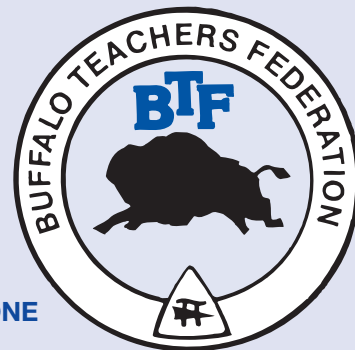


PROVOCATOR

November 2023

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION VOLUME 54/NUMBER 1

DEDICATION
SOLIDARITY
PROFESSIONALISM
PRIDE
SECOND TO NONE



A New Era Has Begun at BTF

For the first time in 42 years, the BTF has a new president in Rich Nigro. Since winning a runoff election in June, Nigro and his Vice President, Melinda MacPherson Sullivan, have tackled many challenges and initiated several changes.

One of the first orders of business was to address several outstanding grievances that had been moved to arbitration long ago. Many of these grievances were moot because they dealt with, for instance, the 2012 or 2013 APPR process. Since a new APPR procedure was negotiated with the District in 2017, the old grievances had no value. Several such arbitrations were withdrawn.

In exchange for dropping these moot grievances, the BTF was able to successfully negotiate settlements on several other matters that had been moved to arbitration. Most of these involved financial compensation to teachers. The actions taken by the BTF leadership represented a win-win situation for both the affected teachers and the District.

At the July meeting of the Executive Committee, President Nigro and Jesse McVerby, a math teacher at Bennett High School, were named and confirmed as trustees to the BTF Supplemental Benefit Fund. The trustees met in August and, at the request of President Nigro, began examining ways to improve benefits for teachers. As a result, improved benefits can be expected in the coming months.

The training of elected building representatives is a high priority of the new administration, and three all-day workshops already have been conducted. The workshops, held August 22, August 23, and September 30, were created by the NYSUT Labor Relations Specialists assigned to the BTF office. The workshop, entitled *Delegate Training 101*, was the first delegate training since 2019, largely due to Covid and the BTF's focus on contract negotiations.

About 75 building representatives participated in the workshops and

there was a great deal of positive feedback from those who attended. (Story and photos on pg. 4)

Another accomplishment was the appointment of chairs of BTF committees. New chairs were confirmed by the Executive Committee at their August meeting. Most of the committees already have met and all will be active throughout the year.

One of the committees that had lain dormant for some time is the Central Grievance Committee (CGC). The CGC is referred to in the contract in Article V C. (2). Chaired by BTF Treasurer Joseph Montante, its task is to meet monthly and perform a meritorious review of grievances before they are advanced to the next level. The procedure is designed to determine whether the best way to resolve an issue is through the grievance process or by engaging in talks with the District.

Those talks are now happening on a monthly basis. The BTF and the District are holding regular Labor/Management meetings. This began in September. At these meetings, both sides have the opportunity to present pressing issues, which are not necessarily grievances. The meetings have been productive, and both sides feel that more can be accomplished if we work together.

Several months ago, the District approached the BTF and inquired about the union entering into a Memorandum of Understanding regarding "Intensive Needs Classes".

The MOU was discussed by the Executive Committee and then referred to the BTF's Special Education Committee. This committee met with District officials and proposed several changes to the MOU. The District accepted all of the BTF's changes.

At its September meeting, the Council of Delegates discussed and debated the merits of the MOU. After many questions, the Council voted to approve it. This represented a win for both sides.

The leadership of the BTF recommended several updates to our

Bylaws. Some of the provisions were outdated and specific to a school year in the past (such as 2005). Other edits involved updating the masculine pronoun used throughout the Bylaws to "he or she" and changing "Chairman" to "Chair". The proposed changes were passed unanimously at the October Council of Delegates meeting.

As you will see throughout this issue of the *Provocator*, things have been very busy at the BTF. There is a positive vibe that many teachers are feeling as evidenced by attendance at events like the Labor Day Parade.

Finally, the BTF Executive Committee approved a motion that was recommended by President Nigro and VP MacPherson-Sullivan. Regular issues of the *Provocator* will not be printed this year but rather, a link to read the publication online will be emailed to all members. This will represent a savings to the BTF, and that money has been earmarked for the purchase of a projector and screen for the purpose of making presentations and giving trainings.

