



LOCAL 237

NEWSLINE

Vol. 59, No. 1

Spring 2025



Say Hello to SPRING

SHOP STEWARD SHOUTOUT

HOUSING



Jeremy Buckery
Caretaker X, Fulton Houses
A motivated and driven Shop Steward who goes above and beyond to help coworkers and supervisors.



Trevor Hoffman
Maintenance Worker, Drew Hamilton Houses
An advocate for his coworkers even in rough situations.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

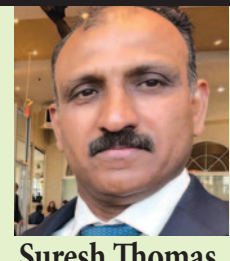


Officer Angel Ascenio and Officer Kwame Kensah
Jacob Javits Center Shop Stewards
Helping members in the workplace thrive and resolve issues through hard work and dedication.

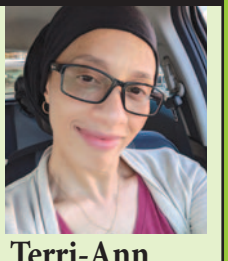
CITYWIDE



Gloria Santisteban
Senior Housekeeping Supervisor
A proud Shop Steward establishing bonds and unity amongst her Teamsters sisters and brothers.



Suresh Thomas
Radiological Tech-L4
A proud Teamster who always reaches out for updated information to share with his colleagues.



Terri-Ann Hawley
Radiological Tech-L3
Committed to serving her fellow 237 brothers and sisters.

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
Dr. Kangela Moore,
Assistant 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 Carezza, 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-
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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

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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

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212-924-7220
The Fund administers the eligibility,
enrollment, disability, optical and
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and dental programs indirectly.
Diana Nappi, Director
Len Proctor, Deputy Director

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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
service we can provide.
Karla Steinberg,
Membership Social Worker

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212-924-1220
Lawyers advise and represent mem-
bers on covered personal legal prob-
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(family court proceedings, divorce
and separation), purchase and sale of
a primary residence, wills, adoptions,
credit and consumer problems,
tenant rights and bankruptcies.
Jennifer Hudson, Esq., Chief Attorney

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

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President

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Vice President

DONALD ARNOLD
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Recording Secretary

**POLITICAL ACTION &
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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.
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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



Message from the President

Black History Month

It's not about validation, it's about involvement – it's about action.

By Gregory Floyd

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

February was Black History Month. It's a time to celebrate and educate. It's a time to acknowledge the accomplishments, delight in a rich heritage and retell the history of a people too often forgotten, mistreated, and misunderstood. The originators of the idea for a Black history celebration were historians Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson, and his associate, Jesse E. Moorland. They created the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History in 1915, to promote black history and recognize achievements of African Americans. But they knew that was not enough. As Woodson argued, "If a race has no history, it has no worthwhile tradition; it is a negligible factor in the thoughts of the world and stands in danger of being exterminated." So, in 1926, they launched "Negro History Week", on the second week of February, because both President Abraham Lincoln's and abolitionist Frederick Douglass' birthdays coincided. But it took 50 years for the week to become a month when President Gerald Ford created Black History Month in 1976.

Today, Black History Month is not without controversy. To some critics, the argument goes that empowerment is not accomplished by one month of recognition. Some find it outdated, only symbolic, not necessary, and even separatist. For me, there is no controversy. Black History Month is not about validation, it's about involvement; it's about action. It's both a time of recognition and a call to duty. In labor unions, there's an important organizing

principle used to increase our numbers, demonstrate power and harvest our next generation of unionists—which is applicable here. Especially in order to grow a cadre of potential leaders who will take us to the next plateau, we must inspire and excite young people. We must also remember and thank those who have led the way with words and actions that changed history. Surely, there is tremendous wisdom in the words of Winston Churchill, who said: "Those that fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it."

The celebration of February as Black History Month should not be about avoiding mistakes, but instead, about creating more accomplishments, breaking more barriers, and earning the respect of all people. And, in keeping with the tradition of February as the month for acknowledging "The Best" in many categories—from the Super Bowl to the Grammy Awards—let's use the occasion to honor our own list of "Best In Class" and work to add more names to it. For sure, the list is already long with many giants and "firsts" past and present, including among them Dr. King, President Barack Obama, Justice of the Supreme Court Ketanji Brown Jackson, and Congressman and Chairman of the Democratic Caucus, Hakeem Jeffries. But Black History Month—which remembers the past, celebrates the present and looks to the future—should also be a time that helps to motivate, mentor, and nurture our next generation of champions in the struggle for social and labor justice. ■



SELMA AT 60

Ruben Torres, Local 237 Executive Board Vice President, and in his capacity as Assistant Director on the Human Rights and Diversity Commission for the IBT, was in Selma, Alabama to mark the 60th anniversary — March 7, 1965 — of the fight for the right to vote denied to Blacks in that state. That day was known as "Bloody Sunday" because the peaceful protesters were met with violence by state troopers, deputies and men on horseback as they marched across the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

Among those remembered was Viola Liuzzo, a white mother of five, was a civil rights activist who was murdered in 1965 after participating in the Selma to Montgomery march. She was the wife of a Teamsters Union organizer, Anthony "Jim" Liuzzo. On March 25, 1965, while driving marchers between Selma and Montgomery, Liuzzo was shot and killed by Klansmen, who were in a car with an FBI informant. Liuzzo's death shocked the nation, and her funeral was attended by prominent civil rights leaders, including Martin Luther King Jr. and Teamsters General President James R. Hoffa. Many believe her sacrifice helped push for the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. ■

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:

COMPASSION, TRAINING, QUICK-THINKING AND TRAGEDY AVERTED



On January 8, 2025, **Officer Donaldson**, of Metropolitan Hospital, responded outside of the emergency room to a report of a patient fleeing the Psychiatric Emergency Room, headed toward the Pediatric Emergency Room waiting area without authorization. Demonstrating quick thinking and compassion, Officer Donaldson located the individual, and by using his training, persuaded him to return to the hospital. Officer Donaldson exhibited empathy and composure while treating the individual, as well as working collaboratively with mental health professionals to ensure the person's safe return to care thereby preventing potential harm to himself or others.

On January 25, 2025, **Officer Sagastume**, of Metropolitan Hospital, was conducting a routine wellness check inside of the men's restroom when he found an unresponsive male lying on the floor suffering from what appeared to be an unknown medical condition. Officer Sagastume attempted to get a response from the individual and when he remained unresponsive, the officer concluded that he must have suffered a drug overdose. Officer Sagastume relying on his skills, quickly administered one dose of Narcan and a sternum rub. The man awoke and was taken to the emergency room for treatment, where he was able to survive and recover.



A MULTI AWARD WINNER

School Safety Agent Level 3 **Sandra Reid** was awarded The Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award, City Council Citation, New York State Assembly Certificate of Merit, and a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition from Member of Congress Woman by the Transformation Center Outreach.

HOSPITAL POs SAVE STABBING VICTIM



Pictured (l-r): **Sergeant LaRoche, PO Lopez and PO Truong.**

On Tuesday, March 11, at Elmhurst Hospital, **Sergeant LaRoche** responded to a call requesting assistance in the H building lobby where she encountered a female armed with a knife who had stabbed someone. Aside from Laroche, responding officers included: **PO Moreno, PO Lopez, PO Kolenovic, PO Morales and PO Truong.** The suspect was arrested and the knife used was recovered at the scene by the officers. The officers also gave aid to the victim.

