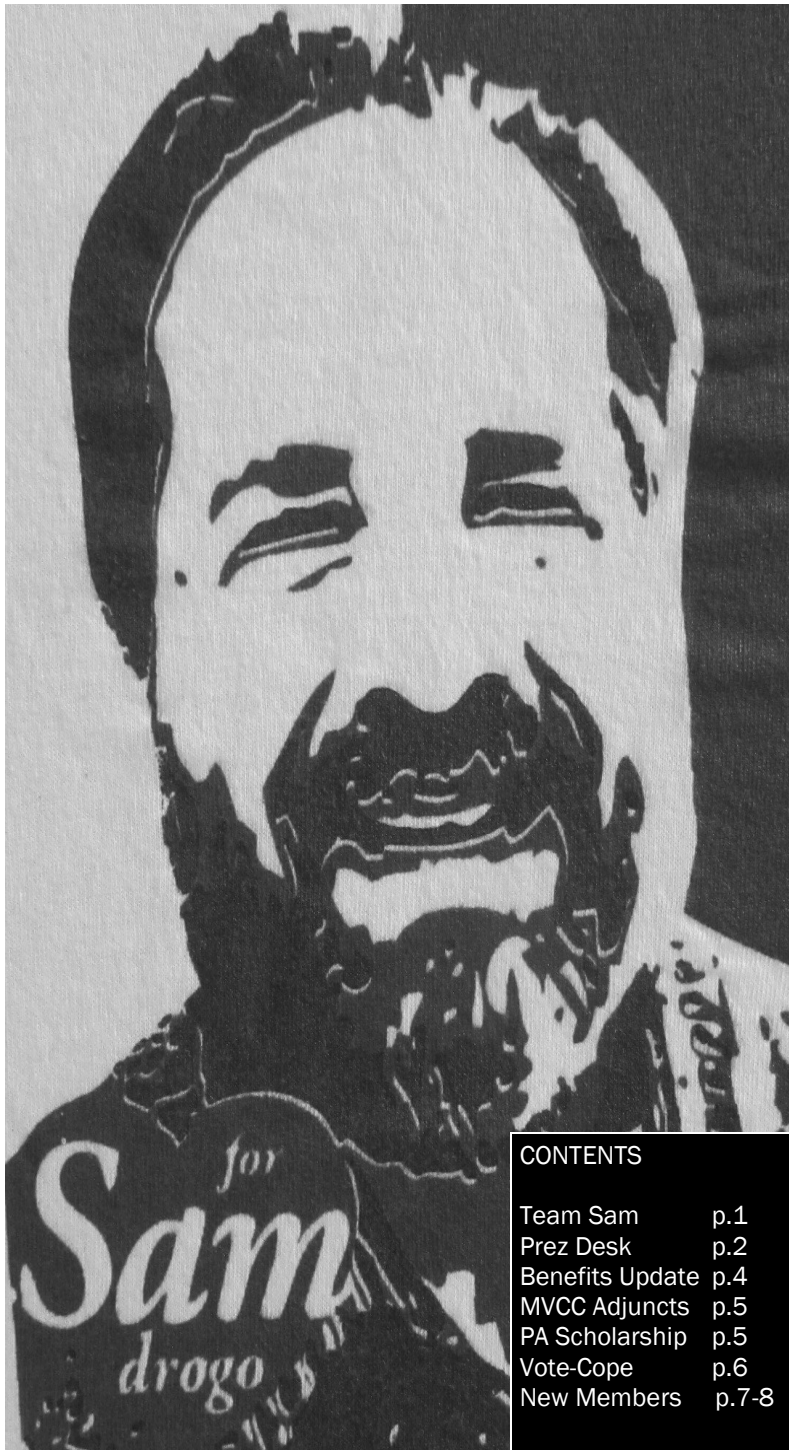


panorama

UNITED FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

MVCC Professional Association Newsletter • Volume XVII • No. 3 • Feb 2014



Be There for Team Sam!

