
 KAMEL BRITTON  
 DANIEL BROWN-BESS  
 CRYSTAL D'ALO  
 RAYVON DEBERRY  
 CURTIS DEROR  
 JOSEPH FAX  
 DERRICK FEURTADO  
 PHILLIP GARVIN  
 SHARIF GETHERS  
 ADAN GOMEZ  
 ANTHONY GRAHAM  
 AMBER GREENIDGE-PIERRE  
 SHAWNTAY HAMPTON



(l-r) **Derek Jackson**, Local 237's Law Enforcement Director; Chief George Sheinkopf, NYC HRA/DSS Police; Salutatorian **Bryan Sanchez** of HRA; Valedictorian **Alexander Figueroa** of HRA; **Martha Bodhnarain, Esq.**, Local 237's Senior Counsel; and **Frank Rella**, Business Agent.

### DHS GRADUATES CONTINUED

JOHN HERNANDEZ  
 AALIYAH HOLLOWAY  
 JAMILYAH HUFF  
 KENYATTE HUGHES  
 SHANIA JEFFREY  
 RUDEAN JENKINS  
 SABRINA JENKINS  
 SHERLEY S. JOSEPH  
 SANAA KEARNEY  
 CLAIRE LAINBLERT  
 JASMIN LASTER  
 MAJEUR LIMAGE  
 ODESSA MANIGAULT  
 ISADORA MCCALLA  
 DIJON MCCRAE  
 AYANA PAUL  
 SADE RAIKES-BRITTON  
 SHAREEMA RANEY  
 LUISA RAPOSO  
 ALIYAH RIGG  
 PAUL ROSS  
 DANIEL SAUL  
 SANIYAH SCOTT  
 IYANA SMITH  
 OCTAVIA SPENCE  
 DECHANTEL STEELE  
 SHAKUR STOVES-BOSTON  
 DANA TORRES  
 MALIK WILLIAMS  
 DYANI WILSON

### HRA GRADUATES

ALEXANDER FIGUEROA  
 JASON GONZALEZ  
 ABBY HAYWOOD  
 AKEHL MAYO  
 BRYAN SANCHEZ  
 TAMIYA WARE

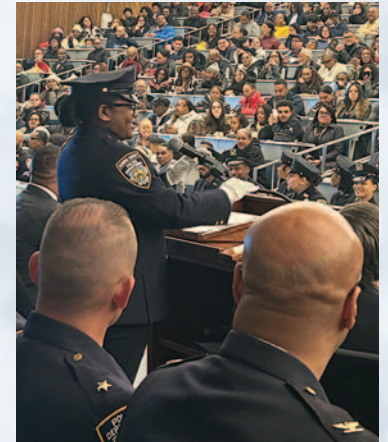
### DHS POLICE ACADEMY SPECIAL GRADUATES

*DHS Deputy Commissioner  
 Shelter Security Management  
 VELVAUNCHE PREISTER*

*DHS Assistant  
 Commissioner  
 Shelter Security  
 Management  
 Program Shelters  
 ANTHONY STASI*

*ACS Assistant Chief  
 Division of Youth  
 and Family Justice  
 CLIFTON BROWN*

## SCHOOL SAFETY GRADUATION



118 New School Safety Agents.

## NYC TAXI & LIMO COMMENCEMENT



**Gregory Floyd**, President, Teamsters Local 237, addresses the Class of 2024A. CLASS OF 2024A: Ashrafal Alam, Nelson Andino, MD Shuyeb Chowdhury, Kamrul Hasan, Joshua Hennegan, Mohammed E. Hossain, MD A. Islam, Shafiqul Jewel, Aupu Kazi, Krystal Lewis-Oudit, Angel Mendez, Mohammad Nabi, Giovanni Palaguachi (Valedictorian), MD Sarker, and MD Uddin.

## SI DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S EDUCATORS BREAKFAST



(l-r) District Attorney McMahon, SSA Creese, Dwayne Archibald, and SSA 3 Castillo.



(l-r) SSS Hines, SSA Creese, SSA 3 Castillo, District Attorney McMahon, SI Borough Commander Melissa Eger, SSS Morales, Xo Sanders and Dwayne Archibald.



Law Enforcement Division meeting with a beach decor organized by Secretary **Jean Arias**.



(l-r) **SSA1 Shawnta Alston** School Safety Agent and her father, 1st Lieutenant Brother Alston William Jefferson of Lodge 480 — 25 years of serving the Brooklyn Shelter families and young adults hot meals and desserts for Thanksgiving.



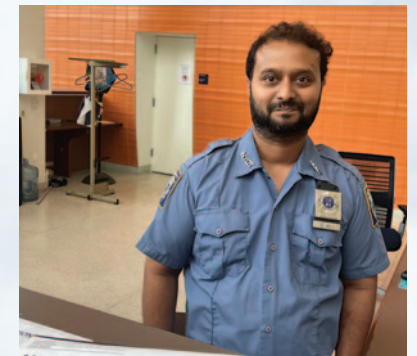
Office of Medical Examiners. **Special Officer Matiaz, Sergeant Walters, Lt. Doby, Lt. Paisley and Shop Steward Lt. Miller.**



Congratulations to **CSA Jackson** at York College for being highlighted and celebrated by the college President as "Officer of the Month".



