



Local 1321 News

DISTRICT COUNCIL 37, AFSCME, AFL-CIO
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Nazima Mohammed, Kane Noel**

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**Edith Batchler, Sharla Emery
Mike Wong**

President's Message

Cooperation and trust have made your work better.



John Hyslop
Local 1321 President

WHEN I became president in 2010, the Library's Director Thomas Galante was facing a self-inflicted budget crisis he claimed forced him to layoff library staff. For the next five years, him and his leadership team roiled the library in conflict, mistrust, stupid management and financial decision, pettiness, meanness, and radical incompetence.

Every budget season, with Mayor Bloomberg threatening budget cuts, the library threatening more layoffs, the Union became the primary advocate for our budget. Branch staff and the local would coordinate advocacy events throughout the system and we would invite the politicians. At these events the City Council member and I would be there and Galante would not even show up or if he did, make a cursory appearance.

Every grievance initiated and labor-management meeting held became an exercise in distrust, yelling, and stupid administrative intransigence. At one infamous one, our negotiator stood up and yelled "fucking amateurs" and we all walked out. At another, they unilaterally told us they were contracting out custodial work (later the Union discovered the contracts were more expensive than hiring full-time library staff). Nothing positive for library staff was accomplished at those meetings.

Finally, the Union initiated a New York Daily News expose that exposed a host of stupid corruption and spending malfeasance. The Trustees removed Galante and most of his leadership team was let go or left.

(Continued on page 10)

Local 1321 Election Committee Report.

THIS past spring we held elections for the Local's executive board.

Nominations were at the May membership meeting; ballots were sent to members addresses on file with DC 37; and ballots were mailed back and counted in June.

Of the 922 ballots mailed out, only 278 were returned, 30% of our membership.

The Election Committee received a number of questions but the most frequent one we received was about why members received different ballots. The reason is, only contested Executive Board positions are on the ballot, and

members receive a ballot for the races you are eligible to vote in.

For example, members in Librarian classifications get to vote for Vice President of Librarians, while members in other classifications don't get to vote for this office.

In our opinion, the voter response was extremely low: 30% of the eligible voters voted. This is your union. Your Union is only as strong as its members. We hope that in the future more members vote! You might not think it is important, but it is.

Congratulations to all the winners!

Election Committee
Bonnie Hodes, Chair

Donated Sick Leave Bank

PLEASE donate to the Donated Sick Leave Bank. If you have sick leave hours that you feel you are not going to use, please consider donating to the Sick Leave Bank. If you are retiring and you will have sick leave left over after you have converted it to your terminal leave, donate it to the Sick Leave Bank. The form to donate sick leave is on the HRD sec-



tion of the staff website.

This program has proved to be extremely successful, ensuring our friends and colleagues who have exhausted their time because of a catastrophic illness, have a salary, medical insurance, and DC 37

benefits. Please consider donating your time.

Union Strong The Trump Tax Scam

President Donald Trump's promise that his Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 would turbo-charge the economy and help working families prosper has proved to be bogus.

In reality, Corporate America and the Power Elite have made out like bandits at the expense of middle-class families.

Here's the plan's impact:

A Greater Wealth and Income Divide

The new law increased after-tax incomes of people with incomes of more than \$1 million by 3.3 percent, compared to only 1.3 percent or less for people earning less than \$100,000.

Stagnant Wages

Inflation-adjusted wages grew by 2.0 percent in 2018. But for ordinary workers ("production and non-supervisory workers," as classified by the government), the wage growth was only 1.2 percent.

A Corporate Windfall

The plan lowered the corporate tax rate from 35 percent to 21 percent. Over a decade, the projected savings for corporations will be \$1.35 trillion.

Weak Economic Stimulus

The tax plan had "a relatively small (if any) first-year effect on the economy," according to a Congressional Research Service report.

The economic growth rate did increase from 2.2 percent in 2017 to 2.9 percent in 2018, but that's far less than Trump promised. The increase resulted entirely from higher oil prices, according to a University of Pennsylvania study.

Miniscule Corporate Hiring and Investment

Eighty-five percent of corporate economists say the tax cuts "have not caused their firms to change hiring or investment plans," a Na-

tional Association for Business Economics 2018 survey found.

Companies opted instead for a buyback bonanza to benefit corporate titans and shareholders. Corporate share buybacks hit a record \$1.1 trillion in 2018.