HISTORIC RECORD ACHIEVED



The Special Services Section Team did a phenomenal job during an unannounced scanning on Thursday March 6, 2025. Team members confiscated a total of 90 weapons at Cooperative Tech in Manhattan North Command. Never has such a feat been accomplished in one day! The Scanning Team returned on the next day and confiscated 21 more items, bringing the remarkable grand total of one hundred and eleven weapons in just two days. Special Services Team members included: **SSS Yamiraliz Arroyo; SSA3 Robert Jackson, George Gayle Jr., Tiffany Reyes, Drea Broaster, Jahmiel Warner, Austin Hunter, Sandra Reid.** And SSAs **Sean Simon, Juan Guerrero, Ceasar Soriano, Christine Haynes, Jennifer Freeman, Alexa Dela-Cruz, Nyaja Burton and Shaniya Wright.**

A HERO IN OUR MIDST

On December 27, 2024, **Metropolitan Hospital Officer Woodson** was off duty when he encountered a homeless man on the train asking commuters for money. After being denied his request, the man took a torch lighter and began to approach commuters and threatening to light them on fire. PO Woodson courageously confronted the suspect as an active threat and restrained the suspect until the NYPD Transit District Officers arrived and placed the individual in custody, subsequently charging him with menacing and criminal possession of a weapon. The individual also turned out to be wanted on previous warrants. PO Woodson's heroism was acknowledged by the hospital.



Local 237 NEWSLINE

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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.



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.



Carl Giles, Director of Housing (center), **Shavelle Knox**, Assistant Director of Housing (second from left) and **Jaleesa Moye**, Housing Business Agent (fourth from left) with Housing employees.



(l-r) **David Baker**, Manhattan Heating Plant Technician; **Terease Hunt**, Shop Steward LaGuardia Houses; **Crystal Walker**, Shop Steward Morris Houses; **Christopher Quinones**, Safety Associate Kings Towers; **Dashawn Hightower**, SOHC Throggs Neck; **Roslyn Reed**, Shop Steward Butler Houses; **Stacie Gardner**, Shop Steward Woodside Houses; and **Willie Smith**, Safety Associate Vladeck Houses, at the union hall.



(l-r) **Gregory Floyd**, Local 237 President and **Dashawn Hightower**.



(l-r) **David Baker** and **Shavelle Knox**.



(l-r) **David Baker**, **Terease Hunte**, **Gregory Floyd**, **Willie Smith** and **Christopher Quinones** at the union hall.



BA Jaleesa Moye poses proudly with members. (l-r) **Dashawn Hightower**, **Stacie Gardner**, **Shop Steward Roslyn Reed**, **BA Jaleesa Moye**; and **Crystal Walker**.

NAACP AWARD



(l-r) NAACP award recipients **Andre Jones**; **Sueann Middleton**; **Shavelle Knox**, Assistant Director of Housing; and **Charles Newton**.



(l-r) **Kadijah Wilson**; **Shavelle Knox**, Assistant Director of Housing; **Carl Giles**, Director of Housing; and **Lynn Spivey**.



Karla Steinburg, Local 237 Social Worker (fifth from right), meets with the Sotomayor Houses staff to discuss the benefits that Local 237's Social Services provide.



(l-r) Caretaker J's **Barry McIntyre** and **Bobby Arocha** Dyckman Houses during snow detail.



Michelle Jones (AKA MJ) Caretaker X from East River Houses.

2024 SAFETY SYMPOSIUM



2024 Safety Symposium award recipients with (l-r) **Ken Roper**, Business Agent and Assistant to the President; **Susan McQuade**, Local 237 Safety Coordinator; **Ken Franco**, Housing Business Agent; **Norberto Luna**, Assistant Director of Housing; **Carl Giles**, Director of Housing; **Vincent Latimore**, Housing Business Agent; **Shavelle Knox**, Assistant Director of Housing; and **Jaleesa Moye**, Housing Business Agent.



Brooklyn Safety Congress.



Bronx Safety Congress.



Queens Safety Congress.



Staten Island Safety Congress.

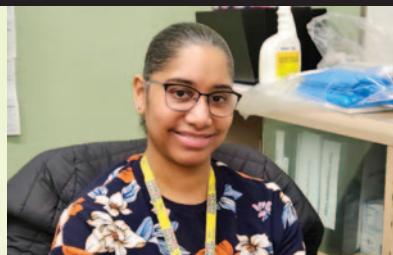


Manhattan Safety Congress.

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.

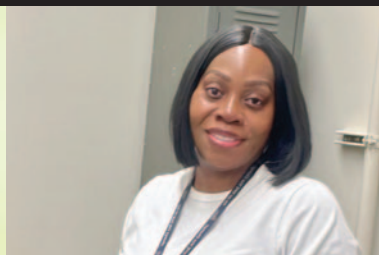
CITYWIDE WOMEN: "There is no limit to what we, as women can accomplish" — Michelle Obama



Ada Baker, Harlem Hospital, Food Service Supervisor.



Jennel Jerome, Department of Education, Associate Food Service Manager.



Shannon West, Harlem Hospital, Stock Worker Level I.



NYC Health and Hospital Elmhurst Hospital, Cardiology EKG Techs.

Inside a Rikers Island Kitchen, Dull Knives and Critical Jobs. As New York City's troubled jail complex tries to improve its food, the people who cook there see a higher mission.

*As appeared in the **The New York Times*** By Priya Krishna | Photographs by Brittainy Newman. | Feb. 4, 2025

Priya Krishna and Brittainy Newman twice visited Rikers Island, where they were granted extensive access to a kitchen, its cooks and the detainees who assist them. Here is what our members who were interviewed had to say:

Luis Reina was preparing dinner for a crowd: turkey stew, rice and cucumber salad. The recipes were simple — chop the vegetables, brown the meat — but the process was anything but straightforward. Each box of ingredients had to be searched for contraband. The knife was tethered to the counter by a sturdy chain, and the metal spoons came from a cabinet flanked by security guards. The sharp-edged lids from tomato cans had to be tossed into a trash can inside a locked cage. Several kitchen assistants were clad in jumpsuits and carefully patted down before they could start work on the meal — for 3,800 people.

Mr. Reina, 56, is a cook on Rikers Island, New York City's notorious 415-acre jail complex in Queens. He commutes two hours from Flatbush, Brooklyn, to prepare meals for the jail population and staff alongside roughly 50 other cooks in the larger of two kitchens on the island.



"People say the food on Rikers Island is nasty, and they are looking at the cooks. I only cook what I was told to cook."
— **Luis Reina**



"I always say we are 'out-carcerated,' We come and go as we please but at work, we are locked in."
— **Kay Fraser**



Tamara Craddock, a Rikers cook, commutes two hours each way to work every morning. She can't share too much: the cooks typically go by only their last names and don't discuss their personal lives with detainees, for safety reasons.

LOCAL 237'S TRAINING AND EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2025!

On February 7, 2025, Local 237's Training and Education Department held a graduation ceremony for the 80 students who successfully completed the Fundamentals of Heating Operations Course. This 10-month course prepares candidates to qualify for the title of Heating Plant Technician (HPT) at the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA). **President Gregory Floyd** offered words of encouragement during the ceremony. Also on hand to lend their support was **Trustee, Curtis Scott**; **HPT Course Instructors Sean Blount, Dawn Carter, and Krzysztof Wasik**; **Housing Director, Carl Giles**; **NYCHA Deputy Director of Heating, Anya James**; and **NYCHA NAACP President, Lynn Spivey**. Afterwards, graduates and their guests were treated to a catered dinner including delicious red velvet cake and lively music. It was a celebration well deserved!



Local 237 President **Gregory Floyd** shares words of wisdom with the graduates.



(l-r) HPT Graduates **Orlando Mercer-Smith, Juliana Cardona, Kimberly Ballinger, Margaret Littlejohn** and **Aaron Cordon** create lasting memories at the photo prop station.



(l-r) **Instructors Sean Blount and Krzysztof Wasik**; **Cum Laude Honorees Katia Johnson, Gemini Tuckett and Cerise Alston**; and **Instructor Dawn Carter**. (Not Pictured: **Cum Laude Honoree Crystal Yorke**)



(l-r) **Shanell Grayson, Salutatorian Darnell Johnson** and **Sean Blount**.



(l-r) **Dawn Carter, Valedictorian Jasmine Taylor**, and **Shanell Grayson**.

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.



(l-r) **Jeanette Taveras**, Local 237 Executive Board Recording Secretary and Law Enforcement Business Agent; **Louis Sanchez**, CSA Baruch College; **Gregory Floyd**, Local 237 President; **Level 3 Nunez**, Youth Response Team; **Level 1 Dejesus**, Youth Response Team; and **Level 3 Yvonne Clarke**, Liaison to Local 237.



