

**Volume 35 Issue 3  
April 2022**

**AFT Local 3037/ NYSUT Local 22-220**

# The BEES Beacon

**BOCES Educators of Eastern Suffolk**



*From the Lighthouse  
in the East  
to the Lighthouse  
in the West*



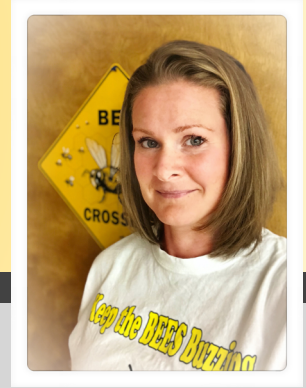
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# President - Asha Mazza-Shaw

## Union Strong

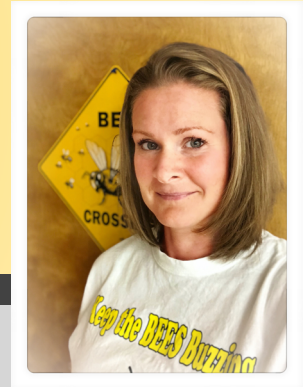


Greetings BEES members. Spring is in the air, and soon we will be getting ready to hang up our “days until summer” countdown signs. I would like to take a moment to thank each and every BEES member for your continued support during this school year. As an Executive Board, we asked you for patience and time to work on things, and you stuck by us. I know that things are still challenging, but there is light at the end of the tunnel. By now, I hope you have heard about the two MOAs (Memorandum of Agreement) that we were able to negotiate on behalf of both the Yellow and the Blue contracts. Both of these agreements bring increases in pay that have been long overdue. Both of these MOAs are a representation of what we are able to do when we remain cohesive and work together for a common goal; I assure you that our work will continue. We have also set the stage for formal negotiations for the Yellow (paraprofessional) contract to begin this summer. We will be working diligently on your behalf to make the language of that contract work better for our members.

I had the opportunity to participate in the NYSUT RA (Representative Assembly) in Albany at the beginning of the month. This conference is a large gathering of NYSUT leaders, local union leaders and NYSUT delegates where resolutions are discussed, caucuses meet and local leaders have a chance to voice their concerns to various leaders. This year, Dr. Betty A. Rosa, Commissioner of Education, along with her Senior Deputy Commissioner of Education, Jim Baldwin, were there to meet with local presidents. We were able to share our concerns with them regarding state testing, school violence and more.



## Union Strong

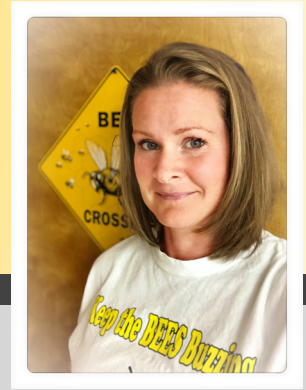


Following the Commissioner, we met with NYSUT President Andy Pollatta, Executive Vice President Jolene DiBrango, Second Vice President Ron Gross and Secretary-Treasurer J. Philippe Abraham. Local presidents from around NY were able to express their concerns during this meeting, many of which echoed our own concerns here at ES BOCES. As the weekend continued, we heard from AFT and NEA Presidents Randi Weingarten and Becky Pringle about many issues affecting unions today. We also learned about some great gains unions have made recently including a history-making win for Amazon employees as the first union was formed by Chris Smalls. All in all, it was a very informative weekend, and I walked away with some great information about membership benefits that we will be sharing out to your programs, so be sure to keep an eye out for that! To read more about the NYSUT RA check out this link - [https://www.nysut.org/news/2022/april/ra-2022-resolutions?fbclid=IwAR3UvjhTk48m67t\\_ZoWGF6A-1h9N8E\\_9m1Vk\\_8T5mTAbi-7mnwP2sEe4Z20](https://www.nysut.org/news/2022/april/ra-2022-resolutions?fbclid=IwAR3UvjhTk48m67t_ZoWGF6A-1h9N8E_9m1Vk_8T5mTAbi-7mnwP2sEe4Z20)



# President - Asha Mazza-Shaw

## Union Strong



NYSUT continues to lobby for causes that affect our membership. One of the topics discussed at the RA was that of Tier inequity and how NYSUT has begun lobbying for changes to Tier 6. If you are unaware of the tier issue, I will give you a short breakdown of the issue. In 2010, Tier 5 was started, which requires members to contribute 3.5% for the entirety of their career (vs. 3% for 10 years for Tier 4). The minimum age for retirement was increased from 55 in Tier 4 to 57 with 30 years of credit in Tier 5. Then, two years later, Tier 6 was added, changing the minimum age to 62 and making more changes to contributions.

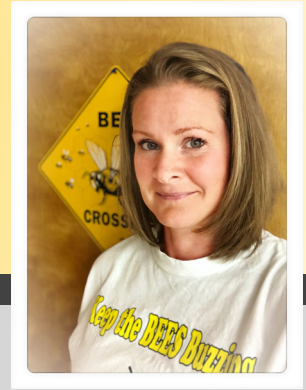
Members of Tier 6 must contribute a higher percentage as their salaries increase. NYSUT representatives are meeting with legislators around the state to discuss these inequities and other concerning issues.