Starving Government

The cuts will add an estimated \$1 trillion to the federal deficit by 2022.

Corporate tax revenues plunged 31 percent in 2018. The Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy says the reduction amounts to "a more precipitous decline than in any year of normal economic growth in U.S. history."

The Cost:

The \$1.9 trillion tax giveaway could have paid for

- the elimination of childhood poverty;
- a doubling of the federal investment in climate science;
- extending universal access to affordable child care and pre-K;
- a \$10,000 raise for teachers in high-poverty schools; free community college and addressing the opioid epidemic.



Sources: Americans for Tax Fairness, Center for American Progress, Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, Congressional Budget Office, Center for Public Integrity and the Congressional Research Service.

We must resist.

Join the labor movement in the fight for shared prosperity!

President's Message (continued from page 1)

Local 1321 members were in desperate need for an Administration that would act as partners to improve our working lives. In the Fall of 2015, the trustees hired Lew Finkelman. In those first few months, the Union and Administration's relationship was tense. Our initial conversations were tentative, but soon we realized Lew would listen and honor his commitment. After a few months, Lew resolved some very substantial issues.

The one issue that produced the first real thaw was Lew agreeing to our Freedom of Information Request to see the contracts for security guards and custodians. After some very honest discussion about them, the Library cancelled the contracts and hired full-time custodians and security guards.

In quick succession, issues that the prior Administration could never resolve, got resolved, including two major ones.

- The Trustees hired Dennis Walcott and he agreed to not contest over one hundred library employees' desire to join the union. Though we had (have) many bumps along the road to making these newly unionized members whole, all of those bumps were smoothed over because Lew and the Union trusted each other to cooperate.

- We negotiated a new contract. For over seventeen years, Local 1321 and the Administration had not been able to negotiate a new contract. The Union made so many attempts but prior Administrations were too inept, incompetent, insecure, and selfish to negotiate a contract that would improve the lives of their workers and make the Library a better place to work.

With this new Administration, we were able to negotiate a contract with some very significant improvements. That could only happen with trustworthy partners.

Everything this Administration and Union have recently achieved was because we cooperated and trusted each other - eliminating excessive contracting out; a new working conditions contract; a massive shift differential/hourly rate/overtime grievance settled amicably and rationally; bedbugs; the incorporation of many previously non-union staff into the union; grievances that get settled without going to arbitration; reclassification of staff into appropriate classifications; and so much more. Whenever the Union had an issue we would bring it to Lew's attention and he would spend the time working on it. Sometimes we got everything we wanted. Sometimes we worked out a solution where we shared results. And sometimes we got denied. However, we always knew an honest effort was made to resolve the issue.

Lew Finkelman viewed the union, not as adversaries attempting to undermine HIS library, but as the custodians, librarians, project managers, security guards, adult learning teachers, finance staff, drivers, IT workers, supervisors, maintainers, clerks, HR staff, who are the library. He saw all library employees as partners who deserve to be treated equally and fairly. His humble, honest, generous, selfless, common-sense, adaptable, won't "bullshit" you approach to his job made the working lives of Queens Library employees better. He created trust with Local 1321. That trust reduced labor conflict and your Union and Administration cooperated. He is a model for his successor.

The Executive Board



L to R: Margaret Gibson, Executive V.P.; Thomas Wyn, Blue Collar V.P.; Roma Ramdhan, Clerical V.P.; Andrew Barfield, Blue Collar Rep.; Barbara Holloway, Clerical Rep.; John Hyslop, President; Chante Gaines, Delegate; Pat Eshun, Librarian Rep.; Ann-Marie Josephs, Secretary; Kacper Jarecki, Delegate; Sharon Diamond-Velox, V.P. Librarians; Kyle Douglas, V.P. Non-Librarian Professional and Technical; Kane Noel, Delegate

IN June 2019, Local 1321 members elected a new Local 1321 Executive Board. We have new leaders for Vice President for Librarians, Blue Collar Representative, and Delegates. The remaining board members ran unopposed. Congratulations to the 2019-

2022 Executive Board. Your new board is listed on the cover of this newsletter.

Everyone should remember, we represent you! Your active participation ensures that your executive board is the best. This collaboration accomplished a lot these past three years including.

