



# LOCAL 237 NEWSLINE

Vol. 53, No. 4

Winter 2019

## Naughty or Nice

With a holiday gift list of “must haves” that includes super hero figures, baby dolls, Playstation 5 and a puppy dog — to name a few items — children around the world at this time of year are ready to answer Santa’s prerequisite question to determine their eligibility for gifts: “Have you been naughty or nice?” Children know that “Yes” will bring Santa down the chimney.

For adults around this time of year, there are traditions too. Many of us make a self-evaluation that may not bring a gift from Santa, but rather, prompts a resolution or prediction of how the next new year could be or should be an improvement. Lose weight, quit smoking, save money, be kinder to my spouse, are among the frequent resolutions made, but broken — by 80% before March has ended. Countless celebrities have weighed-in with their New Year’s hopes, predictions, aspirations and advice. Recently, former President Barack Obama gave advice to Millennials: “*This idea of purity and you’re always politically ‘woke’ you should get over that quickly...the world is messy.*” Oprah Winfrey, said: “*Cheers to the new year and another chance for us to get it right.*” Albert Einstein advised: “*Learn from yesterday, live for today and hope for tomorrow.*” Maya Angelou noted: “*I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.*” Mark Twain suggested that: “*New Year’s Day is the accepted time to make your regular annual good resolutions. Next week, you can begin paving hell with them as usual.*” John Lennon said: “*Count your age by friends, not years. Count your life by smiles, not tears.*” Michelle Obama encouraged youngsters to: “*Choose people in your life who lift you up.*” Mohammed Ali gave this advice: “*I hated every minute of training. But I said, don’t quit. Suffer now and live the rest of your life a champion.*” Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. counseled his followers to “*Take the first step in faith—you don’t need the whole staircase, just the first step.*” And even Dr. Seuss chimed in with this philosophical thought: “*Sometimes you never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory.*”

As we look forward to 2020, the way historians will evaluate 2019 is yet to be determined. The past year saw terrorism, both domestic and abroad, wreak havoc and heartache to so many. Hatred in the form of nationalism, anti-Semitism and racism resulted in the senseless slaughter of innocent children, worshippers and workers. In our country, union bashing and union busting is at an all-time high. And, there are also those who suffered the ravages of climate-related catastrophes and saw their houses burn to the ground or blown away. Closer to home, gun violence makes this Christmas an especially sad one for countless New York families. Homelessness is at a record high, and fear among undocumented immigrants in our communities dampens holiday cheer and makes the lady in the harbor weep. Yet, Teamsters Local 237 has persevered. Our members and leadership have succeeded in keeping our best interests a priority, and upon reflection many things were accomplished. Still to do, here are some wishes, hopes and predictions for 2020. ■



*We wish all our members and those they hold dear, health, peace and prosperity for the New Year. Let us give thanks for what we have and remain hopeful for what lies ahead...  
— From Local 237’s President, Gregory Floyd, the Executive Board and staff.*



## Resolutions, Predictions and Prayers

**Gregory Floyd, President Local 237:** “I have a prediction for 2020. Labor unions have been down, but don’t count us out! In fact, all current trends indicate the exact opposite. A recent M.I.T. study found that 46% of nonunion workers say they would like to be in a union. These workers have come to understand that the adage: ‘There’s strength in unity’ is not just an old saying, but rather, a wisdom-packed approach that does not go stale and has a proven track record of results including union workers earning, on average, 20% more than non-union workers. And let’s not forget that the 40-hour work week, health benefits, worker safety guarantees, \$15 an hour minimum pay, paid vacation and family leave are just some of our hard-fought — and won — battles. Clearly, after years of being made a scapegoat and piñata for the corporate 1%, opportunity now exists to expand union membership—an opening that many nonunion groups are keenly aware of. For example, the New York City branch of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) has expressed dissatisfaction with unions as not being aggressive enough on worker issues and presented its members with a plan to gain entry into six of our most powerful unions to organize members to become their own. This is simply not true. Unions are aggressive. Unions are progressive. History proves it. Now is the time for unions to get back to basics and tackle future challenges, like the upcoming Census and elections, with the same unity, passion, and total commitment that produced some of our greatest triumphs. Labor also needs to fight its own fight. That does not mean we shouldn’t seek allies. But simply: There is no substitute for labor unions. That’s a fact that some never knew, some have forgotten or just ignored and I predict that labor unions will once again become the driving voice, vision and vote of America’s middle class.”

**Benny Carenza, Trustee Local 237 Executive Board:** “My hopes for the members and their families would be first and foremost health and happiness. My goals on Long Island would be to help as many members as we possibly can with the great representation they receive, contract enforcement and just being a good listener to all. Life is tough sometimes and people get frustrated and we understand those frustrations and work with our members every day to help them. Long Island business agents, liaisons, chapter officers and shop stewards do an amazing job every day and for that I am very thankful.”

**Gisela “GiGi” Reyes, Executive Administrative Assistant:** “My resolution for the New Year is to take better care of my health. I know that my family and friends will be happy, and for that reason alone, I want to succeed. I think of that famous quote from Mickey Mantle, who said: ‘If I knew that I’d live this long, I would have taken better care of myself’ and I don’t want it to apply to me. For too long, I’ve viewed taking care of my health as unnecessary, time-consuming — even selfish. Not anymore. My health is important to the people I love, and now, it’s important to me.”

## Resolutions, Predictions and Prayers

**Donald Arnold, Director of the Citywide Division and Secretary-Treasurer-elect of Local 237’s Executive Board:** “Family means everything to me. I guess this is something that we tend to learn only as we grow older. My wish for 2020 is that younger people could appreciate their parents and grandparents while they still have the opportunity to live among them, learn from them and give them a hug.”

**Phyllis Shafran, Director of Communications and Political Coordinator:** “My wish for year 2020 is that we start to see the world with 2020 vision: Sharp and clear with nothing out of focus or missed. This will help us understand and appreciate what really matters. And once we know that, we should learn to live each moment to the fullest, without hesitation or fear. I see this done by my little grandson, Mason, age 3. His innocence, candor and unfiltered reactions let him enjoy the moment to the max and register any disappointments or disapproval immediately — and loudly. With his favorite song being “Happy Birthday”, his hysterical laughter at my unfunny “knock-knock” jokes and his refusal to play with the boy who pushed his friend, Fiona, Mason has a perspective on life I wish we could all embrace. Being an adult can be a drag, I know. But if we are receptive to experiencing life with the wonderment and whimsy of a child, we have a unique chance to recognize our blessings and pray to be worthy of more.”

## Local 237 Member Services

### UNION HEADQUARTERS

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

### LOCAL 237 DIVISIONS

#### CITYWIDE DIVISION, 2nd Fl.

212-924-2000  
Donald Arnold, Director  
Derek Jackson, Director,  
Law Enforcement Division

#### HOUSING DIVISION, 2nd Fl.

212-924-2000  
Carl Giles, Housing Director

#### SPECIAL PROJECTS, 2nd Fl.

212-924-2000  
Debbie Coleman, Esq., Special Projects Director

#### LONG ISLAND DIVISION

631-851-9800  
100 West Main Street, Babylon,  
New York 11702

Benedict Carenza, Director  
Long Island Welfare Fund:  
For information on the various  
funds call 800-962-1145

#### RETIREE DIVISION, 8th Fl.

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

#### LOCAL 237 DEPARTMENTS

##### (Citywide and Housing)

#### SKILLED TRADES, 2nd Fl.

212-924-2000  
Donald Arnold, Director

#### HEALTH AND SAFETY, 2nd Fl.

212-924-2000  
Donald Arnold, Director  
Carl Giles, Coordinator

#### MEMBERSHIP, 3rd Fl.

212-924-2000  
Provides membership services and  
records, including address changes.

