

Local 237 NEWSLINE



Vol. 44, No. 7

September 2010

VOTING POWER

Our union's greatest power is turning out a huge vote in the upcoming primaries on Tuesday, Sept. 14, and the General Election on Tuesday, Nov. 2. This election year is especially critical to our survival, as the economy continues to falter. Ignoring the Wall Street greed that triggered the greatest economic collapse since the Great Depression in 1929, misguided elected officials are trying to plug the holes in their budgets by calling for givebacks from hard-working public employees, who have carried the burden of doing more with less since well before the financial crisis of 2008.

"We must defend our negotiated rights with all our power," said President Gregory Floyd. "Our greatest power is turning out 24,000 members to vote on Election Day for candidates that will protect our interests."

A recent National Compensation Survey belies increasing claims that public employees' compensation



is "too generous." The survey found that public employees earn 7.4 percent less than employees with comparable skills in the private sector, even with the cost of benefits factored in. Separately, a study by the Center for State and Local Government Excellence and the National Institute on Retirement Security finds that when such factors as education and work experience are accounted for (including pensions and health coverage), state and local employees earn about 11 to 12 percent less than comparable private-sector workers.

The decades-old war on public employees has intensified as more jobs and homes are lost. "But the attacks have little basis in reality," writes Amy Traub, research director, Drum Major Institute for Public Policy, in her article "'Coddled' Public Employees Make Less than the Private Sector." Traub emphasizes that "at its heart, the scapegoating of public employees is an insidious way to divide public and private-sector workers who share many of the same interests."

Support Candidates Who Will Protect Your Pensions and Benefits

Local 237 Endorsements for Tuesday, Sept. 14, Primary Election

President Gregory Floyd and the Executive Board carefully studied the candidates running in the Sept. 14 Primary Election to determine their positions on issues of importance to members. Below is a list of the candidates they endorsed, at press time, based on their record of support for public employees. The polls will be open from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. All the candidates listed below are Democrats unless otherwise noted.

Governor: Andrew M. Cuomo • **Comptroller:** Thomas P. DiNapoli • **Attorney General:** No Endorsement

U.S. Senate

Charles Schumer
Kirsten Gillibrand

U.S. House

Gary L. Ackerman, CD 5,
Queens
Edolphus Towns, CD 10,
Brooklyn
Carolyn B. Maloney, CD 14,
Manhattan, Queens
Charles B. Rangel, CD 15,
Manhattan

New York State Senate

Manhattan

District
30 Bill Perkins

31 Adriano Espaillat

Bronx

28 José M. Serrano
36 Ruth Hassel-Thompson

Brooklyn

18 Velmanette Montgomery
21 Kevin S. Parker

Queens

10 Shirley L. Huntley
16 Toby Ann Stavisky

Westchester

40 Greg Ball (R)

New York State Assembly

Manhattan

71 Herman D. Farrell Jr.

72 Guillermo Linares

Bronx

76 Peter M. Rivera
77 José Rivera
80 Naomi Rivera
81 Michael Benedetto
85 Marcos Crespo

Brooklyn

40 Inez D. Barron
42 Rhoda S. Jacobs
50 Joseph R. Lentol
52 Joan Millman

Queens

24 David I. Weprin
26 Edward C. Braunstein

28 Andrew D. Hevesi

33 Barbara M. Clark
35 Jeffrion L. Aubry
38 Michael G. Miller
39 Francisco Moya

Suffolk

5 Ginny Fields
6 Philip Ramos

Nassau

20 Harvey Weisenberg



Get Ready for Electronic Voting Machines Page 5

Local 237 Member Services

UNION HEADQUARTERS

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

LOCAL 237 DIVISIONS

CITYWIDE DIVISION, 2nd Fl.

Donald Arnold, Director
Peter Gutierrez, Deputy Director
Al Soto, Law Enforcement
Director
Randy Klein, Assistant Director

HOUSING DIVISION, 2nd Fl.

Remilda Ferguson, Director
Brooklyn, Queens & Staten Island
James Giocastro,
Deputy Director

LONG ISLAND DIVISION

1727 Veterans Memorial
Highway
Suite 308
Islandia, NY 11749
631-851-9800
John Burns, Director
Benedict Carenza,
Deputy Director
John Sepulveda,
Assistant Director
Long Island Welfare Fund:
For information on the various
funds call 800-962-1145

RETIREE DIVISION, 8th Fl.

Provides a variety of pre- and post-retirement services, including pension and health insurance counseling to members. (Pension counseling by appointment, Thursdays only). General retirement counseling and retirement planning series during spring and fall.
212-807-0555
Nancy B. True, Director

LOCAL 237 DEPARTMENTS

(Citywide and Housing)

SKILLED TRADES, 2nd Fl.

Donald Arnold, Director

HEALTH AND SAFETY, 2nd Fl.

Donald Arnold, Director
Diane Stein, Coordinator

MEMBERSHIP, 2nd Fl.

Provides membership services and records, including address changes.

Laverne White,
Administrative Manager

WELFARE FUND, 3rd Fl.

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.
212-924-7220

Paul E. Juergensen, Director

LEGAL SERVICES, 4th Fl.

Lawyers advise and represent members on covered personal legal problems, including domestic relations (family court proceedings, divorce and separation), purchase and sale of a primary residence, wills, adoptions, credit and consumer problems, tenant rights and bankruptcies.
212-924-1220

Office Hours:

Mon.- Fri. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Mary Sheridan Esq., Director

Kenneth Perry Esq.,

Deputy Director

EXECUTIVE OFFICES, 5th Fl.

Gregory Floyd, President
Richard Hendershot,
Vice President

Ruben Torres,

Secretary-Treasurer

PERSONNEL, 5th Fl.

Edmund Kane, Director and
Chief Negotiator

POLITICAL ACTION &

LEGISLATION, 5th Fl.

Local 237 protects members' rights by helping to sponsor legislation that is important to members, and by opposing initiatives that would hurt members.
Patricia Stryker, Director

GRIEVANCES/DISCIPLINARY PROBLEMS, 6th Fl.

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

Mal Patterson, Director of
Grievances and Hearings

Todd Rubinstein, Esq.

Grievance Coordinator

Debbie Coleman, Esq.

Grievance Coordinator

CIVIL SERVICE BAR

ASSOCIATION, 6th Fl.