Bill Perrotti, Team Captain

By now you've seen the posters around campus for the PA's team in the March 1 Heart Run/Walk. Our name is **Team Sam**. Selecting that name was a no-brainer because for his whole career, Sam Drogo was the heart, brain, and soul of our union. Because we started at the college in the same year (1974) and worked closely for so many years, I often mistakenly assume that all of the current membership knows who is being spoken of when Sam is mentioned. The reality is that we have had so much personnel turnover in recent years that many members either never met Sam or knew him only peripherally.

At the luncheon I tried to describe Sam and his impact on all of us through his deep involvement in the PA. As I consider that, I think it apt to share that picture with all of our membership. In doing so, I hope those who attended the luncheon will forgive my repeating some things. Hopefully when you all know Sam better, you'll understand why Team Sam is special to those who worked with him and deserves to be special to all in the PA.

In the whole history of the Professional Association, no one was more involved over an entire career in the most sensitive and important work of the union than Sam. Interestingly, he was never president. In fact, he always shunned the spotlight. His impact was less public and took the form of active and inspired involvement in the workings of the Grievance Committee as member and chair, on the Negotiations Team

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PA Panorama's Editorial Policy

PA Panorama is the voice of our local. In addition to the PA website (www.mvccpa.org), email, and bulletin boards, PA Panorama is a principal vehicle for bringing you, on a regular basis, information on the views and activities of our members.

We welcome articles by, for, and about PA members on union-related issues and concerns as reflected in NYSUT and AFT activities as well as in the purpose and functions of the PA's standing committees: Community Outreach, Education & Training, Grievance, Internal Communications, Member Services, Negotiations, Political Action, and Research and Records.

All submissions are subject to the review and acceptance of the Editor and/or Internal Communications Committee. We do not accept articles that make personal attacks and we reserve the right to edit articles for length. We look forward to hearing from you.

**Publisher
MVCC
Professional Association**

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Norma Chrisman**

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**Special Consultant
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www.mvccpa.org**

PrezDesk

You may soon be asked to complete your self-report. Or maybe you are getting your paperwork together to apply for promotion. With either document, you are expected to cover topics such as Professional Effectiveness / Teaching Effectiveness, Professional Growth, Collegiality, and Community Service.

In preparing my first self-report back in the spring of 2003, the Professional Effectiveness and Professional Growth areas were easy to cover. But I struggled with what to include in the Collegiality and Community Service sections. Should I include the work that I did with the PA? Should I include helping with the PA website or participating in fund raising activities to benefit organizations such as Strides for Breast Cancer or the American Heart Association? Am I restricted to listing only college-sponsored committee work or community service projects?

Article 2.1.A of the PA contract addresses Association Membership. This article can be summarized as follows: the College cannot discriminate against employees for participating in union activities. Therefore, your participation in work for the PA can be included when documenting your collegiality and community service. In fact, members of the PA leadership have always listed their union work in the self-evaluations and promotion packets. One specific example of a member using PA committee work for the collegiality component can be found in this edition of PA Panorama in Bill Perrotti's article, titled "Be there for Team Sam." Bill writes that Sam Drogo expressed that he "planned to satisfy his collegial obligations by participating in contract negotiations and grievance work" for the PA. He said there was nothing he could do that would be of more service to his colleagues than that important union work. "Sam's work with the PA's negotiating team and grievance committee enabled him to contribute to his



colleagues and to the College in countless ways. His union work did not prohibit him from being promoted through the ranks - up to the rank of Professor.

If you actively participate in the PA, your work is a valuable service to your colleagues and to the College and I thank you. If you are not actively participating in the PA, why not? We need you to become more involved!

Included in this edition of PA Panorama (and future editions), you will find a section that will list "opportunities" for collegiality and community service. Also in this PA Panorama is an article written by Aaron Fried, explaining more about the recently established "New Member" committee that will provide you an option to participate in the PA. Your participation is vital to the success of the union. To quote Helen Keller, "alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." You can help the PA do so much more. The ball is in your court. To put a spin on a famous proclamation by President John F. Kennedy, "ask not what your union can do for you, ask what you can do for your union!"

nysut
New York State United Teachers
Affiliate #39015

aft
Affiliate #2839

as member and chair, and as a discreet and trusted advisor to most of the PA presidents who filled that role from the time he was hired until his sudden death in September 2010.