#### WELFARE FUND, 3rd Fl.

212-924-7220  
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.  
Mitchell Goldberg, Director

#### SOCIAL SERVICES, 3rd Fl.

212-924-7220 ext. 7562  
Living and working in New York can  
be challenging and our members  
work extremely hard. Social workers  
also work hard by connecting peo-  
ple to much needed assistance and  
resources. With this in mind, Local 237  
has introduced a new Social Ser-  
vices Department featuring free  
social work services that are available  
to all members. The union knows  
that its members have tough jobs  
and that when encountering tough  
personal challenges, learning about  
possible solutions to those challenges  
would make things that much easier.  
Contact us to learn about the many  
service we can provide.  
Ayana Ali, Director

#### LEGAL SERVICES, 4th Fl.

212-924-1220  
Lawyers advise and represent  
members on covered personal  
legal problems, including  
domestic relations (family court  
proceedings, divorce and separa-  
tion), purchase and sale of a primary  
residence, wills, adoptions, credit  
and consumer problems, tenant  
rights and bankruptcies.  
Office Hours:  
Mon.- Fri. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Mary Sheridan Esq., Director  
Kenneth Perry Esq.,  
Deputy Director

#### EXECUTIVE OFFICES, 5th Fl.

212-924-2000  
Gregory Floyd, President  
Ruben Torres,  
Vice President  
Edmund Kane,  
Secretary-Treasurer

#### PERSONNEL, 5th Fl.

212-924-2000  
Edmund Kane, Director and  
Chief Negotiator

#### POLITICAL ACTION &

#### LEGISLATION, 5th Fl.

646-638-8501  
Local 237 protects members'  
rights by helping to sponsor  
legislation that is important  
to members, and by opposing  
initiatives that would hurt  
members.  
Phyllis S. Shafran, Coordinator

#### GRIEVANCES/DISCIPLINARY

#### PROBLEMS, 7th Fl.

212-924-2000

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

Mal Patterson, Director of  
Grievances and Hearings  
Diana Doss, Esq.  
Grievance Coordinator

#### CIVIL SERVICE BAR ASSN

7th Fl., 212-675-0519

Saul Fishman, President  
Aldona Vaiciunas,  
Office Administrator and  
Grievance Coordinator  
Abbott Gorin, Esq.,  
Business Representative  
CSBA Welfare Fund  
Alicare 866-647-4617

#### COMMUNICATIONS, 5th Fl.

646-638-8501  
Phyllis S. Shafran, Director  
Local 237 Newsline and  
Retiree News & Views, Editor  
Website: [www.local237.org](http://www.local237.org)

#### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

8th Fl.  
212-807-0550  
Provides a variety of training  
and educational advancement  
opportunities for members.  
Bertha Aiken, 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](http://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



### By Gregory Floyd

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

## WHEN THE AMERICAN DREAM BECOMES A MALL IN NEW JERSEY

Has the American Dream become just a mall in New Jersey? Right now, this \$6 billion version, just 6 miles from Manhattan, in East Rutherford, is where private developers were able to leverage a stake in property abandoned by previous developers, along with the sale of \$1.1 billion in tax-exempt bonds and \$390 million in tax concessions. With \$3 million-plus square feet that include a Nickelodeon Theme park, a DreamWorks water park, ice skating rink, ski slope, movie theaters, a live performance theater, high-end retail shopping stores and destination restaurants, this American Dream--which already employs 1,200 people directly with an additional 17,000 jobs expected to come--may actually come closer to embodying the concept of the "American Dream", a term originally coined in 1931.

In his Depression era best-selling novel, "Epic of America," writer and historian James Truslow Adams described America as a land where "each man and woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of fortuitous circumstance of birth or position." Simply: America is a land of opportunity where even if you are born poor, through hard work, you don't have to remain that way.

New Jersey's American Dream took 15 years to produce. The American Dream that Adams envisioned went on to produce programs during that same period of time that included a national infrastructure system for highways and utilities as well as a master plan for affordable housing like NYCHA. Indeed, perhaps the most significant feature of the 1931 American Dream was that it triggered a public consciousness which acknowledged gross inequality in America and resulted in an outcry for the Federal government to take action to remedy it.

Some might say that the American Dream mall is the exact opposite of Adams' idea and that it's actually a perversion of his concept—an ideal run amuck. To some,

this high-end, high-cost American Dream is the embodiment of opulent entertainment and other over-the-top self-indulgences that are certainly not available and affordable for all. Now, nothing is intrinsically wrong with a place for Americans to have fun. But in the current political landscape, where Progressives and Social Democrats are critical of the great divide between the "haves" and "have nots" in our society and lambaste as ineffectual, those who have historically led the fight to level the playing field—members of the Democratic Party and unions — it leaves us to wonder how, if and by whom, will economic equality ever come about? There are many who think that they have the answer: Just complain about it and you've done something." Even today's Democratic presidential candidates have adopted a "woke" element to their campaigns. The strategy seems to be: Say it out loud. Then apologize for past offenses or actions that should have been taken and absolution is on the way.

Recently, former President Obama hosted a summit that challenged the "woke culture" for precisely that—complaining without activism. He told the audience: "There is this sense sometimes of: 'the way of me making change is to be as judgmental as possible...if I tweet or hashtag about how you didn't do something right.... I can sit back and feel pretty good about myself.... Man, you see how woke I was, I called you out. That's not activism... That's not enough."

We've come to accept the importance of "See something; say something." But that is only the start. "Doing something" really makes the difference. The American Dream is an evolving concept. It is mired in a time of great desperation; it held the promise of hope and the encouragement to accomplish. Today the phrase may be used to symbolize the fruits of our labor....proof positive that the American Dream is obtainable, with tangible results. But for those who are still feeling that the dream is still not theirs, being "woke" is not enough. To awake requires action. ■



**When there are only  
words and no action,  
society stands still.**

**SEE SOMETHING.  
SAY SOMETHING.  
DO SOMETHING.**

# MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

## On the Job

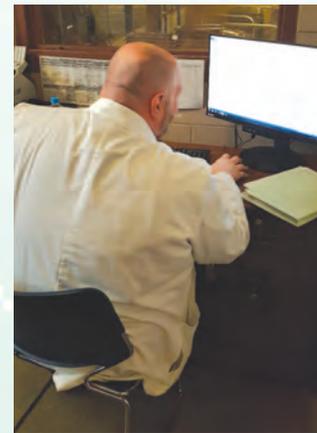
Local 237 is the largest Teamsters Local in the United States and Canada. Our members are dedicated municipal workers performing tough jobs in a wide range of titles for nearly every government agency in New York City and on Long Island. The quality of life for all of us is positively impacted by the hard work of 237 members. Meet some of those members:



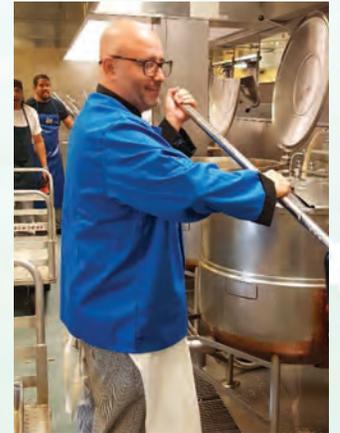
Senior cooks and cooks from Rikers Island meeting at Local 237 headquarters with **Curtis Scott**, (first row, right) Citywide Business Agent and Executive Board Trustee and **George Wade**, Citywide Business Agent.



At AMKC-Rikers Island -Food service managers, senior cooks and cooks.



FSM Seddo



Cook Nieves



Cook Ari Arzuza



Cook Alfonso Sjorgreen



Cook Frederick Paisley



Cook Glasbert McCorkle

### Local 237 NEWSLINE

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#### Executive Board

<b>Gregory Floyd</b> President	<b>Ruben Torres</b> Vice President	<b>Edmund Kane</b> Secretary-Treasurer	<b>Jeanette Taveras</b> Recording Secretary
<b>Curtis Scott</b> Trustee	<b>Benedict Carenza, Jr.</b> Trustee	<b>Catherine Rice</b> Trustee	

**Phyllis S. Shafran**  
Editor

Special thanks in the preparation of Newsline to:  
**Gisela (GiGi) Reyes**, Executive Administrative Assistant

IF YOU MOVE – Please send your change of address in writing to **Membership** to insure that you continue receiving your newspaper.



At Woodside Houses-**Len Proctor**, Deputy Director of Local 237's Welfare Fund with **Roseann Balletta**, Senior Caretaker; **El Barsere**, Caretaker X and **Jose Quiles**, Supervisor of Caretakers.



**Kenny Morrow**; **Donna Parsons**; **Jasmine Smith** and **Marcos Vidots**, Deputy Custodians at Wards Island, Bureau of Waste Treatment.

Local 237 is the largest Teamsters Local in the United States and Canada. Our members are dedicated municipal workers performing tough jobs in a wide range of titles for nearly every government agency in New York City and on Long Island. The quality of life for all of us is positively impacted by the hard work of 237 members. Meet some of those members:

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

On the Job



**School Safety Agent Abad** of the Queens South Command



Housing Assistant, **Marie Espinal** who is currently assigned to the NYCHA Leased Housing Unit at Fordham Plaza in the South Bronx in the comfort of her work space with her alter ego, "Hello Kitty."



