

**Volume 36 Issue 1  
October  
2022**

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

# The BEES Beacon

**BOCES Educators of Eastern Suffolk**



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



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# President - Asha Mazza-Shaw

## Union Strong



Greetings BEES members. I want to thank you for your continued support and for voting me back into the President's position to continue to represent you all. It is truly an honor to represent such a large, diverse and hard-working unit. It is nice to be back without COVID restrictions this year. Gathering together for activities and meetings, and seeing our colleague's smiling faces outside of a Zoom box is a refreshing change. COVID is still lingering, and cases are beginning to rise again, so please continue to be mindful of your health. The NYS COVID sick leave continues until December 31st. If you have questions about accessing the COVID sick leave, please speak with your building representatives. If you are unsure who your building representatives are, please visit our website [www.beesbeacon.org](http://www.beesbeacon.org) to find a list of BEES building representatives and their email addresses. Our website is also an excellent resource and includes several links to valuable information about contractual and membership benefits as well as information about workshops and upcoming meetings.

We have undergone some changes on our Executive Board due to the retirement of two integral members, former Treasurer, Michelle Tinter and former Area Vice President for CTE/SCE, Rosaria Catania. They both served on the Executive Board for many years, and we wish them all the best as they enjoy the fruits of their years of hard work. Congratulations to you both-- you will certainly be missed! Thankfully we have excellent people who have been elected to both positions. Rachael Klahn is our new Treasurer, and she's already doing a terrific job. Deirdre Pettit has been elected to the position of Area Vice President for CTE/SCE. Deirdre brings many years of experience in the CTE/SCE world and has been a great addition to the Board as well. Our former Membership Coordinator, Lisa Mongiello, also stepped down to pursue other professional interests; we thank Lisa for helping to update and digitize our membership files. Adrian Grube has been elected as our new Membership Coordinator, and she has hit the ground running! You can reach out to her if you have any questions about your membership numbers or status. We also welcomed building representative Dana Sayers to the Executive Board as our new Grievance Officer. Finally, we have a number of new building representatives who have signed on to represent our BEES membership. We are grateful to all those, past and present, who have represented our BEES members, and we encourage anyone who is interested in unionism to watch for opportunities to get involved. We are all the union.

# President - Asha Mazza-Shaw

## Union Strong



If you are a paraprofessional under our Yellow contract, you are likely aware that our negotiating team has put together a short survey regarding our upcoming contract negotiations. If you already took a few minutes to complete the survey, thank you for your time and suggestions. Your responses are important to us and will help shape our negotiating process moving forward. We are in the beginning stages of collecting information and looking at improvements that can be made via negotiations. It is important to know that we hear you and have your best interests in mind. As we continue through the process, we will be sharing updates with our building representatives, so please be sure to attend your building-level union meetings so you can hear the most updated information. You can also share your thoughts with your building representatives, who can bring the information back to the Executive Board. It is important for us to hear from the membership.

While I try to keep politics and unionism as separate as possible, the reality is that they cross over one another at times. We may not sit on the same side of the fence, or even the same side of the football field, but what we may be able to agree on is that public schools and educators have been used as political pawns for years. Which candidate is going to support our public schools and those who work in them, who will support the needs of our students? If you have worked at BOCES or any public school long enough, you will have certainly seen the pendulum swing in both directions. In years when schools are well-funded, there has been money for hiring and new programs and years when the budget is stretched thin, there has not been much extra for anything. As public school employees, I will encourage you to take a look at the "Politics in Education" section of our Beacon publication to see who the NYSUT endorsed candidates are. These candidates are people who have pledged to support public education and educators. While I encourage you to vote for the pro-education candidates, most of all, I encourage you to vote. Our union rights hang in the balance of elections like this upcoming cycle. I will use the 2014 North Carolina midterms as an example... that year, the lowest number of union educators showed up to vote in the elections. The ballots not cast resulted in a Republican supermajority in their General Assembly. Steps for veteran teacher pay, teaching assistants in classrooms, longevity pay, and other negotiated items were all eliminated in North Carolina. Voucher schemes were started and grown and harsh funding cuts were imposed on the state's colleges. North Carolina is still recovering from these devastating setbacks with the help of the North Carolina Association of Educators, which is their state union. I will encourage you once again, please get out and vote, and please consider the stances each candidate has on education and unions. Undoubtedly, it will have a lasting impact on all of us.



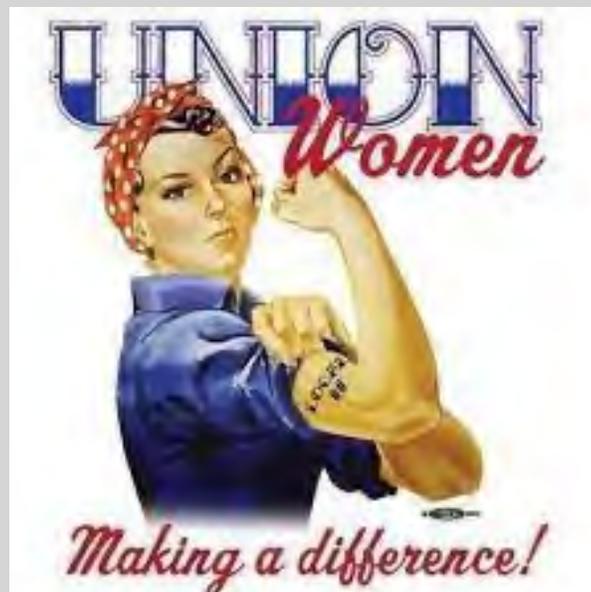
## Union Strong

Lastly, if you are new to the agency this year or if you are a veteran or anywhere in between, I want to thank you for sticking with the BEES. We have a strong union because we have a strong membership. Almost all eligible employees choose to sign up for their union benefits and to become BEES members. That is a great accomplishment, and we are proud to be part of such an amazing membership. If you haven't already signed up to receive our informational texts, it's never too late: just text the word BEES to the number 33222. You can also get information just for members on our private Facebook group page. You can join by visiting our website, and while you're there, sign up for emails, too!