**Sergeant Ruiz** from Lehman College assisting with the college's youth event.



**CSA Ali** at New York City College of Technology.



Queensborough Community College Campus Police Officers **Sanchez, Sgt Grant and CSA Nunez.**



**CSA Beckford and Sergeant Maldonado** of Queens College welcomes all students, faculty and visitors at the college.

# 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 make 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 resolutions that top the list. We know when we make resolutions that, at best, are wishful thinking, they 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 we can always make them next year 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 during which 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." 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." Mohammed 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." Or when 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."*

*With news headlines blaring chaotic events world-wide—both man-made and environmental—and after several years of suffering the effects of the Coronavirus and its variants, many things have now changed forever. Despite signs that we're on the road to recovery, there is a new normal that remains, which for some, is anything but normal. Surely, so much is different, from the way we currently work and shop, to how we spend our leisure time. Some might say they preferred the pre-pandemic ways – like frequently going to see a new movie at the local cinema and buying a gigantic tub of hot popcorn loaded with butter, instead of viewing it on their iPhone or iPad. Yet, here we are, 2025 knocking at the door and telling us it's time to move on. While some may question if the pandemic and other calamities 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, let's now look to the future. Let's fill that vision with hope and excitement.*



In a recent edition of New York Magazine, columnist Sam Adler-Bell writes: "Since the election, the exhausting pastime of my peer-pundits and pontificators—has been the postmortem. It's a funny term. Who died? Not democracy, surely.... For better or worse, democracy had a good night. What we really mean by postmortem is determining why the losers lost. As it happens, the cause of death, in each report, is a disease for which the examiner is selling a cure... I have my own cures to peddle. I think the Democrats should be recruiting candidates from among rank-and-file union leaders, people who learned to speak plain and forcefully about economic need, who understand solidarity, and know how to mediate conflicts with shared interests (and common enemies) but different cultural values and tastes."

Wow! That's some advice! And it's not just for the Democrats as a strategy to win the next time around, but also for Republicans and Independents, to understand how to create and sustain a government with laws and policies that reflect and protect the everyday, average American. People like us. Working families. Union households. If you're concerned about the future—and want to have a say in it—the time has come to be more than just a good listener but a leader as well. That takes getting involved in big ways and small. Participate in the political process. Vote. Join the school board. Run for office. Remember: No one understands the needs of workers, more than a worker. And no one is better equipped than a union member to connect, communicate and combat – if needed – those in power. We know how to organize. We've walked the picket lines. We support one another. We rally. We don't give up.

So much has been written. So much has been said. There are book writers and TV "talking heads" galore alarming us with tales of the post-election exhaustion and making dire predictions about what lies ahead. But as Adler-Bell sees it: "It's true, exhaustion can be demobilizing, but it can also be a guide." He goes on to write about the virtues of political exhaustion. "...exhaustion is a wise teacher. We have lives to live, families to nurture, movements to build. We know what exhausts us. But what gives us energy? What makes us hopeful instead of cynical? What makes us curious about the world and other people, instead of bored or contemptuous? What if we exhausted ourselves with other's burdens instead of our own dread? Things won't necessarily get better. But they might."

*My wish. My prayer for 2025... is that exhaustion continues and evolves into action used to encourage and inspire the next generation of union members, activists and leaders.*

**– GREGORY FLOYD.**  
President, Teamsters Local 237 and Vice President at-Large on the General Executive Board of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.



*As the end of the year approaches, I am honored to join Teamsters Local 237 in offering my New Year's resolution for 2025. I'm so grateful for your leadership and all of you for the tremendous work you do in keeping our city and county services running, especially during trying times. In typical New York style, you responded with resilience first through the pandemic and now as we weather extreme storms.*

*As every New Yorker knows, it's gotten harder and harder to make ends meet - with the cost of everything from groceries to rent continuing to stretch those paycheck even thinner. My resolution is to put more money back in the pockets of working men and women. This includes providing an inflation refund of up to \$500 to families making less than \$300,000 a year, alongside our historic investments in affordable childcare and housing.*

*My administration knows 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 a more prosperous future. Organized labor will create, and recreate, the underpinnings of safe communities and a vibrant economy. That's why I need our labor community, including the members of Local 237, to fight by my side to advance this affordability agenda.*

*We are in this work together, and I could not ask for a better partner. I wish everyone a safe and happy New Year.*

**– GOVERNOR KATHY HOCHUL**  
Governor of New York



*My hopes for the new year would be to see members spend more time with family and friends as life is very short and our time here is precious. Local 237's job in my opinion, is to help make members' day-to-day more enjoyable and fair at work. Helping members all day, every day is the number one priority.*

*Some members just need to be heard and listened to, whether it's a union issue or nonunion issue, we always try to help. My hopes are to connect to more union members both on Long Island and NYC to try and make members lives better. Lets all work together, more than ever in 2025 as day to day can be tough for all! Happy Holidays and lets all have an awesome 2025!*

**– BEN CARENA**  
Director of the Long Island Division for Local 237 and Trustee on the Executive Board



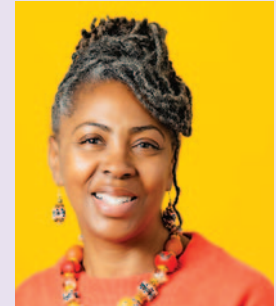
*It's that time again when we bid farewell to the old year and welcome in 2025! Wishing health and happiness to you and your family in 2025. Let's be grateful for what we have, and here's to making more memories in 2025!*

**– GISELA REYES**  
Local 237 Executive Administrative Assistant



*For a change, don't add new things in your life as a new year's resolution. Instead, do more of what's already working for you and stop doing things that waste time. New Year is a new morning and a new morning is a new opportunity and a new opportunity is a new path and finally a new path is a new richness!*