NYCHA members carry out complicated and dangerous work assignments, such as waterproofing and pointing walls, and using a 90-foot aerial lifts. **Bricklayer, Lenny Battaglia; Helper, Andre Pitts and Supervisor, Eddie Marsh.**



Present at a UFT parents conference were members of our School Safety Community Outreach Unit. **SSA III Brown and SSA Riser**, along with Congressman Max Rose (center).



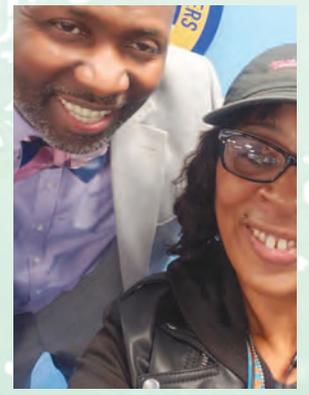
NYCHA members at the High Bridge House ready to tackle the day's work of their AWS assignments. **Luis Ceron, Caretaker X; John Woods, Caretaker J; Robert Golding, Maintenance Worker and Melvin Thomas, Caretaker J.**



**Ken Roper**, Local 237 Business Agent, Housing Division (r) with **Jonathan Hunter**, Plasterer Helper, South Bronx.



**Local 237 President Gregory Floyd** with **RosAngel Almonte**, Shop Steward for Environmental Services at the Javits Center, attending a meeting at Local 237 headquarters.



**Ken Roper**, Local 237 Business Agent, Housing Division with **Dawana Brown**, Caretaker J, Manhattanville.



Meeting of Caretakers at Local 237 headquarters to discuss the new Alternate Work Schedules (AWS).

Local 237 wants to thank the following members for their years of dedicated service, and wish them well in their retirement:

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

Added to the Roster of Retirees



**Wilbur Royal, Jr.** has been a loyal and dedicated member for 32 years. The NYCHA Maintenance Worker, currently working at Redfren Houses, has retired. **Ruben Torres** (left), Vice President on Local 237's Executive Board and **Norberto Luna**, Business Agent from the Housing Division were on hand to wish him well.

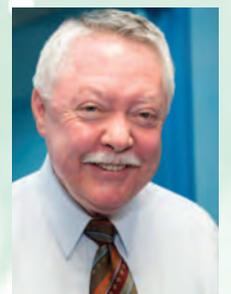


The staff of High Bridge Houses celebrated the retirement of Maintenance Worker **Martin Rivera**. Joining in the festivities are: **Michael Peterson**, Superintendent; **Renee Taylor**, Manager; Martin holding a plaque to signify appreciation; **Carlos Cevallos**, Maintenance Worker and Local 237 Shop Steward and **Luis Perez**, Assistant Superintendent.



**Reva Egdal**, Campus Security Assistant, has retired. Reva looks forward to spending more time with her family and friends and in her words "just having some fun." She is pictured with **Jeanette Taveras**, Local 237's Recording Secretary on the Executive Board and Business Agent in the Law Enforcement Division, and **Donald Arnold**, Director of the Citywide Division.

**Ed Kane, the Go-To Guy**



In describing **Edmund Kane**, one would never use words like "reserved," "reticent" or "retiring". So to say that he is retiring, clearly, that's a verb, not an adjective suited to his personality traits.

Ed has been a Teamster for 44 years, 25 of those years at Local 237—10 years on the Executive Board, and now its Secretary-Treasurer. Previously, he was a member working at NYCHA as a Manager and twice elected as Chairman of the Housing Managers Association. Ed is known for his quick wit, endless reservoir of jokes and inspired recipes—the results of which, often made their way to the office to be shared with his colleagues.

Ed is also a human encyclopedia on Local 237 history, public housing and City politics. No need to look something up: Just ask Ed and he can speak volumes about a long-past contract negotiation, why and when a policy procedure was implemented—or changed—by NYCHA, how various Mayoral administrations treated public employees and identifying people in an old photo. Ed knows it; lived it and of course, has an opinion on all of it. Ed is also the "go-to guy" if you're trying to recall the name of an old movie or a line of a song, want a recommendation on red wine, looking for where to get a good buy on almost any item or if you need some advice on a job-related issue or a personal matter. There are countless members, staff and union leaders who have benefitted from his wisdom, empathy and willingness not just to listen, but to work on coming up with a solution.

Ed Kane is the consummate professional whose demeanor is more than just friendly. He has been a true friend to Local 237 members, its leaders and retirees. Now that he has joined the ranks of retiree, he will certainly personify the slogan of the Retiree Division: "retire from work, not the union." And in doing so, we're confident that even though Ed may not be at his usually desk each morning, he'll always be our "go-to guy."

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

In recognition of a Job Well Done

The first-rate work of our members and staff is often acknowledged with special honors to mark their achievements. Here are some of those recently recognized for their professionalism and performing a job well-done:



Trustee of the Year Award was presented to **Lawrence Bosley**, Local 237's Senior Counsel, (pictured with **President Gregory Floyd**) by the New York Chapter of the National Association of Securities Professionals (NASP), whose parent organization has chapters across the country. NASP is dedicated to creating a level playing field in the securities industry and providing continuing education for securities professionals of color, who are too often underrepresented in large securities firms and as owners of asset management firms, not given equal opportunities to compete to manage the assets of retirement systems, endowments, sovereign funds and large trusts and estates. NASP to combat these inequities through networking support, seminars, expert panels on issues affecting the industry, in particular for managers of color, and recognizing through award ceremonies the achievements of people of color within the securities industry.



PSOs honored for many years of dedicated service-Javits Center members: **Kwadwo Siribe; Kwame Kensah; Awilda Negron; Saarah Adu-Gyamfi and Trevor Forbes.**



NYCHA member **Robert Rodriguez**, a three time winner of the DeCarlo Award for his time, attendance and demonstrating an over-all team spirit.

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

Congratulations to the Graduates

We are very proud of the accomplishments of our members striving to achieve new educational and professional heights. Meet the new graduates:

TLC OFFICERS

Congratulations to the graduating class of new TLC officers. They graduated on October 10, 2019.

A - ACADEMY

- |                      |                           |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Kareem Abdurrahman   | Mehidee BM                |
| Ahmed Aquieb         | Melendez Michael          |
| Jean Augustin        | Mohammed Ashton           |
| Jorge Baldeon        | Paul Jay                  |
| David Boyd           | Penafiel Michael          |
| Darron Bryant        | Pierce Avery              |
| Manuel Chuva-Galarza | Polanco Christian         |
| Jason Daley          | Rivera Jaisen             |
| Francis Ryan         | Rodriguez Daniel          |
| Galarza Rosemary     | Rodriguez Saul            |
| Garcia Anthony       | Sahota Gurjeet            |
| Garcia Justin        | Sharma Aniket             |
| George Chanelle      | Skeffrey Clive            |
| Hamroff Scott        | Sulan Sumit               |
| Hernandez Rafredery  | Suri Ashish               |
| Hilton Edward        | Tejada Ivan               |
| Jean Marie Brunet    | Trinidad Peter            |
| Johnson Michael      | Valcin Gasmyr             |
| Lirio Mac Cronell    | Valdez-Aponte Christopher |
| Martinez Felipe      | Vargas Joseph             |
| Mayes Angel          | Wagner Robert             |

B - ACADEMY

- |                     |                 |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| Arjoonsingh Nalinee | Romero Tomas    |
| Aslam Fahad         | Simms Ricardo   |
| Celebioglu Cuneyt   | Su Ryan         |
| Delsignore Marc     | Sylla Abdou     |
| Martin Aisha        | Williams Marcus |
| Rodriguez Jennifer  |                 |

Condolences

*It is with great sorrow that we announce the death of the following members of Local 237 or members of their families. They will be sorely missed.*

I.S. 72 unveiled a monument based on the sketch of two seventh grade students, Sarah and Sophie Shapiro, to honor fallen officers, **Patrolman Rocco Laurie** and **Detective Rafael Ramos**. The monument is located outside of the school's main entrance. The school honored the two officers because Laurie is the school's namesake, and Ramos was a School Safety Agent at the school before he entered the NYPD. Pictured with family members, monument designer students **SSA KNESAL, SSA JIMENEZ, SSA DELISO (retired) L3 WIENSTEIN (retired)**, all played a part in dedication ceremony.



to **Trisha Wade**, Secretary of the Long Island Division and her family, on the passing of her beloved step mom, Joanne Sweeney.

to **Juan Perez**, a Clerk of the Welfare Fund and his family on the death of his cherished mother, Alejandrina Perez.

