

THE UNITED NEWSLETTER

LOCAL 15-175 NYSUT LOCAL 3072 AFT

December 2019

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A Letter from the President

It is a great honor to have been elected President of the United Staff Association. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to serve the Association in this capacity. The past few months have been filled with a great deal of energy and enthusiasm. We are an extraordinary Union! Just ask the Oxford dictionary which defines extraordinary as “very unusual or remarkable.” Some synonyms include: exceptional, amazing, and astounding. There is no doubt the work we do falls nothing short of extraordinary.

One of the many goals of the Executive Board is to improve communication. Communication and transparency are key to developing relationships and trust. Of course, the Executive Board is not “the Union.” We can’t do this alone. YOU are the Union. YOU are part of this team! Now, more than ever, I ask that we find ways to positively communicate, connect, commit, and care for our fellow members. Take the time to build great relationships. This is how we build strength, trust and, ultimately, solidarity.

With the holidays season upon us, so are the “Believe” signs. At one time, I saw these signs as a call to believe in Santa Claus, the magic of the season, or a higher power. I see these signs a little differently now. To me, they are a reminder to stay focused on the “why?” Why do I work at BOCES? Why have I taken on the President position? My belief statements are the “North Star” that guide and keep me focused. In this time of reflection and renewal, I ask that you think about what you believe in regards to your role at BOCES and as a member of the United Staff Association. What do you believe is possible for the future of the United Staff Association? Let’s reach for the stars!

In Solidarity,
Catherine



2019 USA Election Results

The United Staff Association would like to congratulate and welcome the following newly elected and returning Executive Board Members and Program Representatives:

Executive Board

Position

President
Vice President (CTE)
Vice President (Special Education)
Secretary
Treasurer
Membership Chairperson
RA Delegates:

Colleague

Catherine Armisto
Stephanie Buckhout
Marianne Rodriguez
Melissa Bayeur
Sharlene Orlowsky
Stacey Chiarella
Larry Marino
Josephine Scala

Program Representatives

Administrator

Pinesbridge/Mate
CTE/Lowery
CTE/Bellucci
Walden/Sowul/Mate
Fox Meadow/Ginexi
Local School Buildings/Cafaro
Local School Buildings/Cafaro
RSE/TASC/Slobogin

Representative

Taheera Mushatt
Alyssa Cavorti
Lisa Tobin
Brandy Haight
Patty Lucido
Donna Gast
Margo Schepart
Stephanie Wozniak



Meet the USA Executive Board

Catherine Armisto

Union Position: President
Job Title: Literacy Specialist
Location: Walden and LSBs
Start Year: 2003

It is with great excitement that I take on the position of President of the United Staff Association. Prior to working at BOCES, I worked at a private therapeutic school without a union. While my time at the school was positive, I've seen the importance a union plays in the quality of work life (and life in general). My main goals for the United Staff Association are to improve communication, connections, and engagement.

My husband, Aaron, teaches Computer Graphics at CTE. We have been together for over 23 years and have two beautiful children: Cathleen (6) and Adam (4). Cathleen is an amazing artist and Adam is an aspiring comedian. A gray cat, named Statler Andrew Vincenzo Armisto, also lives with us...Stat for short. In my spare time, I enjoy mountain biking, reading, and eating chips and dip.

Marianne Rodriguez

Union Position: Vice President, Special Education
Current BOCES Job Title: Special Education Teacher
Location: Falls Academy (LSB)
Start Year: 2008

I am very excited that the BOCES staff have elected me Vice President, and I take this role very seriously. I look forward to learning a lot through this experience and steering our union in a new direction. I have taught in many BOCES programs over the years: Walden, Fox Meadow, and other LSB programs. My varied experiences have led me to meet so many wonderful staff members! In my personal life, I just celebrated my 20th wedding anniversary with my husband Pablo, and I am a mother to two wonderful children: Christian and Giuliana. In my free time I love reading, watching my kids play soccer, and baking. I look forward to working with the new Executive Board and getting to know everyone!