While there are still many problems to address with the District, including violence in our schools, cleanliness of buildings, and teachers not getting paid in a timely fashion for service rendered, we are hopeful that more positive change is coming.



ABOVE: Joining in support of the D'Youville Faculty, VP Melinda MacPherson-Sullivan and President Rich Nigro listen as NYS Senator Tim Kennedy speaks.



I have so much to share with you all as we end the first Marking Period of the 2023-24 school year. First, let me begin by saying thank you for your continued support as Melinda and I transition to our new positions. We appreciate all your calls, letters, visits, and cards of support. It has been such a busy few months with so many changes both in and out of our Porter Avenue address. We also appreciate your patience, as change takes time and constant effort. As we work through each new project, we will keep you informed of what's to come.

Inside the BTF

Those who have visited 271 Porter may have noticed some changes! The entire staff has been working tirelessly to freshen up the look and feel of your union headquarters. Additionally, we have all been putting in extra effort to begin the slow process of organizing, updating, and modernizing some of the systems we use. Look for the new BTF app that we will begin piloting with the Executive Committee and Council of Delegates members this month. We hope to roll it out to the membership at large next month. We think you will like the app as it will increase communication among members, provide you with information about upcoming events, offer file and media sharing, provide a digital copy of your contract, and more!

In the Schools

Since September, Melinda and I have been visiting schools with an emphasis on seeing firsthand the struggles teachers have had getting students to the buses. We understand your frustrations, and we will continue to share your experiences with the district to identify schools that regularly experience busing issues. We will also continue conducting school visits in the coming months. And, once the BTF app is fully up and running, we will use it to let you know when we will be at your school!

Payroll Issues

Teachers work hard every day. Your job is physically and mentally exhausting. We know you don't "do it for the money," which is why it's doubly upsetting when your pay isn't correct. You work a job; you should get paid correctly for that job. People rely on their paychecks to live. Please know we have had several meetings with the Superintendent and support staff on this issue. I commend your patience and dedication in spite of this issue. Payroll is now piloting a replacement for the current way they process Extra Activity Pay, and the CFO has committed to providing us with regular updates. We have been in regular communication with him and are paying close attention to this matter. Changes are coming.

School Violence and the Media

Everyone has a camera these days. We know that school violence is a problem, not just in Buffalo, but all over the country. Students are quick to record fights and share them on social media for "likes," and then the news gets ahold of these videos and creates a sensationalized video clip for ratings. Many of you have contacted us with reports of violence in your schools this year. The data online is clear – school violence has increased nationwide since the pandemic! Our stance on this has not changed – we demand ZERO tolerance! We continue to meet with the district and building leadership to work toward consistent and appropriate consequences for students who act out violently. Always remember to document any instance immediately, and then call the BTF directly. So far, the district seems to be genuine about their desire to support teachers on this issue. Please know, this is not just a Buffalo problem. Rather, it's a nationwide epidemic. Thank you to everyone who completed the survey on assaults against teachers. In the coming weeks, look for another survey addressing student-on-student violence. We will bring your voices and your stories directly to the Superintendent.

Change Takes Time

Yes, there are problems within our district, but they didn't happen overnight, and we can't change them overnight. It is most effective to address problems and conflicts at their root and with the people who have the ability to correct them. When teachers aren't receiving pay for work they've done, we speak with Payroll. When teachers have building-related concerns, your elected representatives address them at Building Committee meetings. When issues with healthcare arise, we speak with Benefits,

and so on. Some of the work we've been doing in our new roles include:

- Tackling non-grievance related concerns with Human Resources and General Counsel at monthly Labor/Management meetings.
- Strategizing with our NYSUT Attorney and Labor Relations Specialists to resolve the voluminous grievances that have accumulated over the years.
- Meeting with teachers to discuss building issues, possible solutions, and plan how to steer their Building Committee conversations.
- Attending meetings with building and district administrators to establish a presence and create working relationships that will lend themselves to more collaborative problem-solving.
- Communicating with the Benefits Office, District officials, and other BPS bargaining units to tackle Highmark issues.