The past several months have been very difficult for the School Safety Division in Manhattan South as it mourned the passing of several members: **SSA Ill Lorraine Brook; SSA 1 Nairé McCormick; SSA 1 Tyrone Neal and SSA Ill Mike Harrington**. Our deepest condolences to their families, friends, and to all of the members of service, especially to those who knew them, and worked closely with them.



Personal Notes

**Donald Arnold**, newly elected Secretary Treasurer will receive an increase in salary \$43,628 per year effective 1/1/2020.

**Andre Green** was promoted to Deputy Director of Law Enforcement effective 12/2/2019. He received an increase in salary of \$6,344 per year.

So many of our members go above and beyond the call of duty, performing acts of heroism, ingenuity, kindness and generosity that demonstrate their professionalism and heart. They were willing to go that extra mile, and by so doing, made a difference in someone's life. Here are some of their stories:

# MEMBERS IN THE NEWS Above and Beyond



The Veteran Appreciation Luncheon was held on November 8th by NYC Social Services, Human Resources Administration and Department of Homeless Services to celebrate our veterans and thank them for their heroism. Teamsters Local 237 was well represented. Pictured is the **HRA Police Honor Guard: Michael Porcello, ACS Attorney; Sgt. Wanda D. Carrington, Shop Steward; Special Officer Annette Palmer.**



A student who had injured himself at the Canarsie Campus High School received vital assistance from **School Safety Agents Sophie Brown; Derrick Holmes and LaSharta Foskey, SSA III.**



**SCA Zennetra Sullivan** and parents from the PTA at CTEA High School hosted a bake sale to raise money for funeral costs needed by the parents of two students who tragically died while swimming in the ocean at Rockaway Beach...one died trying to save the life of his friend.



School Safety Agents at Prospect Heights High School hosted a Career Building Workshop to help empower students to become tomorrow's leaders.

## BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

October was Breast Cancer Awareness Month and members of Teamsters Local 237 did their part to show support for victims, survivors and those who lost loved ones to the disease. Their message was simple, yet powerful: Early detection leads to good results and know that there are many treatment options.



Manhattan South HSES



**SSA I Shawnta Alston** from the Brandeis Campus/P811 Mickey Mantle School in front of the Wall of Hope.



**SSA I Saahir, Manhattan South; SSA I Corbrey, Manhattan North; SSA I Cuello** (cancer survivor) and **SSA I Cortijo, PS 191.**



**SSA III Erica Lewis** has served as a mentor and great role model for thousands of students.



**SSA I Shawta Alston** from the Brandeis Campus/P811 Mickey Mantle School proudly represented Local 237 at this year's African American Day Parade. She marched with the Empire State Grand Council and Deborah Grand Chapter organizations and with her Dad, Brother Alston, title II, Lt.



Benjamin Cardozo High School Marine Corp recruitment assisted by **SSA III Bellevue; SSA Carter and SSA Nath.**



**SSA I Andre Pascal, Manhattan North** seemed to enjoy Family Day at PS 158 as much as the kids.



Truman High School in PB Bronx East.



Fun was had by all at a community Halloween celebration organized by Explorer Post 2015 of PBSI, led by Post Advisors **SSA David Perez, Dominick Barresi, Civilian Advisor Brianne Whelan** and overseen by **SSA III Harold Wise** in partnership with the Westerleigh Park Coalition. Monies raised from the "Trunk and Treat", set up with candy donated by the School Safety Agents, was distributed to 27 different schools in the area.



Jacobi Hospital Police Officers.



Thousands of high school students benefit from a great sports program supported by the NYPD and the School Safety Division. A new banner, donated by Mitch Weiss was unfurled at the monthly meeting of POLICE OFFICERS FOR CHRIST (POFC). Pictured: (left to right) NYPD Liaison Mitch Weiss; Pastor Joe Maldonado, who offered blessings for the banner and program; Program Coordinator, SSA Ill Luis Marquez; Comm. NYPD/School Safety Division Ramon Garcia and Chief NYPD/School Safety Division Ruben Beltran.



Alfred Smith High School's SSA Glover averted a potential tragedy with her quick action in apprehending an unknown male in possession of a meat cleaver.



Thanksgiving food baskets were amassed and distributed by School Safety Post 0105 and NYPD Post 2120 to help families in need throughout their community.



Teamsters style and spirit was in full display by all as Local 237's softball team demonstrated its skill and camaraderie throughout the season.



Carl Giles, Director of the Housing Division with the Astros, a Local 237 sponsored softball team.

## CITY PHOTOGRAPHERS

City photographers — and proud Teamsters — take more than NYPD mug shots. For example, through their efforts, they amass, investigate and organize crime scene photographs that have helped Detectives solve major crimes; they also serve as photojournalists and historians who record historic events throughout New York City, including parades down the Canyon of Heroes for luminaries from astronauts to the Yankees. Senior photographer Lance Karp noted that since their work dates back to the early 1900's, they are now in the arduous process, led by colleague Christina Fetkovitch, to archive thousands of negatives that date back decades. This photographic history will be preserved with the City Archive agency.



City photographers, working for various municipal agencies throughout New York, gathered last year at Local 237 to celebrate Carl Ambrose (seated center) for 50 years on the job at the DEP, joined by Donald Arnold, Citywide Director.



Ken Roper, Business Agent, Housing Division with Astro's coach.



A happy holiday season will be had by many children on Long Island thanks to Local 237 members who helped organize and participate in the Toys For Tots fund raiser motorcycle ride. Pictured: Rich Miliken; Steve President of the Tier Rats; Anthony Vasquez; Kito Baez; Eduardo Santiago; and Detective Brant from PSA 2.

# THE ROYAL TREATMENT

A very special edition of "Reaching Out With Gregory Floyd", the weekly radio program, took place in October. Reverend Robert Royal — a legend in the Harlem community — was the guest. At that time, two shows were taped from the headquarters of Local 237 in front of a live audience of consisting of members and staff. Rev. Royal discussed the many changes he has seen in the political climate of New York and the nation throughout the years. He also discussed the importance of the union membership and the vital role Shop Stewards and Business Agents play in making sure that the needs of the members are heard. Rev. Royal congratulated Gregory Floyd on his recent reelection and praised the "leadership that President Floyd brings to organized labor." Rev. Royal also offered in-



spiring words for young people on the need to "educate themselves and exercise their right to vote" as the most valuable way to achieve a satisfying and productive life. "Reaching Out With Gregory Floyd" airs Saturdays on 570AM/The Mission at 4:30pm and on 970AM/The Mission at 7pm. ▮



# Celebrating a Salad Bowl America

## Latino Heritage Celebration

In his inaugural address of January 1990, David Dinkins, the 106th Mayor of the City of New York and the first African American to assume that high office, said: *"I see New York as a gorgeous mosaic of race and religious faith, of national origin and sexual orientation."* In 1977, when he ran for Mayor of New York City, Mario Cuomo called the city a *"magnificent mosaic"*. In 1960's New York United States Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan famously wrote about our nation as a *"great melting pot"* and Jesse Jackson, the legendary Civil Rights icon, over the years, has used the home-spun image of a patchwork quilt to describe the American people, calling to mind a blanket made up of many different threads beautifully intertwined to keep us safe and secure. But, Mayor Dinkins, when sworn in as Manhattan Borough President in 1985, made the case for maintaining ethnic identity even as that identity becomes a part of a new, mosaic picture. Mayor Dinkins said: *"I never liked a 'melting pot'. Our strength is not in melting together, but in keeping our cultures."* His idea was that if everyone, from everywhere is blended into one big stew — that may seem charming—but misses the great advantage of the multiplicity of cultures brought by people from across the globe. A "salad bowl" is a better model, where each ingredient retains its taste and appearance without being totally absorbed or obscured.

