

Vol. 43

The COMMUNICATOR

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The President's Message By WAYNE SPENCE



Waiting on budget details while preparing for the fight ahead

As of this writing (May 6, 2025), Gov. Kathy Hochul and the State Legislature have reportedly reached a deal on the “conceptual framework” of the State’s next budget, but the bills that allocate all the money are not yet printed and so we don’t have details to share in this issue. As soon as they are, the PEF Legislative Department will analyze them and report to the membership on status of the union’s various budget priorities.

What we do know is that the volatile federal government could slash New York’s budget even further by taking away federal funding for various programs, and if that happens, the Governor and Legislature will be right back in Albany to amend the budget. Rest assured that your union will continue advocating for you! We’re still soliciting [testimonials](#) from members about how federal funding cuts could impact the services you deliver and the patients who depend on them. Visit www.pef.org/stop-the-cuts to learn about ways you can get involved.

While we can’t yet report on the budget, this issue features a wealth of information shared during the most recent [Telephone Town Hall](#), including details on all the contract money that paid out last month and negotiations for a successor contract. In addition, PEF’s Department of Civil Service Enforcement/ Research shared details about the status of the State’s total compensation study that PEF and other unions pushed hard for; and MIS announced the launch of the PEF app, the newest way for you to stay connected to your union. Visit www.pef.org/app for details on how to download.

Our [Workers’ Memorial Day ceremony](#) on April 28 highlighted the importance of continuing to fight for safer workplaces, and how unions have always been at the forefront of protecting workers. In this issue, we report on how PEF is supporting a member at [Pilgrim Psychiatric Center](#) in Suffolk County on Long Island after she was sexually assaulted by a patient with prior offenses.

Finally, a tip of my PEF cap to our Organizing Department. Director of Organizing Scott Harms was asked to speak recently to other SEIU labor organizations about how PEF is increasing its membership despite the difficult conditions for labor nationwide. [We continue to be one of SEIU’s top public-sector unions](#) in terms of signing up new members, and preventing others from dropping their membership. I’d like to think that’s because the professional, scientific and technical members of PEF know a good value when they see one! Thank you for your membership and I wish you all a good start to your summer.

In Unity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wayne Spence". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Wayne Spence

PEF Telephone Town Hall focuses on Civil Service, Federal Cuts, Contracts and the new PEF App

By **NAJEE WALKER**

At a Telephone Town Hall held on April 16, PEF President Wayne Spence invited staff directors from the Departments of Civil Service Enforcement/Research, Membership Information Systems, Legislative, Statewide Field Services and Contract Administration to address the thousands of PEF members on the line.

Director of Civil Service Enforcement/Research Veronica Foley briefed them on the total compensation study the New York State Department of Civil Service (DCS) began in March 2025. It was commissioned at the urging of PEF and other unions almost two years ago as a way to assess how competitive the state's compensation package is with the private sector and is being administered by Deloitte Consulting.

"What the state has outlined for Deloitte to do is conduct a full and thorough review of the state's total compensation structure," said Foley. "What they're going to be looking at goes beyond base salaries."

The study will also compare salary add-ons, as well as leave and retirement benefits to see how they compare and compete with the private sector. One-thousand State titles were chosen by DCS to serve as the benchmark for Deloitte to determine "alignment and competitiveness."

"Once this review is done, they're going to assess how those titles line up with employers of similar size in the public and private sectors," said Foley. "They're also going to be looking at required levels of education. They're using what's already based in law to see how we stack up with other employers."

Foley said that there will be a review of turnover rates as well, as limiting turnover is one of the State's goals when it comes to recruitment and retention of the workforce. Additionally, while the study is ongoing, any requests for salary differentials and salary reallocation will be on pause, a decision that PEF opposes.

"While this study is ongoing, the work does not end. Our department of Civil Service Enforcement and Research has created a toolkit to make sure people understand how salary differential requests and reallocation requests work their way through the state bureaucracy and what the role of each stakeholder is—including PEF," said Foley.

Members can find the toolkit at [PEF.org/CivilService](https://pef.org/CivilService). A recording of an April 30 training about the toolkit will also be available on that page.



Joe Cocci, PEF's Director of Membership Information Systems (MIS), introduced the PEF app to members on the call.

"The app is now available for download in the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store," said Cocci. "Complete instructions on how to log in can be found at [PEF.org/app](https://pef.org/app)."

Cocci stressed that this is a members'-only app, so there is no need for PEF members to sign up or enroll.

"You log in using your membership identification number (MIN) and the same password you use to log in to the PEF website or the Membership Benefits website," said Cocci. "It's that easy."

Members who do not know their MIN can call PEF from 9-5 weekdays at (800) 342-4306 and the MIS team is developing a MIN lookup tool for the website that is expected to launch this summer.

The legislative and budget section of the call was led by PEF Legislative Director Pat Lyons. Since the call on April 16 a conceptual framework for the New York State Fiscal Year 2025-2026 budget was agreed to by the Governor and the Legislature and the union is waiting on details about its specific budget priorities.

Lyons and President Spence once again stressed the possible impact of federal cuts on State services and urged members to call their members of Congress and tell them why it's a bad idea. Contact information for the New York Congressional delegation can be found on the [PEF website](#).

"Because the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) was unable to generate the \$2 trillion in savings that they proposed, it looks as though the Senate and the House are going to pass the next budget via the budget reconciliation process that would trim at least \$1.5 trillion over the next 10 years," said Lyons. "That is a significant chunk of resources to come out of the federal budget."

Lyons said that while about \$92 billion of New York's \$254 billion budget comes from the federal government, New York is a revenue generator for the entire country, and, until recently, it gave more revenue, benefits, and resources to the federal government than it received back. Any loss in federal money that typically funds Medicaid and the Department of Health could have an impact on hospitals and laboratories in New York. There is an expectation that the state can stay afloat, in some cases, thanks to the state's money-saving initiatives.

"The state is sitting on about \$30 billion in reserves. They have about \$20 billion in specified reserves and about \$10 billion in cash, so we are in a strong financial position as a state," said Lyons. "But we have to be clear, there is no way for the state to backfill all of massive cuts that may or may not come about as part of this budget resolution process."

Before ending his section of the call, Lyons called upon the membership to continue to put pressure on legislators at the federal level, to put a stop to the cuts and not to pass the reconciliation budget as currently drafted.

"There is a number you can call to get in touch with your congressional representative," said Lyons. "There are also many rallies going on across the state, and we encourage you to go to those rallies when you can. We need a show of force that these cuts are not going to be tolerated and they're not appropriate."

The number for the U.S. House of Representatives' switchboard is (202) 224-3121. Follow the prompts to be connected to your representative. Members can also get involved by sharing testimony and personal videos through [PEF's Stop the Cuts campaign](#).