Thinking back, I have a vivid memory of a conversation we had in his office in the late '70s. We were both assistant professors at the time and it was around the time I was first considering getting involved with campus governance. He told me that, looking forward in his career, he had decided to steer away from collegial committee work. Rather, he planned to satisfy his collegial obligations by participating in contract negotiations and grievance work for the PA. He said there was nothing he could do that would be of more service to his colleagues than that important union work. And he lived by that for his whole career with impressive results.

It seems appropriate at this time to share some details of which most of our newer members and probably many of our more senior members are unaware. Remember that Sam's genius was in the areas of bargaining (negotiating) and contract enforcement (grievance). Let's take negotiating first. While nothing in our contract is the product of a single individual's work, it's pretty hard to find an article in our collective bargaining agreement that doesn't somehow bear Sam's mark. For instance, the College cannot arbitrarily change our health insurance coverage. Huge! That one sentence (codified in our contract) has saved us from a number of attempts to lessen our coverage and it will surely continue to protect us in the future. You can thank Sam. Members and their dependents now enjoy free tuition for taking classes here at MV. You can thank Sam. There was a time when only faculty could teach overload. Now faculty and non-teaching professionals do. You

can thank Sam. Once assignment of overload was a much more arbitrary process. Now with priority for two overloads, no one gets a second assignment until everyone who is qualified and has requested overload gets one. You can thank Sam. Newer faculty and staff now can earn (in real dollars) in just one-half to two-thirds the time the salaries that senior faculty and staff are currently earning after long careers. Again you can thank Sam... for the strategy that increased the minimums, for the increases and gradations in promotional stipends, and for the way those increases are calculated to maximize the monetary benefit to members. We enjoy a progressive discipline policy that requires the administration to adhere to a definite set of rules that gradually escalate in a predictable fashion. You can thank Sam. At one time promotions could be denied with little reason provided. Now the College must provide reasons for denial so those denied have a clearer understanding of what they must change in order to successfully apply in the future. Once again you can thank Sam. Bereavement leave and personal leave. They don't seem like big deals but they didn't always exist. Now they do. You can thank Sam. We accrue vacation time and sick leave at a pretty fast rate and we are able to donate some of our accrued sick leave to members in need. At retirement our accrued sick leave earns us money with which health insurance premiums can be paid. And again, say thank you to Sam. There's more, much more, but you get the picture.

Sam's grievance activity on behalf of members and their rights is the stuff of legend. With the exception of his first few months as a faculty member, he was somehow engaged in dealing with grievances for virtually his entire career. As chair when approached by a member

who felt he/she had been treated unfairly by the College, Sam's simple reply was, "Let's see what the contract says." If he saw a violation, he pursued it with quiet vigor. His approach was always impersonal, always objective, always wise and more often than not yielded a positive outcome. If he had a flaw, it was that he did too much of this work himself, but he loved it. Ask our current grievance chair Dawson McDermott why the PA's record in prevailing in grievance arbitrations has been so impressive in recent years. His answer will surely take you back to what he learned from Sam. So again, we should thank Sam.

It's good to reminisce. Before I wrote this little piece, I considered Sam a great colleague, a wonderful friend, and my mentor. Now as I review what I've written, I realize he was also a personal hero as well... a hero of and for the PA. And I hope we all now know that his legacy is immense and that through it he still resides with us. So on March 1 let's take part in a real celebration of success, the success that was the career of Sam Drogo. Walk, run, contribute... whatever works for you. Bring your family and/or friends and join your union brothers and sisters as a part of Team Sam!

You'll be happy if you do. Plus, you'll get to see Dawson in a kilt.
Some Heart Run/Walk, Team Sam ideas:

1. Grab a Heart Run/Walk pledge form for Team Sam from the posters scattered around campus. Sign up as a member and collect pledges.
 2. Post a pledge form in your center office so colleagues can contribute.
 3. Convince a pro-union friend to join Team Sam. The more the merrier.
 4. Join Team Sam on-line at <http://social.heart.org/46XTGCX>
 5. Contribute to Team Sam on-line at <http://social.heart.org/46XTGCX>
-

Benefits Update

Justin Wilcox

The benefits Trust Fund trustees recently approved the renewal of our out of pocket reimbursement.