I wish you all a safe and healthy holiday season!

In Solidarity,

*Asha*



# Politics in Education

## From the NYSUT Officers



ANDREW PALLOTTA  
PRESIDENT



JOLENE T. DIBRANGO  
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT



RON GROSS  
SECOND VICE PRESIDENT



J. PHILIPPE ABRAHAM  
SECRETARY-TREASURER

We're pleased to provide this [2022 Voter Guide](#) so YOU and YOUR VOTE can help elect pro-public education, pro-labor candidates in Albany and Washington, D.C., in the Nov. 8 General Election.

In a divided nation, we need to come together around issues that unite us — like our public schools.

The hardships from the past few years remind us just how important our public schools, colleges and hospitals are. This election, we're committed to endorsing candidates up and down the ballot who will fight for the issues that matter to NYSUT members — like funding for public schools, colleges and hospitals; safe schools for all; repealing receivership; tier equity; and so much more.

NYSUT has a member-driven endorsement process for political candidates. Endorsed candidates are thoroughly vetted by NYSUT local presidents and by NYSUT's Political Action Committee. The union's Board of Directors gives final approval.

NYSUT does not make endorsements based on party lines. The statewide union supports candidates who will unite us and keep public schools as the center of our communities.

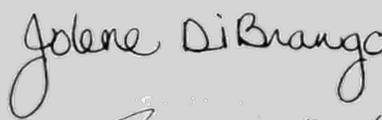
[READ THE VOTER GUIDE](#)

We encourage you to read and consider the information in this voter guide before casting your ballot. You will also soon receive — or may have already received — a print copy of this guide. Please be on the lookout in your mailbox.

You can vote absentee, vote early (Oct. 29 through Nov. 6), or at your local polls on Election Day. Whatever your choice, make a plan and cast your ballot.

*In solidarity,*


# Executive Vice President - Al Rios

## Getting to Know You



Greetings to all our BEES members.

Welcome back to all of our members and I would also like to welcome all the new BEES Members to The BOCES Educators of Eastern Suffolk and thank you for being a part of the union and realizing the benefits there is in unity.

My hope is that your year started smoothly and with little to no complications. I know this is wishful thinking but our life as educators has its' highs and lows but we have learned to work together and face the challenges with professionalism and patience.

As we start this New Year I would highly recommend that ALL members (new and seasoned) reach out and get to know your building Reps. We have Reps. For yellow contract and blue contract members in each of our programs, please look for your reps. and introduce yourselves to them. The Reps. are there to help you with questions or concerns and if they are not sure of an answer, they will find someone who will be able to answer your questions. Your building Reps. are a great source to bring your concerns to and chances are you are not the only member with that concern.

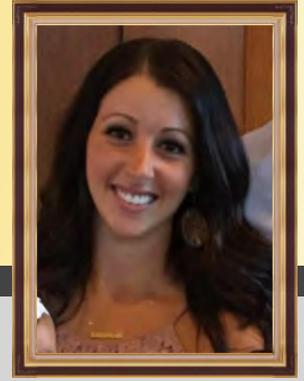
It is a privilege to represent the BEES as your Executive Vice president and I want you to know that along with your Executive Board we will always look out for the best interest of our members. I am also proud to be your NYSTRS (New York State Teachers Retirement System) delegate. I am learning more and more about The Teachers Retirement system. I guess I thought with so many years away from retirement that I will have plenty of time to educate myself about the retirement benefits that each one of us will be entitled to. I have since learned that it is never too soon to make informed decisions about your future at each stage of your teaching career.

Finally, I want to take a minute to wish you all a safe, healthy and happy year ahead. We appreciate all you do and want you to know all your hard work and effort does not go unnoticed. I truly hope I get the opportunity to meet as many members as possible.

All the best,

Al

# Executive Vice President - Amanda Pica



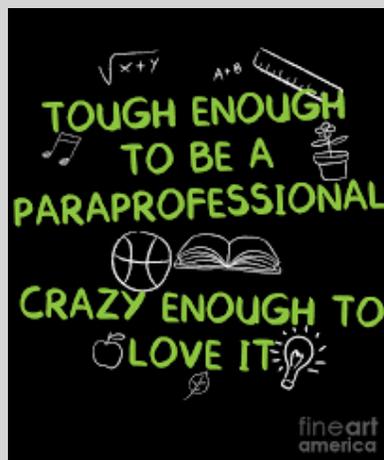
## Better Together

Welcome back to the start of the 2022-2023 school year! It has been a busy yet exciting start to the new school year. For those of you who don't yet know me, I am Amanda Pica, your Executive Vice President. I have been with the agency for over 12 years, a building representative for 6 years and a member of the executive board for the past 4 years. Our Executive Board has had many positive changes over the last few years but our goal to advocate for our members is still our number one priority. I want to welcome back all of our members and look forward to working with many of you.