212-675-0519

Gloria Johnson, Esq., President

Aldona Vaiciunas,

Office Administrator and

Grievance Coordinator

John Picucci, Esq.,

Grievance Representative

CSBA Welfare Fund

Alicare 212-539-5117

COMMUNICATIONS, 8th Fl.

Tania M. Lambert, Editor

Local 237 Newsline

Website: www.local237.org

EDUCATION, 8th Fl.

Provides a variety of training and educational advancement opportunities for members.

212-807-0550

Frederick Dunn, Director

USEFUL NUMBERS

FOR PRE-RETIREES

NYCERS (New York City Employees Retirement System)

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

In Person: 340 Jay Street,

Mezzanine, Brooklyn, NY 11201

Gen'l Information: 347-643-3000

Outside NYC toll-free:

877-6NYCERS

NYCERS Internet

www.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



A Message From The President

Changing Our Destiny Is a Matter of Choice

It seems today you cannot turn on the news without hearing a politician talking about "reform," or "change." Most of their ideas are welcome. Albany is certainly in need of serious reform. Barack Obama famously campaigned on the slogan of change, which he has brought about in a more positive way than critics give him credit for.

But there are some times when too much change, too fast, can be a bad thing. There are institutions, systems and policies that are fundamental to our way of life, and we must be extremely careful when we talk about tinkering with them. Too often, people use change and reform as a cover for what they really mean: destroy and eliminate.

Andrew Cuomo, the New York State attorney general and front-running gubernatorial candidate, has proposed a constitutional convention, which is an opportunity to radically change state laws. No doubt there are great problems in this state that need to be fixed, but a convention would open the flood gates to drastic and dangerous proposals that could hurt working New Yorkers. Lobbyists and special interests would jump on this chance to remake our government in a way that suits themselves, not average citizens, and certainly not working men and women.

Pensions would be at the top of their list. One of the great things about New York State is that a strong pension system is written into the constitution, thereby weaving the benefit into the fabric of this state. The people who built this state from the ground up recognized the importance of protecting workers' quality of life and securing their livelihoods after a lifetime of service. They deliberately made it difficult to change the right to receive pensions that shield workers from the political winds that shift so often in Albany.

Right now those winds are against us. In a tough economic environment, most people outside labor look at pensions and see a burden on the state, but they are misguided. Pensions are really the backbone of the workforce that provides the services that keep the state running. At this time, however, the forces against pensions would use the political climate and the constitutional convention as a chance to attack and weaken our pension system. We cannot let this happen.

I applaud Andrew Cuomo's intentions to improve Albany, but as a labor leader I will take every opportunity to caution him against this drastic route. A constitutional convention could throw the scales off balance in the wrong direction. We vow to fight for public

employee pensions, which were earned the hard way by several generations of union workers.

On the other hand, we look forward to favorable changes and hope to play a part in the city's upcoming Charter Revision Commission. Unlike a constitutional convention, the charter revision process has been handled carefully to ensure that nothing of value is lost. Although the agenda is still being set, it seems they are hoping to tackle many issues — such as term limits — which New Yorkers want to address. I look forward to working with Mayor Bloomberg, good government groups and fellow unions to help bring about changes we can all be proud of.

Because that's what our mission is truly all about: pushing change and reform that help, not hurt, our members.

In the past, we have won many battles in Albany and at City Hall to create new rights and protections for our workers. Members can now live where they want, for example, which has given our working families additional flexibility and freedom in their lives. And we continue to fight for new reforms, such as a law that would strengthen penalties against those who assault school safety agents. With our hard work and your help, we can win those battles and change New York for the better.

That is why it is so important that you take the endorsements in this issue to heart. Our executive board has thought long and hard — interviewing the candidates and reviewing their positions — to determine who will best represent the issues important to Local 237. If we show up at the polls in force and help elect our endorsed candidates, it will allow us to push for the types of reform we want. We don't want to leave it to other people to decide for us. This union must seize its own destiny and play its part in shaping New York for generations to come.



Bill Kresse

ON AIR

Reaching Out With Gregory Floyd

On Sept. 11, the public affairs radio program will air on WWRL AM 1600, Saturday at 3 p.m., when President Gregory Floyd's guest will be New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli. The following Saturday, Sept. 18, at 3 p.m., Floyd's guest will be New Jersey State Senator and former Governor Richard Codey. Upcoming guests this fall will be Magic Johnson, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr., and New York State AFL-CIO President Denis Hughes.

Our cable TV series is going weekly! Local 237: On the Air

Our cable TV series will be aired weekly on several NYC cable TV systems. Check out this month's schedule for your borough below:

Staten Island Community Television (CTV):

Time Warner Ch. 57 and Verizon Ch. 37
Beginning week of Sept. 12, Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m.
Fridays at 6 p.m.

Bronxnet:

Cablevision Ch. 67 and Verizon Ch. 33
Beginning Sept. 14, Tuesdays at 7 p.m.

Manhattan Neighborhood Network (MNN):

Time Warner Ch. 34, RCN Ch. 82 and Verizon Ch. 33
Beginning Sept. 22, Wednesdays at 8:30 p.m.

Brooklyn Community Access (BCAT):

Time Warner Ch. 35, Cablevision Ch. 68, Verizon Ch. 43 & RCN Ch. 83
Sept. 21, Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.

Queens Public Television (QPTV):

Time Warner Ch. 56, Verizon Ch. 36 and RCN Ch. 84
Sept. 6, Monday at 10:30 a.m.
Time Warner Ch. 34, Verizon Ch. 34 and RCN Ch. 82
Sept. 18, Saturday at 8:30 p.m.

President Gregory Floyd speaks with Richard Codey, New Jersey State Senator and former governor, in the WWRL AM 1600 studio.



Teamwork at Baruch College To Aid Minority Businesses



President Gregory Floyd and basketball great Earvin "Magic" Johnson are flanked by campus peace officers at Baruch College in Manhattan on July 20.

Floyd was a guest at a luncheon held at the college as part of a U.S. Tour to launch a partnership between Magic Johnson Enterprises, which provides entertainment products and services, and Aon, a risk management, reinsurance, and human capital consulting firm. The partnership's goal is to educate and create economic opportunities for minority business enterprises.