Director of Statewide Field Services Katie Vorwald said on the call that while the cuts are already taking shape in New York State, PEF and other unions do not usually hear about them until members do.

"Our limitation is that we do not have granular information about what members are federally funded and what agencies may be planning for particular departments or divisions," said Vorwald. "What we need is for you to be talking to your PEF leadership, your local stewards, your Labor-Management chair and your field reps to let us know what you're hearing on the ground."

So far, PEF is aware of cuts to the State Education Department due to COVID relief funds being taken back from the state, even though the money was to be used until 2026.

For the final piece of the Town Hall, members heard from Director of Contract Administration Debra Greenberg. She began by going over contract money that paid out recently, including the \$600 Higher Education Differential, as well as the annual 3% increase that was negotiated.

"We also had some really good increases to location pay, basically about 30% over the term of the contract," said Greenberg. "The biggest chunk of that is going into effect this year."

Downstate location pay rose from \$3,400 to \$4,000 this year. For members working in mid-Hudson locations, the increase was from \$1,650 to \$2,000. These payments are over the course of the year, and began the first paycheck closest to April 1.

There is also a major change to performance awards or longevity payments. In previous years, payments were made to those who have been working "at top of grade" for a certain number of years. This year, after vigorous negotiation by PEF, the payments switched to a new eligibility system that bases the payments on "years of continuous state service."

"The continuous state service doesn't have to be service in the PEF or PS&T unit. It could be with a different bargaining unit, or M/C, but it does have to be in the Executive Branch of NYS government," said Greenberg. "Not if you worked for the legislature, not if you have work in the courts."

Twelve (12) years of continuous state service earns a \$1,500 longevity award, 17 years is \$3,000 and 22 years is \$4,500. These are lump sum payments that were already awarded in member checks on April 17 (administrative payroll) and April 23 (institution payroll).

After the Town Hall, PEF was notified that there were challenges in calculating years of qualifying service for the 2025 performance awards (longevities) for employees with more complicated work histories, which include the following groups:

- Employees with multiple records when time in the records do not overlap
- Employees with multiple payment eligible records
- Hourly and FEE service
- Legacy service prior to PayServ conversion
- Certain reinstatements where the effective date of the reinstatement is after the effective date of the rehire

The Office of the State Comptroller will be conducting the necessary review and issuing additional and/or corrected payments. When we find out more specific details about the dates for these additional payments, we will provide an update.

[Click here](#) for a complete memo from PEF Contract Administration detailing the situation.

Finally, Greenberg touched on negotiations for a successor contract to the 2023-2026 collective bargaining agreement. The members of the new contract team were announced at the March executive board meeting and have already begun training.

"We want to be ready to begin bargaining early this round if we determine that is the best course of action," said Greenberg. "Like we've been talking about throughout this call, we are in really challenging economic times, but we're closely monitoring the situation to see if it makes sense to get to the table early and, if so, we'll be ready."

Greenberg said that even with all the uncertainty at the federal level, PEF was able to eliminate a lot of sunsets in the previous two contracts, so things like the Productivity Enhancement Program (PEP), performance awards, and tuition reimbursement will continue after the current contract expires on April 1, 2026, as will items that have always continued, such as health insurance benefits and performance advances.

In closing the call, President Spence took a moment to announce another contest surrounding the Toxic Workplace and Bullying campaign. The first contest was to name PEF's new 20-foot inflatable bull. The winner, PEF retiree Barb Rock, won a \$250 gift card and has successfully named the Bull: S.T.O.M.P., which stands for Stop Treating Our Members Poorly.

The next contest will send S.T.O.M.P. to a workplace where members are being treated poorly. The president asked members to tell PEF where the bull should be blown up first.

"We're asking members to tell us in two paragraphs or less, where should we bring the bull?" he said. "Visit PEF on social media or send an email to Comms@pef.org to let us know."

As a final farewell, President Spence thanked members at OCFS and DOCCS facilities for their hard work following the corrections' officer strike.

"For those members who are working in correctional settings, and the OCFS settings and institutional settings where staffing is very short, I want to say that I appreciate the work you do," said President Spence. "I don't know if you hear it from your managers, I know that a lot of correctional facilities are operating at 50% or less in terms of staffing. Our civilians and parole officers have stepped up and picked up the slack. I want to let you know that we appreciate you."



Recommit Today!

New + Existing PEF Members

SIGN NOW!

PEF stands strong after assault at Pilgrim Psychiatric Center

By NAJEE WALKER

PEF's Stop Workplace Violence campaign launched last year after three stabbings at Buffalo Psychiatric Center (PC) in April. Since then, additional attacks have made headlines at South Beach PC on Staten Island in October 2024 and now a sexual assault at Pilgrim PC in Suffolk County.

The PEF nurse was assaulted at Pilgrim on March 13 by a patient with prior offenses. PEF Vice President Darlene Williams said that there were several missteps during and after the assault that could have prevented the incident.

"No one informed the member about the patient's history or his previous attacks," Williams said. "The patient was waiting for a moment to strike and found the one person who was unaware to make his move."

Following the assault, Williams said that the patient was removed from the area and the member's supervisor was helpful in getting the member to their local police precinct, but still the member did not feel protected.

"When she got to the precinct, her supervisor did inform her that they believed she had a right to press charges," said Williams. "But she wasn't given any privacy to tell her full story. She was minimizing her experience."

Williams said that even after speaking to a counselor, the member still did not share a complete account.

The incident happened on March 13. PEF area leaders, like Region 12 Coordinator Corrine Testa, didn't learn about it until a week later on March 21. It was only then that the member gave a full account of the incident.

"We wanted to make sure that she felt protected, but we also didn't want her to share anything she didn't want to share," said Williams. "Eventually she spoke with us, and we went through the steps to really get her the help she needed."

That help included another visit to the precinct. Williams said that it was PEF President Wayne Spence who was able to call the precinct and arrange for a detective to speak with the member privately and finally press charges.

"The patient was led out of the hospital in handcuffs, and that is really thanks to President Spence," said Williams. "It would have taken a lot longer for us to move on this issue without his help."

The union was also able to help secure a court order of protection for the member.



The attack prompted the 120 members of the PEF Executive Board to vote unanimously in late March to consider a vote of no-confidence against OMH Commissioner Dr. Ann Marie Sullivan the next time they meet in June.

"PEF members at OMH understand they work in a dangerous setting, but this is not part of the job," said President Spence following the vote. "They care for New Yorkers who really need the services they provide, and it's time for the State to do everything in their power to protect its workforce."

Williams said she can see some change on the horizon.

"We met with leadership at Pilgrim, the Director of Facility Management, and with Commissioner Sullivan," said Williams. "We spoke about all the missteps and discussed next steps, but when the Commissioner said she was sorry, that resonated with me. It felt like she was now really willing to listen to us."