As you can see, no one person has "the answer." There is no panacea. But conducting business the same way it's been done will not yield different results. However, I can report that since Melinda and I began in July, change has begun. We are committed to it.

Pride

Finally, let me end by saying that it makes me incredibly proud to represent you all. I see teachers inspiring our students to be their best. Although it may feel like a thankless job, you truly make a difference every day. Every time you create an exhausting but interesting and engaging lesson, every time you make the day fun for the kids, every time you take a minute out of your busy day to do a little extra, every time you stay after school to work with your students, and the list goes on. Thank you for your work ethic, thank you for your dedication, and thank you for continuing to stand as one!

PROVOCATOR

BTF Provocator Staff

Joseph Montante, *managing editor, photo editor*
Chris Salamone, *editor*

The **Provocator** is the official publication of the Buffalo Teachers Federation. It will be published five times during the 2023-2024 school year as a service to BTF members and interested parties in the community. Subscription price is included in BTF dues.

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Letters to the Editor

BTF Donates to Anti-Racism Program

Thank you for your generous gift in the amount of \$750 to the SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence for a Silver sponsorship of our April 23rd program "Moving BEYOND White Fragility." Your donation was received on 2/21/2023.

We are grateful that you have chosen to support our program with Nanette Massey. Nanette is a local author, activist, and educator. Her first book is a primer on how to navigate conversations about race with confidence, humor, humility from nothing but an authentic place of desiring to do your part for a better world.

With your gift you recognize the importance of working to eliminate violence and join with many other supporters of the SSJ Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence to make this happen.

Thank you again for your generosity!

Warm regards,

Vivian Waltz, director

Donation Made to Wings of Compassion

Thank you for your donation of \$500 to Wings of Compassion Ministries, Inc. Bishop Rev. Angel L. Gauthier
CEO & Founder
Elsie Guash-Rosario
Secretary/Treasurer

BTF Donates To Teacher's Foundation

Thank you for your continued support and generosity to the Alex Pichette Memorial Foundation (APMF). The proceeds from our event are donated to the Kids Escaping Drugs Organization to help fund their Face 2 Face Outreach programs. We were able to donate an additional \$7,000, which brings our seven-year total to \$70,000! We couldn't have done it without you.

Best Regards,

Mary Kobee, (School #97)

APMF 2023

Read to Succeed Thanks BTF for \$500

On behalf of the Board and staff of Read to Succeed Buffalo, thank you for the generous donation of \$500 received on January 19, 2023.

Read to Succeed Buffalo believes through exposure to high quality, intentional, literacy instruction and literacy-rich environments from birth through 3rd grade, all children, regardless of economic or social challenges, can achieve success. However, children from low-income families do not have the same access to these environments – a condition Read to Succeed Buffalo is committed to change.

Your financial support helps Read to Succeed Buffalo achieve its mission of preparing Buffalo's most at-risk infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school age students for success in school and in life through implementation of its evidence-based literacy coaching programs in child care, Head Start and early elementary grades.

Again, on behalf of the teachers, children and families we serve, thank you.

Very truly yours,

Anne Ryan

Executive Director

BTF Supports NFJC Healing Program

On behalf of the Awards Program co-chairs, the National Federation for Just Communities (NFJC) Board and myself, I would like to thank you for your generous support of the 2023 Community Healing Awards. Not only were we able to recognize our honorees for their contributions to Western New York at our networking event, but the awards program was televised on WGRZ-TV and Buffalo Teachers Federation was included as a partner and supporter.

Having conversations, sharing stories, bridging divides and building

BTF Donates \$1,000 to Shea's Arts Center

Thank you!

We are deeply grateful you are continuing your support for Shea's with your gift of \$1,000 received on May 11, 2023.

Because of generous donors like you, the impact of Shea's Performing Arts Center is felt all throughout Western New York and beyond.

In addition to supporting programs in the Western New York Community, your philanthropy allows us to continue ongoing restoration. During the 2021-22 season you may not have noticed the damage to part of the ceiling in the petite lobby. Your support helps complete those types of repairs as well as improving the patron experience for all Shea's ticket holders.