Although this issue affects about a quarter of our younger members, we have been through this before with Tiers 3 and 4. At that time, it was Tiers 1 and 2 who stepped up and fought for their union brothers and sisters. Now it is up to those of us in Tiers 3 and 4 to take up the cause.

Our Vote Cope dollars help support lobbying for issues such as this one. NYSUT is our most powerful advocate when fighting these battles, and I have no doubt that there will be change for the better.

# President - Asha Mazza-Shaw

## Union Strong



In addition, the 2022-2023 state budget has been approved. NYSUT President Andy Pallotta issued the following statement regarding the historic budget: “This budget delivers historic resources for education and continues the promise to fully fund Foundation Aid, a critical step years in the making. It provides funding to hire mental health staff to support students at every level and to bolster professional learning for educators through teacher centers and implicit bias training. But redefining public education as a system that truly supports every child is unceasing work, which is why we’ll continue fighting for dedicated funding for community schools that would deliver transformative supports for families in every community. We also need to tackle the ongoing teacher shortage, which this budget takes important action on. That includes the first steps toward critical retirement system reforms that will ensure public servants in Tier 6 have access to a high-quality, fair pension. This gives us yet another tool for attracting the next generation of teachers, School-Related Professionals and public employees into state and local service.” You can read more about the enacted school aid budget runs here: [https://nyassembly.gov/2022budget/2022files/enacted/2022school\\_aid.pdf](https://nyassembly.gov/2022budget/2022files/enacted/2022school_aid.pdf)

While we will not be holding our BEES Retiree Honorarium in person this year, we will be sending out a gift to each of this year’s retirees and celebrating you all at our end of the year Zoom meeting. We truly wanted to have an in-person Honorarium, but, at the time we would have had to book the venue, the COVID numbers were still very high, and we did not feel we would be making a safe decision for our membership. We are looking forward to moving back to an in-person Retiree Honorarium next year as long as we can do it safely.

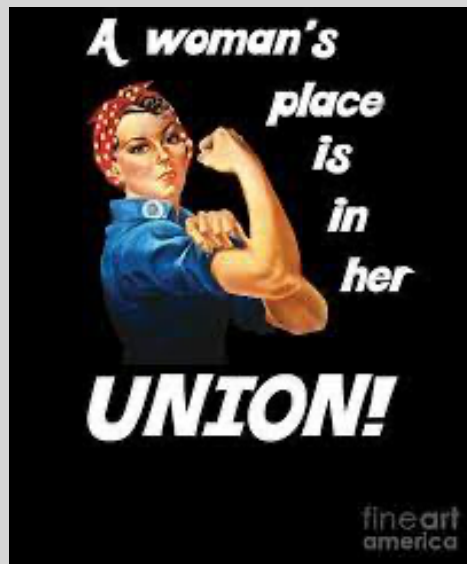
## Union Strong



I am always honored to represent the BEES at any meeting, committee or function, as I know the rest of the Executive Board members are as well. During the course of the school year, we have been busy getting to know all of the new Human Resource administrators/employees and forming productive working relationships with them. I am happy to say that we have some shared vision when it comes to moving the agency forward. It may be frustrating at times, and we may not always get everything we want as soon as we want it, but we have begun the hard work, and we are confident that positive change will come. As always, thank you for your continued support and for sticking with the BEES!

In Solidarity,

*Asha*





# Executive Vice President - Al Rios

## NYSUT Celebrates 50 Years!



Greetings to all our BEES members.

This April marks the golden anniversary of the creation of the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT). A union of over 600,000 teachers, administrative workers, and healthcare workers in the state of New York. Our local, the BEES, is actively involved with NYSUT and as your delegates we will represent our local April 1 & 2 in Albany when NYSUT has their Representative Assembly. This year we will gather with other locals throughout New York State to debate resolutions to set the union's course on legislation, health care, Pre-K through post grad education, organizing and retirement. We will also consider amendments to the NYSUT Constitution and Bylaws.

As a union member I would like to thank each and every member for sticking with us and allowing us to work hard together to continually discuss, and share information and your thoughts on our bargaining agreements. This past month we have had an election for your board. I am honored to be reelected, but many members asked why were the positions run unopposed. I also ask myself that question. I would like nothing more than other members wanting to get more involved.

I would like to encourage members to start by attending your individual building union meetings. Your building reps. are required to have 4-5 building level union meetings a year. These meetings are to keep you informed on the business of the union. These building level union meetings would also be the place where you could have a civil, respectable conversation with your representatives to share your thoughts and ask questions. Your representative should then let you know where you can find that information or if they aren't sure they could contact a member of the board for clarification and should get back to you. Every BEES Union member should also have a copy of their respective bargaining agreement (Blue / Yellow.) Please, if you do not have one, ask your building Rep. to get you one. There is a plethora of information in your bargaining agreements and many of your questions will be available in those booklets.