Since the incident, OMH Central Staff and Leadership have been meeting with PEF to finalize changes to the facility and hopefully bring these incidents to an end. Health and Safety committees are also developing stronger bases of support at the facility.

Ultimately, PEF is cautiously optimistic about OMH working together on safety. Vice President Williams is looking forward to working with leaders and management on the ground, educating and strengthening change at the facilities and finally getting on the same page about workplace violence.

Williams said that it's important to make sure that management and staff are working from the same place of understanding.

"We may not eradicate workplace violence," said Williams. "But we will damn sure know what to do when we have support from both sides of the aisle."



PEF leaders step up in local labor federations and councils

By **NAJEE WALKER**

From Buffalo to Long Island, PEF Regional Coordinators are active members of the New York State labor movement. One of the primary ways they stay connected with their union siblings is via participation in Area Labor Federations (ALF) or Central Labor Councils (CLC). These umbrella organizations bring together workers from all sectors to benefit the communities they represent.

For PEF's 12 Regional Coordinators, joining an ALF or CLC means they can continue to fight for PEF members while bringing the union's priorities to the wider community.



Outgoing Region 1 Coordinator Michele Iorfida is a member of the Western New York ALF and Buffalo CLC. While she does not hold any extra roles with those bodies, other Region 1 members, like PEF Executive Board Member Vincent Cicatello and retiree David Chudy, hold seats on the ALF and CLC. Iorfida said that right now the local focus is not too different than the focus around the nation.

"We're keeping an eye on the federal cuts coming down from the government and how it affects the state workforce," said Iorfida. "Especially in Chataqua County, where OPWDD has been closing many homes."



Shelby Wisneski is Region 2's Coordinator. She is one of two Vice Presidents of the Southern Tier Labor Council, a chapter of the Rochester ALF. The council covers Stueben, Schuyler and Livingston counties. Wisneski said that the council is rebuilding after other labor councils joined the organization and is focused on building a stronger coalition.

"Right now, we are trying to increase communication across the region and increase solidarity across unions," said Wisneski. "PEF members have been great about getting involved in the labor council's events, so we're hoping other unions follow suit."



Region 3 Coordinator Leisa Abraham holds seats on several councils. She is a delegate for the Rochester CLC, holds a seat on the Executive Board of the Rochester-Genesee Valley Labor Federation and is the President of the Finger Lakes CLC. In those capacities, she brings PEF's priorities. This month, Abraham is helping organize a Fix Tier 6 rally on May 6 in the Finger Lakes region. The councils are also

focused on federal cuts as they continue to happen.

"Our public sector unions rely heavily on federal, state and local government budgets," said Abraham. "With the DOGE (Department of Government Efficiency), we are gearing up for various public campaigns and actions to bring in the community to understand what losses they will have in the services they rely on, if these cuts go through."



Monical Moore is the Region 4 Coordinator. She is an executive board member for the Central New York ALF and the Greater Syracuse Labor Council, where she also serves as the recording secretary. Moore works hard to engage the membership of both the ALF and the CLC.

"Our members are really concerned about the state's ability to recruit and retain at all of our agencies," said Moore. "I know that there is also a lot of concern around pay disparities. Many of our members have families to support and it is sometimes hard to do on the amount of money they are paid to provide important services to their communities."



In Region 5, Scott Staub is the newest Regional Coordinator but has been working in the union movement for a long time. Currently, Staub is a part of the Binghamton Labor Council as a delegate representing PEF. The BLC is focused on increasing wages, job security and securing retirement benefits.

"We have helped build collaborations on issues that are important to PEF members and the labor movement in general," said Staub. "Uniting diverse communities on common issues has helped us move the needle on several items."



Chris Dunham is the Regional Coordinator for Region 6. He is excited by the work done across the large Region 6 area, which has several labor federations that overlap with Albany.

"I am currently seeking a seat on the Central New York Labor Council," said Dunham.



Coordinator Barbara Stransky is well known for being heavily involved in PEF Region 7. As a union advocate, she is a part of the Northeast CLC as a delegate and the Jefferson Lewis and St. Lawrence Counties Central Trades Labor Council as delegate and executive board member. As part of the Northeast CLC, Stransky has organized the legislative breakfast and as part of the JLSC CLC she sits on the newly formed scholarship and engagement committees.

"It is really important for us to focus on Tier 6 reform, and that is what we're doing at the councils I am a part of," said Stransky. "We're also concerned about the federal cuts. Our councils are doing what they can there as well."



Danielle Bridger is the Region 8 Coordinator and a proud unionist of many years. She is a secretary with the Albany County Central Federation of Labor and a vice president with the Capital District ALF. In addition to working on special events like Albany's popular Tulip Festival, the Labor Parade and more, she said that much like her fellow Regional

Coordinators, her organizations are working on the incoming federal cuts.

"We're really focused on engaging and educating members on the federal cuts," said Bridger. "We're also doing as much as we can to strengthen food bank distribution."



Gabriela Franklyn is the PEF Region 9 Coordinator. She is a delegate with the Hudson Valley ALF and was recently appointed to the Executive Council of the Westchester-Putnam CLC. She is also a member of the Dutchess, Catskill, Hudson-Catskill and Rockland counties CLC. She has been engaging members since the last presidential election and working hard on what she called Hudson Valley's common denominator issues.

"We're working on a 'Know Your Rights' campaign and Tier 6 especially," said Franklyn. "We're also doing our best to rally and campaign around Social Security, as there have been many closures as of late."



Tamara Martin and Bernadette O'Connor work together closely as the coordinators for Regions 10 and 11, respectively. That partnership extends to their participation in the NYC CLC. They are both delegates with the council and meet monthly to communicate PEF's priorities

and urge unions to join them in campaigns like the one to save SUNY Downstate.

"While many issues matter to our members, we've been focusing on workplace bullying, member safety across facilities, and increasing penalties for assaults on public employees," said Martin.



In Region 12, Corrine Testa serves as the Regional Coordinator for PEF. She is a part of the Long Island Federation of Labor as a delegate for PEF. Testa said that the federation has been kept up to date on the DOCCS crisis that began in February and its aftermath. She has also rallied support for other PEF priorities. Like her fellow coordinators, Long Island is focused on Tier 6 reform, but most of all, she and

other fellow unionists are focused on the lack of pay for workers on the island.

"As an individual who has lived on Long Island my entire life, I am well aware of the high-cost, too-low-pay dilemma that many Long Islanders face. The median home price in Nassau County alone, per the U.S. Census Bureau, was \$658,700 from 2019-2023," said Testa. "In 2025, that number has grown to be more than \$820,000! We cannot afford to live in the very communities we serve as public employees."

All this advocacy by PEF Regional Coordinators helps to strengthen the union movement and create better opportunities and working conditions for New York workers, but as with all things union, they can't do it alone. If you're interested in playing a greater role in your PEF region, [contact your regional office](#) and get to know your coordinator.