Stephanie Buckhout

Union Position: Vice President, CTE
Current BOCES Job Title: English Instructor
Location: Career & Technical Education
Start Year: February 2006

I am looking forward to serving again as Vice President of CTE, and especially excited to be serving another year as the Committee of 100 representative. Voicing our concerns at the state level is something I take seriously and something to which I look forward each year. I started my career at BOCES as an English teacher, and like most people outside the BOCES world, "I didn't know they had academics at Tech!" I enjoy working with the students here, mainly because I am teaching them skills they'll need for their world outside of school. And I especially enjoy working with my staff members; it's so true that we each have our strengths, and nowhere is it more evident than at CTE. Outside of work, I enjoy my family, exercising, reading (cliche, I know) and the beach!

Melissa Bayeur

Union Position: Secretary
Job Title: Special Education Teacher
Location: Walden
Start Year: 2005

Hi, I'm Melissa Bayeur and I'm very excited to be our new union secretary! I've worked at PNW BOCES for almost 15 years, mostly with the younger K-2 students. Prior to my teaching at BOCES, I taught Special Education Preschool at Hudson Valley Community Services. Outside of work, I am married to my husband, Glenn, for 26 years and have two sons: Ian and Graham. I also have two dogs: Wally and Willis. I enjoy reading, though now that I need reading glasses I don't as much as I used to. I'm looking forward to the challenges and opportunities that being secretary will present, as well as working with an amazing group of talented and passionate colleagues to keep our union united and strong.



Meet the USA Executive Board continued

Sharlene Orlowsky

Union Position: Treasurer

Current BOCES Job Title: CTE Math Teacher

Location: Tech Center

Start Year: 2002

I look forward to continuing to serve on the United Staff Association's Executive Board in my role as Treasurer, a position I have held for the past five years. Prior to serving as the Treasurer, I spent three years (about 10 years ago) as Secretary. I work as an applied math teacher in 20 different CTE programs. It's by far the best job I've ever had as I learn something new each day and enjoy giving our students relevant workplace skills. Outside of work, I enjoy knitting, crocheting, cooking, and spending time with family and friends.

Stacey Chiarella

Union Position: Membership Chairperson

Job Title: English Teacher

Location: Fox Meadow

Start Year: 2006

Hi, I'm Stacey Chiarella. I have been the English/Special Ed teacher at the Fox Meadow High School for almost 14 years. I've been the Membership Chairperson for approximately 5 years. I am looking forward to working with the new Executive Board and to continue my work of getting everyone signed up and a member of our Union!

Larry Marino

Union Position: CTE Grievance Chairperson

Job Title: Electrical Teacher- CTE

Location: Tech Center

Start Year: 2001

Hello brothers and sisters. I am looking forward to continuing to work in the best interest of our entire membership. My union career actually started before I started working at BOCES in the Electrical union where I sat on several committees helping to set policy and rules that represented over 500 workers. Since I have been here I have held many union positions: Program Representative, Negotiations Chair, Grievance Chair, Vice President, and President. I currently teach 16 and 17 year olds how electricity works and try my best to make them as marketable as possible to be successful once they graduate and look for jobs in the electric field. My goal is to make sure every student leaves

my program with more skills than when he/she came to Tech.

Outside of BOCES, I have three children and two step children. I have been a volunteer Fireman for 25 years, where I sit on many committees and was a Lieutenant for four years. I enjoy cooking and actually went to culinary school and received a degree in Culinary. I thought that's what I wanted to do with my life, but unless you're Bobby Flay or Guy Fieri there is not a lot of money as a Chef! Many people don't know this about me but I enjoy singing and if you're ever close enough to my classroom you'll hear all different genres of music and me signing along; my students actually like it!