Ticket sales are not enough to fund 100% of these restoration and renovation projects, provide exceptional programming, and be a community gathering space to celebrate Theatre and the Arts. Passionate people like you who understand the importance of providing unforgettable experiences each year while protecting and preserving these treasured theatres are who help provide the balance.

We owe you an enormous debt of gratitude for your role in making Shea's what it is today. You're an important part of this Theatre family and your continued commitment shows.

Thank you again-we look forward to seeing you real soon in one of our three theatres!

Best Regards,

John B. Schaller

Vice President, Development

strong communities is the core mission of the NFJC of WNY, Inc. We work daily to bring people together and to push back against racism, bias and discrimination. Founded in 1951, the NFJC consistently searches for new ways to have conversations that build relationships and community. Thank you for your support in helping us fulfill our mission.

Again, I thank you for honoring our Community Healers and for your support.

Sincerely,

Rene Petties-Jones

President

Seventy-Five Delegates Receive Training

For the first time since 2019, the BTF was able to hold workshops to train building delegates.

The all-day trainings were offered on August 22, August 23, and September 30 at the NYSUT Regional Office in Williamsville.

The workshop, titled *Delegate Training 101*, was attended by both new and experienced building leaders and Executive Committee members.

The workshops are designed to empower delegates to take an active role in their buildings. Delegates, who represent their building before the Federation, make sure the contract is enforced and that teachers and administrators are on the same page in terms of school operations.

At the urging of President Rich

Nigro, the training was planned by the LRS staff in conjunction with the union officers.

The training sessions had several parts. In the morning, following conversation and coffee, the first component focused on the role of delegates. In it, attendees learned exactly what their function should be in the building. Building Committee, SBMT, BTF Constitution and Bylaws, and advocacy for teachers were all topics of the presentation.

After a short break, the next component was a workshop titled *Grievance or Gripe*. In it, union leaders learned what constitutes a grievance. Often, there are issues that are not violations of the contract or of Board policy and therefore should not be

handled through the grievance process. However, that does not diminish their importance and other strategies to solve such issues were discussed.

After lunch, the delegates were presented with case studies. Some were hypothetical situations and others were based on real occurrences.

After breaking into groups to discuss these scenarios, the delegates talked about the best way to handle each situation.

Overall, the feedback received was very positive. Not only will this training be repeated in the future, but other workshops are being planned.

In late November, a new workshop titled *When the Principal Calls* will be offered and conducted at the BTF office.



1. Delegates pose for a group photo at the August 22nd training.

2. Delegates pose for a group photo at the August 23rd training.

3. Delegates pose for a group photo at the September 30th training.

4. After morning coffee, workshop attendees learn about the role of being a delegate.

5. Tasked with deciding the best way to proceed, workshop participants listen to a scenario during Grievance or Gripe.

Great Turnout for Labor Day Parade

Approximately 40 teachers and family members marched with the Buffalo Teachers Federation on September 4 at the Labor Day Parade. The annual event, traditionally one of the largest parades of the year, is sponsored by the WNY Area Labor Federation and all unions are invited to participate.

Even though the mercury reached 85 degrees, BTF had its best turnout ever. The walkers handed out candy to the children along the route and followed a BTF-decorated vehicle driven by Maria Nigro, a Social Studies teacher at McKinley High School and wife of BTF President Rich Nigro.

The parade started at the intersection of McKinley Parkway and Dorrance Avenue and ended in Cazenovia Park. Lunch was provided for those who participated and, despite the heat, parade goers were happy to join in solidarity with other unions.

BTF is preparing for a much larger turnout next year. The Public Relations and Social Committees are planning to work together to make the experience better for BTF members and to build solidarity.



1. Before the start of the parade, VP Melinda MacPherson-Sullivan assists with the BTF banner.

2. BTF participants pose for a photo before lining up to march.

3. Standing beside the BTF-adorned Jeep, members of the Executive Committee get ready to brave the heat.

4. Under the shade of a tent at Cazenovia Park, parade participants enjoy a tasty lunch.



BTF Supports AAUP in Fight for Fair Contract

When the BTF was fighting for a fair contract, it was encouraging to have supporters at our rallies.