On Saturday March 22, 2025 at Bronx East IS 219, **SSA3 Charles Greene** held his annual Da Battle of the School Starz Talent and Showcase Competition (l-r) **SSA Charles Greene**; **Charlie Cotto**, Local 237 Director of Operations, Law Enforcement and Citywide; and **Hospital Police Special Officer Micheal Wash** from North Central Hospital who was a judge.



Agents Fulton, Tummings, and Houston were visited by the Ghostbusters.



(l-r) **School Safety Agent Glover** from Queens South Command with **Dr. Kangela Moore** at PS 147 Career Day.



Staten Island school safety teams up with the 123 Pct. to build teamwork with students from South Richmond Annex School (P25) at basketball game.



Metropolitan Hospital Officers cutting ribbon at it's new entrance gate with **Dr. Kangela Moore**, Assistant Director of Law Enforcement.



SSA3 Jose Gonzalez (bottom row, center) and **SSA Madelyn Gil** (bottom row, first from left) are part of the NYPD Tae Kwon Do team. Instructor, Master James Thorsten (top row, third from left), is a retired NYPD Detective and a certified 4th Dan black belt in Tae Kwon Do, has been an integral part and core foundation of the NYPD Tae Kwon Do martial arts training. **SSAIII Gonzalez** says, "I feel that it's important to know self-defense as an agent because this job can be unpredictable, and you must be ready at all times to defend yourself or someone else from harm."



Metropolitan Hospital Police Officers held their Annual Valentine's Bake Sale.



Staten Island Youth Strategies. The 120 Police Precinct Community Outreach and Staten Island School Safety Community Outreach joined together at the P.O. Gerard Carter Community Center for a friendly game of kickball.



Queens Borough Hall DCAS Officers **Rodriguez, Ahmed, Galazia** and **Lt. Orr** provide a safe environment every day for the staff and visitors.



Avent Vidal at PS 21, has been with school safety for five years and is very happy with her assignment



Hospital Police Officers Josiah, Johnson, Francis, and Motion from Gouverneur Hospital.



Charlie Cotto (r) with the YRT School Safety at Bronx PS 277 for a toy drive.



Patrol Borough Staten Island celebrated the holidays.



Staten Island Command Sunshine Committee held a Staten Island Agents kids party. (l-r) **SSA Meachum, CO Jackson** and **SSA3 Chambliss**.



Staten Island **SSA 3 Meyer** coordinated a Christmas toy give away in memory of **SSA Tamara Hamilton** formerly of PS 18. Passed but NEVER forgotten.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!

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

HOSPITAL POLICE SHIELD DAY



Recruit class 2024-02 participating in Shield Day attended by **Charlie Cotto**, Local 237 Director of Operations, Law Enforcement and Citywide (bottom row, second from left) and **Dr. Kangela Moore**, Assistant Director of Law Enforcement (top row, second from left).



(l-r) Recruit Aris, Charlie Cotto and Sgt. Alonzo at the Shield Day Ceremony.

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| <u>Class 2024-02</u> | Jamell Dunbar | Porsha Martin | Christian Santana |
| Anthony Adams | Al Fuhad | Danny Moise | Talisha Seales |
| Koku Adjonou | Ora Gales | Nyasia Moody | John Shaffer |
| Muktar Ali | Jason Garay | Mighty Opara | Steve Slowe |
| Abigal Angevin-Olivo | Munsi Hasan | William Randolph Jr. | Jose Soto |
| Esteban Arias | Tyshawn Jacobs | Tamalika Ray | Justin Spicer |
| Justin Assante | Anthony Joyner | Michelle Rogers | Sophie Taylor |
| Shateek Barnes | Hassane Lachgar | Tameeka Roman | Paola Valdez |
| Ismael Batista | Keishana Lawrence | Eric Rosario | |
| Cedric Dey | Makeda Lorenzana | Alexis Sales | |

CUNY PEACE OFFICER GRADUATION



CUNY Campus Peace Officers on their graduation ceremony with **Derek Jackson**, Director of Law Enforcement (l).

Class 01-24

- | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Wayne Bowden | Melissa Funes | Denise Rodriguez-Miller |
| Kwana Brunson | Regina Hall | Chenelle Scanterbury |
| Jem Carrington | Scott Hamroff | Danie Singh |
| Stejeff Charles | Syed Hamza | Enrique Vega |
| Jordan Chin | Kevin Hom | Allan Ward |
| Christopher Conde | Brandon Montesdeoca | Michael Weick |
| Brayan Cordova | Daniel Perkins | Emmanuel Yauri |

NYC HEALTH AND HOSPITAL GRADUATION



NYC Health and Hospital Police Officers, Class 2024-02.



Sgt. Francis, Gouverneur Hospital, was promoted to Sergeant.



Department of Mental Health and Hygiene. Promotion to Detective. (l-r) **Detective Kenneth James**, **Detective Taneka Johnson** and **Detective Jackson Singletary**.



At HHC South Brooklyn Health the executive team celebrated promotions and retirement for our very own dedicated Shop Steward **Hospital Police Officer Dalila Mezquita**. Congratulations to all the promoted. **Capt. Carter**, **LT. Brown**, **LT. Ryan**, **LT. Jackson**, **Sgt. Brown**, **Sgt. Baptiste** and **Det. Albattre**.

(l-r) HP Chief Thomas Burke, President, **IBT Local 237 Gregory Floyd**, SBH CMO Dr. Terrance Brady, HHC Chief of Police Juan Checo, SBH Dr. Manjinder Kaur, **Detective Dalila Mezquita**, SBH CEO Lipyanskaya Svetlana, HP Chief Vincent Martinos, SBH CGO Michelle Bekman, **Business Agent Derek Short**.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Nora Cami , System Analyst | Charles Ryan , Lieutenant |
| Courtney Albattre , Detective | Albert Brown , Lieutenant |
| Michael Baptiste , Sergeant | Alyssa Jackson , Lieutenant |
| Brandon Brown , Sergeant | Aurelia Carter , Captain |

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:



SSA3 Ernesto Rodriguez retired after serving over 35 years of dedicated service to the NYPD School Safety Division.



SSA Adriane Witherspoon retired and received her plaque for 25 years of service.



Officer Cofield from Jacob Javits Convention Center retired after 38 years of service.



Hospital Police Sergeant Micheal Johnson of North Central Hospital retired after 40 years of service. Pictured with **Charlie Cotto**.



Ken Roper, Housing Business Agent and Assistant to the President (left) at **Theodore Haynes** (center) retirement party.



SSA Christopher Almeida PBSI retired after 24 years of service.



School Safety Agent Griffiths retired after 18 years of service.

The Message of Spring

By Gregory Floyd

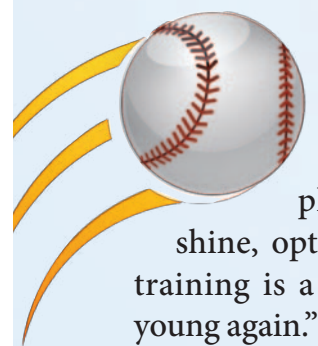
President, Teamsters Local 237 and Vice President-at-Large on the General Board of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters

Ah springtime; Mother's Day, Memorial Day, Buds turn into flowers; the first baseball of the season has been thrown out to the cheers of hopeful fans forgetting a disappointing last year; Mr. Softee's trucks are back on the road driving us crazy with that obnoxious tune, a call to little kids eager to wait in line for that first lick of ice cream; and time to book your summer vacation...worrying, "will I fit into my swim suit?"



Ah springtime!

Much has been written and said about spring and its attractions. Baseball great Ernie Banks said: "Spring training means flowers, people coming outdoors, sunshine, optimism and baseball. Spring training is a time to think about being young again." Former First Lady, Ladybird Johnson said: "Where flowers bloom, so does hope." Singer and songwriter Sheryl Crow memorably wrote about spring: "No matter how chaotic it is, wildflowers will still spring up in the middle of nowhere." And Mother Nature seems to agree with these sentiments as daylight lasts a little longer and our snow boots get pushed to the back of the closet. It seems that we can finally begin to place the Covid chaos in the rear-view mirror, there's a feeling that spring has definitely sprung, bringing new beginnings, a fresh start, a clean slate — and inspiration too.