Lisa Giacomini-Essell

Union Position: Grievance Chairperson for Special Education

Current BOCES Job Title: Special Education Teacher

Location: Pines Bridge School

Start Year: 1998

I am a busy wife and mother to three wonderful, active children. Both of my daughters play travel soccer so weekends in the fall and spring are filled with trips to practice and games that can range all over Westchester County or even Manhattan. My son is on a ski team so the winters are spent traveling back and forth from various ski areas. I also have a small dog named Taco, who is like my 4th child. I love traveling especially to places I've never visited. In my "free time", I am also a Girl Scout Troop leader and teach 1st Grade CCD. I am a Seinfeld fanatic and watch re-runs whenever I can. I can recite almost any line from the Breakfast Club and sing "Ice, Ice Baby" by Vanilla Ice from memory.



Meet the USA Program Representatives

Danielle Iammatteo

Union Position: Program Representative Chairperson

Job Title: Occupational Therapist

Location: Somers Intermediate School and Somers Middle School (BOCES LSB Programs)

Start Year: 2005

I am excited to be working with the new Executive Board and all of our USA members in my new role! I have worked in a variety of programs both on and off campus (LSB, Learning Center, CLASS & Transitions Program) and have worked with many different supervisors during my years here at BOCES. Prior to BOCES, I worked at St. Barnabas Hospital in the Bronx, where I was a Union Member there as well. I enjoy reading, shopping, and hanging out with friends in my free time. I look forward to helping making our union stronger, creating new friendships, and gaining more knowledge in this new role.

Alyssa Cavorti

Union Position: Program Representative

Job Title: English Teacher

Location: CTE

Start Year: 2015

I am very excited to become more involved in the union this year as a Program Representative! I look forward to learning a lot through this experience. Prior to working at BOCES, I spent a year working at Anne M. Dorner Middle School in the Ossining School District (I much prefer high school!) and, before that, I was a substitute in Lakeland School District. I recently got married to my husband, Andrew, this past October, which was the biggest thing that happened to me this year (or ever!). To add to the happy news, my first niece and goddaughter, McKayla, was born in April and I am over the moon in love with her. I love spending time with my niece and my cat, Hayley! With that being said, I look forward to working with all of you this year and hope to help our union in any way that I can.

Stephanie Wozniak

Union Position: Program Representative

Current BOCES Job Title: Transition Specialist

Location: Regional Partnership Center (Projects Building)

Start Year: 2013

I am looking forward to continuing to support all of the Training Specialists in the Regional Partnership Center as a union representative. I started my career working

in the classroom as a Teaching Assistant in a therapeutic school. Most of my experience has been in mental health, work-based learning, career education, special education, and transition planning. Outside of work, when I have time in between being a perpetual student, I enjoy doing projects on my property such as gardening.

Donna Gast

Union Position: Local School Building representative

Job Title: Teacher of the Speech and Hearing Handicapped/Speech-Language Pathologist

Location: BOCES LSB Programs at Somers Middle School, Lincoln-Titus Elementary School, Mahopac Falls Academy, and Walter Panas High School

Start Year: 1993

I am looking forward to exciting new things happening in our union. I began working at BOCES right out of school. Yes, I have quite a few years here under my belt. Over the years, I have worked in some capacity in most programs offered in Special Education with many different supervisors and staff, but have spent most of my time at BOCES in the Learning Center LSB program. On a personal note, my husband Tom and I celebrated our 20th wedding anniversary over the summer. In my spare time, I enjoy traveling, reading, entertaining, and spending time with family and our two funny cats. I hope to help make our union stronger and inclusive.

Brandy Haight

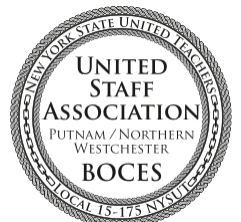
Union Position: Program Representative

Job Title: School Social Worker

Location: Walden/CLASS Program

Start Year: 2014

I am very excited to take on my new role as Program Representative. In addition to being a School Social Worker, I am also a BCBA. I have spent the majority of my career in the private sector working with individuals on the Autism Spectrum and their families both educational and home settings. On a personal note, I have a very rambunctious 2 year old daughter and a puppy. Most of my time outside of work is spent embracing the chaos of toddlerhood and enjoying my daughter being little. I look forward to supporting our union members and strengthening our union as a whole.