- Incorporating thirty-six classifications into our bargaining unit with over 140 new members in those classifications;
- Ensuring those new members enjoy all the rights, salaries, and job descriptions union members have;
- Negotiating a contract that had expired in 1999;
- Ensuring members are paid for the work they perform;
- Celebrating our 50th anniversary;
- Creating a Local 1321 Scholarship for our children;
- Creating a common-sense process for custodial shift changes;
- Advocating for budgets that ensure smooth operation of the library;
- Creating a Legislative Committee that identifies legislation that expands, enhances New York City and State's libraries and unions;
- Continuing to enforce Queens Library policies and procedures and the contract they signed with Local 1321;
- Continuing to advocate for members throughout the system to ensure their work-life and space is safe, clean, adequate.

We will have another successful term representing Local 1321 members. We are honored that you respected our efforts and advocacy and re-elected us. Thank you.

Local 1321 Scholarship



LOCAL 1321 is offering the Local 1321 Scholarship again this year to our members' children. The goal of the scholarship is to provide them with financial assistance towards higher education. Furthering one's education

provides an amazing array of benefits. However, the cost of higher education can make achieving that goal difficult, if not impossible. Local 1321 members recognize this challenge and is pleased to offer two scholarships. Each scholarship is a maximum of \$2,500 and will be awarded to two members' children who demonstrate high achievement in academics, provide service to the community and of good moral character.

To qualify, the applicant must:

- be child/children of Queens Library Guild, Local 1321 member;
- be currently enrolled in a two or four-year college, university, or vocational-technical school accredited by a "nationally recognized" accreditor (or, for certain vocational institutions, approved by a recognized state approval agency). To check if your school is accredited, see <https://www.ed.gov/accreditation?src=rn>;
- have a minimum grade point av-

erage of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale, or equivalent.

Applicants must:

- provide official high school transcript and/or current college transcript including all completed coursework;
- provide an acceptance letter from an accredited school;
- provide two personal, educational or professional letters of recommendation, documenting the applicant's character, professional and/or academic strengths (no family members are allowed to write recommendations);
- write a 1,000 word essay answering the question, "Why do you think you deserve this scholarship?" Please include in your essay:
 - your community involvement,
 - your journey to college, academic work, and
 - your future goals.

The requested documents must be submitted to the scholarship committee by June 20, 2019. They can be emailed to local1321@gmail.com or mailed to:

Queens Library Guild/Local

1321 Scholarship Committee
54-22 Skillman Ave
Woodside, NY 11377.

The committee will conduct a blind-review of the applications and announce the winners on August 1, 2019.

If you have any questions please call 718-779-0787 or email local1321@gmail.com.

We look forward to awarding these scholarships and making higher education more attainable.

Something New and Awesome for our Members.

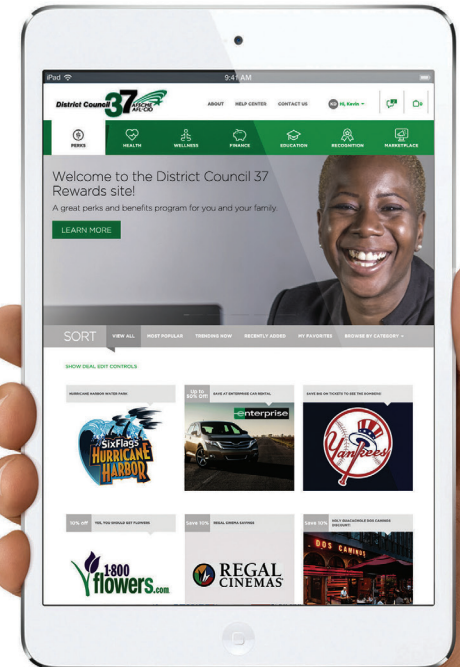
Announcing DC 37 Rewards!

DC 37 Rewards is an exciting new service for District Council 37 members and their families. Enjoy awesome benefits, savings and prizes from trusted partners who will go the extra mile for our members. Whether it's tickets to a ball game or an amazing price on a hotel room, look to DC 37 Rewards for real savings every day.

Registration is free and easy!

Just follow these steps and you'll been joying all the site has to offer in minutes!

1. Go to: www.DC37Rewards.com
2. Click Sign Up
3. Fill out the form and use the group code: **DC37YES** (case sensitive)
4. Enjoy the site!



REWARDS www.dc37rewards.com
DC37 Rewards is powered by RewardJet Inc.