I want to provide you with some resources that you can utilize throughout the year. Please visit [BEESBEACON.ORG](http://BEESBEACON.ORG) to keep up with current information; text the word BEES to the number 33222 to receive informational text messages, and visit [NYSUT.ORG](http://NYSUT.ORG) & [AFT.ORG](http://AFT.ORG), they will help provide union benefit information. Please remember to familiarize yourself with your building representative, as they will be providing each building with the most current and important information. If at any time you need to contact me please email me at [picaparavp@gmail.com](mailto:picaparavp@gmail.com) . I wish each and every one of you a great year!

-Amanda

*Unity is strength... when there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved. – Mattie Stepanek*





**Hungry?  
Need a car rental?  
Looking for a good deal on a hotel or flight?**

**The NYSUT Member Benefits Discounts & Deals program helps you make every dollar count. Save up to 50% on:**

- Restaurant dine-in or take-out
- Groceries and food delivery
- Meal subscription services
- Clothing and shoes
- Oil changes
- Hotels and flights
- Car rentals

**MEMBER  
BENEFITS**  
**nysut**  
Working to Benefit You

**MB Discounts & Deals** offers more than 21,000 deals throughout New York State along with hundreds of thousands nationwide. You can even refer your favorite local business (restaurant, coffee shop, workout facility, etc.) to join the network and provide NYSUT members with a special discount. Don't miss out... register your account today!

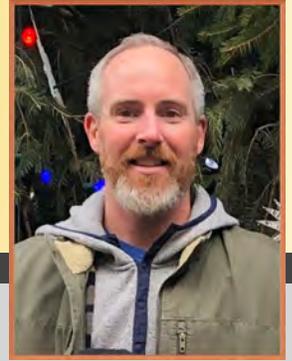
Member Benefits is proud to endorse MB Discounts & Deals along with dozens of other programs and services that may be able to benefit you and your family members. Take some time to explore our website to find out how we can help you make every dollar count!



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

For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Sept/Oct 2022

# First Vice President - Keith Flynn



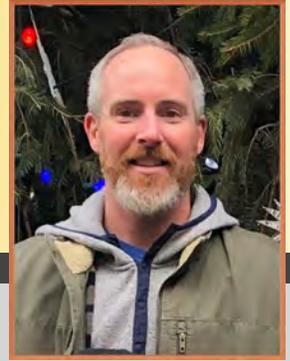
## Your Voice, Your Union

Hello.....BEES Membership! I can't believe the leaves are already falling and we're grabbing our jackets to walk out the door. Summer feels like an eternity ago. I hope everyone and their families are well and that you're ready for the Halloween season, BOO..... Shortly after, we will be sitting down with friends and family to celebrate the holidays. It's truly amazing how fast the time goes.

Two months ago, we had the Opening Day General Membership meeting for the BEES. The Opening Day meeting was a success and we were able to give back to our members through a VOTECOPE raffle. It's always fun to win a gift and we handed out 47 gift cards to our VOTECOPE members. Like last year, we were able to stretch that money out an extra 22% to raffle off more gift cards to our VOTECOPE members. VOTECOPE is NYSUT's non-partisan action fund that coordinates the voluntary contributions of members and supports NYSUT endorsed candidates and campaign committees that are pro-public education and pro-labor. Please contact me if you are interested in becoming a member of VOTECOPE and thank you to all our current members!



# First Vice President - Keith Flynn



## Your Voice, Your Union

BOCES Advocacy Day should be scheduled around the beginning of November. Last year, the event was held virtually. Prior to COVID, it was held at the N.Y.S Capitol, in Albany. It's an amazing event for our students and they continue to shine each and every year. You will be provided with breakfast and lunch and will be given a "professional day" to take the bus up to the state capitol. As soon as we know whether it will be held virtually or in Albany, we will be seeking BEES members to meet with legislators and advocating for support on a variety of issues that pertain specifically to BOCES. Students participate with us, which affords them a unique opportunity to see how the government works and to get involved in the process. It is truly a worthwhile and gratifying experience. Please email me if you are interested in participating at [keithbeeunion@gmail.com](mailto:keithbeeunion@gmail.com).

Election Day is quickly approaching. Please head out to the polls and vote for pro-education and pro-labor candidates. NYSUT is working hard to educate the entire membership on endorsing candidates who are looking to fortify our member benefits, preserve collective bargaining and not to strip those hard earned benefits away. We want all of our members to feel confident that they can retire with their pension secured. In addition, we want Medicare and Social Security to be available when you retire and not to have it sunset every 5 years. As well as fixing Tiers 5 & 6 which currently have NYSUT members pay into their pension for their entire career and unable to retire until they turn 62.

I wish everyone a happy and healthy holiday season!

Keith

# Area VP for Para Educators - Angela Ritchie



## Amazing SRPs

Dear fellow BEES members,

I hope everyone is enjoying the beautiful fall weather we are having and has acclimated to their programs as we move forward into the school year.

My position as Area VP for the Para Educators comes with the responsibility of representing our members and providing new and contractual information that you need to know. This is why your building representatives are very important. We have monthly meetings with all the building representatives to keep them well informed and they in turn provide us with all your concerns and questions. I would ask all members to know who your building representative is and attend their monthly union meetings. These members are dedicated union workers who will provide you with accurate information in regards to contractual issues and your first line of defense should an issue arise.