So much has been written about the season. Toni Morrison, the renowned writer and recipient of the 1993 Nobel Prize in Literature, once wrote: "When spring comes to the city people notice one another in the road; notice the strangers with whom they share aisles and tables and the space... It's the time of year when the city urges contradiction most, encouraging you to buy street food when you have no appetite at all; giving you a taste for a single room occupied by you alone as well as a craving to share it with someone you passed in the street. Really there is no contradiction—rather it's a condition." The Ghanaian founder of Smart Youth Volunteer Foundation, Lailah Gifty Akita calls spring: "A season for the soul to regain its strength." And even comedian Robin Williams had an opinion on spring, calling it, "Nature's way of saying 'Let's Party'."

It's no coincidence that Ramadan, Easter and Passover are spring holidays. The renewal of nature that comes with spring amplifies the promise of redemption embedded in the historical events being commemorated by all three religions. Ramadan, a month-long celebration, marks the holiest month of the Islamic calendar. According to tradition, the holy book of

the Quran was revealed to the prophet Muhammad during Ramadan. Muslims believe that during this month, the gates to Heaven are open and the doors to Hell are closed. Muslims focus on their connection to God, reflect on their lives and spend quality time with friends and family. Easter celebrates the resurrection of Jesus and His victory over death. Around the same time — and often overlapping — Jewish people celebrate Passover, the holiday commemorating the Hebrews' exodus from slavery in Egypt. In both festivals, nature and history converge with a resounding message of hope. These holidays are about delivery from a state of despair. Easter assures the individual that life is eternal. It offers a way out of a world beyond repair. It celebrates a religion that provides comfort to those who had lost faith in the gods of Rome. It spreads the message that the death of one has the capacity to save many and the resurrection of Jesus is the ultimate affirmation of life. Passover summons Jews collectively into the world to repair it. The message of Passover is that a tyrant-like Pharaoh could be overthrown. A nation as powerful as Egypt could be defeated. Slaves could become free men. The oppressed could break the shackles of their captivity. Anything is possible, if only we dare to dream the impossible dream.

It was the biblical record of the Exodus from Egypt that enabled



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on April 3, 1968.

the spirit of optimism to prevail in the quest for equal rights, because they were stirred by the vision of Moses leading his people to the Promised Land. In fact, the historic speech that King delivered at the Mason Temple in Memphis, where he went on April 3 in 1968 to support sanitation workers protesting their meager wages of \$1.65 an hour and deplorable working conditions, included the prophetic line: "I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight that we as a people will get to the Promised Land." He was assassinated the next day. It was ironic that many of King's supporters, aides and confidants had urged him against expanding their focus and leaving their comfort zone to take on new causes, such as the Poor People's Campaign, which he was pushing. King would have none of it. Instead, he urged the sanitation workers to go on strike telling them: "You have to escalate the struggle a bit." And he countered the containment argument with: "We have moved into an era where we are called upon to raise certain basic questions about the whole society."

When we celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., it is impossible not to recognize that his lessons are similar to the main lesson of spring: Without hope, all will be lost. So much about our nation underscores that sentiment. Even the drawing on America's official seal — suggested by Benjamin Franklin in August 1776 — attested to this belief, with the dramatic scene described in Exodus where Moses divided waters of the Red Sea that is depicted on the seal. The history of our nation, the hope and sense of rebirth that springtime inspires, has a message that is clear: The impossible can happen, it just takes longer. Dr. King believed that and lived it. We should too.



LILLY THE MOVIE



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



President Gregory Floyd addressed the audience.



What's a movie without popcorn?



A captured audience.



Starring Patricia Clarkson, John Benjamin Hickey and Thomas Sadoski, LILLY is based on the remarkable and inspiring life of fair pay activist Lilly Ledbetter, who fought for fair pay from corporations to the courts, then on to the Supreme Court, Congress and ultimately The White House.

March was Women's History Month. In acknowledgment of the struggles and accomplishments of women, there were countless events throughout our nation. At Teamsters Local 237, we had our own very special celebration. We had been given a unique opportunity to see a preview showing of a new movie "Lilly", the story of Lilly Ledbetter, a 20-year employee of Goodyear Tires, who upon retirement, found an anonymous note in her locker alerting her to the fact that for all that time working, she was receiving significantly less pay than her male counterparts. She took on Goodyear — suffering great abuse and disappointments along the way—but was ultimately victorious. She became a national icon for equal pay and dignity in the workplace.



Marie Colvin - courageous in the face of danger.

Local 237 had its "Lilly Moment" in 2014 when she traveled from her home in Alabama to join our rally on the steps of City Hall on behalf of School Safety Agents fighting the City over gender-based pay discrimination. She helped us win. As President Floyd said at the screening: "We have had so many great women as part of the Teamster family. From a past member such as the courageous slain journalist, Marie Colvin, to those three School Safety Agents, the late Corinthians Andrew, Bernice Christopher and Patricia Williams who fought tirelessly for pay equity, to our current members, who millions of New Yorkers rely upon everyday, and to Lilly Ledbetter, who came to our aid because she knew what it felt like to be undervalued and underpaid."



(l-r) The late Corinthians Andrews, Bernice Christopher and Patricia Williams.



President Obama signs the Lilly Ledbetter Act into law.



LONG ISLAND REPORT

CUOMO ENDORSED FOR NYC MAYOR



(l-r) **Gregory Floyd**, Local 237 President; **Benny Carenza**, Director of the Long Island Division and Trustee of the Executive Board; and **Ruben Torres**, Local 237 Vice President, participating in the Cuomo for NYC Mayor endorsement event.

CONGRATULATIONS!



Town of Babylon Business Agent **Andy Viegas** presented a retirement plaque to **Stanley Clayton** (center) 25 years Town of Babylon Sanitation Site Crew Leader at the landfill. His coworkers all wished him a great retirement!

NORTH BABYLON



Benny Carenza (l) attended the annual North Babylon Bus Drivers luncheon. **Liaison Demetra (Dee) Tietjen** (r) does an amazing job everyday and is well respected by all.

CONTRACT RATIFIED



Center Moriches School District Custodial, Maintenance and Grounds members overwhelmingly ratified a 5 year contract. All positives with no give backs! Great raises, extra paid holidays and much more for all. Members are extremely happy. Congrats to all. Pictured with **Benny Carenza** (l), Director of the Long Island Division and Trustee of the Executive Board.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH



Community Outreach Lieutenant **Jeff Walker**, from the Suffolk County Police Commissioners office stopped by to say hello to all Teamsters Local 237 members. (l-r) **John Gallagher**, Long Island Business Agent; **Benny Carenza**; **Andy Viegas**, Local 237 Business Agent; and **Lieutenant Jeff Walker**.



(l-r) BA John Gallagher; Assemblyman Kwani O'Pharrow and Benny Carenza.



Commack Schools welcomes new member **Louis Pelkofsky** with Shop Steward **Marc Caruso** (on right) and **Luc Maynard** (middle).

NORTHSHORE PARAPROFESSIONALS



Northshore Paraprofessionals overwhelming vote to approve their 4 year contract! Special thanks to the negotiation committee for sticking it out to attain a great deal for all. No givebacks, raises, retro pay, 3 more holidays and more. Great job by all. Congratulations!

PORT JEFFERSON SCHOOLS



Port Jefferson schools recess meeting with a great bunch of members. **Benny Carenza** on right.

CONGRATULATIONS!



Vinny Laferrera (center) retires from North Babylon Schools. Long time Shop Steward just like his brother **Dominick Laferrera**. Pictured with **Chris LoSardo**, Liaison from North Babylon Schools and **Benny Carenza** (right).

POLITICAL AND LABOR NEWS

Teamsters Local 237's Executive Board 2025

Having won by an overwhelming vote by the members, Teamsters Local 237's Executive Board was sworn-in on January 23, 2025 for another 5-year term. Susan Davis, Board attorney, officiated. **President Floyd** thanked the Board members for their dedicated service and said that he looked forward to continuing working with them on behalf of the membership, noting that "at Local 237 we are not just union brothers and sister... we are like family with a common goal of taking care of one another."



