

PROVOCATOR

May 2017

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DEDICATION
SOLIDARITY
PROFESSIONALISM
PRIDE
SECOND TO NONE



*Are you ready?
A new election process!*

*Cost effective
and efficient*

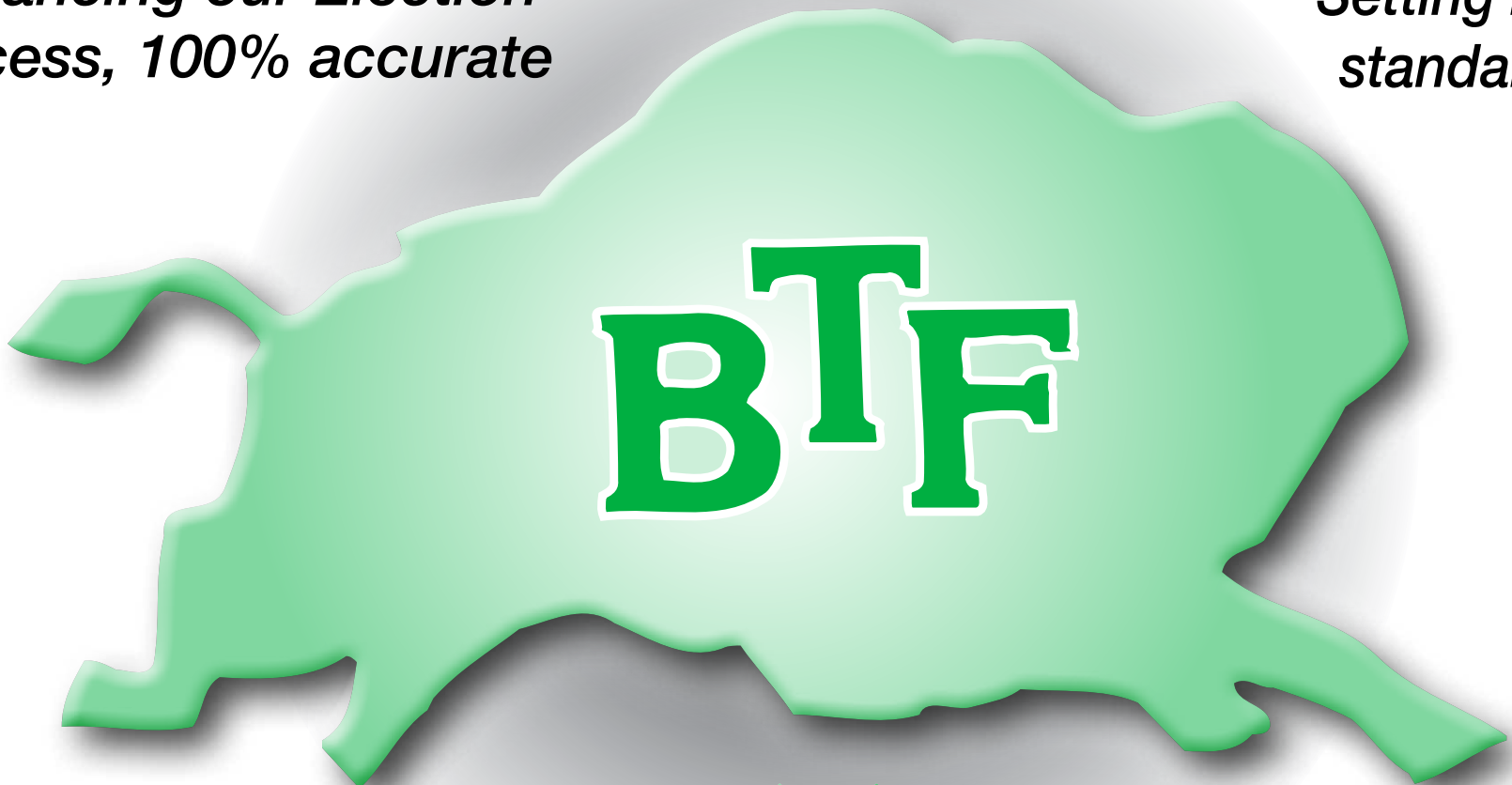
*Online voting,
No Paper Ballots.*

*Earth friendly, eliminating
paper, printing, and postage*

*Accurate,
Private, Verifiable*

*Enhancing our Election
process, 100% accurate*

*Setting new
standards*



VOTE!

*Saving countless
hours of labor*

*Email invitation beginning
May 8, 2017*

*“Going Green”
Save-a-Tree*

*21st century
technology*

*Secure, proven,
streamlined*

*Secure Online
Elections*

*Convenient,
easy, fun*

*Confidentiality,
Vote in your PJ's*

Blaze a New Trail

President/Vice President Candidates



1. Philip Rumore *President*

It is truly an honor to serve and to battle alongside the finest and most dedicated teachers anywhere.

You have and will always hear me say, “You are the very best”.

Negotiations, APPR, Receivership, School Funding, insane and detrimental national, state and local edicts from people who have not spent a day as a teacher in a classroom are but a few of the battles we have and must continue to fight – together.

Together we have negotiated a three-year contract that:

- raises the MS + 30 maximum from \$77,666 to \$96,389;
- eliminates 2-year hold steps at 15, 17, 19, 21; teachers are no longer held at these steps for 2 years – now 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22;
- rejected 15% healthcare payment for a fixed dollar amount.
- provided a substantial SBF increase that will enable a significant increase in dental and optical benefits.

Yes, there were some trade-offs; however, I hope you will agree that they were eclipsed by our gains. The battles ahead:

- Negotiations – They begin January 2019.
- APPR – Continuing the battle to remove student test scores from the APPR.

- APPR – Putting the finishing touches on the elimination of SLO’s. While many Buffalo teachers are now exempt, we can’t stop until we are all exempt.
- Receivership – Ending the labeling of under-funded schools as “Failing” based upon student test scores. Let’s start labeling New York State as failing for underfunding our schools. The Buffalo Public Schools are owed over \$1,000,000,000 in Foundation Aid.
- Over-sized classes; the lack of school counselors, attendance teachers, social workers, psychologists, ENL teachers, etc.
- Insufficient voc/tech programs, art, music, and physical ed.
- And, of course, “President Trump, Betsy DeVos, Governor Cuomo, et al.