I want to provide the following information as it has been brought up by your representatives at our meetings;

All full-time Para Educators are provided yearly with **sick/family sick leave of 12.5 days**. These can also be used when an employee's minor (birth to 18 years or otherwise documented disabled dependent) child is sick. (pages 5&6 in the Yellow Contract)

**Four personal days without reason will be provided yearly**. No more than two 2 personal days can be used in conjunction with a holiday or long weekend. In certain situations, (not extending your vacation) an employee can request to use more than 2 days; however, documentation would need to be provided and the approval would be at the discretion of the employee's supervisor and director. (form 8004F.9)



# Area VP for Para Educators - Angela Ritchie



## Amazing SRPs

**Cancer Screening-** Full -time employees who undergo screening for cancer will be eligible for a one-time leave occurrence of up to four hours per fiscal year. (September 1- June 30) You will be charged sick/personal time until you have properly completed Form 8004F.26 (cancer Screening Appointment Verification) and it has been received in Dept. of Human Resources- Attention: attendance. This form is located at <https://docushare.esboces.org> (click on forms and then Human Resources)

If you have any questions or concerns please talk to your building representative. The work you do with our students is exceptional and I wish you all a successful and healthy school year. Thank you for sticking with the union.

Angela Ritchie



# Area VP for Special Education - Patti Richards

## Union Strong All Day Long



Welcome back to the 2022-2033 school year. I thank you for electing me to continue to serve on the executive board and for the opportunity to work closely with your building representatives. As an educator for the agency for 30+ years, I cannot express just how critical union membership is. Think of union representation like health insurance—though most of the time you don't need it, you should always have it in case of emergencies. One of the most powerful things our BEES Union Executive Board does is negotiate with the agency to support teachers, ensure safe working conditions, negotiate wages and benefits. It does not matter what people outside of education say about unions. We work to defend our profession and protect the learning environment for the students we serve. NYSUT also provides members with numerous benefits like insurance plans, legal and financial programs, shopping, and travel programs. (Check out the Nysut benefits page for a complete list).

On October 15<sup>th</sup>, the BEES held full-day training for the building representatives to ensure they have the tools to advocate for you and your needs. Representatives had the opportunity to learn from our NYSUT LRS and meet with the board for a Q&A. They were provided with many resources about why we are Union Strong!

If you want to get involved in the union, there are many opportunities to do so. Attend your monthly representative meetings, volunteer at the Action Bank, download the Members Action Center (MAC) app and write to your county and state legislators. This is essential, as we can collectively voice our concerns to improve the profession and support the recruitment and retention of school personnel.

# Area VP for Special Education - Patti Richards

## Union Strong All Day Long



A concern that we on the Executive Board see and understand, and your building representatives continue to express are staff shortages across the agency. Although we know the shortages are not exclusive to ESBOCES, the shortages affect teachers, para educators, related service, substitutes and bus personnel. Our agency continues to hold job fairs and advertise on social media, radio and other outlets to fill these positions as quickly as they can. However, not all vacant positions can be filled. A true vacancy is a position that is not filled by a member. We have many staff absent due to a workers compensation situation, medical leave, or child rearing leave of absence, etc. and these positions are held until the member returns, therefore, not a true vacancy.

A second concern is staff injuries. If a staff member gets injured, it creates shortages. Over the summer, the agency implemented an agency wide behavior management committee to address these issues. Several members and administration from each building met to discuss not only the concerns of the buildings, but also to look at strategies that we can all implement across the agency to ensure safety for staff and students. These committee members will work together to put the action plans in place.

Again, my goal is to ensure that all blue contract members feel their voices are being heard. Your first point of contact is your building union representative. If your union representative is unable to provide you an answer, they have an Executive Board member at their disposal to assist them. If you are unable to reach your building rep, you may reach me at [beesserep@gmail.com](mailto:beesserep@gmail.com). Please use a non-BOCES email when corresponding.

Thank you for all you do and have a fabulous year.

*Patti*



# Area VP for Itinerants/SAS - Kristin Ericson Abbruzzese



## Things to Remember

Welcome back! I cannot believe it is the end of October already, time really does fly. I hope everyone has had a great start to the school year and I welcome all the many new related subject, itinerant and special subject members. As I write this, I hope all who are eligible for the Mental Health Hygiene Worker Bonus completed their form and turned it in since it was time sensitive. I think it is a great opportunity to be able to get some money for all your hard work. Please note, it was not ESBOCES that set the guidelines of who was eligible to receive the money but they did need to follow the guidelines. ESBOCES as an agency is very large and needed to go through all subgroups of members to make sure employees who were entitled to the “bonus” received an application for it and this is why many of you may have heard of friends filling out the form or even receiving monies before you even received the form. There are many issues associated with someone filling out the form and not being entitled to the “bonus” including the member potentially having to pay back the money. Those who are entitled will receive up to (2) payments of \$1,500.00 for a total of \$3,000.00, again if you qualify for it. Unfortunately, I do feel your pain for those who were cut out because your base salary was higher than \$125,000.00. It is very strange how they came up with a cut off amount since we ALL WORKED VERY HARD but “it is what it is” and it is nice to see that many members did qualify. Some housekeeping issues for all members: first, you are responsible for signing off on WinCap and verifying your salary and attendance. I can’t stress enough how important it is to start a folder for all your important papers regarding ESBOCES. I encourage you to make copies of everything and print out your salary notification each year. Be old school with printing it out and keeping a paper folder. Each year after I print it and before I sign that I agree with the salary, I compare it to last year’s step and salary and compare it to the salary schedule that was agreed upon for the current school year. Also, check that you are getting the correct longevity amount if you are entitled to it. Many districts do not have longevity in their contracts or even at the amounts that we have at ESBOCES so make sure you receive it if you are entitled.



## Know Your Contract



What a difference a year makes! I will be the first one to admit that the 21/22 school year was my most challenging year professionally. It took me until about August 21<sup>st</sup> to finally “checkout”, let go and relax. What a relief it has been to come into this school year with a healthy new outlook and perspective.