(l-r) Cathy Rice, Trustee; Benny Carenza, Trustee; Curtis Scott, Trustee; Jeanette Taveras, Recording Secretary; Susan Davis, Board Attorney; Gregory Floyd, President; Ruben Torres, Vice President; and Donald Arnold, Secretary Treasurer.



President Gregory Floyd at the podium.



The Local 237 Executive Board takes the oath.

Local 237 Endorses Andrew Cuomo for NYC Mayor. Here's why...

In announcing the endorsement of Andrew Cuomo for New York City Mayor, **Local 237 President Gregory Floyd** said the following: "A great man once said: 'There are only two rules for being successful. One, figure out what you want to do. And two, do it.' That man was Mario Cuomo, our former Governor.



Andrew Cuomo thanks Gregory Floyd for the show of support

Which brings us to why we're here today. His son, Andrew Cuomo, has been very successful at getting things done. Just look at just some of his accomplishments: The most ambitious infrastructure program in the country that included: rebuilding LaGuardia and JFK airports, opening a new Moynihan train station, expanding the Second Avenue subway, building the new Mario Cuomo and the Kosciuszko bridges. (I was there to kick-off many of these great projects...and here is the shovel to prove it).

Andrew Cuomo always supported working families. He got passed into law the most comprehensive paid family leave policy in the nation. And, an historic, \$15 minimum wage. On issues of crime and public safety Andrew Cuomo helped to pass the nation's strongest gun violence prevention laws and instituted a fairer criminal justice system.

For education, Andrew Cuomo made an historic investment in education that resulted in more high school graduates than ever before, and provided free college tuition for New York's middle class, which increased college enrollment substantially.

On healthcare, Andrew Cuomo added more than one million previously uninsured New Yorkers to health insurance plans. Andrew Cuomo also made sure to protect women's health care by the putting into law, a woman's right to choose — two years before the Supreme Court took that right away by overturning Roe v. Wade.

And thanks to Andrew Cuomo basic human rights issues like marriage equality were safeguarded into law. Because of Andrew Cuomo, our economy flourished. During his time in office, the state had its highest credit rating in forty years. Unemployment was down in every part of the state. And, for a solid decade, state spending was kept under a 2 percent cap. Taxes were lowered for the middle class. A permanent cap on property taxes was created. Estate taxes were lowered. Corporate and manufacturing taxes were the lowest levels in decades. Businesses thrived.

And can anyone forget, New York's darkest days of COVID? It was his voice, his steady hand, and the sense that someone was in charge, that helped lead this state and the nation out of the heart-wrenching chaos. He not only provided "must see TV", but Andrew Cuomo gave us hope for a better tomorrow. He provided leadership few others were able to do.

It is because of these accomplishments, and proven track record of success that Teamsters Local 237 proudly endorses Andrew Cuomo for Mayor of New York City. He knows what we need. We trust him to get things done."

New Assemblyman Is One of Our Own

Kwani O'Pharrow is a member of Teamsters Local 237, having served as a security guard at Brentwood school district. Prior to that, O'Pharrow was an NYPD Detective, who retired from the force. In addition, O'Pharrow was on the presidential security detail guarding both Presidents Obama and Trump.



Kwani O'Pharrow is sworn into office by NYS Attorney General Letitia James as the new Assemblyman's proud wife holds the bible.

In A Show Of Solidarity



Maspeth Strike. Showing their support are Derek Short, Law Enforcement Business Agent; Shavelle Knox, Assistant Director of Housing; Ken Roper, Housing Business Agent and Assistant to the President; and Frank Rella, Law Enforcement Business Agent.

It's The Season...

By Vito R. Pitta, Esq.

IT'S BUDGET SEASON IN ALBANY

In January, Governor Kathy Hochul unveiled her \$252 billion Executive Budget marking the beginning of New York State's official budget season. The Legislative Fiscal Committees have since held hearings on the Governor's proposals, hearing from state agency heads, elected officials, and other important stakeholders.

In mid-March, the Senate and Assembly introduced and approved their one-house budget resolutions. Negotiations have now begun, with a target date of April 1st, the start of New York's 2025-2026 fiscal year.

Proposals are currently under consideration and in the coming months, we can expect to learn more about significant changes to the Foundation Aid Formula for school funding, potential limits to student cell phone use, and the introduction of some new tax credits for New York State residents, among other initiatives.

IT'S ELECTION SEASON AGAIN IN NYC

The start of election season in New York City is officially underway, marking the beginning of the countdown to Election Day on June 24th. Below is a rundown of some races to watch.

Mayor: The Mayor's race is particularly crowded this year, with incumbent Eric Adams facing primary challenges from former governor Andrew Cuomo, New York City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams, Comptroller Brad Lander, former Comptroller Scott Stringer, Assembly Member Zohran Mamdani, State Senators Jessica Ramos and Zellnor Myrie, and former hedge-fund executive Whitney Tilson.

Local 237 endorsed Andrew Cuomo in early March, with President Gregory Floyd citing the former Governor's support for funding School Safety Agents, NYCHA and for projects like the Jacob Javits Center, Moynihan Train Hall, and the Second Avenue Subway.

Adding once again to the excitement in the Mayor's race, along with the races for Public Advocate, Comptroller, Borough President, and the City Council, the successful winner of the primary election will be selected by ranked-choice voting (RCV).

With RCV, instead of selecting just one candidate, voters will have the option to rank the candidates in order of preference. If your first-choice candidate cannot win — meaning they receive the fewest first-choice votes — your vote will count toward your second-choice candidate. This process continues until one of the candidates secures a majority of the votes. So, when you go to the ballot box, keep in mind who you will be ranking number 1, but also note your second, third, fourth, and fifth choices.

The process becomes particularly interesting when Mayoral candidates form alliances, in which candidates urge their likely voters to rank their ally second. RCV creates a more open field, that forces front runners to expand their appeal among voters, and with public matching funds, little-known candidates can compete and are often approached to form alliances.

Public Advocate: Public Advocate Jumaane Williams will face off against current Queens Assembly Member Jenifer Rajkumar in this year's Public Advocate Primary. Rajkumar, who initially declared her candidacy for city Comptroller has now shifted to the Public Advocate race, positioning herself as a more moderate counterpart to the left-leaning Williams.

Comptroller: With current Comptroller Brad Lander in the race for Mayor, a seat has opened up for his position. Current Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine and Brooklyn Council Member Justin Brannan are both vying for the job. Brannan is touting his experience as the City Council's Finance Committee Chair and has secured endorsements from the Working Families Party, and several labor unions, among others. Meanwhile, Levine is backed by much of the Manhattan City Council delegation, several Labor Unions and is emphasizing his experience as the Manhattan Borough President, a teacher and the founder of a credit union.

Borough President: Bronx Borough President Vanessa Gibson will not finish out her term without a challenge. Rafael Salamanca Jr., a term-limited Council Member from the South Bronx announced his candidacy in September and has been highlighting his deep roots in the Bronx.

In Manhattan, term-limited Council Member Keith Powers will run against State Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal to fill the seat vacated by current Borough President Mark Levine.

In Queens, Borough President Donovan Richards faces a challenge from Bashek Grimes, a public-school teacher, among other candidates. Both Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso and Staten Island Borough President Vito Fossella are encountering several challengers.

NYC COUNCIL: Some races to watch in the June 24th Primary:

District 1: Council Member Chris Marte is once again facing a diverse group of challengers. This time, he is up against Attorney Jess Coleman; Elizabeth Lewinsohn, the former policy head at the NYPD's Counterterrorism Bureau, and Eric Yu, a member of Community Board 1.

District 2: Council Member Carlina Rivera is term-limited, and her soon-to-be vacant seat has sparked a competitive race. Assembly Member Harvey Epstein, Andrea Gordillo, arts nonprofit leader and Chairperson of Manhattan Community Board 3, Sarah Batchu a former Mayor de Blasio administration staffer and nonprofit leader, and scandal-plagued former Congressman Anthony Weiner have all entered the race.