Pictured, from left, are Baruch College campus peace officers Cpl. Miguel Pena, Bernard St. Andrew, Mahalia Nordrick, Floyd, Johnson, Sgt. Michael Paterson, and maintenance workers Norman Brightman and Joe Pucciarelli.

Teamsters Hispanic Caucus Elects Officers at Convention

The Teamsters Hispanic Caucus Convention was held in Chicago in July, when three new chapters were added in Texas, Las Vegas and Puerto Rico, and new officers were elected.

International Vice President George Miranda was elected president; he is also secretary-treasurer of Teamsters Local 210, and president of Joint Council 16 in New York City. Ron Herrera was elected executive director; he is also secretary-treasurer of Local 396 in Covina, California. Art Cantu was elected first vice president; he is secretary-treasurer of Local 36 in San Diego. Marie Perez

was elected second vice president; she is secretary-treasurer of Local 97 in Union, New Jersey.

Ruben Torres, secretary-treasurer of Local 237, is the Caucus's financial secretary. Its trustees are Tony Gonzalez, president, Local 890 in Salinas, California; Oscar Gonzalez, secretary-treasurer, Local 202 in New York City; Ernesto Medrano, political director, Local 952, Orange, California; Leo Correa, secretary-treasurer, Local 968 in Houston and president of Joint Council 58; and Chuck Baez, business agent, Local 710 in Mokena, Illinois.



Ruben Torres, right, secretary-treasurer of Local 237's Executive Board and financial secretary of the Teamsters Hispanic Caucus, sits with Art Cantu, secretary-treasurer of Local 36, San Diego, who was elected first vice president at the Caucus convention.

Local 237 NEWSLINE

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Local 237 Newsline (USPS 700-000 ISSN 1083-3536) is published 10 times a year in the following months: January, February, March, April, May, (June, July and August will be combined into one issue), September, October, November and December by Local 237, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, 216 West 14 Street, New York, NY 10011.
Periodical postage paid at New York, NY. Postmaster: Send address changes to Local 237 Newsline, 216 West 14th Street, New York, NY 10011.

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Edmund Kane Trustee
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Newsline and www.local237.org

Tania M. Lambert
Editor

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Citywide Division	212-924-2000	Health & Safety	212-924-2000
Housing Division	212-924-2000	Retiree Division/	
Long Island Division	631-851-9800	Pension Counseling	212-807-0555
Welfare Funds	212-924-7220	Membership	212-924-2000
Education Department	212-807-0550	CSBA	212-675-0519
Legal Department	212-924-1220		

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All in a Day's Work

Woodhull HPOs Help Free Peregrine Falcon From Hospital Roof

Todd Heiman, deputy director of Woodhull Hospital Police, responded quickly when maintenance men called to report a large bird was trapped in the mechanical space on the hospital's 10th floor. Heiman assembled a group of hospital police officers, in-house engineers and officers from the New York Police Department to assist in rescuing the bird, which, it turned out, was a federally protected peregrine falcon.

"The mission took about three hours," notes Heiman, because the bird "kept trying to get away from us." Apparently, the falcon gained access to the space — a maintenance area with catwalks and pipes — through an opening on the roof.

After many attempts to grab the falcon, Det. James Halleran of NYPD's Emergency Service Unit Truck 8, grabbed it, using an animal capture lasso. "It was a joint venture; they did a great job," said Heiman.

After shooting some photos, the captors released the falcon from the same roof where it entered. Powerful and fast flying birds, peregrine falcons have adapted to city life, which offers tall buildings with ledges for nesting, water sources, large populations of pigeons and starlings for food, and few natural predators. The birds catch prey in midair after fast pursuit, or rapid dives.



Det. James Halleran holds a peregrine falcon and is flanked, from left, by Todd Heiman, deputy director, Hospital Police, and Joe Raccio, senior stationary engineer, on the roof of Woodhull Hospital.

Coney Island HPOs Nab Man Wanted in Shooting

Hospital police officers at Coney Island Hospital in Brooklyn were alerted at roll call on June 29 to be on the lookout for a man wanted for a felony assault involving a shooting. The Queens Violence Felony Squad also provided a de-

scription of the suspect, adding that he may be visiting the hospital to see his girlfriend in the maternity ward.

At about 7:30 p.m., HPOs Walter Smith and Shayne Maragni spotted a man who fit the description com-

ing into the hospital lobby with two females and heading toward the elevator. Maragni says he watched the suspect press the 8th floor button on the elevator, heading for the maternity ward. "I notified my supervisor that I may have a positive ID," said Maragni. "We ran to the eighth floor to cut him off and called for other units."

HPOs Mohamed Salem, Warren Boller, and Sgts. Jorge Mojica and Louis Torres responded, keeping an eye on the suspect while Maragni removed his uniform shirt and walked undetected toward the suspect for a closer inspection. The suspect was in the waiting area

making a phone call and he appeared jittery, "like he felt us watching," says Maragni, who called the other officers to apprehend the suspect.

Before the HPOs reached him, the suspect bolted, but he was tracked on camera by HPO Guillermo Rose, who told the officers which way he ran. HPO Isa Abdula spotted the suspect entering the ladies room. Smith followed, kicked the stall door open and was joined by Maragni. Together, they subdued and handcuffed the suspect until police officers from the 60th Precinct arrived and took over.

Safety is on Housing's Agenda

Local 237's Housing Division and the Health and Safety Department co-hosted a meeting with New York City Housing Authority officials to discuss safety issues in general and at specific developments.

Among the topics discussed were the summer's near-record heat wave. Remilda Ferguson, director, Housing Division, and Diane Stein, coordinator, health and safety, noted that floor-stripping projects should be suspended during periods when New York City heat alerts are in effect. They also proposed that super-

visors of caretakers check the electronic thermostats kept by heating plant technicians to see if temperatures are suitable to assign certain high-intensity tasks.

Deputy Director James Giocastro and Business Agent David Gonzalez also attended. Pictured below, seated at the right side of the table, are, from left, NYCHA officials Jason B. Krantz, coordinator, environmental health and safety; Joan Ceinski Rabb, labor relations, and Adam Eagle, chief of labor relations. Seated at the left side are Giocastro and Stein.



New York City Housing Authority officials, at right, meet with Housing Division and Health and Safety staff at Local 237.