I am very proud to be a part of a cohesive and productive Executive Board. We recently had training for the BEES building representatives and it made me think of the many ways being a union member and having a strong contract benefit me as a member. Here are a few that come to mind:

- 1 Legal and Financial have taken advantage of the NYSUT legal benefit for a **free Simple Will**. I have also changed it without extra cost multiple times due to changes in marital status and children becoming adults. You can find this information @ NYSUT.org -go to Member Benefits and then click on Legal and Financial.

**Legal Security Package:** If you should pass away without having a Will, the state can decide who raises your children and who receives your money and possessions. However, as a Plan member, you are entitled to a **Simple Will** – or an update of your existing Simple Will – every year that you are enrolled in the Plan. That way, you select the guardian for your children and decide who will share in your estate. A Will also speeds up the probate process and makes settling your estate much easier.



# Contractual Benefits Officer - Nick DeBlanco



## It Benefits You to Know

Happy harvest members.

With the rising prices that we are seeing on the news each day, it's a good time to take advantage of the benefits of being a union member.

Heating costs are expected to be higher than normal this year. And being a member of such a strong union has a few options to help out in such tough times. One of those is the NYSUT home heating oil program for members. I've included a link here that will help you determine if this program is right for you. <https://heatusa.com/nysut/> . The buying power of such a large membership affords us opportunities that others do not have.

NYSUT also offers shopping discounts to all current members. By clicking on the link below and signing in with your NYSUT credentials, you can browse local and national purchasing discounts. <https://mbdeals.enjomydeals.com> Discounts on food, auto repair and purchase, travel and even local restaurants can be had by just being a member! The mobile app, when downloaded, lets you receive promotions on discounts in the area. Browse the options and see if you can save some money!

The time is approaching for open enrollment. If you're thinking of adjusting your Health plan or making changes to which plan you have, the window will open shortly. Please keep in mind you may have made some adjustments to some of your plans in the past few years due to the pandemic. Take some time to review your current needs and adjust them accordingly with your families' requirements. Pay attention to the email from the agency alerting you that open enrollment period is starting.

Please enjoy the fall season as we all prepare for the family time the holidays bring.

Thank you for being a member, our large numbers benefit all of us.

- Nick



# Membership Coordinator - Adrian Grube



## A Happy Hive

Welcome back! I am excited to be starting this year with all of you as your new Membership Coordinator. I am very excited for the year ahead. I'd like to share some resources with you; most union members think the union is there to assist with contractual aspects of the job and to be there in disciplinary situations. However, many other benefits come with union membership. We are a small factor of two other larger organizations, NYSUT and AFT. Both of these larger organizations offer many extras with membership. We all have financial budgets and we all look for opportunities to save money. So, one of my most popular recommendations to members is to check out the promotions and discounts page on the NYSUT website. There are discounts on education and wellness workshops as well as discounts on shopping and travel. AFT also has a program called Share My Lesson ([Share My Lesson](#)). That provides free lessons to those that need them. All you have to do is create an account. Being a union member grants you access to many wonderful benefits, all you have to do is check out these wonderful websites and spend some time exploring them. I am excited for all of the opportunities to see you this year and I hope you have an amazing school year.

All the best,

Adrian



# Treasurer - Rachael Klahn

## Budgeting the BEES



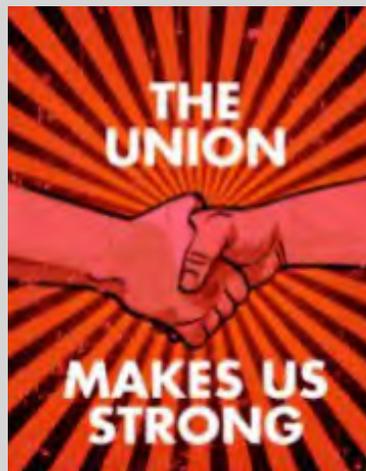
Hello everyone and welcome to another great school year! I hope everyone is settling in and enjoying everything that a new year brings. This year there are minor adjustments to the dues schedule for all categories for local dues. For any payroll deduction questions, please reference your dues schedule. As a reminder, the dues deductions are withdrawn on the third pay period, which took place in October. The deductions will continue for 18 consecutive pay periods ending in June. A copy of the dues schedule is available on the BEESBEACON.org webpage and is shown below for reference.

I would like to acknowledge that the brilliant and devoted Michelle Tinter, the former treasurer, is retiring this fall. I am so grateful for what you have done not only for me as a mentor, but for our members all these years. Enjoy your much deserved retirement!

I look forward to this year and wish you all a safe, healthy and joyous holiday season!

Sincerely,

*Rachael*



# Treasurer - Rachael Klahn

## Budgeting the BEES



### NYSUT/AFT/LOCAL Dues Schedule for 2022-2023 Membership Year

NYSUT (Codes)	Membership Category By Salary Range	NYSUT Annual Per Capital	AFT Annual Per Capital	LOCAL DUES	TOTAL NYSUT/AFT/LOCAL DUES	AMOUNT Deducted per Pay Period (18 Pay Periods)	INCREASE Per Pay Period
(1) Full	\$34,000 and higher	\$378.00	\$239.76	\$364.24	\$982.00	\$54.55	\$0.11
(7) $\frac{3}{4}$	\$25,500 to 33,999	\$283.50	\$119.88	\$222.32	\$625.70	\$34.76	\$0.11
(2) $\frac{1}{2}$	\$17,000 to \$25,499	\$189.00	\$119.88	\$170.12	\$479.00	\$26.61	\$0.11
(5) $\frac{1}{4}$	\$8,500 to \$16,999	\$94.50	\$59.94	\$117.56	\$272.00	\$15.11	\$0.11
(8) 1/8	Under \$8,499	\$47.25	\$29.97	\$35.83	\$113.05	\$6.28	\$0.11
(6)	Unpaid leave Laid-off	\$10.00	\$12.00		\$22.00	\$1.22	-0-
(9) **	Per-Diem Substitute	---	---	---	---	\$.70/day	-0-
(3)	Retirees (pre-funded)	---	---	\$35.00	---	---	-0-
*	Full/Split	\$378.00	\$119.88	\$272.00	\$771.88	\$42.88	\$0.11

**Note:\*** A special split NYSUT/AFT category within Code 1 (Full Dues) exists only if members are earning more than \$34,000 but less than the basic teacher's salary.