# Executive Vice President - Al Rios

## NYSUT Celebrates 50 Years!

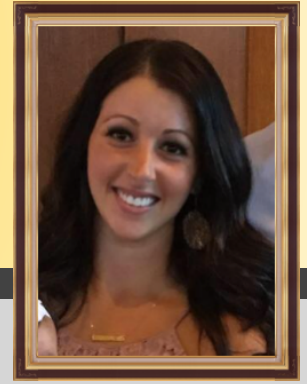


We also had two informational meetings, one for the yellow collective bargaining unit and one for the Blue. It was during these meetings that the board shared the M.O.A.'s that benefitted each unit. Remember, these are small steps that when we see an opportunity that will benefit our members we take full advantage of. It was also during these meetings that I learned first hand the issues that are foremost on our members minds. This was important to hear and many members gave insight and information to issues that we as a board can look into as well as discuss in future meetings. I thought these discussions were helpful, but as you can imagine having discussions with a few hundred people can take hours, especially when many of the same concerns are shared by many members. I found these discussions beneficial and I thank all of you who took the time to attend these meetings as well as for the information, insight and civil discussions you shared with us. Every generation of educators in our local is important and has something beneficial to share for future discussions and negotiations. The information and ideas we can gather with respectful discussions and individual insight could benefit us all in the future. Let's work together to benefit us all. Thank you again for all your support and working with us to make us stronger.

All the best,

**Al**

# Executive Vice President - Amanda Pica



## Better Together

### Importance of Member Benefits

It's hard to believe we are starting to wind down the school year. Warm weather and sunny days are ahead. I would like to begin by thanking the election committee for volunteering their time to make our election so successful. Your time and effort is much appreciated. With almost another year down that means one year closer to negotiating a new contract. I encourage each one of you to share your concerns and/or any changes you would like to see to our CBA with your building rep. Our E-board will be reviewing and taking into consideration all of your concerns as we enter into formal negotiations. Now is the time for your voice to be heard. I encourage each one of you to attend your building union meetings, ask questions, and become more involved. We are stronger together.

I often hear that members are unaware of the benefits that NYSUT and AFT offer. Some examples are free college courses, financial and legal services, and discounts on travel and insurance. The list is endless! Here are some important links where you can access all your member benefits. Thank you for sticking with the BEES!

- <https://memberbenefits.nysut.org/>
- <https://www.aft.org/member-benefits>

- Amanda



**Explore all your union membership has to offer!**

When you're planning for the future, what's at the top of your list?

- A comfortable nest egg for retirement
- Providing for your family
- Purchasing a new home
- Home improvements
- Purchasing a new vehicle
- Travel and entertainment



**NYSUT Member Benefits** offers dozens of endorsed programs to help turn those dreams into reality.

When it comes to saving you money, protecting your family and helping you plan for the future, NYSUT Member Benefits has a variety of programs and services to help with your goals. Whether you are just starting out on your journey, well into your career or enjoying a well-deserved retirement, there is a Member Benefits-endorsed plan that may be of assistance featuring value-added extras unavailable to the public.

Get started by first bookmarking the Member Benefits website at [memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://memberbenefits.nysut.org). There, you will find numerous tools and resources available to you as a NYSUT member – including a **Financial Learning Center** with articles designed to help educate you on financial decisions and topics. Member Benefits also endorses important **legal and financial services** along with an **online savings program** featuring some of today's most competitive interest rates.

Next up would be looking in the "Shopping, Travel & Personal" section of our site for **MB Discounts & Deals**. This program utilizes the nation's largest private discount network to provide NYSUT members with exclusive access to savings of up to 50% on restaurant dine-in or take out, groceries and food delivery, clothing and shoes, hotels and flights, vehicle maintenance, and much more.

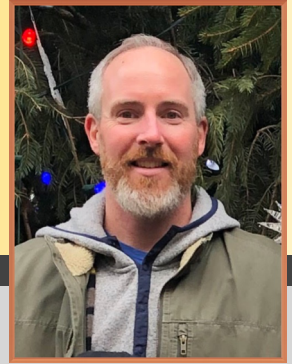


**Learn more by scanning the QR code to the left, visiting [memberbenefits.nysut.org](http://memberbenefits.nysut.org) or calling 800-626-8101.**





# First Vice President - Keith Flynn



## Your Voice, Your Union

At last, spring is finally here. There is more sunlight, the hope of warmer temperatures and the opportunity to spend more time with Mother Nature. Birds are chirping and children playing outside has a different feel since the start of the pandemic. COVID numbers have dropped significantly and the last variant of COVID-19 is less virulent. Vaccines and boosters are readily available, as well as other treatments. People are craving to take vacations, socialize and get back to a normalized lifestyle.

Most of you are in the midst of the Annual Review season and some of you are contemplating whether to work this summer? With the added bumps in pay for both blue and yellow contracts, you may be enticed to work this summer? That was one of the great benefits of being a union member. Your union has established a solid working relationship with the agency and negotiated this option for you at a time when both contracts are not expiring until 2023 & 2024.