Yes, we have challenges ahead; however, as always, we will meet them head-on and we will not stop until they are overcome.

As always I, as are you, am ready for the battles. I am just as driven as I was on the day you first elected me to be your President – for which, I remain honored.

Once again, I say “Bring them on!”

Phil Rumore



1. Rebecca Pordum *Vice President*

As a twenty-five year Buffalo Teachers Federation member, I am seeking your support to serve as your Vice-President. I believe that experience is critical and I have held many positions through out my public school career.

It has been my privilege to serve as both the Treasurer and as a presidential assistant for the Buffalo Teachers Federation over the past several years. I have been able to witness first hand that Buffalo Public School teachers are dedicated, caring, hardworking and innovative. Although the challenges you face are sometimes overwhelming and challenging, you are unwavering in your commitment to all the children attending our Buffalo Public Schools.

As your treasurer I have worked diligently to maintain a sound, fiscally stable organization. Although there has not been a BTF dues increase in the last twelve years, our recent independent audit affirms the stability of our Union. As the treasurer, I am also responsible for the Extended Pay Program. Nearly two thousand teachers participate in this program allowing them to deduct monies from their paycheck and have it dispersed during the summer months.

As a presidential assistant I am involved full time in many aspects of our

Union. As a member of the BTF negotiations team I worked with the rest of the team to negotiate a contract that our teachers deserve. There were many decisions during the process that were made to reward teachers for their dedication and experience as well as enhance the quality of education our students receive.

I also served on the APPR negotiations team. Although it was a very lengthy process, the agreement that was reached contains many provisions that enable teachers to be evaluated as fairly as possible under the law.

As a BTF officer I am knowledgeable of National, State and Local educational policies. I attend many conferences and participate in and organize leadership opportunities provided by the BTF such as The Delegate Workshop and attend Leadership Institutes provided by NYSUT. Unions are at a crucial crossroad and it is my core belief that we need to be appropriately informed in order to protect our rights as union brothers and sisters.

Finally, as the former Buffalo Teacher Center Director I know that the future of our Union will depend on educating our newest members of the importance of becoming active members. Please support Philip Rumore for President and Becky Pordum for Vice President.

Secretary & Treasurer Candidates



2. Melinda MacPherson Sullivan *Secretary*

When I started teaching in Buffalo in 1990, I at times felt overwhelmed, as many of our new teachers do. A veteran teacher gave me some sage advice. When in doubt, call the Union! That motto has helped me through many situations. In the BTF, I have become friends with people who were not afraid to speak to the injustices that threaten our profession and the larger world in which our students live. I found camaraderie in people who were always willing to roll their sleeves up and fight. We have suffered defeats. But in our union lies our essential strength. The BTF will always remain a strong voice for those with no voice.

I am running for Secretary because I am committed to giving back to the BTF what it has given me over the years: Friendship with my peers, purpose beyond my classroom and dedication to my profession and all that entails.

Thank you for your vote!

3. Joseph Montante *Treasurer*

The financial health of a union like the BTF is essential to its survival. If the Federation’s finances were not in order or if expenses exceeded income, we would not be able to perform the services our members need and deserve. Fortunately, the BTF has had excellent treasurers in the past and a system of checks and balances already exists. As our next treasurer, I promise to maintain our long history of transparency. After serving for nine years on the BTF’s Budget and Finance Committee, I am very qualified for this position. Furthermore, I was proud to be a part of the team that brought us a long-overdue contract. Outside of the BTF, I have experience serving as treasurer of a not-for-profit group in WNY. Accounting for funds always has been my forte. As the yearbook advisor at Olmsted High School for five years, I took a publication which had no reserves and not only turned it into an award-winning book, but one with several thousand dollars in much-needed funds. This union is important to me and I am asking for your vote as BTF treasurer. Trust in my record of experience, integrity, and accountability.

Pre K - 6 (6 to be Elected) Executive Committee Candidates



4. Sophia Howard-Johnson

The start of the fall school year was a very tense, yet successful time for BTF membership. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to serve on the negotiations team to help end the disgracefulness of a 12 year battle of working HARD without a decent and well-deserved contract! I helped organized and spoke to fellow colleagues to rally together at City Hall. I was able to design and create our rally button, "I Walked! We're United! We're Strong!"

I teach Pre-k at School #61, with 24 years of teaching experience. I have served many years as Delegate Chairperson, SBMT and Building Committee. I presently serve you as a Sick Bank Trustee, an Executive Committee member, and both Negotiations and Action teams. I am the Co-chairperson of the Ethnic Minority Involvement Committee. You can count on me to be there physically to support marches and to speak at rallies against any injustices impacting us, our students and the community. I am not afraid to vocalize and express my fellow colleagues concerns.

I give you my word that I will continue to Serve, Engage, Mobilize and help Lead our Union into the future! Thank you for believing and having confidence in my abilities to represent you.

5. Janine Schuster

I am approaching my 30th year as a teacher with 16 years in BPS, mostly at B.E.S.T. #6, at the third grade and kindergarten levels. I've been a delegate and building committee member in the past and am currently the delegate chair of my building.

The placement of B.E.S.T. #6 on the first receivership list back in 2014 spurred me to become an entry level activist for public education. I work to uphold a developmentally appropriate curriculum at the kindergarten level, which includes play as an essential element of learning. I am a member of a Refuse Receivership Committee, the Buffalo Parent Teacher Organization, NYS Allies for Public Education, among others, and try my hardest to stay on top of current educational events.

With BTF contract negotiations behind us, we must look forward to strengthening our sense of community and uphold the provisions of our contract. Every single day we advocate for our students. Let's advocate for each other at all levels. I would like your support to become an advocate for you as a member of the Executive Committee (PK-6).



6. Rachel Binda-Lis

As a first grade teacher at Roosevelt #65, I currently represent my colleagues as a building committee member. Prior to being elected to the Executive Committee, I had served as the building delegate chair. For the past 8 years, I have been privileged to represent PreK-6 teachers. 7 of those years I have been the co-chair of the Public Relations committee as well. Proudly, I represent the Buffalo Teachers at both State and National Conventions; as a voting delegate.