It's the Greens for Chris Maisano

It's tee-time for Housing Division Deputy Director Chris Maisano, who retired July 30. An avid golfer, Maisano looks forward to quality time on the course, after 32 years of service, beginning in 1978 as a plasterer for the New York City Housing Authority.

Maisano rose through the ranks and was promoted to supervisor of plasterers in 1988 and Manhattan borough supervisor in 1991. A shop steward early in his career, Maisano became a business agent in 2000 and was promoted to deputy director in 2008.

"I did my job 150 percent," says Maisano, adding that his "biggest satisfaction was taking care of my members." He notes that he will miss the members and offers the following advice: "Make sure you come to union meetings and share your concerns. Members are the union. United we win; divided we lose."

Maisano said he will also miss all his Local 237 colleagues, although he will enjoy the company of his wife Joan in Peekskill, N.Y., and his son, Michael, daughter-in-law Debbie, and daughter, Karen.



The Political Scene

Get Ready for Electronic Voting Machines in NYS

Beginning with the Primary Election, Tuesday, Sept. 14, electronic voting machines will replace the old mechanical lever system throughout New York City and the state. Under the new system, launched by local and state boards of elections, voters will receive a paper ballot, a privacy sleeve and a specific pen to use on their ballot. The privacy sleeve helps shield each voter's ballot from view.

Each voter will then be led to a designated area or booth to complete their paper ballot in private by filling in ovals with the pen to mark their choices. If a mistake is made, the voter returns the ballot to the voting inspector at the site, who will issue a new ballot, mark the original as void, and place it in a container with other voided ballots.

After completing the paper ballot, the voter will take it to the electronic ballot scanner, insert it, and wait for the scanner to read the ballot. If the ballot is correct, the scanner signals the voter to "Cast Ballot." If there is a mistake, the scanner signals "Don't Cast – Return Ballot."

Critics of the electronic voting system are con-



A voter feeds a completed ballot into an electronic scanner.

cerned with ballot print size and voter privacy. Nassau County filed a complaint and sued the state after the Board of Elections demanded that pull-lever machines be replaced with computerized voting technology, according to courthousenews.com. The plaintiff said that electronic voting technology "is notoriously vulnerable to systemic hacking,

tampering, manipulation and malfunction."

The Brennan Center for Justice at New York University's law school filed a federal lawsuit in June on behalf of the NAACP, the Working Families Party, and other organizations challenging a flaw that could discount thousands of votes.

The flaw, as reported in *The New York Times*, makes it possible for voters to "accidentally pick too many candidates for a particular race — an error known as 'over-voting.'" The new machines do not automatically return such a ballot. Instead the machines beep and offer a choice on a digital touch screen. The old lever machines prevented over-voting by locking themselves if a voter pulled too many levers. The lawsuit said the design of the new machines is confusing, especially to non-native English speakers, and may cause voters to press the wrong button.

In the 2000 election, thousands of voters in Florida accidentally chose two candidates for president, invalidating their selections, in part due to electronic voting systems, according to a 2009 study by the Florida Fair Elections Coalition.

Social Security Celebrates Its 75th Anniversary

On Aug. 14, our nation celebrated the 75th Anniversary of the Social Security program. Enacted in 1935 by President Franklin Roosevelt, a native New Yorker, the Social Security program continues to provide protection to family income for retired Americans, disabled workers, children, and surviving family members.

To mark the occasion and its significance to New York State, Gov. David Paterson proclaimed August as Social Security Diamond Anniversary Month. Several events were held for New Yorkers to celebrate the milestone, including two on August 19 in Manhattan. One was at Taino Towers at 240 East 123 Street, and another at Hunter College Kaye Playhouse, where attendees were treated

to information, including a new report, "Social Security Works for New York," and entertainment provided by community groups.

Among the experts in the field who planned and participated in the events was Nancy B. True, director of Local 237's Retiree Division, and representatives from the Social Security Administration, Medicare program, New York State Office for the Aging, the Business and Labor Coalition of New York (BALCONY), AARP, the NYS Alliance for Retired Americans, as well as several elected officials.

In its 75th year, the Social Security program continues to be a financial cornerstone for many Americans:

- Nine of 10 individuals age 65 and older received benefits represent-

ing nearly 40 percent of their income.

- Among elderly beneficiaries, 52 percent of married couples and 72 percent of unmarried individuals receive 50 percent or more of their income from Social Security.

- Among elderly beneficiaries, 20 percent of married couples and nearly 41 percent of unmarried individuals rely on Social Security for

90 percent or more of their income.

- An estimated 159 million workers, or 94 percent, are covered under Social Security, while 52 percent of the workforce has no private pension coverage, and 31 percent of the workforce has no retirement savings.

- New York State residents receive more than \$3.5 billion in Social Security benefits each month.

Stryker Counters Blackstone Big Who Attacked Union Pensions

When an official at Blackstone, an investment firm serving the New York City Employees' Retirement System (NYCERS), attacked his biggest clients — retirees in state and local governments — saying their benefits are "too generous," he triggered many protests, including one from Local 237. Patricia Stryker, recording secretary and a designated trustee representing Gregory Floyd on NYCERS board, wrote a letter to the editor of *Pensions and Investments*, which was published in June. In the letter, Stryker set the record straight on who calls the shots.

"I was astounded by comments made by Byron Wien, senior managing director of The Blackstone Group," Stryker wrote, noting that NYCERS provides retirement security for 300,000 city workers and retirees, has \$544 million in assets under management with Blackstone and has paid the firm more than \$16.4 million in fees.

"Our members and retirees have



Patricia Stryker

often accepted lower wages, with the understanding that one day they will be able to retire with dignity," wrote Stryker.

She also asked Blackstone to clarify its position about pension plans for public employees and was pleased that Blackstone's president, Hamilton James, responded to her request by writing to NYCERS' chairman, Bud Larson. James assured NYCERS that Blackstone "believes that retirement security is critical for all workers," and that "working men and women who put in years of service should have the means needed to live comfortably for the balance of their days after retirement, without feeling their financial security is at risk."

Stryker said that NYCERS' trustees are "closely monitoring investment managers" and are "committed to maximizing returns and ensuring that members' retirement assets are not used to finance efforts to undermine their own retirement."

Political Roundup

Congress passed its Wall Street Reform package in July, which President Obama signed into law subjecting more financial companies to federal oversight. The final bill also regulates complex derivatives contracts and creates a Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to oversee the industry. Such an agency may have prevented the economic collapse brought on nearly two years ago by risky lending and investment practices.