PEF Vice President Bruce Giddings, at the podium, and Secretary-Treasurer Joe Donahue, led the Workers' Memorial Day ceremony at PEF Headquarters in Latham on April 28.

PEF recommits to the fight for health and safety on Workers' Memorial Day

By **KATE STICKLES**

Workers' Memorial Day is set aside to remember and honor those who died or suffered illness or injury on the job and PEF leaders and staff observed a moment of silence in memory of those fellow workers on April 28.

[RELATED: Watch video of the ceremony](#)

"We do this on this day to remember those who have lost their lives, or gotten injured severely, or with minor injuries, to be reminded of the importance of preventive protocols for health and safety practices," said PEF Vice President Bruce Giddings. "We remain mindful for ourselves and others to remain safe, unharmed, and alive each day so that we can go home to our families and loved ones."

Unions have been on the frontlines of health and safety and remain so today.

"Nearly all on-the-job fatalities should be prevented," said Secretary-Treasurer Joe Donahue. "As a union, it is important on this day to publicly renew our commitment to health and safety for workers. Thousands of PEF members work on the frontlines every day, caring for some of the state's most vulnerable people."

Donahue called attention to the need for continued advocacy in the wake of a handful of high-profile workplace violence cases across the state since this time last year, including the stabbings at [Buffalo Psychiatric Center](#), the attack at [South Beach Psychiatric Center](#) that left a member with a traumatic brain injury, and recently a sexual assault of a PEF member at [Pilgrim Psychiatric Center](#) in Suffolk County.

"Those are just the ones in the media," he said. "In response, PEF launched a '[Stop Workplace Violence](#)' campaign to educate members about what to do in the event of an incident with tabling events across the state."

The union also initiated an advertising campaign on buses, bus shelters, and billboards.

Bradley Kolb, a field representative from the New York City office and president of PEF's staff union, USW Local 9265, understands firsthand the importance of workplace safety – having lost a family member to an on-the-job exposure.

"Each year, too many workers around the world leave their homes and never return," he said. "They are our coworkers, friends, parents, siblings, and neighbors. Today, we honor their memory and recommit ourselves to the mission of ensuring every worker has the right to a safe and healthy workplace."

"The day is not just about mourning, but about action," Kolb said. "It's a call to strengthen protections, raise awareness, and fight for justice. Whether it's better safety training, stronger regulations, or simply speaking up when something doesn't seem right – every step we take matters."

Later in the afternoon, PEF Health & Safety Director Geraldine Stella joined Shana Davis, CSEA Capital Region IV President, to represent the unionized workforce at a [Workers' Memorial Day Dedication ceremony](#) at the New York State Department of Labor in Albany.

There is a wealth of information on health and safety on [PEF's website](#).

Mobile dental clinics coming to the North Country

Jet Dental clinics, a mobile, on-site dental provider, will be coming to Region 7 in June – offering New York State Dental Plan enrollees and covered dependents preventive dental care at locations in your area, including cleanings, exams, and X-rays.

Clinics will be appointment only and are scheduled for 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. June 4 and 5 at SUNY Potsdam, Raymond Hall, 8th Floor, 44 Pierrepont Ave., Potsdam, and from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. June 6 at the Village of Saranac Lake, 39 Main St., Saranac Lake.

Any services rendered by Jet Dental are subject to your New York State Dental Plan benefits and limitations. If you have questions on what is covered, contact Anthem Blue Cross, the dental plan administrator, at 1-833-821-1949. Jet Dental will bill Anthem directly for covered services.

For more information and to sign up, [click here](#). You can also call Jet Dental at 801-430-9262 or email hello@jetdental.com with any questions. A FAQ document is available [here](#).

Scan the QR code to make an appointment.



— *Anthem Dental News* —

JET DENTAL CLINICS



June 4, 5 & 6

PEF asked to share successful tactics for increasing membership with SEIU Public Division Labor Boards

By **KATE STICKLES**

With federal budget cuts and continuous attacks on unions and collective bargaining, now more than ever, mobilizing and organizing are vital to the survival of unions.

That's why SEIU invited PEF Director of Organizing Scott Harms to speak at its virtual Public Division Labor Board meeting April 24. PEF has been a leader among public-sector locals across the country who participate in SEIU's "Together We Rise" initiative, aimed at increasing union membership.

"We are going to continue to push forward, we are resilient and resolved and we are seeing that workers are wanting to fight back," said Heather Conroy, SEIU's Executive Vice President, on the call. "They are not just sitting back and accepting what's happening to them, their families, their loved ones, and people they don't even know but care about as human beings."

Harms started out by saying PEF is a diverse union, representing nearly 60,000 State workers across 3,000 job titles, from nurses to engineers to parole officers to scientists.

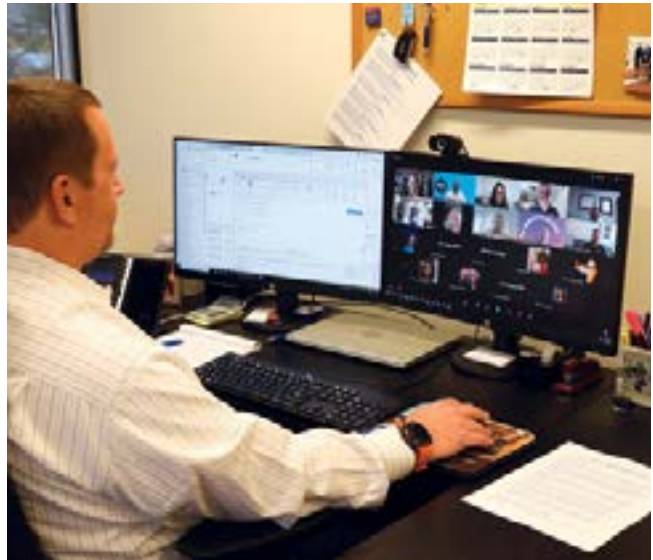
"Because of this incredible diversity across professions and agencies, our approach to organizing cannot be one-size-fits-all," he said. "We've had to build strategies that are inclusive, adaptable, and responsive to the unique needs of every corner of our membership."

PEF's current membership count of 54,807 active members and 4,368 non-members equates to a 93% membership density – and while that's a percentage to be proud of, the goal is to keep increasing it.

"Like all unions, we are carefully watching the changing political winds in Washington and beyond," he said. "Anti-labor groups are becoming more sophisticated and more aggressive. That means our organizing efforts must evolve just as quickly – and stay two steps ahead."

Harms said PEF uses a multi-pronged approach to drive up membership numbers and one of the key factors is access, something labor unions across New York fought to improve through legislation.

"Through those efforts, we secured reforms that significantly improved our access to new hires and improved the flow of information we receive from agencies," he said. "We also negotiated language into our contract that gives us more direct and timely access to employees entering our unit."