District 13: In 2023, Council Member Kristy Marromorato defeated Marjorie Velasquez, becoming the first Republican council member from the Bronx in decades. This year, several Democrats are competing to steer the district back to the left. Among them are Shirley Aldebol, Executive Vice President of 32BJ SEIU; David Diaz, a senior executive director at a boutique investment firm; Theona Reets-DuPont, Chief of Staff and Budget Director for City Council Member Oswald Feliz; and Jacqueline Torres, a veteran and HR professional, all vying for the coveted spot.

District 14: Council Member Pierina Sanchez is running against the former council member she replaced. Fernando Cabrera, a conservative Democrat and former council member, was a faith adviser in the Eric Adams administration and finished second in the 2021 Bronx Borough President race. He is joined by 24-year-old Bryan Hodge Vazquez, a former intern for Congressman Espaillat, both working to unseat Council Member Pierina Sanchez.

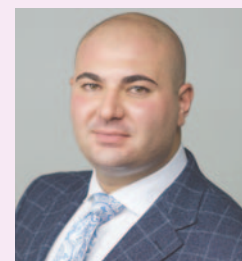
District 21: Council Member Francisco Moya is term-limited, leaving an open seat in his Queens district. Erycka Montoya, a staffer in Speaker Adrienne Adams's office; Sandro Stefano Navarro, an Army National Guard Veteran and District Director in State Senator Jessica Ramos's office; former Senator Hiram Monserrate; and District Leader Yanna Henriquez have all thrown their hats in the ring.

District 49: Incumbent Council Member Kamillah Hanks is facing a challenge from Jozette Carter-Williams, the widow of NYPD Officer Gerard Carter, and several others. While Staten Island Democrats have made several political endorsements, they opted not to endorse a candidate in this race.

District 51: Council Member Joe Borelli's resignation in January sparked a contentious special election on the south shore of Staten Island. On April 29th, Conservative talk show host Frank Morano, Democratic special education teacher Clifford A. Hagen, and Griffin Fossella, son of Staten Island Borough President Vito Fossella, will all be on the ballot.

All these individuals are vying for the opportunity to serve or continue to serve you and Local 237's interests. They will vote on public housing, healthcare, education, and pension issues, so I encourage you all to vote in the election on June 24th! ■

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.



Spring Forecast for CSBA: RAISES, REMOTE WORK AND ROCKY ROAD AHEAD

By Saul Fishman

President, Civil Service Bar Association (CSBA)

Let's start with the good news, beyond the warmer temperatures and longer sunlight hours after work:

1. Our final raise under the current collective bargaining agreement will be paid to us on Friday May 9th as 3.25% salary, recurring increment payment ("RIP") and longevity differential increases.
2. Remote work is expected to continue at least until the next round of Citywide bargaining late next year, and in all likelihood, well into the foreseeable future.
3. Our employer, the City of New York, has very substantial reserves, enabling it to withstand almost any short-term financial crisis.

That said, you don't need to be an expert in economics, political science or meteorology to forecast very strong headwinds battering New York and other so-called "blue states" later this year and over the next couple of years. CSBA members and indeed the whole world can see that the President of the United States is acting in

totally unprecedented fashion, tearing down entire Federal agencies, slashing staffing, funding and protections for workers, consumers, seniors, veterans, hospitals and nursing homes. Monies paid to state and local governments are in many cases either threatened with cutoff or actively being clawed back. Prime example: The \$80 million that the prior President reimbursed NYC for temporary migrant housing has been summarily recouped without either warning or a valid rationale.

Unfathomable too, is the change in our nation's relations with our closest international neighbors and allies. Suddenly even Canada is our adversary? I remember when "Blame Canada!" was an absurd parody of a song by comic actor Robin Williams.

The point is that uncertainty is no friend of the economy and of Wall Street, which affects tax revenues here in New York City, complete with a big ripple effect on our agencies and potentially on collective bargaining.

Yes, NYC has very significant financial reserves. Given these crazy times, how much is enough? Both the NYC and NYS Comptrollers have publicly expressed concerns. The truth is nobody knows for sure how this is all going to shake out for our city, region and nation. Inflation is very likely to increase from steep reciprocal tariffs, which act essentially as a sales tax to the consumer from the goods now made more expensive at our border. And suddenly there is also talk about a possible recession. All that is certain is that there will be a lot of pain and displacement.

Overall good news? Probably not in the near term. Take heart, buckle down, get involved and know that over time, the pendulum swings and some semblance of normalcy and/or progress returns. ■



The Importance of Naming a Beneficiary, Your Life Insurance. Keep your family safe.

By **Diana Nappi**

Director of the Welfare Fund

There are certain important topics that people feel uncomfortable discussing. At the top of this list is Life Insurance. The Welfare Fund provides for a Group Term Policy with MetLife Life. This benefit is paid to your designated beneficiary at the time of your death. The beneficiary may be any person of your choice.

Naming a beneficiary is easy. You can name a beneficiary by contacting the Fund office (212) 924-7220 and requesting a new enrollment form and completing the beneficiary designation portion of the enrollment form. In order to be in effect, your designation must be on file in the Fund office or with MetLife.

If there is no designated beneficiary living at the time of your death, the Death Benefit will be paid to your estate. This creates a delay in payment and can be time-consuming for the executor of your estate who must go to Surrogates Court to obtain the proper papers needed by MetLife Life before payment can be made.

Life sometimes brings unexpected changes. Your personal situation may have changed due to divorce, death of your original beneficiary or you may simply want to name a new beneficiary. If you are unsure of who is listed as your beneficiary, we suggest you complete a new enrollment form or call MetLife.

The current benefit provided under our Group Term Policy is \$15,000 should you the member die. The spousal benefit is \$5,000 if your spouse passes before you. The dependent benefit is \$5,000.

MetLife also offers Voluntary Benefits by payroll deduction for additional Life Insurance. Live in the moment. Plan for the future. Apply at www.metlife.com/info/teamsters-local-237. You can apply for Supplemental Life Insurance at any time.

Questions? Call Metlife Customer Support 1-866-492-6983

If you require further information or clarification regarding this article, please call the Fund at (212) 924-7220 or email welfarefund@local237.org. We are here to help our members. Visit our website at Your Benefits - Teamsters Local 237 for more information regarding your Plan Benefits. ■



What You Should Do If Served Legal Papers

By **Jennifer Hudson, Esq.**

Director of Local 237 Legal Services Plan

First, call your Teamsters Local 237 Legal Services Plan at 212-924-1220!

Our Civil Legal System allows anyone to bring you to court (sue you) for any reason, and it is up to you to go to court and show why they shouldn't win their case against you. If you don't, the person or entity suing you automatically wins, even if they don't have a good case.

What counts as "being served"?

You can be served by someone handing you papers personally, or, handing someone in your household papers for you, and mailing a copy of the papers, or, by taping the papers to your house or apartment door, and mailing a copy of the papers.

If you receive court papers, you should note down the day, time, and method that you receive those papers.

Once you are served with court papers, even if you did not get them in any of the ways described above, you must go to court.

"Answering"

Your response to the papers you received is called your "Answer" and this is the document used to tell the court your defenses. You have a short time to respond so it is crucial that you go to court and do your "Answer" as soon as possible, even if you don't know your defenses and just put "general denial". If you don't answer on time, or go to the court date, the person/entity suing you could win their case by default just because you didn't answer in time.

What happens when you "default" on a case?

When you don't go to court to defend against a lawsuit, the person/entity suing you wins their case by default. You must attend every court appearance or they can get a default judgment against you because you are not there. The person/entity will win because you didn't show up (defaulted) and will get a judgment against you for whatever they are seeking, most often money or eviction.

What is a "judgment"?

When a person/entity suing you gets a judgment against you, it means they won their court case. A money judgment is good for 20 years. The person/entity who sued you and got a judgment can hire a marshal to evict you, or, collect on a money judgment whenever they want to for the next 20 years. They can take 10% of the gross (before taxes) amount of every paycheck you receive until they get the full amount of the judgment with interest, or, they can attach your bank account and just take it right out of your bank.