- President Obama signed into law a \$26 billion plan to save the jobs of thousands of teachers and government workers as the economy continues to falter and the unemployment rate remains stuck at 9.5 percent. "We can't stand by and do nothing while pink slips are given to the men and women who educate our children and keep our communities safe," Obama said at a Rose Garden news conference.

Calling the plan a "bailout," Republicans objected to raising about half of the money for the plan by increasing taxes on U.S.-based multinational companies. The bill also reduces food-stamp benefits for the poor.

- Albany lawmakers finally passed a state budget on Aug. 3. It was 125 days late. Gov. David Paterson said he was proud that "there was no borrowing," noting that 90 percent of budget reductions were achieved by spending cuts, and 10 percent by taxes. Tax increases include suspending the sales-tax waiver on clothing under \$110, though Paterson's proposed tax on sugared beverages did not survive.

The budget is incomplete, however, requiring legislators to revisit a tax cap on local property taxes, SUNY tuition, and a gap in Medicare funding in the near future.

CELEBRATING A GREAT LOSS



The NYPD School Safety Division held a rousing Grand Finale for its 2009-2010 Semi-Annual Biggest Loser / Winner Competition. On July 1, school safety agents and supervisors, including Assistant Chief Thomas Chan, gathered in the Martin Luther King H.S. auditorium in Manhattan North Command to applaud each other for collectively losing 1,171.6 pounds.

Individual winners included Ramon Garcia, Director Patrol Operations, in first place after losing 16 percent of his weight. "I wanted to lead by example," said Garcia, adding that he lost 68 pounds and hopes to lose 70 more.

Lakeisha Richardson of Queens South won second place, losing 15 percent of her weight; and L2 Tiffany Fielding-Clarke of Queens South won third place, losing 13 percent of her weight, which she said amounted to 34 pounds.

L3 Anthony Morales of Bronx West, a diabetic, said he joined the program for health reasons. He lost 35 pounds, or 13 percent of his weight, and came in fourth.

In addition, the following command-level winners were announced: Central Headquarters took first place with a total loss of 333.6 lbs.; Brooklyn South second with a total loss of 232.2 lbs.; and Queens South third with a total loss of 165.2 lbs.

On hand for the talent show and diet-friendly lunch were Local 237 Citywide Division Director Donald Arnold; Law Enforcement Director Al Soto; and Business Agent Charles Cotto.

"It's about being healthy," exclaimed SSA



Above, contest winners Tiffany Fielding-Clarke and Anthony Morales, center, are flanked from left by an unidentified woman; Steve Gordon, Local 237 trustee; Thomas M. Chan, assistant chief, School Safety Division; Al Soto, director Local 237 Law Enforcement unit; Ramon Garcia, director patrol operations, School Safety Division.

Left, Gary Armstead, deputy director, School Safety Division, works the mic as master of ceremonies.



Chief Thomas Chan greets Vanessa Ortiz, who coordinated the competition and sang in the talent show.

Deputy Director Gary Armstead, the master of ceremonies, who recalled his mom's delicious, but high fat, macaroni and cheese dinners prepared with USDA-issued cheese and butter when he lived at Kingsborough Housing.

The start of the next semiannual competition will be announced soon.

Right, School Safety Agents Sharon Williams of Staten Island Command, left, and Arlene Mercedes of Central Queens Evaluation unit, dispense fruit-kabobs.



Denise Credle hits a high note at the talent show.



We Salute Campus Peace Officer Graduates

The City University of New York Department of Public Safety Training Academy held an Entry Level Graduation Ceremony for campus peace officers on July 9 at York College in Jamaica, Queens.

The 34 officers in the graduating class completed their 12-weeks training and are deployed at CUNY campuses in Manhattan, the Bronx, and Brooklyn.



Above, Level 2 and 3 school safety agents surround Al Soto, director, Local 237 Law Enforcement unit, and Manhattan South Command officials for a group portrait.

Right, school safety agents sit at a table before the presentation.

Below, SSA L3 Frankienette Roberson of Norman Thomas H.S., left, and SSA L3 Travice Brown of Humanities H.S. display their certificates of appreciation.



Manhattan South Hosts SSA Appreciation Day

Manhattan South Command officials marked the end of an especially busy year, which boasted a significant decline in school crimes, with a buffet lunch and certificates of appreciation for all Level 2 and Level 3 school safety agents in their ranks.

The annual event was held in Stuyvesant High School's expansive cafeteria with panoramic views of the Hudson River, where SSAs enjoyed camaraderie and a well-earned break.

Al Soto, Citywide director, law enforcement, was on hand to help present certificates and congratulate the agents.



LONG ISLAND REPORT

Union Makes Time for Service to the Community



Teamsters stand behind their banner at West Babylon's Pathmark. Pictured, from left, are Ben Carenza, deputy director, Long Island Division; John Gallagher, custodian at Half Hollow Hills School District; Trisha Wade, secretary; and Andrew Viegas, business agent. Not pictured are Bobby Verch, chapter chairman and shop steward for Babylon Highway Department, and Kevin Currie, from the International Brotherhood of Teamsters in Washington, D.C., who helped recruit members to IBT's DRIVE Democrat Republican Independent Voter Education program.

Local 237 teamed up with the Lindenhurst Rotary Club at Pathmark in West Babylon recently and held a drive for food and school supplies to help the needy.

Ben Carenza, deputy director of the Long Island Division, a Rotary Club member, notes that Teamsters are committed to helping members as well as the community.

From their post at Pathmark, Local 237 representatives passed out flyers asking shoppers for donations to help the community. All the donations they collected were delivered to Our Lady of Grace Church, in West Babylon, which handled the distribution.



A shopping cart is filled with food donations.

Preparing for School Days in North Babylon

The maintenance and custodian crews in the North Babylon School District work year round to keep the facilities operating at top grade level. Several of these dedicated workers are pictured here.



Maintenance men, from left, are Gerry Sampogne, Bob Bailey, Paul Buehler, Pete Brennan, and Jim Binizzi.



Custodians, from left, are Steve Mirrione, Sam Ferindino, Kieth Kelskey, and John Genova, kneeling.