My commitment to teachers remains the same. I will represent YOU to the best of my abilities, and work toward amicable relations between the board and the teachers; which will strengthen appropriate and positive morale toward teachers... both current and retired.

I promise to continue to help build a community among the shareholders in the Buffalo Schools. I was elected to the Executive Committee (PreK-6 position) 8 years ago. I thank you for allowing me to work in this capacity. My purpose is to continue to build the bridge between the Board, the teachers, the community, parents, and our schools. I remain excited, and look forward to the possibility of serving YOU in the next term! Thank you for your consideration.



7. Ruyvette Townsend

I am asking for your vote so that I can continue to perform the job in the position of "PreK - 6 representative" on the Buffalo Teacher Federation Executive Committee. During my terms as an at-large and PreK-6 member, I have worked diligently with my colleagues on the executive committee to fight against the injustice brought on by those who do not promote the educational standards that we believe in. I look forward to

continuing to show my commitment by working towards completing the current issues that we face in and outside the classroom. I still believe that these standards will provide a safe, positive, and creative environment conducive to learning for every student. I thank you for your help, allowing me to represent your concerns, regarding the educational environment that we work in.

Thank you again.



8. Chris Stephens

I am honored to be nominated for re-election for Executive Committee PK-6. Being a representative of the BTF and all its members is a duty that I am very passionate about. **My role as an executive Committee member is to be knowledgeable, firm, and most importantly impartial when representing all of my union brothers and sisters.** It is my duty to uphold the American Democratic traditions by protecting the rights of every BTF member.

Having a strong union with the **best contract, benefits, working conditions, and salary** is of the utmost importance to me. Buffalo teachers are the hardest working teachers in the country, and **ALL BTF MEMBERS** should not settle for anything but the **BEST!**

I currently teach grade 6 math at Waterfront Elementary, and have been teaching in the BPS for the past **seventeen** years. I am very passionate about my profession, always striving to be the best at everything I do. **I am a family man vested in the Buffalo School District.**

Please allow me to continue to be your voice! If you vote for me for the Executive Committee PK-6, it will be **my mission to represent all Buffalo Teachers' interests.**

9. Jennifer Panzica

My name is Jennifer Panzica and I am a second grade teacher at Roosevelt ECC School 65. I have been teaching for 25 years, twenty one of those in the city. I began my career teaching at the Native American Magnet School 19, and from there I came to Roosevelt ECC #65.

I have served as a member of the Building Committee, Building Alternate, and currently as Building Delegate. I have attended several BTF workshops, learning more about the contract and our rights as BTF members.

I have chosen to run for the Executive Committee so I can be more involved in the everyday doings of our union. If elected, I will listen to the concerns my fellow BTF members have and be their voice. I will ensure that the people I am representing understand the issues we face as a union. I will make myself available for conversations to clarify the complex problems we must navigate together.



10. Trisha Rosokoff

As a current member of the Executive Committee, I have had the honor to fight and advocate for all of our members and students. I have been an Elementary Teacher in our district for 19 years. I currently teach 1st grade at International School #45. I was a building delegate there for over a decade. I also taught Kindergarten at ECC #78.

I am a Co-Chairperson for the BTF Membership Committee, a member of the Action Committee, Community Engagement Committee, and the District's Stakeholders Committee. I have attended numerous BTF Delegate workshops.

I serve as a NYSUT Delegate and have participated in many NYSUT RA's, and winter/summer leadership conferences. I am a graduate of the Wellstone Action Grassroots Organizer Training in Albany. I worked diligently on the Buffalo Believe Campaign, and the BTF/NYSUT/NEA Buffalo Students Deserve Week of Action, and our successful September contract rally at City Hall.

The uncertainty and chaos in public education and to our profession has been relentless. The entire labor movement is under attack and our collective bargaining rights are at stake. We have many struggles ahead, but together we will prevail. Thank you for allowing me to represent you. I appreciate your continued support.

Executive Committee Candidates

7-12 Secondary (7 to be Elected)



11. Michael Jeffers

Fairness and equality. This is what I fight for. This is what I demand. In the current David vs. Goliath reality in which we live, leveling the playing field is critical. Empowering those who feel they have no means of recourse, while maintaining the resolve of those so deeply entrenched, will grant the ability of us all to soldier on in solidarity.

I have served as Building Delegate, Building Delegate Chairperson, Successor Delegate to the NYSUT RA, worked with VOTE/COPE, and I have completed various NYSUT/BTF trainings in regards to strengthening our Union. I also have prior experience working for the Teamsters Local 445, and have been in attendance at our rallies. "Life isn't fair."

Maybe. But it doesn't mean I shouldn't fight to make it equitable. I will work diligently for those who need our assistance and for those who do not yet know they need our help. One path through unity.

12. Sue Raichilson

We, as teachers, face many challenges daily. We try to guide our students through their day-to-day struggles, both in school and out. Our efforts and goals are to see that our students not only receive a solid education, but develop the tools and skills to apply that knowledge to their future and the future of our community.

This year has been and the next few years will be extremely challenging with attacks on our integrity and ability as professionals through unrealistic testing, laws and demands by non-educators under the guise of "improving education". In addition, there are legislators and others who are trying to take control of our retirement system, so we must become vigilant and active in order to defeat the upcoming vote in November on a NYS Constitutional Convention.

I have served on the BTF Executive Committee for the past several years. I take this position, the interests of the BTF and our members very seriously and I have worked hard to ensure that our voices and concerns do not go unheard. I hope that you will support my candidacy for re-election and give me the opportunity to continue to serve you to the best of my ability.



13. Eve (Hernandez) Shippens

Eve Shippens is an alumni, parent, and in her 16th year of teaching in the Buffalo Public Schools.