At Local 237, we embrace "salad bowl" concept and recognize that diversity is our greatest asset. While we are all proud Americans, we also retain pride in our individual cultural heritage. We want others to know about it and are confident that cultural exchange leads to better understanding of our fellow Americans. Among our efforts to showcase the richness of our cultural differences, we hosted the Latino Heritage Celebration in September. This celebration gave members of Latino heritage a chance to proudly share with all members their history, food and culture. The evening's program had a number of highlights. For example: Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez — who made history in 1992 when she became the first House Representative from Puerto Rico — was awarded the Teamster's "Trailblazer Award." The Congresswoman spoke passionately about the importance of *"protecting our democratic way of life in the 2020 election"* and pointed to the need to pass comprehensive immigrant reform legislation as an important step in that direction. Congresswoman Velazquez concluded her remarks by noting that Puerto Rico is still dealing with the devastating effects of Hurricane Maria and expressed a commitment to working with the federal government to further aiding the weather-ravaged Island. In addition, acclaimed poet and educator, Peggy Robles Alvarado served as the program's emcee and there were also two special award presentations: One El Ritmo de la Ciudad Award presented to **Chembo Corniel** by **Nancy True** and another, presented by **President Floyd**, to **Ernesto Rodriguez, SSA III**, on behalf of the NYPD Explorers/Bronx West Command, Post 226, which he serves as lead advisor. The centerpiece of the evening was awards for the accomplishments of several Latino members who were recognized by Local 237 President **Gregory Floyd**, who awarded them a plaque for a job well-done as their proud family and friends cheered them on. The honorees included:

- **Clara L. Albino**, Corporal/Peace Officer, Law Enforcement Division
- **Carlos J. Rivera**, Dept. of Homeless Services/Special Officer, Law Enforcement Division
- **Catherine V. Sparks**, High School Nurse, Long Island Division
- **Dalina Viera-Florencio**, Supervisor of Grounds, Housing Division
- **Jaime Rivera**, IT Driver, Long Island Division
- **Luis A. Acevedo, Jr.**, Supervisor of Traffic Device Forman, City Wide Division
- **Luis A. Marquez**, School Safety Agent III, Law Enforcement Division
- **Luis Soler**, Housing Assistant, Housing Division



Lorenza Latin Dance Studio



Emcee Peggy Robles Alvarado



Honoree Jaime Rivera with President Gregory Floyd



Honoree Clara L. Albino with President Gregory Floyd





Amigos Unidos



Congresswoman Nydia Valazquez



Honoree Chembo Corniel with Retiree Division Director, Nancy True



Local 237's Executive Board VP Ruben Torres



Honoree Carlos J. Rivera with President Gregory Floyd



Honoree Ernesto Rodriguez with President Gregory Floyd



Honoree Dalina Viera-Florencio with President Gregory Floyd



Honoree Luis Soler with President Gregory Floyd



Honoree Luis A. Acevedo, Jr. with President Gregory Floyd



Honoree Catherine V. Sparks with President Gregory Floyd



Honoree Luis A. Marquez with President Gregory Floyd



Jeanette Taveras, Local 237's Executive Board Recording Secretary and Business Agent, Law Enforcement Division



NYPD/SSD Comm. Ramon Garcia, Jeanette Taveras, NYPD/SSD Chief Ruben Beltran and Ruben Torres.





# LONG ISLAND REPORT



Local 237 Long Island hosted another union training class. Great learning experience for all! Thanks for always supporting your union!



Brentwood's **John Gilmore** retired from Brentwood school district recently. Good luck in retirement John!



Brentwood's Food Service workers doing a great job as usual!



Town of Babylon's **Benny Rivera** receives the Town of Babylon's Hispanic Heritage award.



OTB cashiers **Catherine Rice, Gabriella Ulloa** and **Paige Grill**.



**Benny Carenza** with OTB cashier **Danielle Van Valen**.



Long Island's Local 237 chapter motorcycle club is growing! President **Kito Baez** from the Islip Housing Authority brought the crew to help out at the recent veterans event on Long Island. Thanks!



Local 237 members helping veterans every day. We presented a check to VFW Post 2912 in Wheatley Heights to help homeless veterans and we also collected 1,500 pairs of socks for the homeless veterans. Great job by all!



A fundraiser was done for Half Hollow Hills member **Mike Broderick** called "Teamsters Helping Teamsters" as he is out of work due to a motorcycle accident. We wish Mike a speedy recovery!



North Babylon's **Danny Clinch** retires with 42 years of service! Great job. Now enjoy your time off!



Maintenance Mechanic **Shawn Dimperio** keeping Brentwood School District in good shape and safe.

## Latino Celebration Honors Two LI Members



Long Island honoree **Catherine Sparks** (standing) with her family and friends.



**Benny Carenza**, with Long Island honoree **Jaime Rivera** with President **Gregory Floyd**.

## POLITICAL AND LABOR NEWS

### Local 237 Welcomes Korean Labor Communicators



Teamsters Local 237 welcomed a delegation of labor communicators from Korea's Province Hapcheon Labor Management Division. They were visiting New York to learn about labor rights and various work environments. They contacted the professional organization of labor communicators in New York City, Metro New York Labor Communicators Council to arrange the meeting. They met with **President Gregory Floyd** (center), who, through their interpreter,

answered many questions and provided insights about labor unions in New York and throughout the nation. Also pictured with the group is **Tim Sheard** (right), Metro's Chairman and member of the National Writers' Union, UAW Local 981, and editor of Hard Ball Press, which publishes labor-related books and educational materials, and **Phyllis Shafran** (left), Local 237's Director of Communications and Political Liaison, and member of Metro's Executive Board. ■

### FLOYD ADDRESSES MINNESOTA TEAMSTERS

**Local 237 President Gregory Floyd** was the keynote speaker at a Steward's workshop of Local 320, in Minnesota. He told the members: "Labor unions throughout America are under attack! Public employees are especially targeted as being overpaid and underproductive. The facts tell it all: Nationwide, union membership is at an all-time low. Today, only 10.7% of workers are union members—in the 1950's, membership was 40%. 28 states are already "right to work" states and more are likely to follow. We try to help our members see beyond the smoke screen of misinformation spread by the corporate 1% and the people they elect. We want members to see what this really is: Just a brazen attempt to reduce our voice to a whimper and purge the power from us. Clearly, workers must know and understand much more about the advantages of union membership. Collectively, we have the power to bring positive change to working men and women throughout the nation. This is where all of you come in! Shop stewards are the eyes and ears of a union. Shop stewards are the vital lynchpin between management and labor. Shop stewards educate and advocate for our members. They play an important role in so many issues of workers' rights, from grievance reports to the collective bargaining table. And they are biased



for sure... they are always on the side of the worker. Especially in this current climate in Washington, where union-busting and union-bashing are encouraged and rewarded, shop stewards can help to harness worker strength, and turn it into political power. Shop stewards can help our members learn to become more active. They can show them how to use their voice and vote in their own best interests. This is a heavy responsibility indeed. But remember that labor unions helped countless Americans to realize the 'American Dream' by building the middle class. So be confident that shop stewards will also work with union leaders to ensure that we preserve the ideals of the American way of life for our children and grandchildren." ■

### A WINNING TEAM



Votes were cast and the count is in. Members overwhelmingly elected the Floyd Slate for a five-year term. The Floyd Slate includes: Gregory Floyd as President; Ruben Torres, Vice President; Donald Arnold, Secretary-Treasurer; Jeanette Taveras, Recording Secretary and Trustees—Curtis Scott, Benny Carenza and Cathy Rice. ■

### Red Flag Gun Safety Conference



**New York State Governor, Andrew Cuomo** convened a conference to discuss a new law, that went into effect this year — the Red Flag Law — which prevents individuals who show signs of being a threat to themselves and others from purchasing or possessing any kind of firearms. This was the second in a series of three summits across the state to raise awareness about the legislation intended to curb gun violence. Its focus was primarily those who work with school children such as teachers, school administrators and School Safety Agents. The Governor told the audience: "As the federal government continues to abdicate its responsibility to protect people in this country by failing to take action on meaningful, common sense gun control... We were a laboratory, and now it must be done on a national level." ■

### THE TRIANGLE SHIRT WAIST FACTORY FIRE



This 108-year old tragedy, which took place in a lower Manhattan building that is now part of New York University, changed labor safety laws, not just in New York, but throughout the nation by ultimately paving the way for the New Deal labor reforms. 146 garment workers died on March 25, 1911 — mostly young immigrant women and girls, working for meager pay. They died largely because they were locked in and could not escape on their own and ladders on the fire trucks were not long enough to rescue them. Their employers never received punishment for the conditions that led to the loss of so many young lives. Although the occasion is commemorated each year, there is no fitting memorial to mark the site. Among those fighting to change that is **Edgar Romney** (pictured at the podium), a longtime union leader with the Union of Needletrades, Industrial, and Textile Employees, (UNITE) and its subsequent unions, Unite Here and Workers United, SEIU. For 50 years, Edgar has been on a crusade. Recently, Edgar, Vincent Alvarez, President of the New York City Central Labor Council and Gary LaBarbera, President of the Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York, addressed a group of labor leaders to garner financial support to construct a monument on Washington and Green Streets to the Shirt Waist Factory workers and to all workers who are injured or die on the job. ■



## Short Term Disability Benefits

By Mitch Goldberg

Director of the Welfare Fund

If you become disabled and cannot work because of an injury or illness that is not job-related or is not covered by no-fault auto insurance, you are eligible to receive short term disability benefits. There is a 14-day waiting period for benefits to begin. A physician must examine you within 3 days of your disability for these days to be included in the waiting period; otherwise the 14-day waiting period begins only when you are examined.