Added to the Roster of Retirees

Dancing Out

Francisco Baez, holding his retirement plaque, is flanked, from left, by Secretary-Treasurer Ruben Torres and Trustee Edmund Kane. Baez, who says he was the first Dominican hired to work as an elevator mechanic at New York City Housing Authority, has 25 years of service. He lives in Brooklyn with his wife.



They have five daughters, two granddaughters and one grandson.

Baez says he keeps fit by jogging across the Verrazano Bridge with his wife. He also loves to dance, and displayed some fancy footwork on the elevator at union headquarters.



Reel Classic

Donald T. Jones holds his retirement plaque as Secretary-Treasurer Ruben Torres looks on. Jones, a former sergeant in the ranks of campus peace officers, served CUNY for 38 years. The Brooklyn resident plans to study religion and indulge in his hobby: 1930s films.

Jones notes that "1939 had more classic hits in one year than any other

year." Those hits, he notes, include "Gone With the Wind," "The Wizard of Oz," and "The Roaring 20s."

One Day at a Time

Justo P. Santiago, a former evidence and property control specialist assigned to Bronx Property, holds his retirement plaque and is congratulated by President Gregory Floyd, left, and City-wide Law Enforcement Director Al Soto.

Santiago, who officially retired June 29 after 24 years of service, expressed his thanks to "the ones who supported me throughout the years and to New York City's finest, for listening and understanding."

As for the future, Santiago plans to take it "one day at a time," hopes to move out of NYC, and looks forward to traveling.



Passion for Fashion

From left, Secretary-Treasurer Ruben Torres presents a retirement plaque to Theardis McNeal, a former school safety agent with 28 years of service. Al Soto, director of Citywide law enforcement, and

Charles Cotto, business agent, look on.

McNeal, who has three children and was assigned to I.S. 84 in the Bronx East Command, is interested in travel and fashion. She plans to take a Caribbean cruise with her newfound quality time.



Local 237 Notes

Get well wishes to **SCHOOL SAFETY AGENT THERESHA DIXON** at New Utrecht H.S. in Brooklyn South Command.

We'd like to hear from you. If you'd like us to report on what's happening in your life, drop a line to Teamster Notes, Newsline, 216 W. 14 Street, NY 10011, or call 646-638-8636, or e-mail Tlambert@local237.org.

Save the Dates

This month kicks off a series of annual events where members come together to acknowledge pride in their roots and in each other. Check our website at www.local237.org for further details.

- African American Day Parade: Sunday, Sept. 19. Time and location to be announced.
- Latino Heritage Month Celebration: Friday, Sept. 24, 5:30 p.m. at union headquarters.
- Italian Heritage Celebration: Friday, October 22, 5:30 p.m. at union headquarters.

Retirement Planning Seminar Schedule

The Fall 2010 Retirement Planning Seminar includes four sessions held at Local 237 headquarters at 5:30 p.m. Each session covers an important aspect of retirement presented by an expert in the field.

I – Thursday, Oct. 7: Introduction to Retirement Procedures and Benefits

II – Thursday, Oct. 14: Health Insurance & Retiree Benefit Fund Coverage

III – Wednesday, Oct. 20: Financial Planning, Social Security & Legal Services

IV – Thursday, Oct. 28: How to Stay Healthy in Mind and Body.

CONDOLENCES TO...

...the family of **ANTHONY WILLIAMS**, a caretaker J at Harlem River Houses, who died on July 4. Williams is survived by his father, Leroy Williams, a Local 237 retiree, who also served as a caretaker J.

...

...**SSA TIFFANY MARTIN** at I.S. 78 in Brooklyn South Command, on the loss of her father, Robert Smith. The Home Going Service was held June 25 at Crossover Baptist Church in Brooklyn.

...

...**SSA EUNICE EMERY** of Middle School 61 in Brooklyn South on the death of her grandmother, Deaconess Frances Cole, at age 95. The funeral service was held July 26, at the Salem Missionary Baptist Church.

Special condolences to the families of seven members of Teamsters Local 1035 in South Windsor, Conn., who died Aug. 3, following a senseless shooting at their workplace, Hartford Distributors in Manchester, Conn. Teamsters General President Jim Hoffa said in a statement that the shootings "shattered the feeling of safety many feel while at work." He also noted that Local 1035 lost "friends, family, co-workers and a dedicated shop steward and union president," **BRYAN CIRIGLIANO**, 51. Also killed were truck driver **VICTOR JAMES**, with 30 years of service; **CRAIG PEPIN**, **EDWIN KENNISON JR.**, 49, **DOUG SCRUTON**, 56; **FRANCIS FAZIO JR.**, 57, and **WILLIAM ACKERMAN**, 51.

"Local 1035 and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters are doing all we can to help those affected by this tragedy. For now, though, as the facts are still slowly coming out, all we can do is keep the family and friends of the deceased in our thoughts and prayers," added Hoffa.

Jacob Riis Housing Manager Moon-Writes; 4th Play to Open

Sibyl Colon will soon raise the curtain on her fourth play, "This is Why I Whisper." Colon is a housing manager at Jacob Riis Houses, on the lower east side of Manhattan, with nearly 20 years of service.

Colon's play, written and produced under the pen name Sibyl Renae, tackles social injustice. It focuses on a family in upheaval following the death of the matriarch and being forced to deal with mental illness — specifically schizophrenia.

"Be prepared to laugh, cry and feel inspired," says Colon, who captures life's ups, downs, and humor in her script.

Colon says she is motivated by the desire to educate people and hold "a mirror to society."

She turned to playwriting after a near-fatal car accident a year after her husband's death. "I saw the light," says Colon, recalling how she willed herself to live by thinking, "I



**Sibyl Colon
aka Sibyl Renae**

can't leave my baby" — her son, Cesar — before losing consciousness. She was confined to a wheelchair for five years and still suffers side effects.

"I'm passionate about my stories," says Colon, who is writing another play, "Single Mother Blues," a murder mystery.

Colon, who holds a bachelor's degree in communications from the State University of New York at New Paltz, funds her own work and produces about one play each year. She encourages everyone, including her son, now 21, a student at West Virginia University, to "Do what you're meant to do."

Her play, "This is Why I Whisper," will be presented at the Helen Mills Theater, 139 West 26 Street in Manhattan on Oct. 29 at 7:30 p.m. and Oct. 30 at 4:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$40 each and can be purchased online at Brownpapertickets.com or by calling 800-838-3006.