Let's Stay in Touch!

Please fill out this [United Staff Association Contact Form](#) to be added to the distribution list for future USA communications (updates, meeting minutes, etc.). Also, please use carmistousa@gmail.com to contact me, Catherine, with any USA inquiries.

Our Voice, Our Values, Our Union

[What would improve General Membership meetings and make them more meaningful?](#)

Guest speakers? Mini-trainings? Time to collaborate? Different topics? Send us your ideas. Click the question above to respond and be heard!

Know Your Union! Know Your Contract!

How well do you know your union? How well do you know the Contract? Click the link to answer five questions. One random "quiz participant" will win a \$10 gift card to Starbucks!

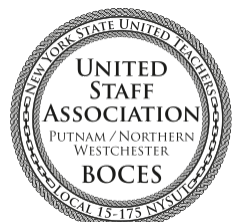
[United Staff Association Quiz](#)

We're on Facebook!

Head on over to Facebook and like (and follow) our new page. Not on Facebook? That's okay...all vital information will still be sent via personal email addresses.



<https://www.facebook.com/usapnwboces/>



Welfare Fund Reminder



Just a reminder to all members of the current Trustees of the Welfare Fund.

Everyone can be reached at their BOCES email, except for Doreen Trani.

Trustees of the Welfare Fund:

Jenna Larkin - Chairperson

Doreen Trani (treasurerusawf@gmail.com)

Deirdre Toolan

Maria Pontbriand

Jessica Fytros

Cristin Deagan

Catherine Armisto



Retiree News

Our people are always moving and traveling:

Nancy Bartolmucci has moved to Dennis Port MA

Helen Brown to Victor MT

Mary Carr to St Augustine, FL

Joe Cotumaccio to The Villages, FL

Joanne Fenton to Sarasota, FL

Mimi Gettinger to Cary , NC

Phyllis Jakubowski to Mooreville, NC

Ned Mahoney to Savannah GA

Joel Shapiro to Sanasota , FL

Mary Vinci to Somers , NY

Jean Berchielli to North Salem NY

Please share your news!

Our retirees are always traveling to new an interesting places:

Marion Connelly went to Hawaii with her son and his family this October.

Cathy Prior and Gay O'Brien traveled to northern Europe this spring and Cathy was in Paris for Thanksgiving. Cathy is in Sarasota FL for the winter and Gay in Naples FL.

John Hallahan and his wife Pat, yes she retired after 35 yrs with the Westchester Library system , to Ireland 🇮🇪. It looks like they had a great time with lots of outdoor times with nature. Now plans to visit California. Both are very community minded and work with the Homeless Shelter, Jan Peek in Peekskill.

Kitty D Simon and Jim just returned from a six week trip to Australia, Bora Bora and New Zealand 🇺🇸. We want to see their photos. They have been in Tulsa OK for the holiday visiting their daughter Molly.

Linda Bonavist and the Forbes took another wonderful repositioning cruise to Rome this spring. It sounds like a trip of a lifetime.

Kathy Heller had a great trip to France for a family wedding. Her grandchild is closer now

in Dobbs Ferry no more trips overnight to Brooklyn. Marsha welcomes her fifth grandchild to her daughter.

Retiree Sympathy

We extend our Sympathy to the family members and friends of deceased USA member:

Fran Carbonaro. Fran worked as a Teacher Aide in Tech with Fred Maley and in Special Ed at Pines Bridge for many years.

To Chris O'Shea Konczewski on the passing of her husband Mike. Mike was a psychologist at SWBOCES and former president of their NYSUT teachers union.

Bob Esposito, a former principal of Pines Bridge died in The Villages, Florida this November.