Any approved medical expenditures incurred in 2014 will be reimbursed through our "Out of Pocket Medical Expense Reimbursement." Members (including your spouse and dependents) can be reimbursed for any out-of-pocket medical expense/flexible spending expense incurred in 2014 for procedures performed or co-pays paid in the 2014 calendar.

This out of pocket reimbursement is capped at \$100 per member. The eligibility information, reimbursement form, and electronic funds transfer form can be found on the PA website at

<http://www.mvccpa.org/main/benefits-fund-reimburse.cfm>.

Should you have any questions pertaining to benefits through the Professional Association's benefits fund please contact me at jwilcox@mvcc.edu.

MVCC PA Benefits Trust Fund

FINANCIAL COUNSELING PROGRAM

The Benefits Trust Fund is happy to announce a new benefit through Stacey Braun as well as renewing the \$100 reimbursement benefit for 2014. There are many financial services offered through Stacey Braun please take advantage of this great benefit.

Services Available to Each Member (at no cost):

Free financial consultation each year*: Consultations will be held throughout the year on campus. Members can receive up to six hours of time, in person or over the phone or in combination. For more information or to schedule an appointment call 1-888-949-1925. Spouses and/or other family members may attend consultations with you.

Unlimited access to Stacey Braun's proprietary

website: This password protected website is a useful financial tool intended to address many of your financial concerns. The website contains financial narratives, market data, quotes, charts, portfolio tracking, financial news, financial glossary, financial calculators, links to other useful financial sites and the email helpdesk. To access the site use "money" as your password and "hendrick" as the User ID.

Unlimited use of Stacey Braun's email helpdesk: To provide answers to basic financial questions, you have access to qualified professionals via Stacey Braun's email helpdesk.

Topics for consultations include, but are not limited to: Retirement Planning, Refinancing, Mortgages, Debt Management, Budgeting, Divorce, Investments (403B, Pension Advice), Mutual Fund Questions, Asset Allocation, Establishing Risk Tolerance, Taxes, Inheritance Issues, Gifting, Estate Planning, Savings, Cash Flow, General Education, Elder Care, Social Security, Education Funding (i.e. 529 plans), Second Opinions & Life, Disability and Long-Term Care Insurance

STACEY BRAUN PERSONNEL ARE PROHIBITED FROM SELLING INVESTMENTS OR INSURANCE PRODUCTS

STACEY BRAUN IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY 403(B) PROVIDERS

***Written summaries of consultations containing recommendations are available to members upon request.**

*Stacey Braun Associates, Inc.
377 Broadway
New York, NY 10013
1-888-949-1925*

MVCC Adjunct and Part-time Association: Update

by Katherine Chester, President, and Ellis Gage Searles, Executive Board Member at Large

Good news on the Affordable Care Act! As you may recall, the APA filed an improper practice charge against the College for its assertion that 29 hours per week was the limit on the number of hours we could work. Thanks to the hard work and diligence of Jerry Brown, Dennis Rahn, and Jim Henck, we have signed an agreement with the College stating that the measure will be the average of hours worked over a 52-week period, not a weekly limit. This is very good news for MVCC adjuncts and part-time professionals because, without our intervention, the College would not have changed its position, and many people would have had hours reduced.

In another positive development, several members of the APA leadership were present at two adjunct orientation sessions in January and added 8 new members to our membership roster. We continue to seek your assistance in helping our membership to grow, so, as always, if you know someone who has not yet joined us, please send him/her our way.

We're walking with you! For the first time, our two unions will be supporting a good cause together—which, of course, is the union way. Members of the Adjunct and Part-time Association will join members of the Professional Association on **Team Sam** at the **Greatest Heart Run/Walk** on March 1 at Utica College.

Meanwhile, on the negotiations front, we're awaiting a date for our next session. The delay is due to the time needed to find a replacement for Greg Amoroso, who had been the College's spokesperson until recently when he left his employment as Oneida County Attorney.

Excellence in Education: Not Just a Slogan Anymore

Rialda Shulman

The motto of our Professional Association, "United for Excellence in Education," is what the Internal Communications Committee keeps in mind when choosing a recipient of the PA scholarship. This year, among many accomplished candidates, Adnan Huric's stellar academic record set him apart from other candidates and earned him a \$1,000 scholarship, presented to him during our annual PA luncheon on January 17th.