\*\*Per- Diem Substitutes dues are \$.70 per day for NYSUT/AFT up to a maximum of  $\frac{1}{2}$  dues. Refer to Membership Reporting & Dues Transmittal Handbook for additional information.

Full Dues Paying Member	2021-2022	2022-2023	Increase
NYSUT	\$378.00	\$378.00	0
AFT	\$239.76	\$239.76	0
LOCAL	\$362.24	\$364.24	\$2.00
TOTAL	\$980.00	\$982.00	\$2.00

Proposed income for the 2022-2023 budget is based on an estimated (full)627, (Split)39, (3/4),342, (1/2),536 (1/4) 2 dues contributions and interest from savings. Active Members + Leave = 1,584 Total Members.

Submitted by the **BEES Budget Committee:**

Asha Mazza Shaw - President, Rachael Klahn - Treasurer, Adrian Grube - Chairperson, Dana Sayers & Michelle Tinter, Active Members

Dues deductions begin the 3<sup>rd</sup> pay period for (18) consecutive pay periods.

**VOTE/COPE**  
 Do assets go down, so little to give?  
 If you are not a vote/cope member, please  
 fill out a card this morning for automatic  
 annual deduction now done a year off  
 \$12.00(aide) \$25.00(TA)  
 \$50.00(Teacher) donation.

**\*Reminder\*** All up & coming retirees must join the B.E.E.S retiree Chapter in order to retain any insurance you may have through NYSUT.

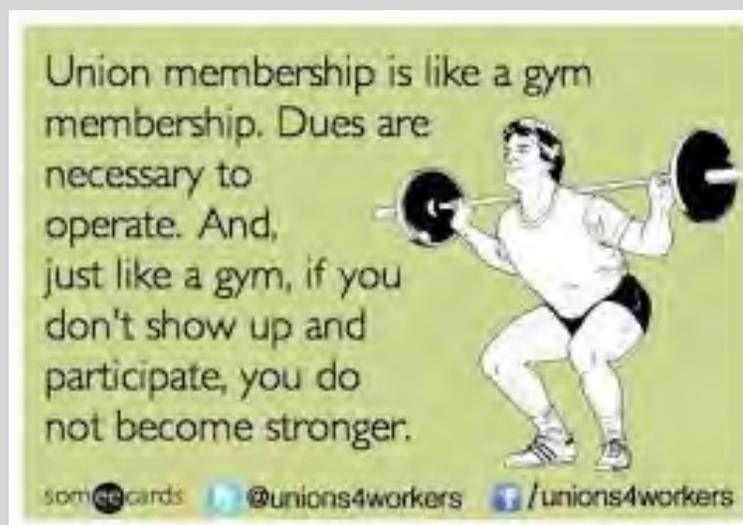
# Grievance Officer - Dana Sayers



## Starting Fresh

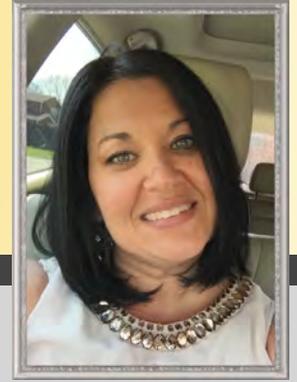
Welcome to the 2022-2023 school year. I hope it is off to a great start! I am new to the Grievance Officer position this year. I have served as a union representative in my building for several years and have enjoyed serving in this role and helping our members. Please take some time to familiarize yourself with your contract, as it is so important to be informed of all your contractual benefits. I can be reached at [danasaybees@gmail.com](mailto:danasaybees@gmail.com) if you need anything, don't hesitate to reach out. Wishing you all a successful year!

Dana



# Social Chair - Danielle Ibba-Morabito

## Let's BEE Social



Greeting everyone here we are in our 2022-23 school year. I hope everyone one had a great start. It feels good to be back to normal as much as possible. I would like to welcome all the new members and our seasoned ones back to the grind. Together we make a difference every day here in BOCES. Don't forget how important all of you are to the TEAM.

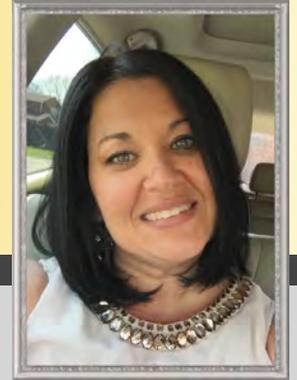
BUZZZZZZZ..... If you haven't heard the news buzzing in the air yet, we are starting to plan for our 2023 Honorarium. Check out below our save the date for June 7, 2023. I hope this news makes some people smile as much as it makes the Executive Board smile. We cannot wait to see everyone in person again.