DC 37 New Executive Board

As you may know, in January 2019 DC 37 elected a new executive board and leadership. Henry Garrido was re-elected DC 37 Executive Director, Shaun Francois, was elected DC 37 President, and I was elected one of twenty-five DC 37 vice presidents. Also, elected was Maf Misbah Uddin DC 37 Treasurer, however charges were filed against Bro. Uddin for how he ran his campaign. AFSCME ruled that the election had to be rerun. DC 37 ran the election again in June 2019 and Bro. Uddin won again.

In regards to the DC 37's Secretary position, Sis. Deborah Pitts ran unopposed. However, since August 2018 Sec-

retary Pitts had not produced any minutes for the meetings she is required to produce. At the May 2019 DC 37 Executive Board meeting, the Executive Board suspended Sis. Pitts from the position and filed charges with AFSCME to have her removed. In the interim, I was made DC 37's acting-Secretary. I am honored that my fellow board members recognized my work.

DC 37 is a large and complicated organization with many moving parts and many challenges. Along with my fellow board members, we are making big strides at DC 37; increasing our membership; providing quality benefits; and fighting for all members.



Union Headquarters is finally being renovated!

FOR awhile now, DC 37's headquarters at 125 Barclay Street has been in need of serious repair. Its elevators were not up to code. Its roof was falling apart. It still had not fully recovered from SuperStorm Sandy. And most importantly, the building did not follow FDNY code for fire suppression. All of this and more, forced DC 37 to make the difficult decision and renovate the whole building.

To maintain services while the building is being renovated, DC 37 rented two floors across lower Manhattan at 55 Water Street. There they will have most of their operations. Representatives from DC 37's Welfare Fund services - legal services, personal services unit, housing, prescription



coverage, and other medical services - will stay at 125 Barclay Street.

Local 1321 representatives are still available and can be reached through all the regular channels.

Legislative Committee

THE inaugural year of Local 1321's Legislative Committee started late but had a very real impact on the legislation we supported. At the March 2019 General Membership meeting, the membership created the Legislative Committee to identify and advocate for legislation that will have an impact on New York State's public libraries and education, and workers' rights.

The committee met in person and online and identified three pieces of state legislation that met our criteria of benefiting New York State's public libraries, education, and our fellow workers:

- Assembly bill 02750 and Senate bill 02837 to give worker protections to farm workers and allow them to form a union;
- Assembly bill 03771 and Senate bill 05589 to change the state capital funding formula for libraries in disadvantaged communities;
- Assembly bill 02444 and Senate bill 02421 to ensure all New York public schools have librarians.

We met with District Council 37's Legislative Department and NYLA to discuss our agenda and for them to offer advice and support. Both were very interested in working with us and provided us with very useful assistance. We created memoranda of support for the bills. DC 37 distributed the memoranda and we called our state legislators.

In regards A03771/S05589, for many years the Assembly had always passed that bill and the Senate would not take up the bill. After we sent our

memorandum of support, we contacted our Queens senators. After speaking with Senator Leroy Comrie, he volunteered to co-sponsor the legislation!

By the end of the 2019 session, the Senate voted for the legislation and the bill was sent it to the Governor's office for his signature.

In regards to A02750/S02837, again, the Assembly had voted to give farm workers basic worker protections and union rights but the Senate

never voted on the bill. This year would be different. Along with our fellow union brothers and sisters, we distributed our memorandum of support and contacted our representatives. We had a few very engaging telephone conversations with our representatives supporting this legislation. At the very end of the session, both houses passed it and on July 16, 2019 Governor Cuomo signed it.

In regards to A02444/S02421, the Legislature did not take this bill very far.

In the fall, our committee will begin planning for next year's session. We will meet with NYLA to discuss library legislation. We will meet with DC 37's Legislative Department and discuss labor/DC 37 legislation. After evaluating the legislation, we will present to the membership the list of legislation Local 1321 should advocate for and ask for their endorsement.

Even though the Senate now has a Democratic majority that allowed bills to pass the Senate, our Queens representatives still need to hear from their constituents. They need to know what is important to New York. We let them know and they voted for legislation that will make our lives better.



MLC General Membership meeting

The following was emailed to all the unions of the Municipal Labor Committee (MLC).

"At today's MLC General Membership meeting, Harry Nespoli made reference to Medicare Part B differential for 2018. Below is the information for those eligible to receive the differential.

Medicare Part B reimbursements for the calendar year 2018 for Medicare-eligible retirees and Medicare-eligible dependents were issued in April 2019.