Coming from a family who became union organizers in the early 1900s after experiencing the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory tragedy, unionism and a commitment to social justice are in Eve's blood. Eve has served the union as Building Delegate and Delegate Chair, and is currently a NYSUT Delegate and the BTF Community Engagement Chair. Eve's passion for racial and social justice, especially as it pertains to equitable and quality public education, extends into her community work through her leadership as Co-Chair of the Buffalo Parent Teacher Organization, Chair of the Education Committee and Board Member for Citizen Action WNY, and WNY Regional Representative on the State Board of Citizen Action. Eve graduated from the 2016 NYSUT Leadership Institute and has attended many leadership conferences across the state and country.

Eve wants to bring her drive and dedication to the BTF Executive Committee to represent the interests of teachers and to make our union more progressive. This means uniting with the community to fight for education funding, for healthcare, for better public transportation, for fair wages, and stronger unions overall. In solidarity, we win!



14. Melissa Kenney

I love being your representative on the Executive Committee. Please support me and allow me to continue to work on your behalf. This is my 19th year teaching in the Buffalo Public Schools. I spent 14 years teaching at BAVPA and now I am teaching 9th grade English at the new Computing Academy at Bennett. I am a graduate of Hutch Tech's Industrial Chemistry program.

I served as a building committee member and as a delegate at BAVPA. I am a member of the Action Committee, the Technology Committee and a Sick Bank Trustee. I helped to organize the rally at City Hall for our contract negotiations and was very proud of our membership turnout.

I am going to continue to make a difference for my brothers and sisters in the BTF. I attended and graduated from the 2016 NYSUT Leadership Institute, I serve as a NYSTRS Delegate, a NYSUT RA Delegate and attended other leadership conferences as well. My father and grandmother were proud union members and I am proud of having helped put a union in place at the first school I worked in after graduating from Buffalo State College. I am committed to keeping our union strong.



15. Cathy Stearns

Vote for Cathy Stearns. I am passionate about defending public education and preserving the BTF contract for all BPS teachers. I attend and participate in monthly delegate assemblies with BTF and NYSUT as a delegate.

I have been an active and committed delegate for over a dozen years. I am on the Political Action Committee. In prior years I have been a debate coach. Also, I have been elected by my teacher peers many times as a NEA and NYSUT delegate and have attended the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the NYSRT (Retirement) conventions as a delegate. I recently attended the March 2017 Leadership Workshop. I have been involved in the U.B. ISEP program with Buffalo Science Teachers for a few years now. My passion will extend beyond teacher and delegate duties when I attend the Scientist's March in Washington on Earth Day to stand up for critical environmental justice. As a proud parent of a severely autistic son, I have a strong respect and appreciation for special education teachers. I would love to be an influential member of the executive committee and be an active part of the resolution making process. Please support me with your vote.

16. Lynn M. Garcia

Teachers face unprecedented challenges, attacks to our tenure rights and our unions continue. We must continue to build bridges with our parents and community groups to ensure our students have the schools that they deserve, including the needed resources. I continue to work with many others to build coalitions needed to accomplish this work.

We need to advocate for a legitimate teacher evaluation system, not one imposed by Albany. We must work to end high stakes testing that hurt our students and unfairly label our schools as failing.

As a member of the BTF Executive Committee, I put my NYSUT training into action. As PAC co-chair, I work to elect pro education candidates. As a member of BPTO, I work to promote the positive things that are happening in our schools. As a delegate to the NEA RA, I serve on the board of the NEA Women's Caucus.

I appreciate the support you have given me in past elections. It has been my honor to represent you in these positions. I am asking once again for your support to continue this important work. If re-elected, I will do my best to represent the voice of secondary educators.

17. Chris Salamone

I am running for re-election as a 7-12 representative on the Executive Committee, a position I have held for the past four years. Currently I teach history at Bennett High School, where I have worked for 9 years.

I have been actively involved in the BTF for 19 years and have served as Building Delegate, Alternate and Building Committee member. In addition, I have been a delegate for NEA-NY, The American Federation of Teachers and NYSUT. I served on the BTF Election Committee for many years, was selected to represent the BTF on various panels and teacher interview committees and have been the editor of The Provocator, the official newspaper of the BTF, since 2002. I am a 2012 graduate of the NYSUT Leadership Institute and have attended NYSUT Summer and Winter Leadership Conferences.

In addition to working on the paper, I am currently a member of the BTF Action Committee, Political Action Committee and the Community Involvement Committee. I am also a delegate for both the AFT and NYSUT conventions and treasurer of the Buffalo Parent-Teacher Organization.

A lifelong resident of Buffalo, I am a graduate of Buffalo Public Schools, as are my children.

I would appreciate your vote!

7-12 (7 to be Elected)



18. Tom Anthony

I have been teaching in Buffalo Public Schools for 11 years. From 2006 to 2013 I taught at Grover Cleveland HS/International Prep. During the 2013 - 2014 school year, an Instructional Technology Coach. During the 2014 - 2015 school year, I taught at Futures Preparatory and Middle Early College HS. I have been teaching at Middle Early College HS from 2015 - to the present. In addition, I have served as BTF delegate or alternate at Grover and I Prep from 2007 to 2014. I have been serving on the Executive Committee for the last 3 years. I also served as a NYSUT RA Delegate from 2011 - 2016 and have attended RA conventions in both Buffalo and Washington D.C. I am the chairman of the BTF technology committee. where I am helping to create better communication to our BTF members. I attended the BTF Leadership workshop in 2015 and 2017. My goal for the BTF is to get more of our members involved. I plan on moving the BTF forward on the technology end by helping create a new web page to keep our members informed as well as continuing the BTF Facebook page and twitter handle.



19. Patrick J. Foster

We stand today at a crossroads facing opportunities, challenges, and perils. While our work has yielded positives like the improved school board and the watershed of a new contract, major challenges remain from Buffalo to Albany to Washington. Receivership, charters & vouchers, the new APPR & 3012 (d), and our promise to further increase benefits in the next contract negotiations pose significant challenges for BTF.

Clearly, we have important work to do, but with a unified and activated membership, BTF WILL secure a positive future for Buffalo teachers and our schools. As a 13-year member of the Council of Delegates and NYSUT Delegate, I pledge to work together with current and future BTF leaders and with all members to realize the above goal.