Welfare: The loss of a loved one is an emotional time, and one of the worst things we may go through in life. It is with that thought that we would like to reach out to our families in need in a timely manner. There are guidelines for sending out cards or a small token to the family of a member. In the past I have gotten several requests that I was not able to send out in a timely manner because the guidelines below were not adhered to. Please make sure that you include all of the information listed below so that we may pay our respects to the families in their time of need. Thank you. Guidelines for welfare: A bereavement card will be sent in the event of a member's spouse, parent, child, or sibling's death. In the case of a member passing, special circumstances will then apply. The procedure for a sympathy card to be sent is as follows: Members should contact their building representative as soon as they believe a member meets the above guidelines and a bereavement card should be sent. The building representative should contact me via email at [daniellesocialchairbees@gmail.com](mailto:daniellesocialchairbees@gmail.com) with the member's name, address as well as the name and relation to the deceased. In the event it is a member that has passed, I still need their name, address and a home or cell number of a member of their family so that we can acknowledge their service with us in a special way. If you need more information, see your building rep, check out our BEES website or feel free to send me an email.

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

Danielle

# Social Chair - Danielle Ibba-Morabito



## Let's BEE Social



A chalkboard graphic featuring a red apple with a yellow bee on it, a green pencil, and a row of colorful markers at the top. The text "School is Out FOREVER" is written in colorful chalk.

School is Out  
FOREVER

Join your fellow BEES members in celebrating this year's retirees at the

**BEES HONORARIUM**  
DINNER • MUSIC • DANCING

**Save the Date!**  
**Wednesday, June 7, 2023**

Land's End  
8 Brown's River Road  
Sayville, NY 11782



A row of colorful pencils at the bottom of the chalkboard graphic.

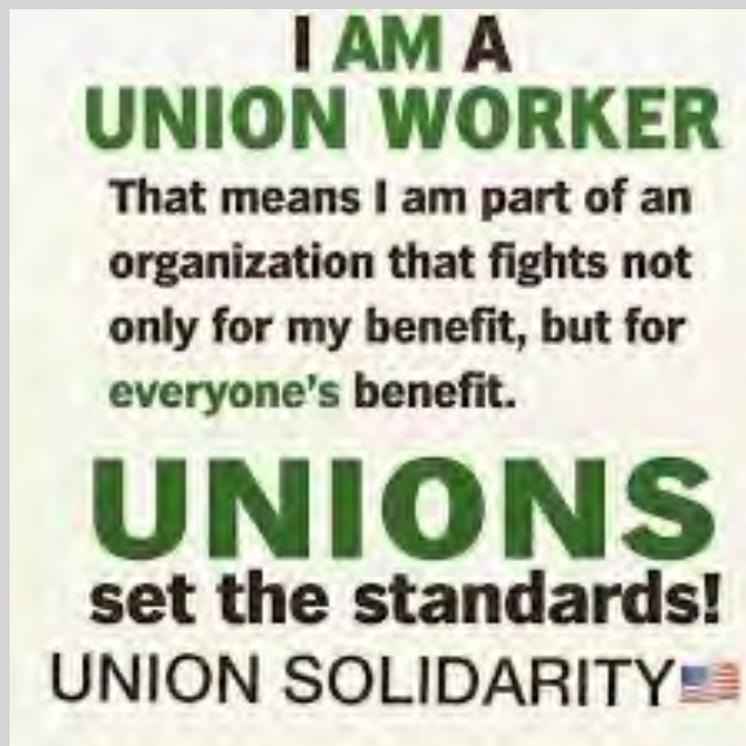
# Recording Secretary - Tiffany Robinson

## Nice Notes



Hello everyone! And welcome to a new school year! I'm hoping that everyone had a happy, healthy summer! It is so nice to walk through the buildings and see everyone's smiling faces now, especially as covid restrictions have eased up. These past couple of school years we have met and been faced with many challenges, but it is nice to now enter the school year on a positive note. I have had the pleasure of working with such an amazing, and hard working E-Board again this year who are always dedicated to their members. Members, remember to always take advantage of available resources and don't forget about all the useful information that is available on the BEES Beacon website. Thank you for standing by your union!!

Tiffany



# Retiree Chapter Chairperson - Terry Kalb

## Radiant Retirees



When you retire, you may think that your union years are behind you, but you should be UNION FOR LIFE! Why? Your hard-earned pension and benefits, Social Security, Medicare and those premium reimbursements are not all cemented in place. There are always political and economic pressures that put them at risk for reductions. In fact, political attacks on public education can impact future union negotiations and can impact retiree benefits. Be sure to vote this November for candidates who will keep Medicare and Social Security in place for ALL- they are not a drain on the taxpayers- they are funded through our and our employer's payroll contributions. We have paid for them all our working lives so they will be there when we need them. Beware of those who suggest "sun-setting" those programs to save costs, or who want to tax your employee health coverage!

It is NYSUT, even in our retirement, that strengthens our collective voices and protects our pension fund and benefits. For just \$35 every school year, you keep your membership in our BEES Retiree Chapter, your first year of retirement the annual participation fee is waived. As BEES Retiree Chapter President, I represent you on our BEES Executive Board. Since retirees cannot negotiate on our own, I bring our retiree issues and concerns to the attention of our BEES Executive Board so they can negotiate on our behalf and act to protect our needs and benefits after we retire. If you are a BEES retiree with a question or concern, please email me at [terrykalb@yahoo.com](mailto:terrykalb@yahoo.com) and I would be happy to help. Medicare and Medicare premium reimbursement are the most common topics people have questions about- don't hesitate to ask about the process to get our premiums reimbursed. The sooner you return the required forms to BOCES HR, the smoother the process will go. Make sure BOCES and our union always have your correct mailing address and updated email in retirement.

If you are approaching retirement, be sure to attend the pre-retirement workshops our union local offers. It pays to be informed!