We try to include as much as possible from the retirees.

If you have news to share, please send it:
Wynnie McCarthy wam48@aol.com



Join the Retirees on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1003774856345167/>



Union Representatives

Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES
Yorktown Heights, NY 10598
914-607-6736

Executive Board

President	Catherine Armisto
1st Vice President (Special Education)	Marianne Rodriguez
2nd Vice President (CTE)	Stephanie Buckhout
Secretary	Melissa Bayeur
Treasurer	Sharlene Orlovsky
Membership Chairperson	Stacey Chiarella
Grievance Co-Chairperson (Special Education)	Lisa Giacomini-Essell
Grievance Co-Chairperson (CTE)	Larry Marino
Negotiations Chairperson	Nate Ball
Program Rep Chairperson	Danielle Iammatteo

Program Representatives

Administrator	Representative
CTE-Jim Bellucci	Lisa Tobin
Pinesbridge/Cilla Mate	Taheera Mushatt
CTE-Steve Lowery	Alyssa Cavorti
Fox Meadow/TBD	Patty Lucido
Walden/Michael Sowul	Brandy Haight
Local School Buildings/Melissa Cataro	Donna Gast
Local School Buildings/Melissa Cataro	Margo Schepart
RSE/TASC/Patti Slobogin	Stephanie Wozniak

United Staff Association Welfare Fund

c/o Daniel H. Cook Associates
253 West 35th Street, 12th Floor
New York, New York 10001

Chairperson:	Jenna Larkin
Secretary:	Deirdre Toolan
Treasurer:	Doreen Trani
Trustees:	Catherine Armisto Jessica Fytros Maria Pontbriand
Alternate Trustees:	Cristin Deagan
Consultant:	Flo Laicher
Administrator:	Daniel Cook Associates www.dhcook.com
Contact for USA Members and Retirees:	Silvanna Padilla silvannapadilla@dhcook.com (914) 250-0700, EXT 438
Legal Fund:	(914) 997-1576 www.teacherslegalfund.com

Upcoming Meetings

Upcoming Executive Board Meeting

Tuesday, January 7, 2020
3:00 P.M.
Pinesbridge Conference Room

Upcoming General Membership Meeting

Tuesday, January 14, 2020
3:00 P.M.
Adult Dining Room



A Bouquet from Us

Congratulations to...

Jackie Kelm- birth of a Girl.
Amanda Keenan- birth of a Boy.

In Our Thoughts...

Peter Iandioro for the loss of his Father.
Gerry Battista for the loss of her Father.
Jennifer Wynne for the loss of her Father
Noreen McNamara for the loss of her Father.
Joseph DeCicco for the loss of his Father.



Send items for A Bouquet from Us to
Karen Carey at kcarey@pnwboces.org



To schedule an appointment
with the lawyers at
Mirkin & Gordon, Members
should call (914) 997-1576.

IMPORTANT:

Grievance Co-Chairpersons are:
Larry Marino (CTE) lmarino@pnwboces.org
(914) 248-2480 (ext.480) and
Lisa Giacomini-Essell (Special Education)
ligiacomini-essell@pnwboces.org (914)248-2264 (ext. 264)

We are on the Web!

pnwb.ny.aft.org



Thanks to All:

Thank you to everyone who contributes to this Newsletter by submitting articles, important information, bouquets, or helping with the printing and/or distribution throughout the school year. This is my last edition of The United Newsletter; I have enjoyed working with everyone in this capacity for the past 9 years! Thank you for all of your help! I am confident in handing over the Newsletter Editor Position to Meg Buckland. Send her your information! -Meredith Markolovic

Please send Retiree News for the Newsletter to Wynn McCarty, wam48@aol.com or
36 Cheshire Lane Yorktown, NY 10598. We want to reach out to more Retirees.

Please send Newsletter worthy information to
Meg Buckland at mbuckland@pnwboces.org.