(7-12 continued from Page 4)

Together with you, it is my desire to transform the perils we face into stepping stones of opportunity. Elemental to this is increasing school funding from both Buffalo and New York State and standing alert and ready if *Friedrichs v. CTA* is re-heard or if a NYS Constitutional Convention convenes.

It would be my honor to earn your vote and to serve Buffalo teachers on the Federation's **Executive Committee, 7-12.**



20. Dennis Brancato

It is an honor to have **served for many years as your voice on the BTF Executive Committee** and the Council of Delegates. Over 25 years of teaching experience shaped my perspective and service on the Council and Executive Committee. Teacher concerns vary across the spectrum of teachers' experiences, whether by building, grade level, or career stage. **All teacher concerns are important** and worth fighting for. **I represent everyone.** In Executive Committee and Council of Delegates meetings, I always take the position that **every teacher in our union is important** and we must do everything with the goals of protecting our teachers, making sure our teachers are valued, and doing our best to continually improve working conditions for all BTF members.

My union experiences include serving as the Senior Sick Leave Bank Trustee, BTF and NYSUT Leadership Workshops, serving as a NYSTRS Delegate, serving as NYSUT Convention Delegate, and serving by appointment as Sergeant-at-Arms for the NYSUT Representative Assembly. I never forget that I represent BTF and I never forget that I represent you. **It would be an honor to continue to represent you** for the challenges ahead.

Please vote for Dennis Brancato for 7-12 Executive Committee

Executive Committee Candidates

K-12 (7 to be Elected)

21. Jack Caldiero

22. Gregory Sawicki

I would like to thank you for electing me in 2015 to serve on OUR BTF Executive Committee. It has been an honor to serve. The experience, cohesiveness and actions of the Executive Committee have resulted in our Union being as strong as ever. That strength and solidarity resulted in a reasonable NEW CONTRACT finally being offered to our members this past October.

During the past two years I have been a very visible and active member of the Executive Committee. I was very active in the School Board election process making phone calls, walking the neighborhoods of Buffalo and working the polls. I have attended BTF leadership workshops every fall as well as NYSUT leadership training in both the winter and summer.

I have continued to attend EVERY Council of Delegates meeting since 2011 and have not missed a single Executive Committee meeting since my original appointment in 2014. I continue looking for areas to expand my knowledge and participation (i.e. running in NYSTRS and NEA elections).

I again humbly ask for your vote so that I can continue to be an informed, active and strong advocate for OUR best interests.

23. Claire "Weege" Rosart

24. Nicole Herkey

I am seeking your support for election as a K-12 representative on the Executive Committee. I am a graduate of the Buffalo Public Schools and for the past ten years I have been a Reading teacher in the district

servicing in eight different elementary buildings. In April 2016 I was appointed to the K-12 position I currently hold. I have attended numerous trainings and seminars including NYSUT winter and summer leadership conferences and multiple BTF delegate leadership trainings. I was actively involved in the school board elections by phone banking and canvassing which helped us obtain a new contract. I serve on the grievance and community engagement committees as well as being a co-chair of the social committee. I experienced first-hand what unions can accomplish as I withstood the forty-two day Verizon strike standing with my husband and his fellow union brothers and sisters. I am extremely passionate about my union and will continue to fight for my fellow teachers and our students as public education is constantly under attack.



25. Mark Mecca

My name is Mark Mecca and I am running for my third term on the executive committee in the K-12 category. I feel I am uniquely qualified to serve the union as I have union experience, am a certified administrator (In addition to my job as a certified school psychologist) and I now am serving as Vice President of the Williamsville school board. These varied experiences give me a larger perspective on the issues that we are facing. In terms of union experience, I have been a building delegate, delegate chairperson, executive committee member, vote-cope coordinator, NYSTRS delegate, NYSUT RA delegate and an alternate for AFT. Our union and school district are facing pressures from the federal and state governments that require creative solutions and hard work - I believe that I am one of the people that you want at the table advocating for our public schools and our amazing and dedicated teachers. Because you are the best, you deserve top notch representation - please vote for Mark Mecca!

K-12 (7 to be Elected)

(K-12 continued from Page 5)

26. Isabella Keegan

During my 20 year career in the Buffalo Schools as a Library Media Specialist, I have been a Building Committee Member, an Alternate Delegate and a Delegate. I have also attended the NYSUT RA in Rochester. I have an extensive research background gained in corporate and government employment prior to joining the district. Utilization of research techniques has given me a depth of perspective on issues affecting education at the local, state and national levels. I have closely followed the impact of negative legislation affecting our collective bargaining rights as well as the persistent destructive undermining of our profession. I have worked to keep our Buffalo Schools free from privatization by collaborating on rallies designed to highlight the dangers of receivership and charter school proliferation. I have campaigned for School Board members with whom I share a vision and passion for local control of our BPS schools. My hope is to work collaboratively with the Executive Committee to maintain high standards for our educator's working conditions and for our student's learning environment. My focus is to expose those entities that seek to either weaken our union or to personally profit from public education through privatization efforts.



27. Elizabeth (Liz) Spiro-Carman

I am the Art teacher at School #6 for 15 years. I come from a long line of union members in education, NYS police, and CSEA. I believe in the unionized work force and collective bargaining to build a strong and thriving working and middle class in our society.

I am a BTF Delegate and have served as an Alternate Delegate. I am a willing activist and have stood in protest against the dismantling of collective bargaining in Wisconsin, and in support of the Communications Workers of America. I marched in the Women's March on Washington, D.C. in January, 2017, and locally in support of my refugee students and their families, and against the present administration's travel and immigration ban.

I participate in BTF opportunities to learn about our contract and BTF concerns, e.g., BTF Leadership conferences. I actively communicate BTF

business with my colleagues.

I seek to deepen my activities on the BTF via the Executive Committee to represent the concerns of K-12 teachers regarding rights, considerations, and fair play; to assist incoming teachers in embracing their union memberships, benefits and responsibilities; and to represent the concerns of future retirees in long-term planning and in the immediate.