If you go to court and defend yourself, you might still end up with a judgment against you, but only if you decide to settle with them, or, they prove their case over your defenses.

Because you are a Teamsters Local 237 member, you have a free attorney to help you with all of this. Please call us at the first sign of court papers! ■



"Hold On To Your Hat!"

By **David Bonington, CFP®**

Financial Planner,
Stacey Braun Associates, Inc.

Are you approaching retirement age or thinking about retirement?

If you grew up in New York City, from early childhood memories you might recall seeing lots of signs with this recommendation. The signs belonged to an earlier time, maybe years between 1920-1960, when most of the men, ladies, and even schoolboys of Gotham wore hats. Most have been removed since (to be sure, the hats as well as the signs!).

In really hazardous zones, like the subway, signs were everywhere—trying to protect everything from a newsboy's cap to a man's fedora to a lady's finest from being lost to the press of air from an approaching train or the vacuum behind a departing one.

At a young age, my grandparents took me on a Staten Island Ferry ride. Signs were posted in the terminal and on the boat. Just minutes after setting out, a boy of maybe 10 standing near us had only time to cry out, "My hat!" as a cruel gust lifted it and tossed it into New York Harbor. (P.S. The ferry didn't stop.)

For a time, "Hold On To Your Hat" was used as a general expression of advice and caution for a variety of "roller coaster" situations—but I haven't heard it in quite some time, and I bet you haven't either.

So why bring it up now? Winds of change may blow strongly in 2025 on a number of financial fronts, including one with significant implications: personal income tax rates! Current federal rates and brackets were set by 2017 legislation – but with a "sunset" feature that causes them to expire this December. If Congress does nothing we go back to the previous arrangement, but it's likely Congress will act. It may extend or only tweak today's structure, or it might do something else entirely. We just don't know.

And that is the point! Retirees are in a phase of life where Social Security will supplement pensions with additional, federally taxable income (although this, too, might possibly change). Required Minimum Distributions from pre-tax Retirement Accounts will generate even more taxable income. And yet the rates of tax which will be levied upon all this money aren't yet known.

The post-2025 landscape should be visible in a few months, and will help everyone plan ahead— or even take precautionary action in late 2025 if it's advisable. Before it gets too late into 2025, a meeting with a Stacey Braun planner might help you evaluate your retirement income sources and investments in the context of potential tax changes by roughing out at least an "Okay, If-This, Then-That" type of game plan.

Remember, it's not only your hat you want to hold on to – it's your wealth, too! If you are caught unready and off-guard by a cruel tax gust, the ferry won't stop. ■

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.



Our Top Social Media Pages

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

We strive to provide the public with accurate and helpful information. In addition to the resources available on our website at www.ssa.gov, we post useful information on our social media channels. We invite you to learn about our programs and services on our social media pages:

- Our Social Security Blog – Here we post articles about our program, current events, and online services. We respond to general questions and comments people share. You can read our articles and subscribe at blog.ssa.gov. Our blog is now available in Spanish at blog.ssa.gov/es.
- Facebook – www.facebook.com/socialsecurity. Facebook is our primary page for sharing information about our programs and services with our vast network of followers and advocacy groups.
- Administración del Seguro Social – www.facebook.com/segurosocial. Our Spanish Facebook page shares information about our programs and services.
- X – www.x.com/socialsecurity. @SocialSecurity is our official account. This page to provide timely information and updates about our programs and services with our followers and advocacy groups.
- Seguro Social – www.x.com/segurososocial. On this page we share information about our programs and services in Spanish.
- Instagram – www.instagram.com/SocialSecurity. On this page we share stories and resources that can help you and your loved ones.
- YouTube – www.youtube.com/SocialSecurity. We have many informative videos on this page. Our videos cover online services, applying for retirement and disability benefits, Social Security-related scams, and much more. We also offer some of our videos in Spanish and other languages.

You can find a full list of our social media channels at www.ssa.gov/socialmedia. Connect with us on social media to learn helpful information and ask general questions. But remember, you should never post personal information on social media. Follow along and share our pages with friends, neighbors, or loved ones today. ■



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Debit Card v Credit Card
Which offers greater protection in the event of fraud?

Questions? Call Us at **877-308-9169** www.idresolution.net

El mensaje de la primavera

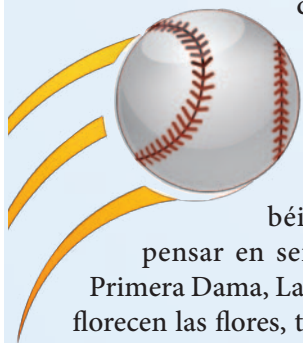
Por Gregory Floyd

Presidente del Teamsters Local 237 y Vicepresidente de la Junta Directiva de la Hermandad Internacional de Teamsters



Ah, la primavera! Día de las Madres, Día de los Caídos, los brotes se convierten en flores; el primer lanzamiento de la temporada de béisbol despierta los vítores de aficionados llenos de esperanza, olvidando una decepcionante temporada pasada; los camiones del Sr. Softee vuelven a las calles, enloqueciéndonos con esa melodía estridente, un llamado para los niños ansiosos por hacer fila y probar su primer helado; y es hora de reservar las vacaciones de verano... preguntándonos: ¿entraré en mi traje de baño?

¡Ah, la primavera!



Mucho se ha escrito y dicho sobre la primavera y sus atractivos. El gran beisbolista Ernie Banks dijo: "La pretemporada de primavera significa flores, gente saliendo al aire libre, sol, optimismo y béisbol. Es un momento para pensar en ser joven nuevamente." La ex Primera Dama, LadyBird Johnson, dijo: "Donde florecen las flores, también florece la esperanza." La cantante y compositora Sheryl Crow escribió de manera memorable sobre la primavera: "No importa cuán caótico sea, las flores silvestres seguirán brotando en medio de la nada." Y la Madre Naturaleza parece estar de acuerdo con estos sentimientos, ya que la luz del día dura un poco más y nuestras botas de nieve son empujadas hacia el fondo del armario. Parece que finalmente podemos comenzar a dejar atrás el caos del Covid; hay una sensación de que la primavera definitivamente ha llegado, trayendo nuevos comienzos, un nuevo inicio, una página en blanco... ¡y también inspiración!

Tanto se ha escrito sobre esta estación. Toni Morrison, la célebre escritora y ganadora del Premio Nobel de Literatura en 1993, escribió una vez: «Cuando la primavera llega a la ciudad, la gente se figa en los demás en la calle; se figa en los desconocidos con quienes comparte pasillos, mesas

y el espacio... Es la época del año en que la ciudad exagera las contradicciones: te incita a comprar comida callejera aunque no tengas apetito dándote ganas de ocupar una habitación individual solo para ti y al mismo tiempo deseando compartirla con alguien que te cruzaste en la calle No es una contradicción, sino una condición». Por su parte, Lailah Gifty Akita, fundadora ghanesa de Smart Youth Volunteer Foundation, define la primavera como «una estación para que el alma recupere sus fuerzas». Hasta el comediante Robin Williams tenía su opinión: la llamó «la forma en que la naturaleza dice: "¡Festejemos!"».

No es casualidad que el Ramadán, la Pascua cristiana y el Pésaj, la Pascua judía, sean celebraciones primaverales. El renacer de la naturaleza en esta estación amplifica la promesa de redención que encierran los eventos históricos que estas tres religiones conmemoran. El Ramadán, celebración de un mes de duración, marca el período más sagrado del islam. Según la tradición, el libro sagrado del Corán fue revelado al profeta Mahoma durante el Ramadán. Los musulmanes creen que, durante este mes, las puertas del Cielo están abiertas y las puertas del Infierno están cerradas. Los musulmanes profundizan su conexión con Dios, reflexionan sobre sus vidas y pasan tiempo de calidad con amigos y familiares. La Pascua cristiana celebra la resurrección de Jesús y su victoria sobre la muerte. En fechas cercanas, y a menudo de forma superpuesta, los judíos celebran el Pésaj, la festividad que conmemora el éxodo de los hebreos de la esclavitud en Egipto. En ambas festividades, la naturaleza y la historia convergen con un mensaje resonante de esperanza. Estas festividades tratan sobre la liberación de un estado de desesperación. La Pascua asegura al individuo que la vida es eterna. Ofrece una salida de un mundo más allá de la reparación. Celebra una religión que brinda consuelo a aquellos que habían perdido la fe en los dioses de Roma. Difunde el mensaje de que la muerte de uno tiene la capacidad de salvar a muchos, y la resurrección de Jesús es la afirmación definitiva de la vida. El Pésaj convoca a los judíos colectivamente al mundo para repararlo. El mensaje del Pésaj es que un faraón tiránico podría derroscarse. Una nación tan poderosa como

Egipto podría ser derrotada. Los esclavos podrían convertirse en hombres libres. Los oprimidos podrían romper las cadenas de su cautiverio. Todo es posible, si tan solo nos atrevemos a soñar el sueño imposible.