**– DONALD ARNOLD**  
Local 237 Executive Board Secretary Treasurer and Director of the Citywide Division



*My 2025 and my forever Resolution is to be kind to myself. Often times we are our harshest critic. I plan to enjoy every moment of life. I don't have time to waste it on nonsense. I plan to live like I won the lottery.*

**– KANGELA MOORE**  
Local 237 Law Enforcement Business Agent



*Eat healthier - eat more vegetables, drink more water. Go to the gym more often- work out to feel good not to be thinner*

**– CHARLIE COTTO**  
Local 237 Director of Operations, Law Enforcement and Citywide Divisions.



*Wishing you and your loved ones a joyful holiday season and a healthy and blessed new year and throughout 2025.*

**– CHRISTOPHER TAYLOR**  
Local 237 Director of Human Resources



# LONG ISLAND REPORT

## Elwood School District Welcomes New Member



(l-r) **John Gallagher**, Business Agent; new member **William Powers**, Plumber; and **David William**, Liaison.

## Welcome Commack Nurses!



**Benny Carenza**, (left) Long Island Division Director and Trustee of the Executive Board with Commack Nurses.



(l-r) **Matt Hromodka**, Long Island Attorney; **Susannah Gulino**; **Christine Wright**; and **Benny Carenza**.

## Commack



Commack Teamsters pouring and finishing cement at Burr Intermediate School. Head Custodian **Todd Raplee**, **Adam McCabe** and **Rich Bullis** all did a great job! This is a part of a memorial dedication for a former student.

Please welcome a group of new members — Commack Nurses! We knocked it out of the park with their first Teamster contract. All were so happy as they voted 100% yes!! They are finally being recognized for what they do everyday. Congrats to all!

*Here is an email from the nurses that makes all of the hard work and hours worth it!*

Good morning Ben and Matt,

Ben- the phone call I made to you is the single best phone call I ever made in my life.

Matt- you are a gift. It was your advice that made the impossible possible.

Thank you both for taking this crazy ride with us even when there was nothing in it for you!! You are my heros and so appreciated!

Ben, you said it best yesterday, This is life changing for us. You two should be so proud of yourselves.

I look forward to a long work relationship with the two of you :)

Love you guys.

## North Babylon



North Babylon Sunday morning union meeting. Great information for all. (above) Liaison **Chris LoSardo** reviews information.

## West Islip



West Islip Maintenance Shop doing major renovations, framing offices for the I.T. Department. Framing, electric, sheetrock, spackle, paint and doors. Skilled members who do most work in house. Great job Teamsters!

## Plainview Old Bethpage Board Recognition



**Benny Carenza** (fifth from right) with Plainview Old Bethpage board members.

Plainview Old Bethpage has great Local 237 members, custodians, maintenance, grounds, aides and security guards. Congratulations to the board for all of their work day in and day out, working with the union on behalf of all members. That's what it's all about and this board cares very much. Thanks to all board members and the great Superintendent Mary O'Meara.



Superintendent **Mary O'Meara** at the microphone.

## Harborfields



(l-r) Business Agent **John Gallagher** with Harborfields Chief Custodian **Bill Sieli**.

## POLITICAL AND LABOR NEWS

### FLOYD SLATE WINS



The Local 237 Executive Board (l-r) Curtis Scott, Trustee and Business Agent; Cathy Rice, Trustee; Ruben Torres, Vice President; Gregory Floyd, President, Teamsters Local 237 and International Vice President-at-Large on the General Board of the IBT; Jeanette Taveras, Recording Secretary and Business Agent; Donald Arnold, Secretary-Treasurer and Director of the Citywide Division; and Benny Carenza, Trustee and Director of the Long Island Division.

The Floyd Slate won re-election by an overwhelming vote of Local 237 members which was independently tabulated on October 18th. President Gregory Floyd said: "We appreciate the confidence members have shown us by this huge win. They know that our Executive Board represents years of experience and a proven track record of protecting their best interests and we look forward to continuing the fight for workers rights, safety and dignity." ■

### REMEMBERING LILLY

In March of 2010, Local 237 sued New York City on behalf of our 5,000 School Safety Agents, 70% of whom were women, mostly African Americans and Latinas. Many were single mothers. Their annual salary was about \$7,000 less than their counterparts, with similar titles, working in other City agencies. Most of them were male. Some called this just a coincidence. We called it



Lilly Ledbetter (in green) and President Gregory Floyd (at the podium) pressured the city to settle and end gender based pay discrimination of School Safety Agents.

discrimination! School Safety Agents have a tough job to do. They help to protect other peoples' children. All they wanted was to put bread on the table for their own children. A meeting of School Safety Agents was called by Local 237 President **Gregory Floyd** to tell them about plans to sue the City. He told them that we needed some volunteers to sign the papers and be the official plaintiffs and three SSAs volunteered: **Patricia Williams, Bernice Christopher** and the late **Corinthians Andrews**. And for four years, these three gave testimony after testimony. They refused any settlement that did not include retirees. They took days off from work. They took time away from being with their families.

President Floyd called for many rallies to put pressure on the City to finally settle. At those rallies, Local 237 did have the support from several elected officials, as well as some of our most renown local leaders such as Hazel Dukes, President of the NYS NAACP and Sonia Ossorio, President of the NYC Chapter of NOW.

And then there was one from Jacksonville, Alabama: **Lilly Ledbetter**.