Advocacy Week took place last month and was another huge success. Although staff and students didn't have to take the 4am bus ride to Albany, the virtual format gave them the opportunity for our CTE & Special Education students to advocate for all the great work that takes place at Eastern Suffolk BOCES. Nothing can replace the in-person experience at the state capital, but all of the students did a PHENOMENAL JOB. The perspective and confidence that our students gain from this experience are invaluable. The students were able to share their personal stories with our state legislators and to let them know how their experiences in BOCES have opened the door for a brighter future.



# First Vice President - Keith Flynn



## Your Voice, Your Union

VOTE-COPE contributions remain strong in N.Y.S. Almost ½ of the contributions come back to our local, and the money is used for many reasons. Not only is it used to secure the great member benefits we receive (pension, vacation & sick days, pay scale, job security, etc), take a look at the following initiative that NYSUT is advocating for. NYSUT is pushing to fix some of the inequities in Tier 6 compared with their co-workers in previous tiers. NYSUT's statement; "In the interest of fairness between employees, current employee retention and new employee recruitment, Tiers 5 & 6 need to be fixed to provide an equitable retirement across the public workforce." VOTE-COPE money is used to help move forward with this initiative. For more information on this, please check out the links below for more information.

<https://www.nysut.org/news/nysut-united/issues/2012/may-2012/trs--how-does-tier-6-affect-current-employees>

<https://www.nysut.org/news/2022/february/fix-tier-6>

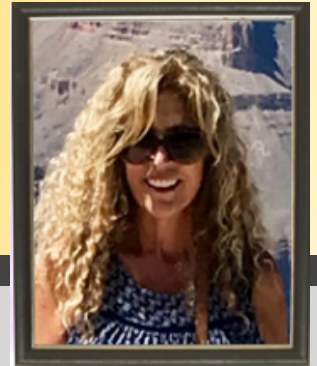
Make sure to vote for your local school budget and have a great spring!

Be well,

Keith

A graphic with a blue background and a grid pattern. On the left, the text "URGENT ACTION NEEDED" is written in large, bold, yellow letters. To the right, the text "Tell your legislators" is written in white. Below that, the word "FOX" is written in large, bold, black letters, with a red hand holding a red wrench in the middle of the "O". Below "FOX", the text "TIER 6" is written in white on a red background. At the bottom left, the text "NYSUT.org/FixTier6" is written in white. At the bottom right, the "nysut" logo is visible in white.

# Area VP for Para Educators - Angela Ritchie



## Amazing SRPs

Hello Fellow BEES Members,

Happy Spring! With the cold air hopefully behind us and the mask mandate lifted, it would seem we are finally moving in a positive direction.

The response we received from the Para Educators upon hearing the contractual information news was overwhelming, and we thank you for your gratitude.

Many new employees chose to join our union in the last few weeks and we welcome the opportunity to offer all the guidance and information the union has to offer.

Your building representatives are your best link to receiving union information and they are in direct contact with the Executive Board when issues arise that need to be resolved. NYSUT (NEW York State United Teachers) is a federation of over 1,200 labor unions (the BEES are one of them) which includes over 600,000 educational and healthcare workers in the state of NY.

### **NYSUT benefits include:**

Contract protection, Access to affordable healthcare, Retirement security

A voice with lawmakers and policymakers to improve your workplace and profession,

Programs for professional growth, Legal representation, They also endorse a number of quality, competitive insurance programs available to NYSUT members

Additional discounts on travel, shopping, and more, available online for just being a NYSUT member.

Please take advantage of the NYSUT member benefits and see all the opportunities they have to offer (see the link below).

As a union member, you are part of a community dedicated to each other and to making the world a better place.

Thank you for your continued support.

Regards,

Angela

<https://memberbenefits.nysut.org>



# Area VP for Special Education - Patti Richards

## You've Got a Friend in BEES



Happy spring! I personally want to thank you for supporting me in the role of Area Vice President for Special Education. Over the past few years, we have all tackled many challenges and your faith in me to continue in this role is very much appreciated.

A concern many of you have expressed over the course of this year has been staff shortages in our school system. These shortages are having a major impact on everyone involved in the educational systems. Districts nationwide report unfilled vacancies for janitors, bus drivers, paraprofessionals, and substitute teachers. Districts across the country are also planning for anticipated vacancies due to retirement or people leaving the profession.

Our agency's biggest staffing issue has been getting substitute teachers, paraprofessionals, and bus drivers/bus aides. The lack of substitutes has created numerous challenges. Over the past few months, BOCES has worked hard to recruit and retain more staff by holding several job fairs. These new employees were placed in buildings where there were numerous vacancies.