**Stay well, and stay connected!**

Terry Kalb

BEES Retiree Chapter President

# Spotlight on Our BEES Community

## No Excuses, No Regrets!

### Alonza Hopkins and Kathleen Burns

Welcome to the first edition of “Spotlight” for our 2022-2023 school year.

In this edition we shine the spotlight on two of our members that will not only motivate us but will also inspire us to know that we can achieve anything we set our minds to.

Our first spotlight is on Mr. Alonza (Al) Hopkins, Social Worker at SHS. Mr Hopkins shared with me that his cycling quest began during the 2020 Covid Pandemic. While most of us were isolating and quarantining in our homes, Al explained that he needed to get out of the house, he needed some much needed fresh air to clear his mind and at the same time feel good that he was getting exercise. Al decided to dust off his old bike, pump up his tires and hit the road! This was his way of getting away and as he so aptly puts in his Strava App. posts, No Excuses and No regrets, The Grind continues. Mr. Hopkins said he started out slow and never gave up. A few miles here and there, built up his stamina as well as his miles. He posts his achievements and trips on Social Media using his Strava App. and let me tell you just looking at all his trips gets me tired! Two years later and Mr. Hopkins has purchased himself a new and improved set of wheels and his trips have increased exponentially and has spanned the Island. I checked out his activities on Strava and he is putting 200+ miles of cycling in a week; He is also motivating, in one post a rider mentions how brutal the breeze was that September morning and Als’ response; “Yes it was, but it’s only gonna make one stronger. Keep pushing and pedaling!” along with his tagline, “No excuses, No regrets, the grind continues.” When I asked him are there are some days where you rather just go home after school and lay on the couch or sleep in a few extra hours? He says of course there are days where I have to push myself, but once I am on my bike and cruising along, I feel great and wouldn’t change it for the world. Ride on Al and thank you for giving us all the little push and inspiration to get out there and push ourselves to the limit. No excuses, No regrets, the grind continues!

Our next spotlight shines on one of our members that has overcome heartbreak as well as personal obstacles and challenges. Kathleen Burns a teacher of Speech and language at our WHBLC has shared some of her most difficult times in her life as well as her most triumphant comeback to date. She tells me that she could not have achieved what she did without the support of her family, friends and coaches. Their support and belief in her, helped her believe in herself.

Kathleen shared with me that when she lost her husband, she felt like a piece of her died with him. She felt lost and powerless and even though her loved ones told her how strong she was she did not have the confidence. She explains that when you lose a loved one you don’t feel strong and she began to go down the “poor me” avenue. She explains, I could have curled up in my bed and felt bad for myself and just give up on personal life long goals. I knew I didn’t like the person I was becoming and I knew I had to make a change in my life.

# Spotlight on Our BEES Community

## No Excuses, No Regrets!

### Alonza Hopkins and Kathleen Burns

In 2017 she decided to take up swimming at her local YMCA pool. She laughed and said the staff there got a good chuckle as they watched her struggle to stay afloat, she admits that she looked like a drowning seal, but she never gave up. Eventually Kathleen made it to the end of the pool, goal achieved! She eventually was able to accomplish a sprint, olympic and finally ½ ironman distance. She became empowered and another goal was created.

Kathleen put on her sneakers and began to run and in 2019 she set a goal to run in the Maryland Ironman. Five weeks before the Maryland Ironman, tragedy came again when Kathleen was in a serious car accident which resulted in five surgeries, a brain aneurysm repair, 2 rotator cuff injuries, disc replacement in her neck and plastic surgery. She thought her dream was over, all that training and all that support. It took some time but with a lot of support from her loved ones and lots of training she got back on track.

This past year Kathleen finally accomplished what she set out to do years ago. With her mother and brothers support, even though they thought she was crazy to attempt this and her children cheering her on she crossed the finish line and completed her first ever Ironman and placed 14th in her age group. She felt strong, she felt powerful and she has set many more goals for herself in the future. She went on to say “her husband is always with her letting her know, you got this!” I have built a new purpose for life and because of how well she did in her first Ironman, she gets to do this again as she was given a slot for the Kona Ironman in 2023.

She shares with us, “My one and done is in the past now, I will continue to build myself, for I have learned that I am strong mentally and physically.”

What an amazing story and such courage and strength to overcome all that she has endured. These two athletes should inspire us to set lifelong goals and never give up.

Is there a BEES member you think should deserves the “spotlight”? Email me at [Alrbeeunion@gmail.com](mailto:Alrbeeunion@gmail.com) and they could be in our next issue of the BEES Beacon!



# Spotlight on Our BEES Community

## No Excuses, No Regrets!

## Alonza Hopkins and Kathleen Burns



July 16, 2022 at 6:45 AM · Town of Hempstead, New York

A little overcast and a threat of rain, turned out to be a great morning for a ride. The Grind Continues. 🚲🚲 No Excuses and No Regrets. Have a Great Day on Purpose!!!

Distance	Elev Gain	Time	Achievements
31.05 mi	149 ft	2h 1m	🏆🏆🏆7





# **BEES**

## **BOCES Educators of Eastern Suffolk**

### **Union Strong**

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**Amanda Pica - Executive Vice President**  
**Al Rios - Executive Vice President**  
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**Dana Sayers - Grievance Officer**  
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**Tiffany Robinson - Recording Secretary**  
**Dennis Charaton - Webmaster**  
**Terry Kalb - Retiree Chapter Chairperson**  
**Mary Longo - BEES Office Secretary**  
**Asha Mazza-Shaw - BEES Beacon Publisher**

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