Remembering that feeling of solidarity, the BTF officers attended a rally October 2 at D'Youville University on Porter Avenue.

BTF President Rich Nigro, Vice President Melinda MacPherson-Sullivan, and Treasurer Joseph Montante attended the rally to support the school's local of the American Association of University Professors. The educators have been without a contract for more than a year.

"We understand exactly what you are going through", BTF President Nigro told the crowd. "As Buffalo teachers, we've been there. We once went 12 years without a contract and the last contract expired almost four years before we settled it. We want you to know that your BTF brothers and sisters are with you in this fight and if called on, we will support you in any way possible."

Typically paid less than public school teachers, their members have been hit hard by inflation. While the professors and instructors have maintained their dedication, not being properly compensated for the work they are doing has been a challenge for them and they are rightly upset.

Standing with the BTF were leaders from other organizations, including the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT), United University Professions (UUP), and United Auto Workers (UAW). State Senator Tim Kennedy was also in attendance.

At publication, the D'Youville faculty was still without a contract.



1. Speaking on behalf of BTF's 3,800 members, President Rich Nigro tells the D'Youville Faculty that we stand with them.

2. With picket signs in hand, AAUP members demand a fair contract now.



Welcome New Members

The following 215 teachers have joined the Buffalo Teachers Federation this school year. Welcome to the union!

Abigail Adams	James O. Doutney	Lauren A. Kotas	Michelle C. Pulinski
Cailin M. Aiken	Brianne Dueringer	Matthew A. Kreib	Daniel E. Rabb
Rehana Akhter	Arianna L. Dugan	Kati J. Krol	Lindsay B. Ragusa
Rakia Akter	Kathleen P. Dunne	Emily E. Kwiatkowski	Anna K. Rauvenpoor
Melissa Albrechcinski	Daniela Edinger	Lindsay E. Lampert	LaToya Reid
Alia K. Alfadhli	Sawsan Esaleh	Gregory M. Landries	Jeffery M. Reinhardt
Lizarelis Ali	Ryan Erickson	Justin Larke	Andrew J. Relosky
Courtney E. Allen	Ashley E. Eschler	Lindsay A. LaVigne-Rapp	Shelaine Ress
Michele E. Allen	Sofia R. Fanizzi	Danilo Lawvere	Craig Reynolds
Anna C. Allman	Susan E. Faulkner	Matthew J. Lebeda	Caitlin E. Ringler
Robert E. Aruvali	Laurie L. Ferraro	Megan E. Lewis	Tiffany Rios
Mary C. Banks	Alexa B. Fiden	Bridget M. Lockwood	Emily Roche
Stephanie R. Barlow	Colleen E. Finn	Diana M. Long	Jessica N. Robinson
Isabelle C. Bateson-Smith	Katelin E. Fitzpatrick	Simona M. Lukasik	Azalea Rosario-Jackson