Prior to these changes, it could take weeks before PEF learned of a new hire. Experience has taught the PEF organizing team that the sooner you make contact and introduce the union and its benefits, the better the outcome, Harms said.

"We want PEF to be the first friend, and the best friend, a new employee has in state service," he said. "That early relationship is key to long-term engagement and loyalty."

Tools making a difference

Since Harms joined PEF as organizing director, he has implemented a rolling six-month analysis of non-members who recently joined the bargaining unit, identifying where they are located, which agencies they are in, and what titles they hold. Organizers reach out and coordinate targeted outreach.

"This data-driven approach has produced powerful ripple effects," he said. "In many cases, we've discovered that non-member 'pockets' exist simply because a member leader left or because a site has no active leadership presence."

It's not necessary to reinvent the organizing wheel, old processes are still effective.

"We also use some tried-and-true organizing tactics that, while old-school, remain incredibly effective," Harms said. "We launched a monthly direct mail campaign targeting all non-members on our six-month list. Each receives a postcard reminding them about the benefits of membership."

Results have been eye-opening, with many reaching out to say they thought they were already members or asking how to join. There are occasions when applications are mismatched that can be cleared up.

Retention is also important to union success. PEF receives about eight valid drop requests per month and the Organizing Department has internal protocols to ensure they reach out directly to these individuals.

"We clearly explain everything PEF provides to its members – from contract enforcement and professional development to benefits access and workplace protections," Harms said. "This effort has helped us save a significant number of memberships and reaffirm our value to members who may be on the fence."



PEF is now on Bluesky!
Follow us today
[@nyspef.bsky.social](https://nyspef.bsky.social)



VP Bruce Giddings speaks at the May Day rally at Albany Medical Center.

VP Giddings joins unions, community on May Day to protest federal cuts, support health care workers

By KATE STICKLES

PEF Vice President Bruce Giddings spoke at a multi-union May Day rally outside Albany Medical Center (AMC) on May 1, representing PEF and standing in solidarity with members of the New York State Nurses Association (NYSNA), United University Professions, the Capital District Area Labor Federation (CDALF), and other labor organizations and community members. More than 1,000 people were in attendance for a speak out and march from AMC to the Veterans' Affairs hospital down the street.

"As we gather here today, Republicans in Congress are working behind closed doors to cut \$1.5 trillion from the \$6.7 trillion federal budget over the next 10 years, including around \$880 billion in Medicaid spending," Giddings said. "These budget cuts are being advanced so that wealthy Americans – those earning more than \$400,000 a year – can get a tax break that will cost more than \$4.5 trillion over the next decade."

Giddings noted that of New York's \$254 billion budget, around \$90 billion comes from federal support for various programs, such as Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the school breakfast and lunch programs, and other funding for schools and the environment.

"Sixty-four billion dollars of that \$90 billion is used to support and administer Medicaid, which provides access to basic healthcare

services for approximately 7 million low-income New Yorkers," he said. "PEF members administer this program and they work every day to provide those benefits, while also eliminating waste, fraud and abuse."

Over the last few months, more than 10,000 jobs have been cut from the federal Department of Health and Human Services and billions of dollars have been pulled from the research of infectious disease, maternal health and mental health services.

"The hardworking healthcare workers of New York deserve better than to have their rights as union members and their jobs threatened by cuts to health programs, Medicaid and more," said PEF President Wayne Spence in a [press release](#) NYSNA sent out after the rally. "The working people of New York deserve quality services that we know our members can provide. With so many of us throughout all sectors of work—private and public—at risk of losing our jobs and with so many more New Yorkers at risk of losing their healthcare, we must take action to ensure that our rights, our health and our livelihoods are protected."

Albany was not the only city that held a rally on International Workers' Day. PEF leaders and members also participated in events in New York City and Rochester.





New Executive Board member seated in April Special Elections

One Executive Board member was seated, while four seats remain contested and will proceed to balloting following the April 2025 Special Election.

Elected to **Seat 165**, Joseph Moynihan will represent members at the Justice Center, Housing & Community Renewal, Veterans' Affairs, and the Office of Cannabis Management.

The race for **Region 1 Coordinator**, following the retirement of Michele Iorfida, is between Vincent Cicatello and Nazia Rahman. Vying for **Seat 65** at Education Main Office are Candyce Young and Angelina Rodriguez; for **Seat 90** at Higher Ed are Zachary Mason and Kristina Tereburke; and for **Seat 445** at the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) are Richard Fletcher and Jill Poeller.

Election ballots will be mailed on May 19, 2025, by American Arbitration Association (AAA) and must be returned to the address listed on the return envelope no later than 5 p.m. June 10, 2025. Return in this case means, in hand, not date mailed or postmarked.

Ballots will be counted on June 11, 2025, by AAA in New York City starting at 10 a.m. If you would like to observe the count, email SpecialElections@pef.org for information.

Five Executive Board seats will be open for the next Special Election in July 2025:

Seat 9: Audit Control
Seat 15: Civil Service
Seat 161 State Police, Criminal Justice Sv.
Seat 177: Office of Information Technology Services
Seat 200: Health Main Office

Visit www.pef.org/elections for details.



STOP *the* CUTS

Are you worried about what the
federal government might do to
state services?

Help PEF Stop the Cuts!

pef.org/stop-the-cuts



Image credit: www.roswellpark.org

Honoring PEF nurses at Roswell during Oncology Nurse Month, National Nurse Month

By **KATE STICKLES**

Nurses are the backbone of health care institutions across the world.

This year, the nursing staff at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center in Buffalo were honored by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) with a prestigious distinction: Magnet® Recognition for nursing excellence. ([Watch the nursing teams get the news!](#))

[Magnet designation](#) is a results-driven recognition that highlights the role nurses play as part of an interprofessional team focused on improving patient outcomes. Research shows that Magnet-recognized organizations demonstrate better patient outcomes and higher patient satisfaction.

During National Nurses Month and Oncology Nursing Month, we asked nurses at Roswell why they chose to become nurses at the cancer center. They all agreed – they do this to help patients during some of their darkest days.



“We choose this path because we have a drive to help and support our patients through some of the most difficult times of their lives, providing both the medical care they need and emotional comfort as well,” said **Christina Haidar**, an inpatient oncology nurse, whose role includes administering medications such as chemotherapy, and guiding patients and their families with information and support.



On the stem cell transplant unit, registered nurse **Julia May** goes home each day feeling fulfilled and is proud of the work being done at Roswell.

“Roswell Park’s transplant unit is continuously evolving with new medical advancements, and it is a privilege to be able to witness the positive effects it has on our patients’ outcomes firsthand,” she said. “Since Roswell is a comprehensive center, I love when I run into a former patient somewhere in the hospital and see how far they’ve come since receiving their transplant and hear about the life they are living, cancer-free.”



On the Bone Marrow Transplant floor at Roswell, **Alex Augustine** loves working at Roswell.