Our agency and union were able to negotiate and deliver our paraeducators a well deserved pay increase. As well as provide a pay increase for those Blue contract members who elect to work summer school, which had not been increased in almost 20 years. If you need more details on either MOA please see your building



# Area VP for Special Education - Patti Richards



## You've Got a Friend in BEES

The months between January-April are mentally taxing to our members, as we begin IEP planning, state testing, report cards, and not to mention our regular duties. This time can present many physical and mental health challenges to staff. We know the primary ways to improve or maintain well-being is the ability to take care of our physical health, connect with others, and find purpose in each day.

Please know that should you ever feel you need help EAP is available. The mission of the Employee Assistance Program is to provide support to employees, and their families in participating districts and agencies to maximize overall wellness and each individual's potential. It is their belief that learning improves when we help people develop skills, attitudes, and values necessary to manage life tasks, form relationships and adapt to the demands of today's society. If you contact all information is confidential. You can find their contact information here - <https://www.esboces.org/Page/245>

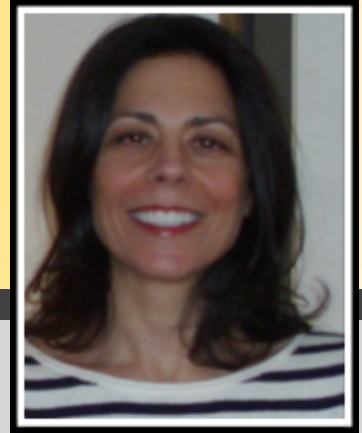
I hope you all have a great remainder of the year,

Patti





# Area VP for Itinerants/SAS - Kristin Ericson Abbruzzese



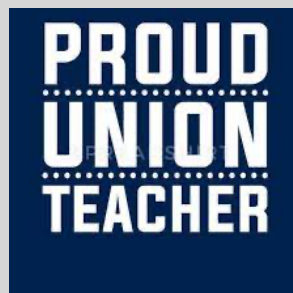
## Things to Remember

If you have not set up a master schedule I encourage you to reach out to either myself or a coworker who is utilizing a master schedule as you may find it is much more efficient. I realize this is yet another task to add to our busy days but I have found that over the weeks I am writing less and getting used to summarizing my changes more efficiently. I urge you to talk with your coworkers since many of us have developed ways to complete tasks in a more timely fashion which could help others.

As we approach the end of the year I want to remind everyone of a few things, first please make sure you complete your 15 hours of professional development and complete the required paperwork on time. Second, send in a copy of your license when you renew it; you are required to keep your license up to date in your professional area. And finally, know your contract. What is in your contract are benefits we have negotiated and responsibilities to ESBOCES as employees. I encourage you to get a copy of the new MOA from your building representative and include that in your contract. I also want to thank every member who has reached out to the Executive Board regarding concerns about work load, safety issues and the likes, please remember we continually work on these issues you bring forward. Sometimes things take longer than we would like since many issues do not have a quick resolution. Many times it could take several meetings with the powers that be to try and come to a resolution or a change if possible.

Thank You for Sticking with the UNION. I can be reached at [beesvpitin@gmail.com](mailto:beesvpitin@gmail.com) and SHS 631-622-1240. I will be holding a meeting on April 27, 2022 @3:30 via Zoom link to follow. Be Safe....

Kristin



# Area VP for Itinerants/SAS - Kristin Ericson Abbruzzese



## Things to Remember

Registration is now open for the 2022 NYSUT Professional Issues Forum on Health Care Conference, May 7, 2022, via Zoom.

This virtual conference is free and will provide professional development and some Continuing Education Unit (CEU) credits to NYSUT members. It is designed for: pre-K-12 school nurses; higher education health care faculty and professionals; school psychologists, therapists and counselors; occupational and physical therapists; speech-language pathologists; VNA nurses; nurses and health care professionals in hospitals and other health care facilities.

To register online, visit: [nysut.cc/pif522](https://nysut.cc/pif522)

For more information, download the [conference agenda](#).

### TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

OPENING SESSION: 9:30-9:00 a.m.

SESSION 1: 9:00 - 10:30 a.m.

- Understanding the New York State Legislature and the Role of NYSUT Health Care Professionals
- Health Care Professionals in a School Setting - Lessons from the Pandemic
- The Overdose Crisis, the Opioid Profiteers and How We're Fighting Back to Save Lives

SESSION 2: 10:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

- COVID-19 - Facts, Updates and More
- Crisis Intervention & De-escalation in the Workplace

SESSION 3: 12:45 - 2:15 p.m.

- Social Media for Nurses: Risks, Rights and Responsibilities
- Our Unsustainable Health Insurance System and Why Unions and Union Members Should Advocate for Change

To register online, visit: [nysut.cc/pif522](https://nysut.cc/pif522)

For more information, download the [conference agenda](#).