Rachael A. Becker	Simon F. Fletcher	Abigail MacWilliams	Anya Roy
Denise M. Bement	Holly E. Follett	Tia M. Mangel	Maureen C. Rudzinski
Mary E. Benchley	Thomas W. Ford	Cara R. Marrano	Jennifer Sadowski
Minser Bernys	Eileen Freeman	Katrina L. Martin	Joshua F. Sanders
Robert P. Biddlecombe	Jonathan P. Garra	Andrea Maslowski	Jamie Schechter
Samantha G. Bizub	Kristine Gemza	Weatherbee	Suzanne Schindler
Natalie Bojanowski	Gabriella N. Green	Hannah Mazzuto	Kelsey L. Sciandra
Carolyn R. Borowski	Jennifer J. Greene	Rebecca McDaniel	Jennifer Scibetta
Alicia Bradberry	Matthew J. Griffith	Mollie A. McDonough	Tara M. Scime
Lisa M. Brandys	Laura L. Grybel	Saw Meh	Meagan E. Shanahan
Joseph P. Brecker	Margaret Gugino	Linda Mendola	Megan E. Shea
Brianna Brown	Amber Q. Hall	Amanda Mick-Peterson	Tabitha A. Sieminski
Meghann Brown	Meghan J. Hall	JulieAnne Miller	Lenore G. Simon
Christopher Capitumino	Terasa J. Hall	Melissa W. Minear	James S. Slaiman
Colette M. Carse	Tamara A. Hamilton	Melissa R. Misnik	Michael Smith
Paul N. Castricone	Megan M. Hamm	Courtney L. Mogavero	Courtney D. Sorrento
Lauren C. Caulfield	Jennifer J. Hand	Bridget K. Mulcaire	Rachel L. Spink
Amanda J. Chapman	Pamela A. Harig	Carrie V. Murray	Emily L. Stavange
Hailey P. Clark	Sarah A. Hart	David A. Myers	Benjamin S. Steele
Nicole T. Clark	Lilian A. Haskill	Jennifer J. Naab	Meghan L. Stella
Erin K. Clay	Paul J. Hattler	Johnathen T. Nelson	Michaela Strobel
Serena E. Clay	Alexa Hefner	Anna V. Nicolia	Heather Syracuse
Charles P. Coleman	Nadia M. Heredia	Krista L. Noonan	Briggs Taylor
Jenna Colerick	Colleen B. Herman	Erin Nyhart	Jasmine E. Thorington
Emily K. Comito	Valerie Hoffman	Kathryn P. O'Leary	Christina M. Toli
Clara Conrad	Brandon M. Hoth	Grace K. O'Neil	Chelsea W. Trulin
Megan M. Cooper	Meghan A. Houston	Alexis S. Orr	Renee M. Tunney
Richard A. Cowans	Jessica A. Hulshoff	Marlene M. Ortiz	Kathryn F. Tyczynski
Laura Crump	Laura A. Iseminger	Jennifer L. Pace	Bruce T. Wallace
Chantal Cunningham	Emily A. Ittes	Dominic Pereira Ballachino	Monica K. Waraich
Eric W. Curtis	Briana L. Iusi	Ivana I. Perez	Matthew K. Weinberg
Maureen A. Daly	Joseph A. Jacobs	Pamela Perry	Anita M. Weppner
Robin M. Damiano	Christina L. Jedd	Allyson M. Pfeil	Corliss R. White
Kevin M. Deans	Jeremy J. Jindra	Melissa Pierce	Lori A. Wilk
Ashley DeGraff-Cenzi	Kimberly Johnson	Philip L. Pinzone	Caroline Williams
Alisha Daniels	Janelle A. Keller	Kristen M. Plec	Mary Wolf
Victoria J. Deth	Rachel C. Kerr	Lucas J. Potter	April Wright
Daniel A. DiPirro	Jason P. Kilonsky	Susan Prise	Quinn Wu
Theresa Dixon	Kimberly Y. King-Glover	Adam T. Pruchnowski	Amber M. Zepper
Katherine M. Domis	Amanda B. Klee	GianCarlo N. Pryce	Leigh M. Zimmerman