28. Catherine Lipsitz

"I have been a visual arts teacher in the district for ten years now. I have had a wide range of experiences, working at over a dozen schools in that time period. Each school has its own personality, and because of this I feel adaptable and capable of working in many kinds of situations. I have a strong passion for working in the city of Buffalo, and Buffalo public schools are where I belong. Over the years these feelings have grown, not only for my students, but also for my colleagues and the overall commitment to excellent education that we all believe is possible. I became a delegate of the BTF after a few years of consistency at Lafayette High School. I would like to continue my experience with both the BTF by becoming a member of the executive committee and at provide a viewpoint for the development of strong visual arts communication and programming both in school and district wide."

29. Susan M. Baker

My name is Susan Marie Baker, I have been a Music Teacher in this district for many years. As a member of the Executive Committee for the past 4 years I understand the need for representation for all Special Area Teachers. I believe it is especially important to have representation, at the executive committee level, for those who may travel between two or more buildings. I am particularly interested in focusing on new APPR changes geared towards blaming teachers for student outcomes. These are certainly challenging times for all of us. I look forward to your support in re-election and serving you.

At Large (3 to be Elected)

30. Marc Bruno

I am honored to have been nominated as a candidate for the BTF Executive Committee; At Large. If elected, I hope to continue my advocacy for Buffalo Teachers. I began teaching at Riverside High School in 2001. I have been the Delegate Chairperson of Riverside and member of the Riverside Building Committee for most of my career. The knowledge and experience I acquired over the years representing Riverside and being both a NYSUT and NEA/ AFT representative has proved to be an invaluable asset. I hope to bring the lessons learned from these experiences to the BTF Executive Committee. As Riverside sadly grows closer to the end of its "phase out" I will continue to tirelessly advocate for the students and staff as I always have. I feel it is time however to turn the page to the next chapter and work with President Rumore and the other BTF officers to continue my education as a unionist while continuing to passionately advocate for Buffalo Teachers. I will continue to use all mediums available to me including speaking at BOE meetings, the media, etc. to support my fellow Buffalo Teachers. Thank you for your consideration and hopefully your vote.

31. Tom Gattie

It has been a privilege to serve on the Executive Committee. Once again, I seek your support so that I can continue to represent you. I believe that my experience at both the high school and elementary school levels, in addition to my long-standing union involvement, affords me an understanding of the issues, problems and needs of all teachers.

My current involvements include: BTF Executive Committee, Buffalo Teacher Center Policy Board Chairman, BTF Sick Bank Alternate Trustee, NEA State Delegate at the national level, AFT Delegate for the BTF at the national level, NYSUT Convention Delegate and New York

State Retirement Delegate. I have completed the NYSUT Leadership Institute and served on the NYSUT High School Initiatives Task Force, helping to develop recommendations to reduce the drop-out rate in New York State. I am also a former Delegate, Delegate Chair, Election Committee member, NEA-NY Delegate and NEA-NY Retirement Committee member. If re-elected, I will continue to serve you to the best of my ability and make your voice heard.

Thank you for your support!

32. Mike Mecca

My name is Michael Mecca; I am seeking reelection for a second term to the Executive Committee in the At-Large category. If reelected, I would bring my extensive experience to the Executive Committee. During my career as a Buffalo teacher, I have gained wide-ranging union experience by serving for most of my 21 years as BTF delegate, alternate delegate, Delegate Chair, Building Committee Chair, and most recently with the Executive Committee. I also have union experience by serving on the BTF Finance Committee, BTF Membership Committee, as a NYSUT convention delegate, and an AFT convention delegate. This is a difficult time for educators, regardless of experience or tenure area. As a teacher of over 20 years and an active BTF member, I bring experienced leadership with a background including my union experience, and teaching experience in both Junior High and as a High School teacher. I am optimistic that you will vote in this election and find that an experienced, team oriented individual like myself is worthy of your consideration for Executive Committee. Thank you, and please vote for Michael Mecca.

IN THE BATTLES AHEAD

Negotiations – Begin January 2019

- We need the team that will not cave into unacceptable demands

- ✓ **APPR**
- ✓ **Charter Schools**
- ✓ **The Buffalo News**
- ✓ **Attacks on Teachers**
- ✓ **Standardized Testing**

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President
Rebecca Pordum
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E

Sophia Howard -
Johnson
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Trisha Rosokoff
Chris Stephens
Ruyvette Townsend

THE ISSUE IS LEADERSHIP

7-12

R

Tom Anthony
Dennis Brancato
Lynn Garcia
Melissa Kenney
Sue Raichilson
Christine Salamone
Eve Shippens

K-12

L

Susan Baker
Nicole Herkey
Isabella Keegan
Mark Mecca
Claire Rosart
Gregory Sawicki

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TENACITY NOT RHETORIC

VICTORIES NOT PROMISES

At-Large

S

Marc Bruno
Thomas Gattie
Miichael Mecca

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 - Student Attendance
 - English Language Learners
 - Students With Disabilities
 - Poverty, etc.

- ✓ **President Trump**
- ✓ **Secretary of Education DeVos**
- ✓ **Governor Cuomo**
- ✓ **Some Board Members**
- ✓ **State Receivership**
- ✓ **Tenure**

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Candidates Credentials

The list that follows was made in accordance with the Procedures for the 2017 BTF Officers Election. Please Note the following:

- 1.) Lists were supplied by the candidates. The Elections Committee has spot-checked but ultimately errors are the responsibility of the candidates.
- 2.) Activities are for 2015-16 and 2016-17 only.

TAKE THE TIME TO VOTE. IT IS BOTH YOUR RIGHT AND RESPONSIBILITY!!

1. PHILIP RUMORE

2015-16 – Exec. Comm., Negotiations, PAC, SBF Trustee, BTF President, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. to NEA, NYSUT Director, NYSUT Exec. Comm., NEA Conv. Deleg.

2016-17 – Exec. Comm., Negotiations, PAC, SBF Trustee, BTF President, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. to NEA, NYSUT Director, NYSUT Exec. Comm., NEA/AFT Conv. Deleg.