“We have a special population of patients who are very grateful to be receiving care here,” Augustine said. “I savor every interaction I have with my patients, and the best part of my job is being able to care for our patients through one of the hardest times of their lives.”

In addition to being one of only about 10 percent of U.S. hospitals that have ever achieved Magnet recognition, Roswell’s Intensive Care Unit earned the prestigious [Beacon Award for Excellence](#) from AACN, a recognition that underscores the hospital’s commitment to delivering high-quality, patient-centered care.



Looking ahead to the PEF Convention; soliciting comment on federal, state legislative agendas

By **KATE STICKLES**

The Convention Committee made several trips to this year's Convention site in Lake Placid, paving the way for the 47th annual PEF Convention from Oct. 19 to 22, 2025.

With a tentative delegate count of about 700, this year is proving to be the largest Convention in years. The count won't be confirmed until after the results for contested elections are available. Ballots for contested constituencies were mailed April 28 and are due back May 19. Elected delegates will receive information from the Special Events department in July regarding registration, travel, and lodging.

The last time PEF held its Convention in Lake Placid was October 2018.

"We are excited so many members will be participating in PEF's highest decision-making body, this year in the beautiful Lake Placid region," said Convention Committee Chair Darlene Williams. "With federal cuts and increased anti-union attacks, we need all hands on deck this year. Our Special Events team and the Convention Committee have been hard at work making sure everything runs smoothly while we conduct the business of the union."

PEF Vice President Randi DiAntonio said one of the key action items of the Convention is voting on the state and federal legislative agendas, which determine the union's legislative and political objectives, and which are developed by members, regional Political Action Committees, and annual Convention delegates each fall.

Members are encouraged to read through the current state and federal agendas and submit recommended changes for consideration at this year's Convention. Please send your recommendations to Danielle Blue in the Legislative Office at Danielle.Blue@pef.org.



PEF members join thousands to tell administration “Hands Off!”

By **NAJEE WALKER**

Thousands of workers across the country attended “Hands Off!” rallies on April 5 to signal to local leaders and the federal government that they are outraged with cuts to government jobs and services. About 1,300 Hands Off! rallies were held around the United States, Canada and even in some parts of Europe.

Since taking office in January, President Trump and his administration have cut funding from several agencies including the Education Department, Health and Human Services, Social Security Administration and more. Many of these agencies deliver program funding to states, including New York.

In Albany, the rainy and windy weather did not deter roughly 6,000 protestors from showing up and pushing back against potential cuts to the federal government and New York State’s public sector. Albany Mayor Kathy Sheehan, State Senator Patricia Fahy and Assemblymember John McDonald joined more than a dozen PEF members at the Albany rally, held in West Capitol Park outside the Legislature.

Among the PEF attendees was Myron Getman, a research scientist at the Department of Health, who sits on the PEF Executive Board and is the council leader of Division 205.

He expressed concern over the potential loss of federal funds at DOH, which is where New York successfully developed one of the first effective tests to diagnose Covid during the height of the pandemic.

“The weather is terrible, but that didn’t stop us from coming out,” said Getman. “PEF and our fellow unions came out to defend the valuable services we provide to society and fight against the administration’s illegal attacks against labor rights.”

Mickey Dobbin was another Executive Board member on hand as well, representing the State Education Department, including the New York State Museum.

“We cannot just hope that our parent unions filing lawsuits to stop these attacks on essential services we provide to the people of New York will work,” Dobbin said. “We can’t just hope that our leadership can end this. We have to show up and make our voices heard by those in power. Unions have always been, and always will be, one of the strongest places for workers to make their voices heard.”

PEF’s mobilization to “Stop the Cuts” is ongoing. Visit our [campaign page](#) for ways you can get involved.



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New + Existing PEF Members

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Keeping PEF members current on PEF news, emailed to your monthly. Make sure we have your personal email address. PEF will never email at your work address.

<https://www.pef.org/emailme/>



PEF introduces mobile app to share union news

By **KATE STICKLES**

If you have an appetite for information – PEF now has an app for you to get it!

The new [PEF App](#), available on [Android](#) and [iPhone](#), is the place to learn everything you need to know about your union and what it's doing for you.

"Our goal is to use the app to keep members and retirees connected to the union by providing access to timely and critical resources," said President Wayne Spence. "It will be a convenient place to find actionable items like letter-writing campaigns supporting PEF budget and legislative priorities, surveys about the contract or workplace conditions, as well as forms such as Protest of Assignment and other grievances.

"The PEF App will continue to improve, but now you have one central place on your smartphone for all things PEF-related that is

designed exclusively for PEF Members and Retirees," he said. "Using the app, PEF can deliver targeted information based on your Region, Division, or Agency, ensuring you stay informed and engaged."

You can access the app using the same credentials you use on the PEF website or Membership Benefits Program website. If you don't have a login or know your Member Identification Number (MIN), you can fill out this form or call (800) 342-4306 or (518) 785-1900 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. PEF is also developing an online MIN lookup tool, which is expected to launch by summer.

Complete instructions for setting up the app on your device can be found at www.pef.org/app.

STOP *the* CUTS

PEF to Washington: Stop the Cuts!

By **NAJEE WALKER**

As the Trump administration continues to cut jobs and services from the federal government, states are preparing for the likelihood that less money will flow from Washington and what that means for public sector services and jobs.

About \$90 billion of New York's \$252 billion budget last year was funded by federal dollars. Last year, \$56 billion went solely to Medicaid. Now, with potential cuts to Medicaid, other healthcare programs, education and more, the services and jobs that come with that money are at risk as well.

To help combat any cuts, PEF has launched a "Stop the Cuts!" campaign on social media. The campaign features short, personal videos about the critical services delivered by PEF members in New York and the negative impact cutting these services will have. The union is sharing the videos on its social media channels and collecting them on this [page](#).

[Scott Dobe](#) works as a Physical Therapist Supervisor at OPWDD Western New York DDSO. His team makes sure people with disabilities have accessible living spaces.

"If services were cut for my agency, we would have difficulty providing safe access to group homes for a very vulnerable

population who can't live on their own," Dobe said. "And we also serve the community. We help folks live independently."

[George Howard](#) is an Information Technology Specialist at ITS in Queens. He worries that cuts to his agency will mean that all public services will be in jeopardy of being inaccessible due to system failure and errors.

"If we are not funded, basic services will fail," Howard said in his video. "We had an issue this spring, we had a computer failure, and we had to react. We were able to get public services back online in a few hours. I am afraid in the future, if we don't have the funding, those kinds of outages can become more endemic."

Members from the Department of Health, State Education Department, the Office of General Services, and more have shared their stories with PEF. You can add yours by getting in touch with Comms@pef.org or recording a selfie video and tagging the union on [Facebook](#), [X](#), [Instagram](#), or [Bluesky](#).