Among many reasons, Adnan was chosen because his story partly mirrors that of many of our students, and partly because we desire to see it realized more often. He began his studies at MVCC in ESL where he earned nothing but A's. Soon, he easily transitioned into the Nursing program where he quickly established himself as a serious and dedicated student by enrolling in courses that are not required in his major and working as a peer tutor and Supplemental Instruction leader for Don Kelly's Anatomy and Physiology class. It is no wonder that Don Kelly called Adnan's interest in education "inspiring" given his ambition to eventually enroll in medical school.

We hope that the PA's modest contribution to Adnan's education will further his goals and in return enrich our community. Meanwhile, we hope that he continues to maintain his academic rigor and continue to be a model of what "excellence in education" can truly be. His winning essay will be printed in its entirety in the next issue of PANorama.

May 1 is deadline for reduced load

Teaching faculty members may elect a reduced load for 2014-05 by notifying their department dean by May 1 of this year. The election to do so is for 3 credit hours or 3 contact hours per term and can be for one or both terms. The economic impact of this can be found in Article 5.6.A (the new contract is on the web at www.mvccpa.org).

VOTE-COPE 2014: Please consider it

Bill Perrotti, VOTE-COPE Coordinator

If you were at the PA luncheon, you've heard a version of my spiel about VOTE-COPE. If you missed the luncheon, some of this will be new to you. Most of you, either in person or in your campus mailbox, have received a copy of the VOTE-COPE pledge form with some NY-SUT supporting information and a separate message from me.

I must say that I'm quite pleased by the response and generosity from a number of members, especially newer members. But there is still a majority of the membership who are not yet contributing. Many of those may feel that \$1, \$2, \$5, or \$10 each pay is just more than they can afford. To that I remind you of an old saying that is all-too-often so true: "penny-wise, pound-foolish." VOTE-COPE is an investment in yourself and in your colleagues. It's an investment in your career. It's an investment in a public education system that does not discriminate against any student. It's an investment in a system that looks at the potential of every student and tries to make it happen. It's a way of helping to protect your standard of living, your career, your retirement. Please consider starting to contribute now or increasing your present contribution even just a little.

COPE. The letters stand for Committee On Political Education. It's the very active and highly effective political action operation of our statewide union, New York State United Teachers, and it is funded

entirely by our voluntary member contributions. It allows our NY-SUT representatives in Albany (actually our lobbyists) and local members as well to educate elected representatives about issues important to our work life. I don't need to tell you that there are many well-financed forces operating to influence the political arena in ways that do us harm as a collective of educational professionals. These forces want to see public education weakened or privatized. They want teachers' and/or workers' rights diminished or eliminated. In the name of fiscal responsibility, they want to make less secure the retirement pensions you've earned over your career. They want to make you less secure in your job and more easily replaced by lower paid employees. They want to limit your right to band together as a unionized collective and bargain fairly within your workplace. The list just goes on and on and on.

I apologize to those of you who've read my VOTE-COPE statement attached to the materials that were distributed but some things are important enough to bear repeating. Here are some reasons I think you need to consider as you try to come to a decision about contributing and getting involved. Many of these I mentioned at the luncheon. Imposition of the Common Core curriculum on K-12 public schools; increased, mandated high-stakes testing in K-12 ; seamless transfer and a rigid 64 credit cap for associate

degree programs ; an evolving higher-ed system in which programs are being forced to be the same and in which any curricular element that is unique or special or innovative is undervalued; performance-based funding to SUNY 2- and 4-year colleges that will base some (likely a gradually increasing percentage) of our funding on the employment success of our graduates in our region; chronically inadequate NY state aid for public education at all levels; continual attempts to privatize public education; an increase in the development of charter schools throughout the state that siphon funds from public education but are not required to serve all students or to abide by the same mandates as public schools; attempts to reduce or eliminate pensions for public employees; attacks on teacher tenure and job security for all professionals at all levels; attacks on the rights of public employees to join a union and bargain collectively; attacks on binding arbitration in the public sector that could leave aggrieved employees with no option of last resort when jobs or rights in the workplace are threatened; the list goes on and on.