## Know Your Contract



Greetings my colleagues and friends,

Spring is finally here and I know we all can feel summer around the corner. It has been an interesting year adapting to new CDC Guidelines (every ten minutes) and hoping it all goes away! We have made tremendous strides as both teachers and union members and I can say with the utmost sincerity that I am so proud to be one of you. Over the last few pandemic years, I have witnessed amazing adaptations of teaching strategies and accommodations from our CTE Program Instructors. We as teachers have been dealt with so many issues centered on our students well-being and the uncertainty that every day brought. We tackled each obstacle as quickly as they appeared and let our students know that they were our priority, all the while handling our own personal issues. That being said, I can assure you that your BEES E-Board never missed a beat. Additional meetings and responsibilities were the norm as we worked diligently to navigate guidelines and be available as resources for our members. Moving forward, there are many great things on the horizon. Please know that attending your building union meetings is crucial to staying informed. Building meetings are the best venue for asking questions and hearing other members' concerns, which can very well relate to your own. Your building representative invests a lot of time being trained and updated and can almost always be ready to answer contractual related questions. Additionally, it is imperative that you become familiar with your contract. There are numerous benefits to being a Union Member, but it is surprising how many do not know them, or take them for granted. The greatest benefit is having a voice in the workplace and the strongest example of this is the language that can be found throughout your current union contract. The rights and benefits in that contract have been fought for and achieved over many, many years. This has been done by past as well as current Union Members who felt strongly enough to get involved, make their voices heard, and to demand and fight for positive changes and improvements to their rights and benefits. Spring is the season during which the natural world revives and reinvigorates after the colder winter months. Days get longer and the air smells fresh and alive. Spring season means more time outdoors, walking and spending time in the fresh air, and it is the best time of year for meditation. Forget about worries, clear your mind, and concentrate on beauty and the sounds of nature. Enjoy my friends and be well.

Rosaria

# Contractual Benefits Officer - Nick DeBlanco



## It Benefits You to Know

Happy spring fellow B.E.E.S. members. With all the renewal that comes with spring and the good news that seems to be happening on the virus front, I would like to share a few things unrelated to viruses and pandemics with you.

Let us begin with your retirement. During the next few months, take some time to reorganize and reallocate your retirement savings plan. One of the great tools at your disposal is the financial planning program at NYSUT. A reasonable yearly fee puts you in touch with a live person for a set amount of sessions that will give you specific insight into how, when and why you should be making changes to or sticking with your current plan. The NYSUT plan and the administrator of that plan sell no investment devices nor work on commission. They are strictly a financial plan that you can bring to any commercial trading platform or retirement account and implement that plan with confidence. Stacey Braun and Associates are the financial counseling program facilitators and can provide a great start towards getting you financially straight and on the path to a great retirement. If you haven't done so already go to [nysut.org](http://nysut.org) and login or sign up. The financial counseling program is just one of many opportunities available.

When you visit the NYSUT website you will see tabs on the top for insurance, learning, shopping, travel, personal, legal, financial etc. There is a ton of information and some of it is exactly tailored to your lifestyle.

Did you know that your union membership comes with so many perks? Try signing up for the member alert program (MAP); this will send relevant emails or other alerts about the benefits that matter most to you.



# Contractual Benefits Officer - Nick DeBlanco



## It Benefits You to Know

Some of you may be struggling with financial woes, and other financial pressures because of the recent events. You may want to investigate the debt counseling program or also the student loan counseling program or maybe one of the banking programs associated with your union membership. If you're not sure about how your 403B is apportioned there's even assistance for that. You will also find many retailers under the shopping tab that offer discounts with proof of your union membership!

Your membership in the union connects you with colleagues and peers that have similar interests and lifestyles. The New York State United Teachers has more than 600,000 members and the American federation of Teachers has 1.7 million members; we are a force to contend with. Some call it a crowd or maybe even a mob, but certainly we are not ignored or pushed aside.

If you find a great resource and would like to share, let me know, I will put in other newsletters and on our home page for others to view.

Please Remember, it benefits you to know and it benefits us all when we share.

Happy Spring,

**Nick**



# Membership Coordinator - Lisa Mongiello



## A Happy Hive

Hi fellow BEES members! I know many of you are excited to enter the 4th quarter of this school year! I love seeing the sun's return, the flowers, and the green in the trees and on the ground.

I'm sure if you're reading this, as a BEES member you are aware of the recent MOA's to our contracts. These advancements come because of our membership. We are strong as we stand together. It is essential for us to ensure that new hires are signed up as union members to continue to advocate for our members and our contract.

Newly hired staff are not entitled to union benefits until they become members. We have many new hires each month, spread across many buildings, so it is essential that we share the benefits of being a union member with them. Our building union representatives have been an incredible help in assisting new hires in navigating this process. I would encourage all our members to share the benefits of being in the union with newly hired staff because together, we are stronger.

Members often ask how they can access their NYSUT ID numbers, so they can login to their accounts to access all their union member benefits. Please see the photos below to see how easy the process is! All you need is the personal e-mail address you used to sign up and your date of birth!

Thank you for your membership and for sticking with our union!