1. REBECCA PORDUM

2015-16 – Communication/Tech. Comm., Exec. Comm., Finance Comm., Membership Comm., Negotiations, PAC, Public Rel. Comm., Provocator, Retirement Dinner, Retirement Workshop, Social Comm., Teacher Center Policy Board, Thanksgiving Food Drive, Variety Club Telethon, Juneteenth, First Book, Read Across America, Erie Canal Discovery, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., Committee of 100, NYSUT Leadership, Summer Leadership, Winter Leadership, NEA-PAC, NEA Conv. Delegate, NYS AFL-CIO Delegate, NYST Retirement Delegate.

2016-17 – Communication/Tech. Comm., Exec. Comm., Finance Comm., membership Comm., Negotiations, PAC, Public Rel. Comm., Provocator, Retirement Dinner, Retirement Workshop, Social Comm., Teacher Center Policy Board, Thanksgiving Food Drive, Variety Club Telethon, Juneteenth, First Book, Read Across America, Erie Canal Discovery, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., Committee of 100, NYSUT Leadership, Summer Leadership, Winter Leadership, NEA-PAC, NEA Conv. Deleg., NYS AFL-CIO Deleg., NYST Retirement Delegate.

2. MELINDA MacPHERSON SULLIVAN

2015-16 – Bldg. Comm. Member, Exec. Comm., PAC, Retirement Dinner, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. To NEA, NYSUT Teacher Center Comm., NEA/AFT Conv. Deleg., NYST Retirement Delegate.

2016-17 – Bldg. Comm. Member, Exec. Comm., PAC, Retirement Dinner, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. to NEA, NYSUT Teacher Center comm., NEA/AFT Conv. Deleg., NYST Retirement Delegate.

3. JOSEPH MONTANTE

2015-16 – Executive Comm., Finance Comm., Grievance Comm. Chair, Negotiations, Provocator (photo editor), NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NEA Conv. Deleg., NYST Retirement Delegate.

2016-17 – Executive Comm., Finance Comm., Grievance Comm. Chair, Negotiations, Provocator (photo editor), NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NEA Conv. Deleg., NYST Retirement Delegate.

4. SOPHIA HOWARD-JOHNSON

2015-16 – Bldg. Comm. Member, Exec. Comm., Negotiations, Retirement Dinner, Sick Leave Bank Trustee, Thanksgiving Food Drive, Anti-Cuomo/Mock Jury, Activist Summit, Juneteenth, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., Summer Apprenticeship, Cancer Walk, Vote-Cope, NYST Retirement Deleg.

2016-17 – Bldg. Comm. Member, Exec. Comm., Negotiations, Retirement Dinner, PAC, Sick Leave Bank Trustee, Ethnic Minority Involvement Comm., Thanksgiving Food Drive, Juneteenth, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., Credentials Comm., Summer Leadership Conf., Winter Leadership Conf., NYSUT “Week of Action”, Cancer Walk, AFL-CIO Labor Day Parade, School Board race Canvasser, NYST Retirement Delegate.

5. JANINE SCHUSTER

2015-16 – BTF teacher contract rallies.

2016-17 – Bldg Comm. Chairperson, Rallies for teacher contract & Receivership, Interview panel team.

6. RACHEL BINDA-LIS

2015-16 – Bldg. Comm. Member, Communication/Tech Comm. Member, Exec. Comm., Public Rel. Comm. Co-chair, Cancer walk, Variety Club Telethon, Read Across America, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. to NEA. NEA Conv. Deleg., NYST Retirement Delegate.

2016-17 – Bldg. Comm. Member, Communication/Tech Comm. Member, Exec. Comm., Public Rel. Comm., Co-chair, Cancer walk, Variety Club Telethon, Read Across America, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. to NEA. NEA Conv. Deleg., NYST Retirement Delegate.

Candidates Credentials

7. RUYVETTE D. TOWNSEND

2015-16 – Bldg. Deleg., Bldg. Comm. Member, Exec. Comm., Grievance Comm., PAC, Public Rel. Comm., SBF Trustee, NYST Retirement Delegate.

2016-17 – Bldg. Comm. Member, Exec. Comm., PAC, Public Rel. Comm., SBF Trustee, Teacher Center Policy Board, Comm. of 100, NYST Retirement Delegate.

8. CHRIS STEPHENS

2015-16 – Executive Comm., Finance Comm., Retirement Dinner, Vote-Cope Various rallies.

2016-17 – Executive Comm., Finance Comm., Retirement Dinner, Various Rallies, NYSUT Leadership Peak-n-Peak.

9. JENNIFER PANZICA

2015-16 – Bldg. Alternate, BTF Delegate Workshop.

2016-17 – Bldg. Delegate.

10. TRISHA ROSOKOFF

2015-16 – Exec. Comm., Membership Comm. Co-chair, Action Comm. Member, Community Engagement Comm. Member, District Stakeholders Comm. Member, BTF Deleg. Workshop, VOTE-COPE, Variety Club Telethon, Activist Summit, Contract Now Rally, NYSUT Summer Leadership Conf., NYSUT Fall Leadership Conf., NYSUT Winter Leadership Conf., NYSUT “Week of Action” organizer, Wellstone Action Organizer Training.

11. MICHAEL JEFFERS

2015-16 – Bldg. Comm. Chairperson, Bldg. Delegate, VOTE-COPE, NYSUT Conv. Successor.

2016-17 – Bldg. Comm. Chairperson, Bldg. Delegate, VOTE-COPE, NYSUT Conv. Successor.

12. SUE RAICHILSON

2015-16 – Exec. Comm., Retirement Workshop Chair, SBF Trustee, Secretary to Council of Deleg., Various Interview Comm., NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. to NEA, NEA/AFT Conv. Deleg., NYS Altern. NEA Director, NEA Joint Conference on Concerns of Women & Minorities.

2016-17 – Exec. Comm., Retirement Workshop Chair, SBF Trustee, Secretary to Council of Deleg., Various Interview Comm., NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. to NEA, NEA/AFT Conv. Deleg., NYS Altern. NEA Director, NEA Joint Conference on Concerns of Women & Minorities.

13. EVE (HERNANDEZ) SHIPPENS

2015-16 – Bldg. Deleg. Chairperson, Delegate Workshop, Activist Summit, NYSUT Conv. Delegate.

