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Happy 50th to NYSUT

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of the New York State United Teachers. NYSUT was born in 1972 after a merger between the UFT from New York City, founded in 1960, and NYSTA founded in 1965. Early union leaders faced harassment from district officials, scapegoating from state lawmakers, and even went to jail as a result of strikes. Over the past 50 years their hard fought gains have benefited students and teachers across our state. Our Association at Questar III would not be in the position we are without the lobbying efforts and support of NYSUT. It is up to us to ensure that these gains are not lost but built upon moving forward.

I recently participated in NYSUT's 50th Representative Assembly and Local Presidents Conference. Delegates heard from the leadership of both the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association about the challenges of the past two years and the issues we face in the future. A number of statewide elected officials spoke including Tom DiNapoli (NYS Comptroller), Letitia James (NYS Attorney General)

and Governor Kathy Hochul. Governor Hochul was the first governor to address the gathering in over 20 years and announced a reset in relations between the governor's office and NYS's educators.

The sentiments expressed by Gov. Hochul gives hope that the voices of educators will be taken seriously in matters ranging from funding, curriculum, testing and APPR. Also encouraging was messages delivered by the State Education Department during a meeting with local presidents. Commissioner Rosa and Senior Deputy Commissioner (and former Questar Superintendent) Jim Baldwin answered questions from presidents for over an hour. They expressed their admiration and gratitude for the work we have done during the pandemic as well as an understanding of the lingering challenges created by the pandemic. Their comments indicated an ongoing discussion regarding Regents safety nets for our students as well as discussion regarding the implementation of APPR for this year. It was especially nice to catch up with Mr. Baldwin. I let him know we would be happy to host him any time on a visit

to our programs.

I left the meetings energized and confident about the strength of our Union statewide. We will need that energy and strength as we face the challenges ahead. While we continue to deal with the pandemic, testing and a return to normalcy, we must also be prepared for the fights that are unfortunately raging in school boards and statehouses across the country. We need to come together to support our fellow educators and push back against the forces seeking to weaken public education. We must fight back against the targeting of educators who have the courage to teach the hard history that is vital to a democracy. We must push back against those wishing to ban books or conversations that touch on race, gender or sexual orientation. We must remember the importance of public education and its role as an institution of opportunity, equality and guardian of democracy.

Happy 50th anniversary to NYSUT. May the next 50 years be just as fruitful!

Joal Bova
RCG-TA President

Union Updates

- *For NYSUT updates visit nysut.org*

Share your stories of our SRP heroes!

As part of its School-Related Professionals public awareness campaign to elevate the roles of our SRP super heroes, NYSUT is collecting stories of School-Related Professionals who go the extra mile for their students and their communities.

Our goal is to find at least one story from each New York State Senate district.

NYSUT will create a poster including an SRP story and picture, which we'll ask our legislators to hang in their offices.

This will be a great way to remind legislators who they represent when they make decisions affecting our schools and our school staff professionals.

Do you know an SRP with an amazing story?

Take a look at the sample poster below and then help us identify

our SRP exemplars by filling out this form to nominate your own local super hero!



Source: NYSUT Program Services

For the full article please visit:

<https://www.nysut.org/news/2022/>



For more information on how to nominate your favorite SRP:

<https://www.nysut.org/news/2022/april/srp-heroes>



6.1 Salary A. The Teachers salary schedule is increased to 27 steps as set forth effective July 1, 2021, July 1, 2022, July 1, 2023, July 1, 2024, and July 1, 2025 is attached hereto as Appendix B-1. Step movement if eligible each year.

B. The Continuing Education salary schedule as set forth effective July 1, 2021, July 1, 2022, July 1, 2023, July 1, 2024, and July 1, 2025 is attached hereto as Appendix B2. Step movement, if eligible each year.

C. Teachers in Year 4 and 5 who are not

entitled to a step movement shall receive 1.8% increase on their base salary each year. 6

D. Continuing Education Teachers in Year 1-5 who are not entitled to a step movement shall receive a 4% increase on their base salary each year.

New Contract Link:

<https://www.questar.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/teachers-21-26.pdf>

Shared Success

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” - Nelson Mandela

At Catskill Academy, we are more like a large family. With spring finally here, we are beginning to anticipate our new move to The Durham School. We are excited to have our own building, an actual gym and cafeteria, and a place that we can call home. The furniture is

being ordered, the rooms designed, and the technology decided upon. All very exciting changes for our upcoming 2022-2023 school year. This year our students showed an interest in starting a Student Government, so we held elections in each of our homerooms. The winner became the representative for that homeroom.