In Solidarity,  
Lisa Mongiello



# Membership Coordinator - Lisa Mongiello



## A Happy Hive

Browser address bar: <https://www.nysut.org>

Navigation: [Go to www.NYSUT.org](#) | [CONTACT US](#) | [LOGIN](#)

Menu: WHO WE ARE | WHAT WE DO | WHAT WE CARE ABOUT | **nysut** | TAKE ACTION | FOR MEMBERS

Form fields: E-mail or Member ID, Password, LOGIN, Forgot your password?, Create an Account, **I Need My NYSUT ID**

# FUTURE FORWARD

NYSUT 'Future Forward' report: Amid unprecedented challenges, NY must envision new future for public education

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Menu: WHO WE ARE | WHAT WE DO | WHAT WE CARE ABOUT | **nysut** | TAKE ACTION | FOR MEMBERS

### Need Your NYSUT Member ID?

Enter your email and date of birth below. If we find you in our database, we'll send an email with your membership information.

Email:

Date of birth:

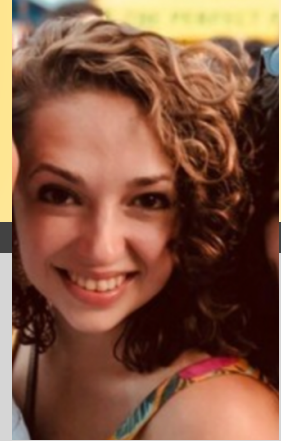
Form fields: E-mail or Member ID, Password, LOGIN, Forgot your password?, Create an Account, **I Need My NYSUT ID**

# SCHOOL UNIT

RA 2022: News, photos and video from the convention floor

# Treasurer Intern- Rachael Klahn

## Learning the Ropes



Happy spring everyone! Like many of you, I am looking forward to warmer weather and spending more time outside with our students. Although we have many things to look forward to in the next few months, I wanted to address something that has been on everyone's mind lately – Ukraine.

A couple of weeks ago one of my students started making comments about the war in Ukraine and how concerning it was. Then, last week another one of my students incorporated the Ukrainian flag and Ukrainian President Zelensky into an art project. I have noticed that, at one point or another, each of my students have shown that they are aware of what is going on in the world and that they think about the ramifications of this war. As someone who was in elementary school when the 911 attacks occurred, I remember what it is like to have something horrific happen that you don't quite understand, but you can tell it will change the world. Our students, no matter their age, all pick up on cues from their families, teachers, counselors, peers, and everyone else in their lives. They know when people are concerned. They know when people are upset. They pay attention to what is happening in the world. It is important to have conversations with our students about world events and help them cope with any feelings of anxiety or confusion. I have included links to articles that talk about how to have these discussions and that provide resources to do so:

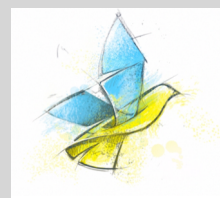
<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/16/learning/lesson-plans/teaching-resources-to-help-students-make-sense-of-the-war-in-ukraine.html>

<https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/how-to-talk-with-students-about-the-russia-ukraine-war-5-teaching-tips/2022/02>

<https://www.apa.org/news/apa/2022/children-teens-war-ukraine>

We all work hard to create and maintain learning environments where our students feel comfortable and thrive – I hope these resources can be of assistance!

Wishing you all good health and happiness this spring!



*Rachael*

# Grievance Officer - Deirdre Pettit



## Choosing to Live the Dream

This morning I woke up to the most beautiful sunrise and rainbow I have ever witnessed. For a few minutes, I was calm, quiet sipping my coffee and feeling lucky to have started my day this exact way. Three minutes later, I am attempting to get my 15 y/o son to “move faster, hurry up and get down the stairs. We are both going to be late for school”. The calm I had just felt was gone. That is how the last two and a half years have felt for so many of us. Quick moments of happiness soon followed by the reality of everyday life living in a pandemic. For the last two years when someone has passed me in the hall and said “How are you”? My response has been “Living the dream”. I really was not being sarcastic-I am living the dream-I have a job, health insurance, two healthy children, a roof over my head, a car to drive and food to eat. We have all been through so much during this pandemic, but that rainbow this morning gave me a little bit of peace-what I do with my behavior, attitude and day is up to me at that point. Today is a good day. Life may not be perfect but I get to make a decision to see things as difficult or that I am “Living The Dream”. My hope for you if you are reading this, is to remember we are close to the finish line, we survived things we never thought we could and I hope you have a smooth end to this school year.

If you feel you have a grievable item please take look at your contract and highlight the area that you are questioning. Afterwards, speak to your union representative and once it is brought to my attention I will be in contact with you.