Save the Date

November 17

BTF Social
3-6 PM
Resurgence Brewing Co.,
55 Chicago St., Buffalo

November 23 & 24

Thanksgiving Recess

November 28

Delegate Training
BTF Office, 271 Porter Ave.

December 21

Council of Delegates meeting
7 PM
Grapevine Banquets
333 Dick Road, Depew

December 25-29

Winter Recess

Deceased Teachers Remembered

The Buffalo Teachers Federation remembers the following active and retired members who have recently passed away. Some also later served as administrators.

Nancy Acara
Dr. Robert R. Agthe
Marion M. Anderson
Artis Baskin
Karen Ann Benson
Albert P. Boettcher
Donald S. Brusky
Lacey Buscaglia
Patricia Ann Butcher
Joseph A. Carnevale
Douglas Carstens
Jo Ann B. Casel
Linda J. Christopher
Joseph J. Ciminelli
Carol A. Colucci
Richard Degnan
Mary Grace Demarse
Anna C. Devaney
Louise Harrison-White
John Williams, Jr.
Margaret L. Faircloth
Barbara Fechter

Barbara Fildes
Marilyn Foote-Kragbe
Margaret A. Forrester
Scott W. Friedman
Karen G. Genrich
Joseph C. Girard
Donna A. Gubala
Sandra M. Hall
Margaret Heiss
Elza Hyrick
Ronald P. Jakubowski
Walter H. Kemp, Jr.
Frank J. Knab, Jr.
Leon J. Laffler
Teresa A. Leatherbarrow
Richard M. Leggio
David M. Leibelshon
Russell C. Link
Jean McCracken
Karen Mercurio
Kathleen M. Mergenhagen
Maureen H. Mitskoff

Judith P. Morrissey
Eirin T. Muentner
Carol J. Northup
Wallace C. Odden
Elizabeth A. Panus
Rosemarie L. Peritore
Bela Petho
Stephen J. Poliachik
Annette M. Rosenberg
Peter P. Schifferli
Margaret L. Schneeberger
Jerome Schweitzer
Deborah A. Smith
Joan A. Smith
Mary Sharon Strait
Reba Thomas
Paul N. Valerio
Lucien P. Visone
Sister Nancy Walsh
Rita H. Wells
Phil Fronckowiak

If you know of a teacher who has recently passed, please send their name to Sumhauer@btfny.org.

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Joe is the Husband of BTF member Barbara Polino Frandina



Joe Frandina
Optician

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With our
Optometrist!

Did You Know...

That the principal of each school shall meet at least once a month with the Federation Building Committee to discuss school operations and the implementation of the Contract? The fact that the language says “school operations” means that a principal should not be telling teachers that if something is not in the Contract, it cannot be discussed.

This important provision can be found in Article VI D. of the collective bargaining agreement between the BTF and the District.

PROVOCATOR

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Eldridge Named Teacher Center Director



ABOVE: Molly Eldridge is looking forward to the challenges of running the BTRC.

Molly Eldridge, co-director of the Buffalo Teacher Resource Center (BTRC), has been appointed director by the Teacher Center Policy Board.

Molly replaces Melinda MacPherson-Sullivan who resigned after being elected Vice President of the Buffalo Teachers Federation.

Molly, a former Social Studies teacher, was appointed co-director in early June when the Policy Board attempted to return the Teacher Center to a co-director system. However, budget cuts eliminated the position at the same time MacPherson-Sullivan was leaving for her new position.

Eldridge said she spent the summer training for the new position under the direction of MacPherson-Sullivan.

Eldridge, a Buffalo Public School teacher since 2001, previously taught Social Studies at the International School #45, West Hertel Academy #94, Newcomer Academy, and Lafayette High School.

For the last two years, Eldridge was an Instructional Technology Coach at Leonardo daVinci High School.

Eldridge also worked as facilitator at the BTRC for five years and has taught numerous classes at the Center.

While teaching at the Newcomer Academy, Eldridge was accepted into the prestigious Fulbright Teachers for Global Classrooms program.

Only 76 teachers nationwide were selected for the program which included an online class and travel abroad in the summer of 2019 as well

as completing a capstone project on global education.

At the time of the award, Eldridge said she applied to the program to “create a culturally responsive classroom”.

She said she decided to leave the classroom for the Teacher Center because “I believe that teacher centers are integral to teacher retention”.

Eldridge explained, “I recognize that professional growth is integral to teachers’ work and the BTRC provides professional learning for pre-service teachers, new teachers, and veteran teachers. The Center also promotes communities of learners and encourages teacher leadership roles.”

Eldridge said she plans to find ways to bring more teachers to the BTRC.

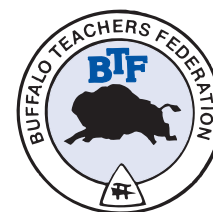
“I look forward to offering more ways to bring teachers into the Center, including an upcoming seminal program.”

Eldridge is a graduate of SUNY Geneseo, where she earned her undergraduate degree, Buffalo State College, where she did her graduate studies, and Fredonia State College for certification in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages, (TESOL).

A native of the Buffalo area, both of Eldridge’s parents were Buffalo Public School teachers and she always wanted to follow in their footsteps. “I never wanted to work anywhere else”, she said.

Eldridge is married and the mother of two daughters and a dog. Her immediate plans, she said, are to spend “a lot of time at the Teacher Center and become proficient on 3D printers”.

She also plans on visiting Dollywood as much as she can.



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