You will lose your right to this benefit if the Fund requests that you have an examination by a physician and the examination does not take place within two weeks of the Fund's request. If you are being treated for substance abuse, your treatment at a particular center or institute is required, in writing, by the physician who certifies that you are disabled. In addition, if the treatment continues for more than two weeks, the treatment center or institute must have a licensed physician on duty who can provide certification of your continued disability.

The amount of the benefit is 50% of your weekly salary up to a maximum benefit of \$300 a week. Benefits begin on the 15th day of your disability, unless you are hospitalized; in that case, benefits are paid from the first day you are confined to the hospital. In any event, you must miss a day of work due to your covered disability for disability benefits to start.

You will be entitled to receive no more than 52 weeks of disability benefit payments during any 104-week period regardless of how many separate disabilities or recurrences you experience during that period. If you return to work before you use up your 52 weeks of disability benefit payments and you are again disabled, you will be entitled to receive benefit payments only for the remainder of the 52 weeks of eligibility you have left during the 104-week period.

In order to receive these disability benefits, you must obtain a claim form from the Fund Office. There are three sections to this form; you should complete the employee section, your doctor should complete the "Attending Physician's Section," and your supervisor should complete the employer section.

Return the completed claim form to the Fund Office within 30 days from the first day of your disability. If you cannot submit a claim form within that time period, you must send a letter explaining the reason for the delay and the details of your disability. If the Fund Director determines that the delay in submitting the form was not for good cause, your claim for benefits may be completely or partially disallowed.

In general, the Fund's short-term disability benefits are not payable for the following injuries or illnesses:

**Automobile Accidents.** If you are injured as a result of an automobile accident that is covered by no-fault insurance, you are not entitled to receive the Fund's short-term disability benefits. Automobile accidents that are covered by no-fault insurance include accidents involving cars, vans, SUVs, taxicabs, private car service vehicles and buses. If you are injured in such an accident, you should contact the insurance carrier covering the vehicle involved in the accident and apply for no-fault insurance benefits, as the Fund will not provide benefits in such cases.

**Job-Related Injuries or Illnesses.** If your injury or illness is job-related, the Fund's short-term disability benefit would not be payable and you would need to file a workers' compensation claim for benefits. If the Fund receives a notice (Workers' Compensation Form C-7) that the claim is controverted by your employer, then the Fund will pay its benefit, pending the resolution of your workers' compensation claim. In such case, the Fund will have a lien on the workers' compensation benefits awarded to you (if any). This means that, if you are paid by the Fund and you are later awarded workers' compensation benefits for the same illness or injury and time period, the Fund is entitled to recover the amount it paid to you, out of your worker's compensation benefits, so that you are not paid twice for the same illness or injury. ■



## Social Services Department

By Ayana Ali

Director Local 237- Social Services

Did you know that the union has a Social Services Department created in 2018 and designed to assist you with personal issues? The department was created solely to assist members with issues that they may need some guidance with. I am a licensed clinical social worker and I head the department. I can assist you with the concerns and challenges in your life such as illness, disability, alcohol and substance abuse, mental illness, and much more.

By talking with me, we can determine what type of assistance you need and how to best respond to crisis situations that you are experiencing. Working together, I can help you to identify existing support networks and research as well as introduce you to community resources that you may not be aware of.

**Some of the assistance that I provide members with are:**

- Referrals to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- Advocacy with city and state entities such as HRA (The Human Resources Administration) and the NYS Health Exchange.
- Assistance with finding mental health providers

and specialists who participate with NYC health insurance plans.

- Identifying agencies and charities that may be able to provide assistance with rental arrears and landlord tenant advocacy.
- Information regarding childcare assistance that members may qualify for.
- Housing resource lists and application assistance with sites such as Housing Connect and [NYhousingsearch.gov](http://NYhousingsearch.gov).
- Liaison services with city agencies regarding issues such as FMLA, LOAs and Cobra.
- Support after traumatic incidents at the worksite or elsewhere and connection to ongoing therapy.

The good news is that these services and more are absolutely free of charge and confidential. If you want to find out more about the Social Services Department, please contact me, Ayana Ali, LCSW, at 212-924-7220 or [aali@local237.org](mailto:aali@local237.org) I am also Spanish speaking and can provide assistance to members who are more comfortable speaking in Spanish. ■



## BANKRUPTCY MYTHS AND FACTS

By Ken Perry, Esq.

Deputy Director Legal Service Plan

Bankruptcy is a legal process which allows a consumer or business to eliminate, reduce, or reschedule their debts. The "Automatic Stay," which you get when you file a bankruptcy case, temporarily prevents nearly all creditors from taking further actions to collect your debts. The "Discharge" permanently prevents nearly all creditors from taking any action to collect debts. There are some debts, such as student loans, which generally cannot be eliminated or reduced by bankruptcy.

There are a lot of "Myths" (lies) out there surrounding the concept of bankruptcy. Most of these criticisms are just NOT TRUE and are designed to scare people from getting help by getting rid of their debt. Bankruptcy can help solve your debt problems and more importantly get you and your family a fresh start. If you are considering a bankruptcy but are afraid about what you have read or heard others say, take a look at this list of Bankruptcy Myths:

**Myth:** People who file bankruptcy lose all their property.

**Fact:** Most debtors do not lose any property. Debtors are allowed to "exempt" (keep) certain property up to a certain value. For example, if you own a house, you can keep it if the equity in your house is less than \$170,825.00. If the equity in your house is higher, you can still keep your house, but you may have to pay back a portion of your other debts. If you don't own a house, you can keep up to \$13,900.00 in cash or cash equivalents like tax refunds. If you have a secured debt (like a car loan or a mortgage), you can usually keep the collateral (your car or your house), as long as you keep up with the payments. The vast majority of all cases are administered as "No Asset" cases, meaning there are no assets that are worth more than what you can exempt and nothing has to be paid to your creditors.

**Myth:** People who file bankruptcy never get credit again.

**Fact:** Many debtors receive offers for credit before their bankruptcy is even finished! Bad credit (such as paying late or not paying a debt in full) is reported

on your credit history for 7 years. Bankruptcy is reported on your credit report for 10 years, but after a successful bankruptcy you don't owe any debt (except for certain debts like student loans and child support). We have had many clients purchase homes within a few years of their bankruptcy, so credit is certainly available.

**Myth:** You can't get rid of back taxes through Bankruptcy.

**Fact:** Bankruptcy can eliminate back income taxes that are more than 3 years old. There are a few additional qualifications, including that there was no fraud involved, but once these are met in bankruptcy those back income taxes are gone.

**Myth:** There is a minimum amount of debt required to file Bankruptcy.

**Fact:** Theoretically you could file Bankruptcy even if you only have \$500 in debt; although, it's not a very good idea since you can only file a Chapter 7 Bankruptcy once every 8 years. But we have had clients with little or no income who have filed for amounts that would be very manageable for those with higher income. There is no minimum.

**Myth:** I only have to list the debt I want to get rid of in my Bankruptcy.

**Fact:** All debt must be listed, but this is actually better for you. For example, without Bankruptcy, if you stop paying a car loan, your car will be repossessed and you will have to pay the lender whatever is left on the car loan. When you file Bankruptcy and you stop paying your car loan, the only thing you'll lose is the car; you won't owe any money on the deficiency.

If you owe debts to friends or relatives, you must include them in your Bankruptcy. If you repay any debts to friends or relatives before you file for Bankruptcy, they will be forced to turnover every dollar you repaid them for the benefit of your creditors. When you include debts to friends or relatives in your Bankruptcy, then you can voluntarily repay them after your Bankruptcy case is over without doing them any harm. ■



# Keeping you in the know

From NYCERS

## World Trade Center (WTC) Disability Retirement Process

Have you submitted your Notice of Participation for WTC benefits?

Active or vested members who participated in WTC Rescue, Recovery or Clean-up Operations may file for disability retirement under current provisions of the WTC Law. A retiree may apply to be reclassified as a WTC disability retiree.

To be eligible to apply for a disability retirement or for reclassification under the WTC Law, you must have filed a Notice of Participation in WTC Rescue, Recovery or Clean-Up Operations with NYCERS (Form #622, available on NYCERS' website at [www.nycers.org](http://www.nycers.org)). Your agency must verify your participation in Rescue, Recovery or Clean-Up operations at a WTC site.