If you don't want to be "on camera," a phone call to your elected member of the U.S. House of Representatives will get noticed, too. Just dial the House switchboard at (202) 224-3121.



Birth of Haiti was result of a labor struggle

By Kurt Joseph, Co-Chair, PEF Caribbean American Committee

During the month of May, let us remember the contributions of our neighbors in the western hemisphere. On May 18, 1803, Jean Jacques Dessalines, the leader of a successful slave revolt and ruler of Haiti, assisted Catherine Flon (his goddaughter) with the design of Haiti's national flag.

The flag has changed throughout the decades due to political turmoil, but what remains true is that Haiti is a democracy that was built on the backs of a successful slave revolt. Some historians argue it was one of the first successful labor struggles in the western hemisphere.

The Louisiana Purchase was made the same year as the creation of the flag. French leader Napoleon Bonaparte was approached by U.S. President Thomas Jefferson through his cabinet to purchase New Orleans and as a result, Napoleon decided to sell the entire French territory (doubling the square footage of the U.S.) for \$15 million.

Prior to this purchase, on March 12, 1779, France sent soldiers from Haiti to fight in the American Revolution. Gen. Andre Rigaud and his men were dispatched to fight in the Battle of Savannah, Georgia. Haitians fought in the American Revolution against the British before becoming independent.

This month, the PEF Caribbean American Committee invites all members to take time and reflect on the contributions our neighbors made to the founding of our democracy and our nation.



Are you interested in a career with PEF?

The New York State Public Employees Federation (PEF) is a diverse and powerful labor union committed to creating a better working life for its members. PEF staff work in various departments in collaboration with PEF's elected union leadership to serve 50,000 members employed in professional, scientific, and technical titles across the State. Some of PEF's departments include: Communications, Contract Administration, Field Services, Finance, Health & Safety, Legal, Legislative and Organizing. If you believe in workers' rights, justice and equality, then a career in the labor movement may be right for you. To see what opportunities are available at PEF, please visit our [Careers Page](#).

www.pef.org/careers-at-pef



PEF in the News



PEF members speak out against parking price hike at SUNY Stony Brook

Employees at SUNY Stony Brook could soon be facing a parking fee increase from \$16.50 to \$50, a 242 percent increase. Stony Brook employees who work at the University, Hospital and Cancer Center protested the potential hike. PEF Executive Board Member and Statewide Health and Safety chair Amy Lee Pacholk said that PEF members and Stony Brook employees should not have to pay to go to work.

Click [here](#) for the FOX 5 New York report.



PEF member joins chorus of workers raising the alarm on Medicaid funding cuts

Healthcare workers and PEF members gathered at a forum hosted by the New York State AFL-CIO and Capital District Area Labor Federation on April 26 in Albany. U.S. Congressman, who represents Schenectady and Albany County as well as parts of Montgomery, Rensselaer, and Saratoga, was in attendance. Union members and healthcare professionals shared their concerns about the growing threat of government cuts to services, including healthcare and Medicaid. Kim Jensen is a Medical Assistance Specialist for the New York State Department of Health and a PEF Executive Board member. Jensen said that a loss of Medicaid funding makes it more difficult for the State to provide medical care and prevent fraud or abuse of the system.

Click [here](#) to read more from the NYS AFL-CIO's press release.



President Spence quoted in New York State press release and PEF Health and Safety Director attends ceremony honoring Workers' Memorial Day

New York State Governor Kathy Hochul marked [Workers' Memorial Day](#) on April 28 by announcing a social media and awareness campaign to continue the conversation around safety at the workplace.

PEF held a ceremony to remember lives lost and recommit to the cause of worker health and safety at union headquarters. PEF Health and Safety Director Geraldine Stella attended the Department of Labor ceremony in Albany on behalf of the union.

Click [here](#) for the story on WNYT.



Retirees, it's time to mobilize!

By **JIM CARR**

As I write this on April 11, 2025, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution which will devastate public programs! Programs that many of us use or depend on! We are in chaotic times and where we go from here is uncertain. Decades of hard-fought gains are being reversed by the Trump administration. Your political beliefs shouldn't come before the union or your job. Union values should matter, common decency should matter, workers should matter, seniors should matter, regardless of your political affiliation. I can only speak for myself, but I believe in truth, character, integrity and doing the right thing for the right reason. Those are values which are imperative for a prosperous nation — A nation where everyone has the right to a secure retirement and the right to join a union.

Read on for PEF's message to its members about the misinformation which is running rampant over social media and the anti-public employee echo chamber:

"There is a lot of misinformation being spread about the value and importance of the federal programs and services that PEF members administer on behalf of the federal government. Many don't realize that these programs and services were not developed out of thin air – they were authorized and funded by an act of Congress for a reason. If you work in a federally funded program or service, it is critically important that our elected representatives, especially Republican majority U.S. House members, know about the important work you do and the potential negative impact on you and other New Yorkers if the funding for these vital programs and services are summarily and unilaterally frozen or eliminated.

If you are in a program area that is funded through federal support, please take a moment to contact your elected representatives in Washington, D.C. at (202) 224-3121 and make your voice heard! If the line is busy or shut down, a list of the district office phone numbers for every Congressional member from New York can be found at the bottom of [this document](#).

Educate Others About What You Do

The misinformation spreading about the federal programs and services that PEF members administer is a real challenge. Too many New Yorkers and other Americans don't understand that the vast majority of these vital federal programs and services keep Americans out of poverty, help educate children with disabilities, provide unemployment benefits, keep our air and water clean, provide basic food assistance to those in need, or prevent abuse and fraud in earned benefit programs like Medicare and Social Security.

If you work in a federally funded program or service, please use your voice on social media, in community forums, clubs, associations and groups to educate people about what you do, why you do it and what would happen if the service or program you administer was eliminated. Here is a [document](#) that PEF put together outlining ways you can help.

Of vital importance to retirees, Medicaid is also in danger as the House and Senate work on proposals to cut at least \$880 billion from the program to pay for tax cuts for billionaires and corporations. [Read this fact sheet](#) about NYS Medicaid Benefits and call your member of Congress today!



Letter to the Editor

Fond farewell from retiring PEF leader

To the Editor

January 14, 1973 - May 30, 2025: Not including my paper route, this is the duration of my official work life.

First night was at a Rochester Americans hockey game which ended in a tie. Memorable.

I started as a peanut vendor at the Rochester War Memorial, selling bags of peanuts for a quarter. I made three cents per bag and ended up earning \$2,000 that year.

I did all sorts of work, and family always came first. Parents, siblings, friends. Along the way I worked many jobs, mostly non-union. Getting laid off three years in a row prompted me to Google "where to get a job where I won't be laid off." It is the worst feeling having to unwrap Christmas gifts and return them so the family could eat, and we could pay our bills.

New York State popped up as the first response. I told the Executive Board just that and also said that many people along the way gave me an incentive to be a bigger part of PEF.