Lilly Ledbetter had worked for 19 years at a Goodyear tire and rubber plant in Alabama when she found an anonymous note in her locker toward the last days at work before retirement. Although she had achieved "Supervisor" status, her pay was as much as \$2,000 a month less than what men were receiving in the same supervisory job. Ms. Ledbetter sued for sex discrimination in 1999 in federal court in Alabama, and a jury awarded her more than \$3 million in back pay and damages. But the decision was reversed on appeal on a technicality, of not filing in a timely fashion (even though she was unaware of pay inequality. Undeterred, she pursued the case to the United States Supreme Court, which in 2007 also ruled against her, saying that she was too late — that she should have filed her claim within 180 days of receiving her first unequal paycheck, citing a narrow interpretation of the law. In a vigorous dissent, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg said it was all but impossible for Ms. Ledbetter to have known of her unfair pay in such a time period. To close this loophole, Congress passed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act in 2009, which was the first piece of legislation that President Barack Obama signed into law, shortly after his inauguration. It effectively eliminates the statute of limitations on fair-pay claims. At the signing ceremony in the White House, Ms. Ledbetter, stood behind Mr. Obama shaking her head and wringing her hands in seeming disbelief.

Lilly became a national symbol of unequal treatment of women in the workplace and a hero to many for her years long persistence in fighting against the status quo in court. True to her icon status, Lilly joined the cause and participated in our rally on May 9, 2014, that was designed to coincide with the upcoming Mother's Day holiday. In his opening remarks, President Floyd said: "There is no better way to honor mothers on Mother's Day, than to fight as we do for women's right to equal pay...Most School Safety Agents are mothers, and many are the sole breadwinners in their households, and are entrusted with our most precious possession — our children." Then Lilly spoke: "It's a sad day when you have to live a life being shortchanged. I've lived that, I know what it's like. I know what they are going through. It's not only illegal, it's immoral. It's not just women, it's families that suffer. Retirement and Social Security are shortchanged. You can't catch up."

After a more than 4-year battle, a judge ruled in our favor and in August of that year, history was made. The City announced a \$38-million settlement, the largest class-action pay discrimination lawsuit in the nation.

Lilly Ledbetter died on October 4, 2024 in Alabama. She was 86. ■

### MAKING THE GRADE



Along with members of the Make The Grade Foundation Executive Board are the 11 honorees (seated) with retired NYS Assemblyman Jeffrion Aubry, Teamsters Local 237 President Gregory Floyd (center) and Dr. Bob Lee standing in back of them.

The Make The Grade Foundation recently held its 19th annual fundraiser gala at Terrance on the Park with over 300 people in attendance. Foundation founder, event organizer, and renown WBLS radio personality, Dr. Bob Lee, along with his wife, Vivian Lee, managed an extraordinary evening of fun and function that sought to blend having a good time while acknowledging the nonprofit's mission and people who helped them achieve their goals. "Make The Grade" believes that a child's zip code should not determine the quality of what is taught, or pose a limit to learning. Also, the quantity and quality of tools available to get the job done should be boundless. Their objective is to help students reach their potential. The award dinner acknowledged individuals who have "made the grade" in helping students make the grade too.

The honorees included: Mr. & Mrs. Alphonso Cohen, The Community Initiatives of NY (TCIONY); **Gregory Floyd**, President of City Employees Union, Teamsters Local 237; Jacqueline Prince, AVP of Medicaid Product Strategy, Emblem Health; Raymond Thornhill, Senior Manager of Community Engagement, Health First; Robert Kelley, Vice President of Stations Department, Transit Workers Union Local 100; Roger Milliner, Chief Growth Officer (CGO), Metro Plus Health Plan Inc.; Servia Silva, Manhattan Borough Representative, United Federation of Teachers; Detective Tanya Duhaney, Community Affairs Bureau, Police Department; and Jeffrion L. Aubry, District 35 - NYS Assembly who received a Lifetime Achievement Award. ■



Gregory Floyd thanked the Foundation for the honor and said: "There could be few greater purposes in life than helping to make a youngster's aspirations a reality. Make the Grade Foundation does just that and I am happy to lend my support to this most valuable work."

### Boy Scouts of America, Greater New York Councils, 39th Annual "Good Scout" Salute to Labor Award Luncheon



(l-r) Member of the Boy Scouts opening ceremony and presentation team; Dan Gleason, VP, United Food & Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) presenter of the North Star Award; Robert Newell, President, UFCW, North Star Award recipient; John Pescitelli, President and CEO, M3 Technology, LLC, an awards luncheon Benefactor; William Lynn, Financial Secretary, IUOE Local 30, "Good Scout" award recipient; Deana Abondolo, President, UFCW Local 342, "Good Scout" award recipient; Gregory Floyd, President, Teamsters Local 237, the luncheon's Master of Ceremonies; Saroya Friedman-Gonzalez, Scout Executive/CEO, Greater New York Councils, BSA; member of the Boy Scouts opening ceremony and presentation team and Joaquin Solivan, Troop 65, Queens, Scout Speaker.

In recognition of the support that organized labor has always shown the Boys 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. ■

### CUNY Pay Update: New Rates at CUNY Jr. Colleges Nov. 22

Local 237 members working at CUNY 2-year colleges began receiving their pay increases on November 22; those working at CUNY 4-year colleges began receiving them on November 14. **Both groups will receive retroactive pay in their respective pay periods.** The union has worked with CUNY to ensure that Local 237 members receive their new wage rates and retro payments negotiated in the current contract. All CUNY members received their signing bonuses over the summer. ■

# Legislative Year-End Review

By Vito R. Pitta, Esq.