**The current deadline to file Form #622, Notice of Participation in WTC Rescue, Recovery or Clean-Up Operations, is September 22, 2022.**

### Track your Notice Online

Members with a registered MyNYCERS account can log into MyNYCERS and track the status of the verification of their WTC Notice of Participation online. The tracker displays the date NYCERS received the Notice, along with status updates during the verification process (e.g., Pending with Agency, Verified, Not Verified, etc.) Sign up or log in here: [www.nycers.org](http://www.nycers.org)

### WTC Filing Requirement

With the exception of vestees and retirees applying for reclassification, you, a person acting on your behalf, or your agency head must file an application for disability retirement under the WTC Law either: (1) while you are active on City payroll; (2) within 3 months after you were last paid by your employer; or (3) within 12 months after you receive notice that your employment was terminated for medical reasons if you were on an approved medical leave of absence prior to termination.

### WTC Reclassification

Individuals who are already retired for service or for a non-WRC disability benefit can submit an application for reclassification under WTC Law along with all required participation and medical evidence. If an applicant's participation is verified, the Medical Board finds that the member is disabled from a qualifying WTC condition, and the NYCERS Board of Trustees finds that the WTC Law presumption is not rebutted, then the applicant will be approved for a tax-free WTC benefit that is payable from the date the NYCERS Board of Trustees approves the application.

### Additional WTC benefits and information

Individuals who have experienced WTC-related health conditions (except for psychological conditions) can apply for additional benefits through the provision of the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund (VCF). To determine what benefits may be available, in addition to NYCERS WTC disability retirement or death benefits, go to the VCF website at <https://www.vcf.gov/index.html> or call the VCF at 1-855-855-1555.

Visit [www.nycers.org/wtc](http://www.nycers.org/wtc) for more information on WTC benefits and filing requirements. You may also sign up for MyNYCERS, the secure online portal to your NYCERS account. MyNYCERS is not required for the WTC disability process, but it will enable you to log in any time to view your account information, change your address, and file certain forms online.

**Remember: The current deadline to file NYCERS Form #622, Notice of Participation in WTC Rescue, Recovery or Clean-up Operations, is September 11, 2022.**



## Social Security Helps Veterans and Active Duty Military Members

By Anny Rosario Diaz Assistant District Manager, Social Security in Downtown Manhattan

Every year on Veterans Day, our nation honors the people who risk their lives to protect our country. Social Security's disability program is an important part of our obligation to wounded warriors and their families.

For military members who return home with injuries, Social Security is a resource they can turn to. If you know any wounded veterans, please let them know about Social Security's Wounded Warriors website. You can find it at [www.socialsecurity.gov/woundedwarriors](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/woundedwarriors).

The Wounded Warriors website answers many commonly asked questions, and shares other useful information about disability benefits, including how veterans can receive expedited processing of disability claims. Benefits available through Social Security are different than those from the Department of Veterans Affairs and require a separate application.

The expedited process is used for military service members who become disabled while on active military service on or after October 1, 2001, regardless of where the disability occurs.

Even active duty military who continue to receive pay while in a hospital or on medical leave should consider applying for disability benefits if they're unable to work due to a disabling condition. Active duty status and receipt of military pay doesn't necessarily prevent payment of Social Security disability benefits. Although a person can't receive Social Security disability benefits while engaging in substantial work for pay or profit, receipt of military payments should never stop someone from applying for disability benefits from Social Security.

Social Security honors veterans and active duty members of the military every day by giving them the respect they deserve. Let these heroes know they can count on us when they need to take advantage of their earned benefits. Our webpages are easy to share on social media and by email with your friends and family.

## Don't bash pensions — learn the facts

Splashy headlines spread resentment, often at the expense of the truth

*The Chief Actuary, Sherry Chan, wrote an op ed for Crain's concerning the press writing articles only highlighting exceptionally high pensions without all of the facts surrounding such benefit payouts, thereby spreading resentment among non-pension employees and other pensioners who receive more typical payouts.*

By Sherry Chan Assistant District Manager, Social Security in Downtown Manhattan

Given the recent spate of news reports about seemingly exorbitant pension payments to New York City retirees, I feel it's important to make a few things clear.

New York City pension money is an important contributor to our local economy. Pension dollars contributed from active workers' paychecks are invested in various assets, spurring market activity, while pension payments to retirees are spent on all manner of goods and services. Discussions of their value should bear this in mind, especially when one reads recurring media stories about large payouts — which can be very misleading.

Gleaned from open-data portals, these stories usually focus on individuals receiving pension benefits on the high end of the scale, represent a specific year, and focus on the benefits for those with a long career of service to the city.

Often the numbers are taken out of context, with minimal explanation.

Public servants who began their career with the city in the 1970s have the option of voluntarily increasing their contributions to their own pension, above and beyond what they were required to contribute. It's like someone saving money in a bank account and getting an annuity when they retire.

The inflated numbers that are reported make some pension benefits seem much higher than what they really are. It is not representative of what typical, newly hired public workers will receive when they retire from a city job.

Sometimes pensioners get a one-time lump-sum payment owed to them, such as when their pension check is suspended for multiple years and not paid until all pieces of their benefit calculation are provided and finalized.

When you read an article reporting on a pension salary for just one year, you could be left with the impression that this specific pension amount will be paid for eternity. That is not always the case. It could include non-recurring back payments.

Taxpayers have a right to know pension amounts, since a portion of pensions are paid from their taxes. But disclosing limited information serves no purpose other than to attempt to stimulate public pension resentment. This is not helpful.

If the pension dollar amounts being disclosed reflect only a particular year, and appear inordinately high, more questions should be asked and more research should be done so explanations can be reported. This way, taxpayers can have more informed opinions.

## Resumen En Español

**Bueno o Travieso**

Con una lista de regalos “necesarios” para las fiestas, incluyendo figuras de superhéroes, muñecas, PlayStation 5 y cachorritos—por nombrar algunos—los niños alrededor del mundo en esta época del año están listos para responder la pregunta prerequisite de Santa para determinar su elegibilidad para regalos: “¿Has sido bueno o travieso?”, los niños saben que un “Sí” traerá a Santa por la chimenea.

También hay tradiciones para los adultos en esta época del año. Muchos de nosotros hacemos una evaluación propia que puede no resultar en un regalo de parte de Santa, sino que incita a una resolución o predicción de cómo el próximo año podrá o debería ser una mejora. Perder peso, renunciar al cigarro, ahorrar dinero, ser más amable con mi pareja, son las resoluciones más frecuentemente hechas pero no cumplidas por al menos un 80% antes de que marzo haya terminado. Incontables celebridades han aportado con sus esperanzas, predicciones, aspiraciones y consejos de Año Nuevo. Recientemente el ex-presidente Barack Obama dio consejos a los Mileniales: “Esta idea de pureza y ustedes siempre tan políticamente ‘despiertos’, deberán superar eso rápidamente... el mundo es un desastre”. Oprah Winfrey dijo: “Salud por el nuevo año y otra oportunidad para que hagamos todo bien”. Albert Einstein aconsejó: “Aprende de ayer, vive por hoy y espera por el mañana”. Maya Angelou notó: “He aprendido que las personas olvidarán lo que dices, olvidarán lo que hiciste, pero nunca olvidarán como lo hiciste sentir”, Mark Twain sugirió que: “El día de Año Nuevo es el momento aceptado para hacer sus buenas resoluciones anuales regulares. La semana que viene, puedes empezar a pavimentar el infierno con ellas como siempre”, John Lennon dijo: “Cuenta tu edad por la cantidad de amigos que tengas, no por los años. Cuenta tu vida por sonrisas, no lágrimas”. Michelle Obama incitó a los jóvenes: “Elige a las personas en tu vida que te eleven”. Mohammed Ali dio su consejo: “Odié cada minuto de entrenamiento. Pero dije, no renuncies. Sufre ahora y vive el resto de tu vida como un campeón.” Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. aconsejó a sus seguidores: “Toma el primer paso en la fe; no necesitas toda la escalera, solo el primer escalón.” E incluso Dr. Seuss aportó con su pensamiento filosófico: “A veces no sabes el valor de un momento hasta que se convierte en un recuerdo”.