Fue el relato bíblico del Éxodo de Egipto lo que permitió que el espíritu de optimismo prevaleciera en la lucha por la igualdad de derechos, pues los activistas se inspiraban en la visión de Moisés guiando a su pueblo hacia la Tierra Prometida. De hecho, en el histórico discurso que King pronunció en el Mason Temple de Memphis, adonde acudió el 3 de abril de 1968 para apoyar a los trabajadores sanitarios que protestaban por sus míseros salarios de 1,65 dólares la hora y sus condiciones laborales deplorables, él incluyó la línea profética: «Quizá yo no llegue ahí con ustedes. Pero quiero que sepan esta noche que nosotros, como pueblo, llegaremos a la Tierra Prometida». Al día siguiente, fue asesinado.

Resultaba irónico que muchos aliados, colaboradores y confidentes de King le hubieran aconsejado no ampliar su enfoque ni salir de su zona de confort para abrazar nuevas causas, como la Campaña de los Pobres que él impulsaba. King se negó. En cambio, instó a los trabajadores sanitarios a declararse en huelga con estas palabras: «Deben intensificar un poco la lucha». Y rebatió el argumento del conformismo afirmando: «Hemos entrado en una era que nos exige cuestionar los fundamentos mismos de toda la sociedad».

Cuando celebramos el legado del Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., resulta imposible no reconocer que sus enseñanzas coinciden con la lección esencial de la primavera: sin esperanza, todo está perdido. Gran parte de nuestra nación refuerza ese sentimiento. Incluso el diseño del sello oficial de Estados Unidos, propuesto por Benjamín Franklin en agosto de 1776, da testimonio de esta creencia, al representar la escena dramática del Éxodo donde Moisés divide las aguas del Mar Rojo. La historia de nuestro país, junto a la esperanza y el renacer que inspira la primavera, envían un mensaje claro: lo imposible puede ocurrir, solo requiere más tiempo. El Dr. King lo creyó y lo vivió. Nosotros también deberíamos hacerlo. ▮





Keeping you in the know



Forever In Our Hearts

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 will offer you peace and comfort.
– President Gregory Floyd, the Executive Board and Staff



Getting Ahead of It

By Karla Steinberg, LMSW
Membership Social Worker

As your membership social worker, I receive a lot of calls asking for help. While the type of help does vary, a lot of my calls are about falling into arrears (rent, utility, medical bills, etc.). I'm fortunate that I meet a lot of Local 237 members in the field, and what I say to all of them is: If you call me and I can help you, I will help you. If you call me and I can't help you, I'm going to direct you to the party or organization that can help you.

Sometimes a member calls asking for my help, and we learn that legal assistance may also be needed, or is in needed in lieu of social work. Sometimes we learn an additional need is financial management (trying to get out of debt, save money, buy a house, buy a car, have enough for retirement, etc.), or something else entirely. Regardless, there are some tips to keep in mind for when you speak to anyone in any of these helping professions. The following is a guide I think useful.

1. When did the issue start? Months, years, et cetera.
2. If you've received documents (bills, notices about a court filing, court date, shut-off notice), please have these available when you call, if possible. Keep these documents in a safe, but handy place.
3. Keep a copy of your bills, and of your payments. If you use Western Union or another money transfer service, ask for a receipt. If you pay cash, ask for a receipt. If you pay through Venmo, Zelle, Paypal, etc., you can take a screenshot and that serves as a receipt. Having these in hand is helpful.
4. If you have spoken to, or plan to speak with other organizations, (HRA, Con Edison, etc.), keep a record of the date you spoke to them, as well as who you spoke with. Ask for a first and last name, or first name, last initial. Make sure you the organization they're from as well. This is most important.
5. If in rental/utility arrears, know the exact amount of arrears. It's okay to call before you have this, but you will need the exact amount early on. If you've been making partial payments, keep a record of your payments (when did you pay, how much did you pay, how did you pay, et cetera), and have this record handy. At some point you'll need to get a breakdown from your building or building management agency (for rental arrears), or the exact charges from your utility provider.
6. If you have any legal/court documents, hang on to them and keep them available and in a safe place.

All these suggestions will make the help process more efficient, in addition to making it go faster. If you're not sure I'm the right person to call, I hope you'll reach out and see if I can't help you one way or another. I'm looking forward to it. ■



Business Communication: A Key to Success

By Shanell Grayson
Director of Training and Education

In today's fast paced, efficiency conscious society, modern communication is centered around sharing information as quickly as possible. This is a clear diversion from more "traditional" ways of communicating which prioritize clear articulation and interpersonal connections.

It can be a challenge to know when speed, accuracy, or clarity should take preference when conveying a message. For example, sending a quick text to family or friends doesn't demand a spell check or proper punctuation to get a point across. In a professional environment, however, it's important to be more thoughtful when writing, even when using instantaneous methods of communication such as texts and emails.

Implementing business writing skills into your professional communication is a way to demonstrate that you are a good employee. Not only will it prevent misunderstandings, it shows that you take pride in your work and that you are an effective collaborator.

Below, I've listed 10 do's and don'ts to help improve your written communication in the workplace.

- Do** make sure you use the correctly spelled name, gender and professional title of the recipient.
- Don't** use slang or informal language.
- Do** proofread for spelling and grammar mistakes.
- Don't** use abbreviations, emojis, or symbols.
- Do** be succinct and to the point.
- Don't** type in all caps. It conveys anger to the reader.
- Do** use full sentences with proper punctuation.
- Don't** make your font too small or ornate. Size 12 Times New Roman is standard.
- Do** add a greeting and closing to your emails.
- Don't** cc or copy someone on an email unless they're relevant to the discussion.

Local 237's Training and Education Department has a variety of classes to help improve your business writing and other necessary skills so that you can thrive in your career. Feel free to review our current course offerings below for more information. **As always, we are eager to serve you!** ■

STUDENTS OF THE MONTH... IN THEIR OWN WORDS



Joffre Viteri - Detective

I would like to thank Local 237's Education Department for the training I received for the Supervising Special Officer promotional exam. The course was demanding, professional and free of charge! The instructor, retired Sergeant Lester Lloyd, kept us alert with his wealth of knowledge and experience. The topics were very informative, and his style of teaching was great and very easy to follow and understand. I couldn't have chosen a better instructor than him.



Adrian Nieves - Caretaker X

I appreciate all the classes that Local 237's Education Department provides for their members. I learned a lot attending the Bridge Exam and Supervisor of Housing Groundskeeper classes. I am looking forward to attending more classes in the future! THANK YOU!

Education Department's FREE Courses

CIVIL SERVICE EXAM PREP CLASSES

- CUNY Campus Peace Officer (April)
- Heating Plant Technician Soft Skills (April)
- Special Officer (April)
- Maintenance Worker (June)

For more information on upcoming exams visit: nyc.gov/examsforjobs

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSES

- Shop Steward Training #1 (April)
- > For Current and Active Shop Stewards
- Beginning Computer Skills (May)

SCHOLARSHIPS

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

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSES

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

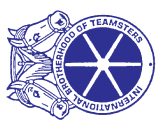
Scan the QR Code to register now.



Email: 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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 New York, NY 10011

SPRING 2025

DATED MATERIAL

Are you moving?

To change your address, fill in the form below, cut it out, and mail it back to Newsline at the above address.

Name _____

New Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____