In short, the wheels are well in motion to corporatize public education at all levels. Good heavens, you heard it at the recent plenary presentation to start our semester where the phrase "producing graduates" was repeated again and again and the phrase "educating students" was

never mentioned. This is no time to stand on the sidelines. This is not the time to save a few bucks every payday when your careers and job satisfaction and job security and retirement are under attack .In short, this is the time for us to be "pound-smart."

We, through the efforts of NYSUT, are not always successful in beating back some of these threats but at least through NYSUT's efforts, we are at the table and often at least able to slow or minimize some of the damage. In fact, we as individuals may not agree with every position that NYSUT takes on our behalf. That's the nature of democracy. What we should all be able to agree on, however , is that we would be much worse off without the daily vigilance and efforts of NYSUT. That important work needs money to operate and that's why you should give to VOTE-COPE. Just imagine how our careers would change if NYSUT weren't "at the table" fulfilling its watchdog/lobbying role.

If you don't yet give to VOTE-COPE, just \$1 a pay period can be a big help. And you won't feel it. That's just \$26 each year. If you already donate, you won't notice a difference of \$1 each payday. With payroll deduction, it's a painless way to invest in our collective future. Your PA leadership is asking of you only what they are already doing. Surely we can come together in this initiative for the purpose of protecting our careers and public education. If you've lost or never got the form, just contact me and I'll get you one. And lastly...

Think **pound-smart!**

New Members Corner

Who is your Area Rep?

Admissions, Counseling, Placement Testing

Patti Antanavige

Art Department

Christine Miller

Business Information Technology, Public Information

Kyle Lince

Business Office, Registrar, Financial Aid &

Advisement Center

Mike Alsheimer

Facilities and Operations, Heath Center , Student Activities

Sandy Cummings

Engineering Technologies and the Trades

Brian Judycki

Engineering Technology, Computer & Physical Sciences

TBA

Health Services

Lorie Phillips

Humanities (Payne Hall)

Shawn Liang

Educational Technology & Library

Colleen Kehoe-Robinson

Information Technology

Sergey Myalik

Life Science

Eileen Bush

Mathematics

Emily Hantsch

OSSD, Learning Center, CCED, Humanities (in AB) and Center for College Outreach

Dayton Elseth

Physical Education

Gary Parker

Psychology, Human Services and Education

Melissa Thomas

Rome Campus - Hospitality and Airframe

David Hoffman

Rome Campus - Plumley

Barbara Evans

Social Science and Criminal Justice

Diana Ayers-Darling

VPLAA, Development Office, Alumni,

President Office and Institutional Assessment

Marie Kohl

Apathy is NOT an Answer

Aaron Fried

Looking for members for the
PA New Members Committee!

Calling all interested
individuals!

At the last general membership
meeting, we all voted to form a
new committee within the PA,
the New Member Committee.

Why?

Union membership faces a
unique conundrum; new
members do not have a
historical perspective of the
current benefits their union
affords them. In a way, I was
lucky because of all the time I
spent with Bill Perrotti when I
started here four years ago. The
stories I heard; tales of Sam
Drogo. It's almost like a book
of parables that everyone
should have access to in order
to understand the current state
of our contract here!

It was easy for me to say yes,
then, and accept the challenge
of negotiating with the college
on the most recent round of
negotiations. During
negotiations two important
realizations occurred to me.
First, we have struggled to get
and keep the benefits package
we have on campus. Also, the
college gets to use these
benefits to recruit new hires
with no context of how those
benefits arose.



As the last round of
negotiations headed into an
impasse, we met as a group at
the beginning of the fall
semester so that I could
discuss the financials and
where we stood. The room
was fairly packed, but as I
looked around I was confused
by the absence of the newer
members of our
community. Where were the
people who started with me?
Did they understand what they
had to gain or lose in the
process?

What am I looking for?
I am looking for people who
are interested, not just in
becoming involved with a
committee, "help" me
understand how we can better
reach out to our newer
members. This is a great
opportunity to help strengthen
our union and bring newer
members into the fold. I am
asking you if you are up to this
challenge!

For us, there is no greater
danger than apathy.