So many people told me that the State would be a good job and provide a good pension. Pension and healthcare are two benefits that still hold true today.

A very smart person once said the Church is made up of God's people. To that end, I think New York State is made up of union workers. We do nearly everything -- from roadwork to licensing, healthcare management, and so on.

In earlier days many people did not need the union for anything short of annual salary increases and improved benefits. Now we are cognizant of many bad actors looking to alter this dream.

I thank the leadership of PEF for protecting me throughout my career. I tried to follow the "straight and narrow," meaning I would agree to do what I am instructed to do (avoiding insubordination, essentially), and helping others who might have trouble doing what I do to avoid issues.

Of course I had my share of run-ins with people. Members of my organization wondering why I didn't say something when I saw it (only to realize I had said something, and they didn't see it).

I have learned a lot in my life. One of the greatest lessons is that it is best to give back whenever I can. Like buying a weekly breakfast for the striking Hilton hotel workers across from the OSC building, to marching whenever asked to march.

In retirement, I plan to take my wife to the beach whenever she wants. I plan to volunteer at the local hospital in whatever capacity they require. Comfort the sick, the lonely, just sit there if that is what they want.

I am never alone, and I will always be thankful that PEF lifted me up when I was at my lowest.

Many of you might say this is a disorganized mess of a letter, and you are probably correct. No one said all my marbles were in a neat row, or that they were all there. I do have a fairly good memory though.

I do the right thing as often as I can, and I am thrilled to be able to retire.

Best of luck to all of you who follow in my footsteps.

Joe Ugino
Albany

Editor's Note: Joe Ugino, an Information Technology Specialist 2 with the Office of Information Technology Services, served the union throughout his career as an Executive Board member, Steward, and Convention delegate. Joe, thank you for your years of service to New York State and to PEF. We wish you all the best in your retirement!

Your fellow members need your leave donations

The following PEF members have reported a need for leave donations due to the need for medical treatment or recuperation from illness or injury.

Donations are made from annual leave and donors must retain at least 10 days of annual leave after donating. To donate leave, obtain a leave-donation form from your personnel or human resources office and submit it to that office. You may donate leave to employees at both the agency where you work and to those working at other state agencies.

Jolene Bariteau is a rehabilitation specialist 2 at Capital District Psychiatric Center in Albany.

Barbara Bertucio is a curatorial visitor services specialist 1 at the Office of General Services in Albany.

Kevin Bromley is a registered nurse 1 with the Office of People with Developmental Disabilities in Norwood.

Elizabeth Newman Cable is a patient access supervisor at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center in Buffalo.

Rhonda Carroll-Eldridge is a dairy products specialist 1 at the Department of Agriculture and Markets in Steuben County.

Brian Cellery is an information technology specialist 3 at the Office of Information Technology Services in Albany.

Maritza Echevarria is an ICM at Bronx Psychiatric Center in the Bronx.

Kimberly Ernst-Harris is a supervising offender rehabilitation coordinator at the state Department of Corrections and Community Supervision central office in Albany.

Heather Farthing is a registered nurse 2 at Capital District Psychiatric Center in Albany.

Ilianna Fermin is a Social Worker at Bronx Psychiatric Center in the Bronx.

Sally Fontana is social work supervisor 1, LCSW at Mohawk Valley Psychiatric Center in Utica.

Alex Frye is a registered nurse 1 at SUNY Upstate in Syracuse.

Wayne Green is a maintenance supervisor 3 at St. Lawrence Psychiatric Center in Ogdensburg.

Kathleen Hill is a registered nurse 1 at SUNY Upstate in Syracuse.

Ann Krenn is an Offender Rehabilitation Coordinator at Groveland Correctional Facility in Sonyea.

Gerard Mazurkiewicz is a fire protection specialist 1 at the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services in Buffalo.

Lee Moore is an auditor 2 at the Department of Tax and Finance in Syracuse.

Rose Niang is an investigative specialist 1 at the Department of Education in Manhattan.

Danielle Newell-Emory is an investigative specialist 1 at the Office of Cannabis Management in Albany.

Cecilia O'Shea is a legal assistant 2 at the Department of Tax and Finance in Albany.

Rosemary Oduh is an information technology specialist 2 at the Office of Information Technology Services in Albany.

Nicole Welch is an auditor trainee 1 at the Department of Tax and Finance in Syracuse.

Jennifer Wells is a registered nurse 2 at SUNY Upstate in Syracuse.

Jen Wolcott-Dean is a vocational instructor 4 at Wyoming Correctional Facility in Attica.

Jennifer Zullo is a research scientist 2 at the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities in Albany.



The rules for making and receiving leave donations (*such as leave recipients may not have had any disciplinary actions or unsatisfactory performance evaluations within their last three years of state employment*) are set forth on pages 174 and 175 of the [2023-26 PS&T Contract](#). If you, or a PEF member you know, need leave donations because of a medical issue, you may contact *The Communicator* to request publication of that need. Send requests to communicator@pef.org, or call 518-785-1900.



April 28, 2025

In response to last month's workplace violence at Pilgrim Psychiatric Center in Suffolk County, PEF continues to meet with members and inform them of their rights and benefits in the event of workplace violence. PEF VP Darlene Williams and Region 12 Coordinator Corinne Testa were joined by Health & Safety, Field Services and PEF Membership Benefits Program staff.



April 29, 2025

VP Randi DiAntonio joined graduate students at the University of Rochester who have been on strike for more than a week over the university's refusal to allow a union election.



April 28, 2025

PEF Health & Safety Director Geraldine Stella joined Shana Davis, CSEA Capital Region IV President, to represent the unionized workforce at a Workers' Memorial Day Dedication ceremony.



April 18, 2025

PEF President Wayne Spence, Region 10 Coordinator Tamara Martin, Chair of Statewide Women's Committee Michele Rosello, Council Leader Div 213 Leticia Rivera, Chair of Emerging Leaders Vivian Falto Lequerique and Executive Assistant Auslyn Benjamin attended the Lois Gray Legacy Celebration hosted by Cornell ILR in Manhattan.



April 26, 2025

Region 2 members took a moment to honor the sacrifices of union siblings at the Southern Tier Labor Council Workers' Memorial in Corning. Tanya Oliver, council leader at Elmira Correctional Facility, spoke on behalf of PEF.



April 10, 2025

PEF attended our multi-union rally at SUNY Stony Brook, where the message from PEF members in Division 225 was clear: Stop messing around with hospital parking!





Letters to the Editor

Sending letters to the editor is a powerful way for members to get answers to their questions, express their opinions, and contribute to public discourse. They can raise awareness, spark dialogue, and influence public opinion on various issues.

We want to hear from you!

Send your letters to to thecomunicator@pef.org. Please include your name and location. Letters may be published in upcoming issues of *the Communicator*.