## NOVEMBER ELECTION

The results of the election on November 5th will bring new faces to both Albany and Washington, DC. Laura Gillen flipped the 4th Congressional District blue after defeating incumbent Anthony D'Esposito. Additionally, Josh Riley claimed the Catskills' 19th following a tight race with incumbent Marc Molinaro. It should be noted that Gillen and Riley lost their races for Congress in 2022.

Westchester County Executive George Latimer defeated incumbent Representative Jamaal Bowman in the Democratic primary to represent the 16th Congressional District in Southern Westchester earlier this year and went on to win the general in November.

A veteran to the legislative floor, State Senator John Mannion will represent the Syracuse area in Congress, winning the race for the 22nd District.

Conversely, former NYPD sergeant Steve Chan triumphed against incumbent Iwen Chu in the State Senate District 17, breaking the Democrats' supermajority in that legislative body.

## CITY OF YES HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

Back in September 2022, Mayor Adams first introduced City of Yes: a three-part plan that could bring the greatest change to our city's appearance and infrastructure since 1961. The final part of the plan is meant to address the City's housing crisis by building more affordable homes.

On December 5th, the New York City Council passed the Housing Opportunity plan into law, passing each part of City of Yes. It is estimated that an extra 80,000 homes will be built over the next 15 years.

## NYCHA BILL SIGNED INTO LAW

One of the most relevant bills for Local 237 members this year was Senate Bill S2208/Assembly Bill 3866B. Sponsored by State Senator Myrie and Assemblymember Jackson, this bill is an act that will require the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) to coordinate with agencies and gas corporations to restore gas services as expeditiously as possible when service is interrupted. It will also ensure transparency by having NYCHA notify residents of what the timetable to restore a service is.

On September 27th, Governor Hochul signed the bill into law. This legislation marks another step forward in correcting the issues with New York City's public housing.

## PUBLIC SAFETY CIVIL SERVICE EXAM

With the hope of adding to community vigilance and the public's sense of security, Mayor Adams, alongside the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) Commissioner Louis Molina, recently announced a first-of-its-kind civil service exam meant to find New Yorkers dedicated to making our city a better, safer place to live and work.

The first of these exams took place in November, which filled public safety positions across agencies such as the NYPD, the Department of Health, and the Department of Transportation, to name a few.

A second exam will be held in Spring 2025, with a third following. Between the three, over 2,000 vacant positions will be filled with dedicated citizens ready to serve their communities.

If you need a refresher before taking these exams, Local 237's Education and Training Department is offering an online Zoom course on Saturday, January 4th. This class is an extension of the course offered in September, but available to new participants as well. Contact Shanell Grayson at sgrayson@local237.org for further information. Members who signed up already should have been notified on our website.

## UNFINISHED LEGISLATION

As we conclude the 2023-2024 term of the New York State Legislature at the end of the year, several pieces of legislation of particular interest to Local 237 members, which were under consideration in the 2024 session, will not become law. Therefore, they will have to be reintroduced in the Legislature next year. Here are the bills that, should they return, we will monitor, as they may have an impact on the lives of our members and their families:

**Senate Bill 8494/Assembly Bill 9088:** Sponsored by Senator Cleare and Assemblymember Gallagher, this bill would establish the New York State Social Housing Development Authority as a public benefit corporation. This will increase the supply of housing through the acquisition of existing property as well as through the construction of new land.

**Senate Bill 4580-A/Assembly Bill 1435:** Sponsored by Senator Comrie and Assemblymember Rozic, under this bill, each agency would be provided with an established policy and program for employees to perform all or a portion of their duties through teleworking, while keeping protections they would have otherwise such as paid leave. If passed, this will ensure all work is performed without diminished performance.

**Senate Bill 2945/Assembly Bill 449:** Sponsored by Senator Kavanagh and Assemblymember Epstein, this bill would ensure NYCHA residents receive the same level of sanitation services that are enjoyed daily and for free elsewhere in the City.

**Senate Bill 2668/Assembly Bill 819:** Sponsored by Senator Comrie and Assemblymember Gibbs, this bill would authorize the New York City Council to oversee NYCHA activity. By mandating that NYCHA produces reports and provide information, the City Council hopes to gain a better understanding of NYCHA residents.

**Senate Bill 1432:** Sponsored by Senator Bailey, this one-house bill would establish the New York City Housing Authority Facilities Modernization Act. Since many NYCHA properties require extensive work, this act will help assist them in the construction, demolition, and repair of the projects they have contracted out. Another portion of the bill requires the reporting on lead-based paint poisoning prevention.

**Senate Bill 546/Assembly Bill 2573:** Sponsored by Senator Gianaris and Assemblymember Anderson, this would require NYCHA to reduce rental rates should a resident have trouble with their utilities. ■



**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 Giomo LLC.



## A New Year Like No Other

By Saul Fishman

President, Civil Service Bar Association (CSBA)

The ball is about to drop in Times Square, ushering in a year that promises (or threatens) to be like no previous year in American history. Voters decided to elect a convicted felon who thrives on chaos, one who is now nominating scary, largely unqualified individuals far more loyal to him than to either the Constitution or to the mission of the vast agencies they would run.

Some will say "Enough about politics already, Saul, the election is over". True enough, but the consequences of that election will reverberate throughout New York in a way which will likely touch all of our lives. Will funding be slashed to our City and State, diminishing vital services like police, sanitation, mass transit, education, adult and children's protective and nutritional services, or forcing higher state and local taxes and fees? Will reduced budgets necessitate a workforce reduction? About the only glimmer of hope is the fact that as of now, New York City has set aside substantial reserves, according to the Municipal Labor Committee, but how long can they last? What impact might this have come the next round of bargaining? And will we have a different Mayor to work and bargain with by the end of 2025 if not sooner?