SSA is a Top Break-Dancer

Known among his peers as a wizard on the break-dance floor, Alex "Merlin" Perez spends his workdays as a school safety agent at John Dewey H.S. in the Brooklyn South Command. When he's not on the job, Perez, with one year of service in school safety, performs, competes and holds break-dance workshops whenever and wherever possible.

Perez notes that he has traveled far to break-dance competitions, including Japan, Korea, London and Austria last March. Perez performed for the School Safety Division last January at the talent show fundraiser for the Biggest Loser/Winner Competition. He has many first-place trophies, which are displayed on his wall at home in Brooklyn.

Perez first started competing as a student at Fort Hamilton H.S. in Brooklyn. He has been a member of the Foot Clan, his break-dance crew, since 1998. Passing it on to the next generation, Perez says he is already training Ayden, his 2-year-old son, to break-dance, in hopes he will "carry the torch."

Perez says he looks forward to more travel and meeting more people. He is becoming a familiar face in the "Bboy" circuit where some Dewey students participate. "Occasionally kids who break-dance recognize me at competition," says Perez, who has fans among SSA colleagues, too.

See Perez perform on video at www.local237.org in the "Latest" box on the home page.



SSA Alex Perez displays his magic moves after hours at a competition.



Know Your Rights

By Sanford Rubenstein

Attorney Sanford Rubenstein, who has represented victims in high profile cases in New York for many years, will be writing a column, "Know Your Rights," on a regular basis covering areas of the law that affect our members.

Product Liability

A person or business that regularly sells a product is legally responsible for personal injuries to the user of his or her product if the product is sold in a defective or unreasonably dangerous condition. It does not matter if the seller was cautious in selling the product; all that matters is that the product was sold in a defective or unreasonably dangerous condition.

It is important to understand what is meant by "unreasonably dangerous," because many products cannot be made entirely safe for all consumption or use. For example, whiskey is not unreasonably dangerous because it can make people drunk, or because it is harmful to alcoholics. But if that whiskey contains harmful chemicals or dangerous particles, such as glass, it is considered "unreasonably dangerous."

A product can also be considered defective or unreasonably dangerous if it doesn't have an adequate

warning about its dangers. In fact, in many cases a seller has a legal duty to warn users about foreseeable misuse of the product. If a product is sold in a defective or unreasonably dangerous condition and the user of the product, or an innocent bystander, is harmed by the product, he or she may recover from the seller under strict liability. A victim does not have to prove it was the seller's carelessness that caused the product to be dangerous; all that has to be shown is that at the time the seller sold the product it was defective, and that this defect caused injuries.

Sanford Rubenstein, Esq., is the senior partner at the Brooklyn law firm of Rubenstein & Rynecki, which handles all types of cases for personal injury, medical malpractice and cases involving police misconduct. The law firm can be reached at 718-522-1020.

18 Graduate HPT Program

The Education Department of Local 237 held a ceremony July 29 for 18 graduates of the heating plant technician training program. Frederick Dunn, director, training and education, addressed the graduates, their families and friends, commending the graduates for their achievement and commitment to developing their skills.

Also congratulating the graduates were Remilda Ferguson, director, Housing Division, and Herman Thomas, deputy director of devel-

opment, New York City Housing Authority.

Instructor Frank Aiello presented certificates to the graduates, who enjoyed refreshments afterward. The following members graduated:

Ava Baker, Oscar Brooks, Latonia Burton, Emerald Canty, Timothy Cook, Willie Davidson, Joyce Davis, Manuel Ferreiras, Pedro Figueroa, Elio Fontanez, Susan Harris, Margaret Latta, Gerald Lucas, David Melendez, Jamal Peets, Fredrick Ramirez, James Reid, and Michael Smalls.



David Gonzalez, Housing Division business agent, is flanked by three happy HPT graduates.

Resumen en Español

¡Llegó la Hora de Lucir Nuestra Fuerza Por Medio Del Voto!

La fuerza más grande de nuestro sindicato sería sacar un número crecido de votantes en las primarias próximas, el Martes, Septiembre 14, y en la Elección General el Martes, Noviembre 2. Este año electoral es de importancia crítica para nuestro sobrevivir, ya que la economía continúa fallando. Ignorando la avaricia de Wall Street que desató el colapso económico más grande desde que empezara la Gran Depresión en 1929, oficiales electos mal informados están tratando de tapar los huecos en sus presupuestos haciendo llamado para devoluciones de parte de empleados públicos que trabajan incansablemente, los mismos que han llevado la carga de hacer más con menos recursos, mucho antes del colapso financiero de 2008.

“Tenemos que defender los

Apoye a Los Candidatos Que Protegen Pensiones y Beneficios de Empleados Públicos

derechos que hemos negociado con toda nuestra fuerza,” dijo el Presidente Gregory Floyd. “Nuestra fuerza más grande es lograr que 24,000 miembros voten el Día de Elección para los candidatos que protegerán nuestros intereses.”

Una reciente Encuesta Nacional Sobre Compensación rechaza los reclamos de que la compensación de los empleados públicos es “demasiado generosa.” La encuesta encontró que los empleados públicos ganan 7.4 por ciento menos que los empleados con pericia similar en el sector privado, aun incluyendo los beneficios. Sepa-

radamente, una investigación por el Centro para Excelencia Gubernamental del Estado y Gobiernos Locales y por el Instituto Nacional sobre Seguridad de Jubilación encontró que cuando se toma en cuenta factores tales como educación y experiencia en el trabajo (incluyendo pensiones y cobertura de salud), los empleados del estado y gobiernos locales ganan unos 11 a 12 por ciento menos que trabajadores compa-

rables del sector privado.

La antigua guerra en contra de trabajadores públicos se ha intensificado con la pérdida de empleos y hogares. “Pero los ataques tienen muy poca base en la realidad,” escribe Amy Traub, directora de investigación, Instituto Drum Major para Política Pública en su artículo “Empleados Públicos ‘Mimados Ganan Menos que el Sector Privado.’” Traub enfatizó que “En sus entrañas, la crítica injusta de empleados públicos es una manera insidiosa de dividir a los trabajadores del sector público y privado que en realidad comparten muchos de los mismos intereses.”