My email is [dkroupa222@gmail.com](mailto:dkroupa222@gmail.com)

Deirdre

# Recording Secretary - Tiffany Robinson

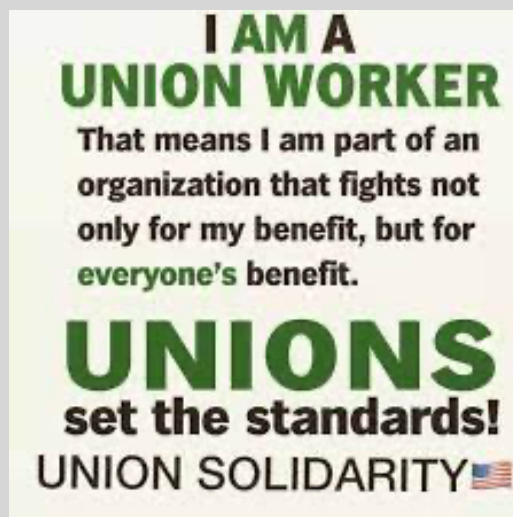
## Nice Notes



Happy Spring! It's so nice to actually see smiling faces as we walk around our buildings now. The weather seems like it's starting to get nicer, the school year is starting to wind down and lots of exciting things are happening for our members.

The craziness of what we have been through these past couple of years seems to be winding down, and it's so nice to end this year on a positive note. Please take advantage of all the many resources that are available, and don't hesitate to utilize the information on the BEES beacon website as well as attend your building union meetings where you can stay up to date on information; remember, your voices matter. Reach out to your union reps, who will always keep you informed. Let's continue to push forward and as always please know that we are here for you. Thank you for standing by your union.

Tiffany





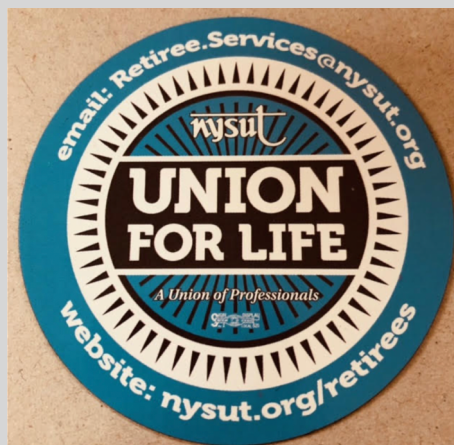
# Retiree Chapter Chairperson - Terry Kalb



## Nice Notes

Happy Spring to our BEES retirees and to our upcoming retirees!

I've spent most of the new year with an inflamed larynx and ENT orders to rest my voice. This was very bad news for an advocate, union rep, and someone who loves to talk and sing along with my music in the car. Fortunately my condition has slowly improved enough for me to schedule our **BEES Retirees Spring Meeting, on ZOOM, for Wednesday April 27th at 11AM**. The slightly later start is to accommodate some of our BEES now living in time zones to the west of NY. You will be sent an invite with the link to join via email. This is just one reason why it is so very important that our chapter has your personal email, and that if you change your email, you send an updated email address to [terrykalb@yahoo.com](mailto:terrykalb@yahoo.com). We have so much to discuss at the upcoming meeting, including ESB's new Medicare premium reimbursement schedule, legislative issues impacting retirees at the local, state and federal levels, school board elections, and expanding our retiree voices in NYSUT. I hope to see many of your postage stamp sized faces on the Zoom that morning!



# Retiree Chapter Chairperson - Terry Kalb



## Nice Notes

A message for all, but especially for our new retirees! When you retire from BOCES you may think that your union years are behind you, but actually you should be UNION FOR LIFE! Why? Your hard earned pension and benefits, Social Security, Medicare and those premium reimbursements, are not all cemented in place forever. There are always political and economic pressures that put them at risk for reductions or change. In fact, even political attacks on public education can impact future union negotiations, and can impact retiree benefits. It is our union, even in our retirement, that activates and strengthens our collective voices and protects our pension fund and benefits. A \$35 annual fee due each September gives you membership in our BEES Retiree Chapter- and now the first year of that retiree membership is free- our gift to you when you provide us with your email address and contact information. That membership allows you access to all the additional programs and benefits you can view on the [nysut.org/benefits](https://nysut.org/benefits) website. It gives you representation and advocacy on the BEES Executive Board, and support when you have benefits questions or issues arise in retirement. SO- take your union with you into your retirement. Send me your personal email because your BOCES email disappears when you leave.

We are UNION for life!

Stay well, and stay connected! See you on Zoom 4/27 at 11!

Terry Kalb  
BEES Retiree Chapter President



# Creative BEES – Gina Cariellos

With Spring upon us and the beautiful colors of the flowers and plants emerging around us day by day, it is most appropriate that this issue's **Spotlight on our BEES Community** article is about art teacher **Gina Cariello**.

**The BEES talented Art Teacher Gina Cariellos** was asked if she would display her beautiful, colorful abstract art pieces for the month of March at The Hamptons Bays Library spring art exhibit.

Ms. Cariello works hard in our BAC and TES programs teaching art to students and helping our students expand their creativity through art. In her spare time Gina takes the time to work on individual art on her own.

The Hampton Bays Exhibit displayed a selection of her beautiful personal art pieces for the entire month of March. Ms. Cariello enjoys creating a diverse variety of shapes and sizes for her art as well as vibrant and bold color combinations that she uses as she creates beautiful, unique, original pieces of abstract art.



# Spotlight on Our BEES Community



## Creative BEES - Gina Cariellos







# **BEES**

## **BOCES Educators of Eastern Suffolk**

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