We meet once a month and back in November, Student Government did a food drive. The donated food went to a local food bank, Matthew 25 in Catskill. Currently, the representatives are collecting book donations for our new library. Students are ecstatic over

having a library, so now we just need some books to fill it. Last year at Catskill Academy, we started a garden, with an abundance of vegetables harvested by the students. This year we are starting seedlings in each homeroom after spring break. The Student Government is initiating this task as well. Our principal, Mark Nizer, would love to move the current garden beds, combine them with our seedlings, and “plant” our roots at our new school in Durham. Each homeroom will be responsible to fill one raised garden bed, led by their homeroom representative. We will begin planning for the new gardens in the upcoming weeks. The Student Government also took on the task of beginning a student newspaper, The Questar Gazette. Any student is allowed to submit something for it, whether it be an interview, art work, creative writing, pictures, etc. We are looking to peak student interest in their daily school day. Our student representatives are in

charge of putting it all together and planning for what will be in the next monthly issue. Our first newspaper went out last month, and the students are working hard on this month’s edition. Student Newspaper link from last month:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1HISFN9J1E12L9U2HvZGZiYshkY8Z4u7ieW3VdoF1SBc/edit#slide=id.p>

Catskill Academy is approaching the end of the school year with new beginnings and major changes on the horizon. However, being the family we are, we will work together to adjust, alter, and rise to the occasion. Special Education staff are resilient, flexible, and hard working. We look forward to a place we can finally call home, having felt somewhat like a visitor at our current location.

~Stephanie Morgan

by **Randi Weingarten**

President, American Federation of Teachers

Ukraine has always loomed large in my life. My grandfather fled near-certain death from the pogroms that massacred Jews in Ukraine early in the last century, and he was able to bring most of his and my grandmother’s family from western Ukraine to America. Many Jews who survived those pogroms later perished in the massacre at Babi Yar by Nazi forces and their collaborators. In 2014, I went to Ukraine on a solidarity mission with other labor leaders shortly after dozens of demonstrators were fatally shot there during a pro-democracy uprising. The uprising ousted Ukraine’s Russian-backed president and ushered in a new era of freedom and democracy that the Ukrainian people have long wanted.

Like so many, I have watched with horror at Vladimir Putin’s barbarism and with awe at the Ukrainian people’s determination and will. Putin’s forces are now killing civilians—bombing kindergartens, hospitals, and people waiting in line for food or trying to flee to safety. But

instead of these Russian

assaults breaking their will, the Ukrainian people have confronted them with staunch resistance, even as the carnage and suffering are mounting. This is a battle for people’s lives and homes, and for freedom, self-determination and democracy.

Oleksandr Sushko, the executive director of the International Renaissance Foundation in Ukraine, urges, “The voices of Ukraine’s civil society sector must be protected, as we know these defenders of democracy and freedom are high on Putin’s kill list.”

Teachers and trade unionists are among those “defenders of democracy.” As Jeffrey C. Isaac, a professor of political science at Indiana University, Bloomington, writes in the Albert Shanker Institute blog:

Education is a dangerous thing for authoritarian leaders and regimes, for it nurtures free-thinking individuals capable of asking questions and seeking

Ukraine’s Iron Will Against Putin’s Barbarism

their own answers. For this reason, teachers have long been on the front line of the struggle for democracy.

In the U.S., teachers are facing a well-orchestrated political campaign by the far-right to limit the teaching of certain subjects and perspectives in public schools, all in the name of a “patriotism” that is manifestly hostile to a multi-ethnic and multi-racial democracy and a well-educated citizenry. ...

... As Human Rights Watch reports, teachers [in Russia] will be required to read out loud a two-page text informing students that Russia is currently undertaking “special peacekeeping operation” in Ukraine... and that the Russian government is committed to “peace” and “freedom,” and “is not going to impose anything on anyone by force.”

Countering that kind of disinformation is part of the fight for self-determination and democracy.

For the full article, please visit: <https://www.aft.org/column/ukraines-iron-will-against-putins-barbarism>



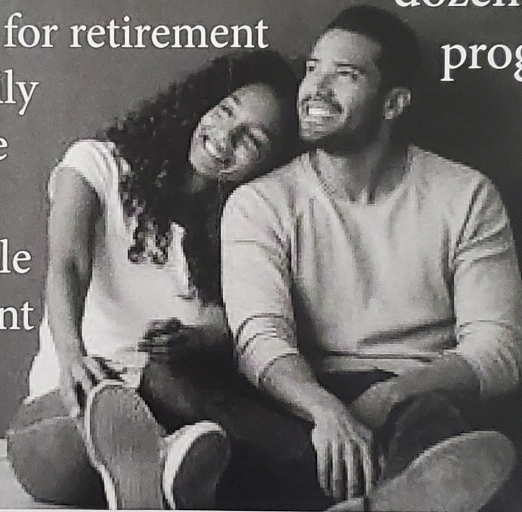
For more information visit: <https://www.aft.org/column/ukraines-iron-will-against-putins-barbarism>



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

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



Learn more by scanning the QR code to the left,
visiting memberbenefits.nysut.org
or calling 800-626-8101.



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

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BCDX928400

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AS A MEMBER OF NYSUT, we are fighting for you every day—for better contracts, safer working conditions and fair pay. Through our advocacy, we uphold hard-won labor rights for our members — and the best possible conditions for the students, patients and others that our members serve. We also offer you exclusive access to a variety of endorsed programs and services offered by NYSUT Member Benefits, and our national affiliates, American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and National Education Association (NEA). From insurance to vacations, use this brochure to start taking advantage of all we have to offer. We're union proud and honored to serve you.



In solidarity,
J. Philippe Abraham
Chairperson, NYSUT Member Benefits Trust



The Power of the Union



Scan me

Call 800-626-8101 or visit
memberbenefits.nysut.org.