Again, I know that these concerns are the opposite of the confetti-like images and dreams people associate with the New Year. Nonetheless, we strive to inform members about what is important rather than only what is pleasing to hear. Exactly what one can do with that knowledge is, of course, an entirely separate discussion.

**One more immediate concern:** A member with more than five years' of Agency Attorney service recently changed agencies, something that members do frequently to advance their careers or escape a bad situation. Obviously, the member was long past their probationary period. But the new agency had the member sign an acknowledgement of a new probationary period. By the time we heard about it, the member was terminated by the new agency for allegedly not passing probation. We have grieved the termination and are otherwise reaching out to reverse this outrageous action. **Caution:** Think twice about changing agencies unless they waive probation in writing and/or unless your current agency agrees in writing to take you back if you are deemed to have not passed the so-called new probationary period. **Prediction:** If the City persists with this new ill-conceived policy, we will be an *even harder title to recruit and retain*, as our colleagues will look to the private sector rather than to another city agency!

**Yes, there are some points of hope** amidst the ominous clouds. We have an ongoing collective bargaining agreement through October 2026, with the next raises in salary, recurring increment payments ("RIPs") and longevity differentials all increasing 3.25% as of April 18, 2025. Pursuant to our CSBA contract, we have grievance and disciplinary rights after one year, valuable Welfare Fund benefits from Day 1, and other "time and leave" rights pursuant to the Citywide Agreement. And we are looking forward to our next meeting with the City, under the auspices of the Professional Development Committee, to enhance career advancement, retention and recruitment opportunities, and may be able to modify some of the archaic "typical tasks" in the various Agency Attorney Level Descriptions.

**Reminder:** Be on the lookout for a new prescription drug ID card. As of January 1, 2025, our prescription coverage will be administered by AEBRx (affiliated with the Amalgamated family of union-centered companies), powered by Prime Therapeutics. You should be able to use the same pharmacy as you always have, and the prescription and prior authorization information will still be available with no further action required on your part. As will be indicated on the ID card, you will be able to call AEBRx Member Services at 1-855-371-9780.

On behalf of our hard-working, always willing to help staff, who you can reach at 212-675-0519 or via csbainfo@local237.org, we wish you and your family, friends and colleagues a very healthy and happy New Year! ■



## Start the New Year Right by Investing in yourself

By **Diana Nappi**

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. Take advantage of this opportunity by contacting **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.

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. ▮



## Get Ready for '25 - But Enjoy Some Holiday Peace First!

By **David Bonington, CFP®**

Financial Planner, Stacey Braun Associates, Inc.

To say that 2024 was tumultuous would of course be an understatement. In financial, social, political, technological, and you-name-it ways, changes and challenges seemed to be everywhere. I could try to list many of them here, but your memory will recall them far faster (and more completely) than a pen could ever set them forth. And simply from a financial planning standpoint alone, 2025 promises plenty of new changes in tax, estate, and retirement savings guidelines.

Fortunately, it is that time of year when the Holidays have arrived. Starting with the Thanksgiving we recently enjoyed, the last five weeks of every year offer a time to get together with family and friends, and to remind ourselves about things that are right and most enduring.

But before I get to my suggestions for December, a brief reminder about a benefit which could reduce financial anxiety. If some loose financial ends are out there, remember that it is not too late to make a free, confidential 2024 appointment with a Stacey Braun counselor. I mentioned taxes above, so let's imagine that some nagging tax questions are on your mind: a planner can help review a checklist of tasks that need - or don't need - doing before December 31. For example, if you are saving in a 529 Plan for college, yes, you need to make a contribution this month for a 2024 New York tax deduction. However, on another matter there is no need to rush - you have until April 15, 2025 to make 2024 contributions to a personal IRA. As you can tell, tax (and many other) checklists feel like they could be long - but if getting to the bottom of a list allows you to better enjoy your Holiday, why not arrange a meeting?

But enough of complicated financial things! 2025 will bring financial changes - but it is not here yet. Once any 2024 loose ends are tied up, the balance of this month can become a great time to relax, reflect, and recharge. My advice? Keep it simple and seek simple pleasures! Take in the sounds, songs, sights, and lights that come with these weeks. Enjoy what's new and different if you are traveling. Enjoy what remains constant if you are hosting. Enjoy time with members of an extended family, or even engage in a multi-generational, kitchen table game of Monopoly, Clue, or a game of your choice. You can also overeat - just a little - because there'll be plenty of time in January for an exercise and weight-loss resolution. Strive for happiness and peace of mind.

While my colleagues and I plan for 2025, we are also going follow these suggestions. We hope to see many of you in the weeks and months ahead - and in the meantime, we wish everyone a safe, warm, peaceful, and wonderful Holiday Season! ▮

**Free, confidential telephone or Zoom sessions with a Stacey Braun planner can be arranged by calling 1-888-949-1925. No financial products are sold and there is no sales pressure.**



## We're Making it Easier to do Business with us online!

By **Ravi Gopaul** Social Security Public Affairs Specialist in New York

We've listened to your feedback concerning your preference to do business with us online. You want the option to submit forms, evidence, and other information electronically. You also want to sign documents electronically before submitting them.

This year we released *eSignature/Upload Documents* as an option to submit documents. This new, online service option allows our employees to electronically request, and our customers to electronically submit, 50 forms and nearly 80 types of evidence. This option eliminates the need to mail, fax, or deliver information to a local Social Security office. By streamlining our document submission process and reducing mail, we are improving the way you do business with us.