Current Events and Opportunities

Community Service Opportunities

- March 1** **Great American Run
and Walk, Utica
College, 10:30 am for
3 or 5 mile walks.**
- March 15** **St Patrick's Day
Parade, Utica –
meet at Labor Coun-
cil, 287 Genesee St. at
8:00 am.**

Collegiality Opportunities

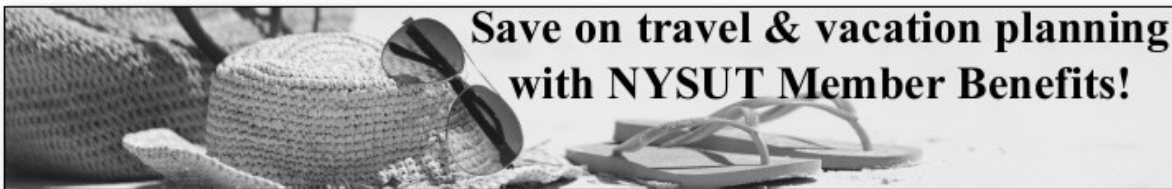
**PA New Member committee is look-
ing for members. Contact Norma
Chrisman if you are interested in par-
ticipating.**

Officer Positions available in May 2014 election:

1st Vice President
Treasurer

Committee Positions available in May 2014 election:

NYSUT Representative Assembly Al-
ternate Delegates – 3 positions available
Audit Committee – 3 positions available
Community Outreach Committee – 3
positions available
Education and Training Committee – 4
positions available
Grievance Committee – 3 positions
available
Internal Communications Committee –
6 positions available
Member Services Committee – 6 posi-
tions available
Political Outreach Committee – 5 posi-
tions available



Are you looking to book that incredible vacation you've always dreamed about, map out that important business trip you need to take or rent a vehicle for an upcoming excursion?

NYSUT Member Benefits offers a variety of endorsed discount travel programs that allow you to do each of these while saving money at the same time!

Travelzoo

Save up to 65% at top restaurants, luxury spas, museums, and other locations with one of the newest NYSUT Member Benefits Corporation-endorsed programs -- Travelzoo.

Travelzoo also offers getaways that include stays at the finest inns, hotels and resorts across the U.S. combined with exclusive hotel perks and amenities to give guests an added bonus to complete their stay. Please note that many of these deals are offered for a limited period of time.

Grand Circle Corporation

One of our newest Member Benefits Corporation-endorsed programs is provided by Grand Circle Corporation, which offers a variety of group tour vacations designed specifically for American travelers over 50 years old.

Grand Circle Corporation -- which includes Grand Circle Travel, the award-winning Grand Circle Cruise Line, Overseas Adventure Travel, and Grand Circle Small Ship Cruises -- is committed to providing international travel, adventure and discovery opportunities that offer impactful and intercultural experiences.

NYSUT members & their family members can either save \$100 per person on their trip or travel for free if they gather at least 10 paying travelers for a group tour.

Wyndham Hotels & Endless Vacation Rentals

If you're on the hunt for savings, look no further than the NYSUT Member Benefits Corporation-endorsed travel program offered by Wyndham Hotels & Endless Vacation Rentals.

NYSUT members enjoy savings of up to 20% at nearly 7,000 participating hotels among 17 hotel brands with Wyndham Worldwide and savings of 25% at more than 200,000 vacation rentals in 100 countries with Endless Vacation Rentals.

Wyndham Hotels has the right hotel for you at the right price -- whether it's an upscale hotel, all-inclusive resort or something more cost-effective.

With Endless Vacation Rentals, NYSUT members can save on beautiful resort condos, villas, homes, and cottages that provide space and flexibility ideal for families and groups of friends traveling together.

Car & Truck Rentals

Do you need to rent a vehicle as part of your next trip? NYSUT members can get discounted rates on passenger car rentals with the following companies: Alamo, Avis, Budget, Enterprise, Hertz, and National. You can also receive 20% off local or one-way truck rentals from Budget Truck Rental.

Learn more about these endorsed programs -- including how to access discounts, unique website codes and website links -- by contacting Member Benefits at **800-626-8101** or visiting ***memberbenefits nysut.org***.



For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.

Jan./Feb. '14