El Comité Directivo Hispano de La IBT Elige Nuevos Oficiales

La Convención del Comité Directivo Hispano de los Teamsters se llevó a cabo en Chicago en el mes de Julio, con la incorporación de tres nuevos capítulos en Texas, Las Vegas y Puerto Rico, y la elección de nuevos oficiales.

El Vicepresidente Internacional George Miranda fue electo presidente; él también es el secretario-tesorero del Local 210 de Teamsters, y presidente del Concejo Unido 16 en la Ciudad de Nueva York. Ron Herrera fue electo director ejecutivo, y es también secretario-tesorero del Local 396 en Covina, California. Art Cantu fue electo primer vicepresidente; él también es secretario-tesorero del Local 36 en San Diego. Marie Pérez fue elegida segundo vicepresidente; ella es secretaria-tesorera del Local 97 en Union, Nueva Jersey.



Miembros del Comité Directivo Hispano, incluyendo a Pete Gutiérrez, director adjunto, División de la Ciudad, en camisa azul, flanquean a Luís Gutiérrez (no relacionados), el Congresista Demócrata de Chicago.

Rubén Torres, secretario-tesorero del Local 237 es el secretario financiero del Comité Directivo. Los fideicomisarios son: Tony González, secretario-tesorero, Local 20 en la Ciudad de Nueva York; Ernesto Medrano, director político, Local 952, Orange, California; Leo Correa, secretario-tesorero, Local 968 en Houston y presidente del Concejo 58; y Chuck Báez, agente de negocios, Local 710 en Mokena, Illinois.

Seminarios de Planificación Para Jubilación

Los Seminarios de Planificación Para Retiro del Otoño del 2010 incluyen cuatro sesiones que se llevarán a cabo en la sede del Local 237 empezando a las 5:30 p.m. Cada sesión cubrirá un aspecto importante de jubilación, presentado por un experto en la rama.

I – Jueves, Octubre 7: Introducción a los Procedimientos y Beneficios de Retirarse

II – Jueves, Octubre 14: Seguro de Salud, y Cobertura del Fondo de Beneficios para Jubilados

III – Miércoles, Octubre 20: Planificación Financiera, el Seguro Social y Servicios Legales

IV – Jueves, Octubre 28: Cómo Mantenerse Saludable en Cuerpo y Mente

Reserve Estas Fechas

Este mes comienza una serie de eventos que se celebran anualmente, donde los miembros se reúnen para reconocer el orgullo mutuo que sienten hacia sus raíces culturales. Vaya a nuestra página de Internet al www.local237.org para más detalles.

■ Desfile del Día de Afro-Americanos: Domingo, Septiembre 19. La hora y el sitio de reunión serán anunciados.

■ Mes de Celebración de Herencia Latina: Viernes, Septiembre 24, 5:30 p.m. en la sede del sindicato

■ Celebración de la Herencia Italiana: Viernes, Octubre 22, 5:30 p.m. en la sede del sindicato.

El Seguro Social Celebra Su 75º Aniversario

El 14 de Agosto, 2010, nuestra nación celebró el 75º Aniversario del Programa de Seguro Social. Establecido en 1935 por el Presidente Franklin Roosevelt, un nativo de Nueva York, el Programa de Seguro Social continúa proveyendo protección de ingresos a Americanos jubilados, trabajadores discapacitados, sus hijos y familiares sobrevivientes.

Para festejar la ocasión y su significado para el Estado de Nueva York, el Gobernador David Patterson emitió proclamación elevando el mes de Agosto como el Mes de Aniversario Diamante del Seguro Social. Para celebrar el acontecimiento, varios eventos fueron

planeados para los Neoyorkinos, incluyendo dos el 19 de Agosto en Manhattan. Uno se realizó en Taino Towers, 240 Este, Calle 123, y el otro en el Kaye Playhouse de Hunter College, en los cuales los concurrentes recibieron información, incluyendo un nuevo reporte, “El Seguro Social Trabaja Para Nueva York,” y entretenimiento provisto por grupos de la comunidad.

Entre los expertos en la rama que planearon y participaron en los eventos figuró Nancy B. True, directora de la División de Jubilados del Local 237, y representantes de la Administración del Seguro Social, el Programa Medicare, la Oficina Para Personas Mayores del Estado

de Nueva York; la Coalición de Negocios y Movimiento Laboral de Nueva York (BALCONY); AARP, la Alianza Para Americanos Retirados, y también varios oficiales electos.

En su 75º año, el Programa del Seguro Social continúa como la piedra angular financiera para muchos Americanos:

Nueve de cada 10 individuos de edad 65 y mayores recibieron beneficios que representan el 40 por ciento de sus ingresos.

Entre los beneficiarios de tercera edad, el 52 por ciento de parejas casadas y el 72 por ciento de individuos no casados reciben el 50 por ciento o mas de sus ingresos del Seguro Social.

Entre los beneficiarios de tercera edad, el 20 por ciento de parejas casadas y casi el 41 por ciento de individuos no casados dependen del Seguro Social para el 90 por ciento o mas de sus ingresos.

Se estima que 159 millones de trabajadores, o el 94 por ciento, están cubiertos por el Seguro Social, mientras que el 52 por ciento de la fuerza laboral no está cubierta por un plan privado de jubilación, y el 31 por ciento de la fuerza laboral no tiene ahorros para su retiro.

Cada mes, los residentes del Estado de Nueva York reciben más de \$3.5 billones en beneficios del Seguro Social.

GREETINGS FROM OUR HOUSE TO YOURS

New York City Housing Authority employees are vital to maintaining the developments that nearly half a million residents call home. The members pictured here work in Brooklyn and are among the 8,000-strong Local 237 members who tend the grounds, clean and repair the facilities and respond to tenants' needs — come rain or shine.



Caretakers join Shop Steward Elijah Bey on the grounds of Lafayette Gardens.



Supervisor of Grounds George Boone maintains his utility vehicle at Brevoort Houses.



Shop Steward Arlene Diggs greets caretakers as they drive a utility vehicle at Wyckoff Gardens.



Caretakers, including an assistant supervisor and supervisor, gather in a Brevoort Houses office.



Housing Assistant Valerie Robbins, with 22 years of service, stays on top of the workload at Lafayette Gardens Houses.



Heating Plant Technician Kiesha Dawkins speaks to Shop Steward Thorton Bynum, who is at the wheel on the grounds of Stuyvesant Gardens.

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