### How Does it Work?

1. Our employee sends the customer a link with the request for the forms and evidence we need to process their application.
2. The customer authenticates by signing in to, or creating, their personal my Social Security account at [www.ssa.gov/myaccount](http://www.ssa.gov/myaccount). The customer then reviews the request, completes the form, electronically signs (when signatures are required), and uploads the completed forms and any supporting evidence to our portal.

Note: Customers have 30 days to electronically submit requested information and may receive an email reminder. If the electronic request expires, they can contact our office to ask for a new request or submit the forms and information by mail, fax, or by visiting an office.

To learn more about Upload Documents, visit our FAQ webpage at [faq.ssa.gov/en-US/Topic/?id=CAT-01360](http://faq.ssa.gov/en-US/Topic/?id=CAT-01360).

### Online Forms and Signature Removal

In addition to the eSignature/Upload Documents option, we are converting many of our frequently used forms to more convenient online versions. Customers will have the option to complete a user-friendly, fillable online form, then electronically sign and submit it.

Some of our frequently used forms now available to sign and submit electronically include:

- SSA-827, *Authorization to Disclose Information to Social Security Administration*
- SSA-820/821, *Work Activity Reports*
- SSA-632, *Request for a Waiver of Overpayment Recovery*
- SSA-634, *Request for Change in Overpayment Recovery Rate*

We have removed the signature requirement for 12 of our most used forms. These forms include:

- SSA-L4201, *Employer Requesting Wage Information*
- SSA-789, *Request for Reconsideration/Disability Cessation Right to Appear*
- SSA-787, *Statement of Patient's Capability to Manage Benefits.*

To learn more about the removal of signature requirements from certain Social Security forms, check out our YouTube video *Signature Removal from SSA Forms* at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmben-skPo4&t=2s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmben-skPo4&t=2s).

Whether you do business with us online, by phone, or in person, we're committed to making it easier for you. We continue to explore more opportunities to make doing business with us easier. Please share this information with others. ▮



★ Interested in learning more about the agency—visit [nyc.gov/vets](http://nyc.gov/vets)

★ Interested in connecting to available services—visit [nyc.gov/vetconnect](http://nyc.gov/vetconnect)

★ If you would like to speak to a member of the DVS team—email: [connect@veterans.nyc.gov](mailto:connect@veterans.nyc.gov) or call: 212-416-5250

New York City is home to roughly 210,000 current and former US Military Service Members; these servants are the backbone of this great city. The NYC Department of Veterans' Services (DVS), the first standalone city agency in the nation dedicated to assisting Veterans and their families, is committed towards ensuring that all New York City Veterans and their loved ones have access to quality care that is compassionate and aligned with our community's needs.

The mission of DVS is "to connect, mobilize, and empower New York City's Veteran community in order to foster purpose-driven lives for US Military Service Members—past and present—in addition to their caregivers, survivors, and families." In partnership with several community-based organizations along with numerous city, state, and federal entities, DVS enables America's brave and their families to receive, wherever eligible: Veterans Administration (VA) claims-related benefits, housing support, VA healthcare, employment assistance, educational access, mental health offerings, and other services. DVS strives to uplift the local Veteran ecosystem by amplifying efforts to make New York City a Veteran-friendly place to live, learn, and work.

Visit [nyc.gov/vets](http://nyc.gov/vets) for information about the benefits and services Veterans have rightfully earned as they navigate their ongoing transition to civilian life. The agency encourages all Veterans and New Yorkers to educate themselves about the many pathways to care and support that are available through your Veteran identity or your identity as an ally.

Whatever challenges you face, DVS will toil on your behalf in all the ways that they can. ▮

## Personnel Note

Effective January 6, 2025, **Kangela Moore** will receive a title change: Assistant Director Law Enforcement, and an increase in her salary. Her new salary will be \$2,123.00 per week (\$110,396 per year).

# Felices Fiestas

Este año, la gran pregunta de Santa no será "¿has sido travieso o bueno?", sino más bien "¿cómo han sobrellevado tú y tus seres queridos tantos desafíos y adversidades?". Acontecimientos inquietantes –algunos causados por el hombre, otros por la Madre Naturaleza– han traído catástrofes sufridas tanto a nivel mundial como aquí en casa, que seguramente han tenido un impacto devastador en el cuerpo, el alma y el espíritu. Sin embargo, nosotros en Local 237 hemos estado en primera línea luchando, trayendo un sentido de normalidad y tranquilidad a las vidas de todos los neoyorquinos. Como trabajadores municipales, se cuenta con nosotros, y hemos cumplido. Ustedes han dado dignidad y honor al título de "Empleado Público" y pueden estar seguros de que Santa los tiene en su lista. Disfruten las fiestas.

**Gregory Floyd**

Presidente de Teamsters Local 237





Holiday time is especially difficult for families who have lost a loved one. To the families of Local 237 members who are no longer with us, and to our members who have suffered a loss, please know that we share your sorrow and hope that fond memories of joyous holidays spent together will offer you peace and happiness.

**President Gregory Floyd, the Executive Board and Staff**



## Managing Holiday Stress

By Karla Steinberg, LMSW

Membership Social Worker

If you are feeling the pressure of the holiday season, you are not alone. Why is this time of year, a time that's supposed to be about reflection, celebration, and family, so fraught with anxiety? And what can you do to abate the stress that accompanies it?

Many of us stress about money, gift giving and making ends meet, especially given the high cost of living. You may feel anxious about hosting or travelling. All of this is, (of course), normal. You might experience mixed emotions, or ambivalence; the presence of multiple conflicting emotions all at once, which is common. A lot of us feel that the external pressures and expectations of the season rob of us our ability to choose (for) ourselves and enjoy.