Al esperar el 2020, la manera que los historiadores evaluarán el 2019 está por determinarse. Este año vimos terrorismo, ambos doméstico y en el extranjero, que causaron estragos y angustia a muchos. Aborrecimiento en la forma de nacionalismo, antisemitismo y racismo resultaron en las masacres sin sentido de niños inocentes, adoradores y trabajadores. En nuestro país el golpe y la rotura de sindicatos está en su punto más alto de todos los tiempos. Y también están esos que sufrieron las devastaciones de catástrofes climáticas y vieron sus hogares incendiarse o perderse en el viento. Más de cerca, la violencia con armas hace que esta Navidad sea muy triste por razones incontables para familias de Nueva York. La carencia de hogar está en su máximo récord y el miedo entre los inmigrantes indocumentados en nuestras comunidades atenúa la felicidad de las fiestas y hace llorar a la dama del puerto. Sin embargo, los miembros del Local 237 han prevalecido. Nuestros miembros y liderazgo han triunfado en mantener nuestros mejores intereses en prioridad y después de reflexionar muchas cosas se lograron. Aún por hacer, aquí hay algunos deseos, esperanzas y predicciones para el 2020. ■

*Le deseamos a todos nuestros miembros y aquellos a quienes aprecian, salud, paz y prosperidad para el Año Nuevo. Demos gracias por lo que tenemos y mantengamos la esperanza por lo que viene en el futuro....*  
— De parte del Presidente del Local 237, Gregory Floyd, la Junta Directiva y el personal.

**Resoluciones, Predicciones y Oraciones**

**Gregory Floyd, el Presidente del Local 237:** “Tengo una predicción para el 2020. Los sindicatos de obreros han disminuido, pero ¡no nos descarten! De hecho, todas las tendencias actuales indican exactamente lo contrario. Un estudio reciente del MIT encontró que el 46% de los obreros no sindicalistas dicen que les gustaría pertenecer a uno. Estos obreros han logrado entender que la expresión: “Hay fuerza en la unidad” no es sólo un viejo dicho, sino un enfoque lleno de sabiduría que no se vuelve obsoleto y tiene un historial probado de resultados, incluyendo obreros sindicalizados que ganan, en promedio, un 20% más que los obreros no sindicalizados. Y además no olvidemos que el trabajo de 40 horas por semana, beneficios de salud, garantías de seguridad, salario mínimo de \$15 la hora, vacaciones pagas y permisos familiares son sólo algunas de nuestras batallas difíciles y ganadas. Claramente, después de años de ser hechos chivos expiatorios y piñatas para el 1% corporativo, ahora existe la oportunidad de expandir la membresía sindical; una apertura que muchos grupos no sindicalistas están profundamente al tanto. Por ejemplo, la sucursal de Nueva York de los Democráticos Socialistas de América (DSA) ha expresado insatisfacción con los sindicatos por no ser suficientemente agresivos con problemas obreros, y presentar a sus miembros un plan para entrar en seis de nuestros sindicatos más poderosos para organizar a los miembros para que se conviertan en los suyos. Esto no es cierto. Los sindicatos son agresivos. Los sindicatos son progresivos. La historia lo prueba. Ahora es el momento para que los sindicatos vuelvan a sus bases y enfrenten retos futuros, como el próximo censo y elecciones con la misma unidad, pasión y compromiso total que produjo algunos de nuestros más grandes triunfos. La clase obrera también necesita enfrentar su propia batalla. Eso no significa que no deberíamos buscar aliados; simplemente: no hay sustituto para sindicatos de obreros. Ese es un hecho que algunos nunca supieron, algunos olvidaron o ignoraron y predigo que los sindicatos obreros una vez más se convertirán en una impulsora voz, visión y voto de la clase media de América.”

**Resoluciones, Predicciones y Oraciones**

**Donald Arnold, Director de la División de Citywide y Secretario-Tesorero electo de la Junta Directiva del Local 237:** “La familia significa todo para mí. Supongo que es algo que solemos aprender sólo cuando envejecemos. Mi deseo para el 2020 es que los jóvenes aprecien a sus padres y abuelos mientras tengan la oportunidad de vivir entre ellos, aprender de ellos y abrazarlos.”

**Phyllis Shafran, Director de Comunicaciones y Coordinador Político:** “Mi deseo por el año 2020 es que comencemos a ver el mundo con visión 2020: Con nitidez y claridad sin nada fuera de enfoque o desperdiciado. Esto nos ayudará a entender y apreciar lo que realmente importa y una vez que sabemos eso, deberíamos aprender a vivir cada momento al máximo, sin vacilación o miedo. Veo esto hecho por mi pequeño nieto Mason, de 3 años de edad. Su inocencia, honestidad y reacciones sin filtro le permiten disfrutar el momento al máximo y registrar cualquier decepción o desaprobación de manera inmediata—y muy ruidosa. Con su canción favorita siendo “Feliz Cumpleaños”, su risa histérica con mis chistes sin gracia de “Toc-Toc” y su rechazo a jugar con el niño que empujó a su amiga Lyla, Mason tiene una perspectiva de la vida que deseo que todos pudiéramos adoptar. Ser un adulto puede ser horrible, lo sé. Pero si somos receptivos de experimentar la vida con la maravilla y capricho de un niño, podemos tener una oportunidad única de reconocer nuestras bendiciones y orar para ser mercedores de más.”

**Benny Carenza, Comisario de la Junta Directiva del Local 237:** “Mis esperanzas para los miembros y sus familias serían primero y principalmente salud y felicidad. Mis metas en Long Island serían ayudar a tantos miembros como podamos con la gran representación que reciben, contractar cumplimiento y solo ser buen oyente para todos. La vida es dura algunas veces y las personas se frustran y entendemos esas frustraciones y trabajamos con nuestros miembros cada día para ayudarlos. Los agentes de negocios de Long Island, los enlaces, los oficiales de los capítulos y los delegados sindicales hacen un trabajo increíble todos los días y por eso estoy muy agradecido”.

**Gisela “GiGi” Reyes, Asistente Administrativa Ejecutiva:** “Mi resolución para el Año Nuevo es cuidar mejor mi salud. Sé que mi familia y amigos estarán felices y por esa sola razón, quiero tener éxito. Pienso en esa frase famosa de Mickey Mantle quien dijo: ‘Si hubiera sabido que viviría todo este tiempo, me hubiera cuidado más’ y no quiero que se aplique a mí. Por mucho tiempo he tomado mi salud como algo innecesario, consumidor de tiempo, o incluso egoísta. Ya no más. Mi salud es importante para las personas que quiero y ahora es importante para mí también”.



# Keeping you in the know

## 2020 CENSUS

What's at stake: With \$73 Billion for New York State and the possible loss of at least three Congressional seats, New Yorkers can't afford not to be counted.



### Shape the future for your family and community.

The U.S. Constitution requires that every decade we count our nation's population. By April 1, every household will receive a notice to complete the 2020 Census and be counted.

**Responding is important.**

You can shape the future for yourself, your family, and your community for the next 10 years. Data collected in the 2020 Census will inform the distribution of more than \$675 billion in federal funds to states and communities each year. Businesses, community leaders, and local governments use census data to create jobs, ensure public safety preparedness, and support community initiatives.

**Results of the census impact funding for things like:**

- > Schools and education
- > Health care facilities
- > Housing assistance
- > Public transportation
- > Child and adult food assistance programs
- > Assistance for people transitioning out of homelessness
- > Career and technical education grants
- > Medicare Part B

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Shape your future  
START HERE >

United States\*  
**Census 2020**

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**Everyone at your address should be counted.**



It is important to count every person living in your household, even if they are staying only temporarily. This includes relatives, nonrelatives, and children as young as one day old.



You should respond at the address where you are living or staying on Census Day—April 1, 2020.

**Our kids are important.**

An estimated 5 percent of kids under the age of five were missed in the 2010 Census. At about 1 million babies and young children, that's the largest undercount of any age group. The 2020 Census helps determine which areas qualify for the critical resources that children and families depend on for the next 10 years—basically an entire childhood! During those years, their communities could receive less funding for schools, parks, SNAP/WIC, hospitals, transportation, and other things kids need.

**Responding is easy and secure.**

Responding to the census takes just a few minutes. Simply answer a handful of questions online, by phone, or by mail. The Census Bureau encourages renters and recent movers to complete their forms right away, online or by phone, in case paper forms get lost in the mail.

All responses are confidential and protected by law. Your personal information can never be shared with law enforcement agencies or property managers, and it cannot be used against you in any way.

For more information, visit:  
**2020CENSUS.GOV**

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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## Although World Suicide Prevention Day Was September 10, Help For Those In Need Is Everyday

*There is no shame in seeking help.  
 If you are suffering, please reach out to get help.  
 800-273-8255 (TALK) or TALK to 741741*

**Or go to the website of the  
 American Foundation for Suicide Prevention <https://afsp.org>**