Any retirees who were Medicare eligible on or after calendar year 2016 are eligible for \$134.00 per month (12 months= \$1,608 per each eligible person). They receive this amount automatically.

Any retirees who were Medicare eligible prior to the calendar year 2016 must complete the Medicare Part B differential form (see below link) and provide SSA-1099 for the calendar year 2018. Those retirees who submit this form may receive an additional amount up to \$300 under the Medicare Part B differential. This payment will be issued in Spring 2020.

<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/olr/downloads/pdf/health/med-b-differential-form-2018.pdf>

However, any retirees who are applying for IRMAA 2018 don't need to complete this form, since these retirees and eligible dependents will receive \$300 additional payment automatically in November 2019 after the IRMAA payments are issued in October 2019"

This is new to most city retirees, but for certain groups, including Queens

Library retirees this is not new.

In a video on OLR's website, <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/olr/health/health-videos/health-video-medicarepart-breimbursement.page>, they state that TIAA, Brooklyn Library employees, Queens Library employees, and line of duty survivors must complete OLR's differential form to be reimbursed the whole Medicare Part B reimbursement.

Every year, NYC and related employees who participate in Medicare and earn below a certain amount of money are reimbursed their Medicare Part B costs from the following year (thanks to our unions). Periodically, retirees' Medicare payments go up. For NYPD, FDNY, DoE, Cultural Trust, and NYCers retirees, their Medicare Part B reimbursements go up as Medicare Part B costs go up. This happens because these five pensions tell OLR the individual's retirement date. For TIAA, Brooklyn and Queens retirees, and line of duty survivors, their reimbursements do not automatically rise because, in the case of Brooklyn and Queens, the NYS Retirement System does not tell OLR the retirement date.

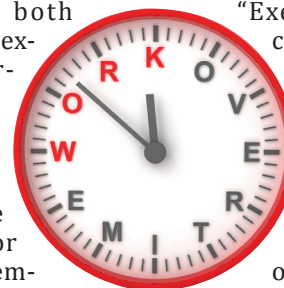
Local 1321 proposed that DC 37, OLR, Brooklyn, and Queens locals and libraries work together to resolve this situation going forward and backwards. We are confident that thousands of retirees are not getting their full reimbursement amount and that is not acceptable.

We look forward to making all retirees whole, automatically. For right now, Queens Library retirees must complete the Medicare Part B **Differential Reimbursement Form** from OLR to get their whole reimbursement.

Refresher on Earning Overtime

This article first appeared two years ago in our newsletter. We are reprinting it because we all need a reminder.

ALL union staff, both exempt and non-exempt, earn overtime if they work more than one hour over their normal hours of work. A quick distinction, for overtime work the Federal Labor Standards Act divides employees into two categories:



"Exempt"; and people who can earn overtime, "Non-exempt." In our local, exempt employees are in Finance, ISD, and IT, Regardless of your exempt or non-exempt status, as members of Local 1321, you earn overtime.

The following are rules for FLSA non-exempt employees.

1. Overtime and standby time have to be voluntary or involuntary and both have to be given in writing.
2. Any overtime between 35 and 40 hours in a week gets compensated in straight time. If involuntary, it gets paid in cash. If voluntary, it gets paid in time (comp time).
3. Any overtime over 40 hours in a week gets compensated in cash at time and a half.
4. If you are recalled from home for authorized involuntary overtime, you are guaranteed at least four hours of overtime paid in cash. If it's voluntary, you are paid in time but it has to be a minimum of four hours. Regardless if it is voluntary or involuntary, all work over 40 hours is paid at time and a half.
5. If you volunteer to standby, you receive 1/2 hour of compensatory time for every 1 hour of standby time. If you are required, ordered and/or scheduled on an involuntary basis to standby you will receive overtime payment in cash on the basis of 1/2 hour for each 1 hour of standby time.
6. Very importantly, a supervisor cannot change your schedule to avoid paying overtime. For example:
 - a. Your schedule is 10 am - 6 pm.
 - b. Your branch needs emergency coverage until 8 pm tomorrow and you are the only one who can provide it.
 - c. Your supervisor cannot ask you to change your schedule to 12 pm - 8 pm.
 - d. You will work from 10 am - 8 pm and receive 2 hours of overtime compensated in time.

As of this writing, Local 1321 and the Library's Administration are negotiating rules for FLSA exempt employees. We will distribute these rules to the affected employees when they have been finalized.