The days between November 1st and December 31st leave many of us feeling stressed. According to NAMI, the National Alliance of Mental Illness, 3 in 5 adults report higher than normal levels of stress during the holidays. All to say, you are not alone if you feel this way. Despite the many of us that feel tired, exhausted, and stressed at this time of year, there is still the potential of something better. Regardless, the uptick in expenses, expectations, time spent with loved ones, and the general hustle-bustle of holiday prep can take some of the joy out of the season. January 1st might feel like a beacon of light at an otherwise stressful time; a perfect opportunity to turn it all around.

It may help to reframe stress and anxiety as things we do have some control over. Given the options, "I have to drive 2 hours to go see my family," versus, "I will stay at home," you get to decide which outcome feels better to you. Both may have unpleasant consequences, but you get to choose which consequences you prefer to accept. Whatever your choices are this time of year, remind yourself that you have choices, and some control over your decisions. While we cannot control external forces like weather, traffic, NYC being packed with tourists and so on, we can control how we respond. Setting boundaries with others can be useful, but difficult. Setting boundaries with ourselves, while equally challenging, will yield beneficial results. I encourage you to think of what you like to do to alleviate stress in your lives. See if you can find joy in little things. If you cannot think of anything, try thinking about what makes you feel calm, content. I like to focus on little goals (like listening to a good album or watching a favorite movie) that can be easily attained.

If you can mentally prepare for the potential good (easy) and the likelihood of some setbacks (more challenging), you'll have laid out realistic expectations, with a mental and emotional cushion for when things don't work out perfectly (they never do). In short, if it all goes perfectly, great. If not, and you accounted for it, you may have even been more prepared for the unexpected, and that feels pretty good too! As one year comes to an end and another one is laid out before us, I hope we can all try our best to set (realistic) goals, be patient with ourselves, expect the unexpected, and persevere regardless. Happy Holidays to all. |



## Celebrate the Past. Live in the Present. Plan for a Brighter Future!

By Shanell Grayson

Director of Training and Education

In almost no time at all, 2024 has come and gone. Thanks to the support and leadership of President Floyd and the Executive Board, this past year we were able to offer an increasing variety of courses to suit the changing needs of our membership. In these moments of reflection, it is important to pause and think about the many accomplishments that Local 237's Training and Education Department has achieved. Here are a few highlights:

### More than...

- 2,000 Members Registered for Classes on Local237.org
- 100 Shop Stewards Received Shop Steward Training
- 20 Members Awarded Computer Skills Certificates
- 1,500 Classroom Hours
- 5 Days of Class Offered Weekly
- 10,000 Downloads of Materials on Local237.org
- 120 Members Admitted to the Fundamentals of Heating Operations Course
- 50 College Scholarships Awarded
- 300 Weekly Email Responses
- 60 Members Earned Defensive Driving Certificates
- 20 Members Received and Won Civil Service Appeals
- 400 Class Recordings Shared
- 6 Education Fairs Attended
- 20 Stellar Students Featured Prominently on Local237.org and in Newsline

Currently, we employ over two dozen qualified instructors from all agencies and specialties. In addition, we have an outstanding administrative and technical support team (Katie, Geraldine, Nakeema, Justin, Denetra, Jean and Devin). Without the staff's patience, expertise, and enthusiasm, none of these feats would be possible.

To our members, who are the heart and soul of all we do, we thank you for not only your participation, but for your courage to overcome obstacles and your willingness to dream bigger. We have shared in each triumph, through both joy and sorrow. Your resilience and determination is an inspiration. We are grateful for you, today and always!

Another year has gone by. It is a joy to be present here, with you, and share our gratitude. There is a bright future that awaits us all. Let's conquer it, together. |

## STUDENTS OF THE MONTH... IN THEIR OWN WORDS



Babatunde Odunfa, Special Officer

Hello, my name is Babatunde Odunfa and I am a Special Officer at South Brooklyn Hospital in Coney Island, NY. The Local 237's Education Department has been a great help to me. They have provided classes and materials to help me prepare for Civil Service tests. The staff and instructors are very accommodating and knowledgeable. Thank you!



Karla Lewis, Public Health Educator

I attended the Defensive Driving Course given by the Union's Education Department. I loved the course. It was fun, insightful, and very informative. I've been a much more careful driver since taking the course. The videos about driving and texting were scary and very sobering. I hope they continue to offer this course regularly.

## Education Department's FREE Courses

### CIVIL SERVICE EXAM PREP CLASSES

- Photographer (December)
- School Food Service Manger (January)
- Senior Photographer (January)
- Cement Mason (March)
- Exterminator (March)

For more information on upcoming exams visit: [nyc.gov/examsforjobs](http://nyc.gov/examsforjobs)

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSES

- Beginning Computer Skills (March)

### SCHOLARSHIPS

- Teamsters International Scholarship
  - > High School Seniors
  - > JRHMS.org
- Union Plus Scholarship
  - > Members and their families
  - > Unionplus.org

### PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSES

- Defensive Driving NY (November)
  - > 10% off insurance
  - > 4 points off license

Scan the QR Code to register now.



Email: [training@local237.org](mailto:training@local237.org)

### COURSES AT PARTICIPATING UNIONS

- GED Prep
  - > 1199: (212) 894-4362
  - > UAW: (212) 228-0041
- English and Spanish Courses
  - > 1199: (212) 494-0525

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## Are you moving?

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