2016-17 – Community Engagement Comm., NYSUT Leadership, NYSUT Summer Leadership, NYSUT Conv. Delegate.

14. MELISSA KENNEY

2015-16 – Communication/Tech. Comm., Exec. Comm., Sick Leave Bank Trustee, Social Comm., Action Comm., Buffalo Believe Campaign, Picket & Phone, Bank Board Elec., NYST Retirement Deleg.

2016-17 – Communication/Tech. Comm., Exec. Comm., Sick Leave Bank Trustee, Action Comm., Rally planning, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT Leadership Inst., NYSUT Phone banks, NYSUT Retirement Deleg.

15. CATHY STEARNS

2015-16 – Bldg. Chair, Bldg. Deleg., PAC, Retirement Dinner, Rallies, Leadership Workshop, NYSUT State Deleg. To NEA, NEA/AFT Conv. Deleg., NYST Retirement Deleg.

2016-17 – Bldg. Chair, Bldg. Alternate, PAC, Rallies, NYSUT State Deleg. to NEA, NEA/AFT Conv. Deleg., NYST Retirement Deleg.

16. LYNN M. GARCIA

2015-16 – Exec. Comm., PAC Co-chair, Tchr. Center Policy Bd., Vice-Chair, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. to NEA, NEA/AFT Conv. Deleg., NE Coordin. To NEA Women’s Caucus, NYST Retirement Deleg.

2016-17 – Exec. Comm., PAC Co-Chair, Tchr. Center Policy Bd., Vice-Chair, Community Engagement Comm., NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. to NEA, NEA/AFT Conv. Deleg., NE Coordin. To NEA Women’s Caucus, NYST Retirement Deleg.

17. CHRIS SALAMONE

2015-16 – Communication/Tech. Comm., Exec. Comm., PAC, Provocator, Action Comm., NYSUT Buffalo Believe Campaign, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. To NEA, NEA/AFT Conv. Deleg., NEA-PAC, NYST Retirement Deleg.

2016-17 – Exec. Comm., PAC, Provocator, Action Comm., Community Engagement Comm., NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. to NEA, NEA/AFT Conv. Deleg., NEA-PAC, NYST Retirement Deleg.

18. TOM ANTHONY

2015-16 – Communication/Tech. Comm. Chairperson, Exec. Comm., NYSUT Conv. Deleg.

2016-17 – Communication/Tech. Comm. Chairperson, Executive Committee.

19. PATRICK J. FOSTER

2015-16 – Building Deleg. Chrprsn, PAC.

2016-17 – Building Deleg. Chrprsn, PAC, APPR Comm. of 40, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT “Buffalo Students Deserve” Building-Level Leader, Lafayette.

20. DENNIS BRANCATO

2015-16 – Exec. Comm., Retirement Dinner Comm., Sick Leave Bank Trustee Chairperson, Leadership Workshop, Rallies, APPR Comm. of 40, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT Legislative/Political Action Resolutions, NYSUT NYST Retirement Deleg.

2016-17 – Exec. Comm., Retirement Dinner Comm., Sick Leave Bank Trustee Chairperson, Leadership Workshop, Rallies, APR Comm. of 40, Community Engagement Comm., NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT Phone Banks, NYSUT Sergeant-at-Arms, NYST Retirement Deleg.

21. JACK CALDIERO

Candidates Credentials

22. GREGORY SAWICKI

2015-16 – Exec. Comm. Member, Teacher Center Policy Bd. Member, School Board Elec. Phone Bank/poll worker, CTE Comm. Member.

2016-17 – Exec. Comm. Member, Teacher Center Policy Bd. Member, School Board Elec. Phone Ban/poll worker, CTE comm. Member.

23. CLAIRE “Weegee” ROSART

2015-16 – Building Deleg. Chairperson, NYSUT Conv. Successor, NYST Retirement Delegate.

2016-17 – Building Deleg. Chairperson, NYSUT Conv. Successor, NYST Retirement Delegate.

24. NICOLE HERKEY

2015-16 – Bldg. Alternate, Exec. Comm., PAC Phone Bank.

2016-17 – Executive Comm., Grievance Comm., Social Comm., District Interview Team, PAC Phone Bank.

25. MARK MECCA

2015-16 – Exec. Comm., Retirement Dinner Comm., Retirement Workshop, VOTE-COPE Coordin., NYSUT Conv. Successor, NYSUT Legis./Educ. Issues Comm., NEA/AFT Conv. Successor, Educ. & Retirement Issues Comm., NYST Retirement Deleg.

2016-17 – Exec. Comm., Retirement Dinner Comm., Retirement Workshop, VOTE-COPE Coordin., NYSUT Conv. Successor, NYSUT Legis. / Educ. Issues Comm., NEA/AFT Conv. Successor, Educ. & Retirement Issues Comm., NYST Retirement Deleg.

26. ISABELLA KEEGAN

2015-16 – Building Altern., Building Deleg., School Board Elec. Rally organizer, VOTE-COPE, BTF/NYSUT Summit, BTF Deleg. Workshop, BTF/NYSUT Week, NYSUT Conv. Deleg.

2016-17 – Building Delegate, NYSUT Conv. Delegate.

27. ELIZABETH (LIZ) SPIRO-CARMAN

2015-16 – BTF Delegate Workshop, BTF Rallies.

2016-17 – Building Delegate, School Board Elec. Phone Bank, BTF Rallies.

28. CATHERINE LIPSITZ

2015-16 – BTF Building Delegate.

2016-17 – BTF Building Delegate.

29. SUSAN M. BAKER

2015-16 – Executive Comm., Retirement Workshop, VOTE-COPE, Cancer Walk.

2016-17 – Executive Comm., Retirement Workshop, VOTE-COPE, Cancer Walk.

30. MARC BRUNO

2015-16 – Bldg. Deleg. Chairperson, Bldg. Comm. Member, NYSUT Leadership Confer., NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NEA/AFT Conv. Deleg.

2016-17 – Bldg. Deleg. Chairperson, Bldg. Comm. Member, APPR Committee of 40, NYSUT Leadership Confer., NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NEA/AFT Conv. Deleg.

31. TOM GATTIE

2015-16 – Executive Comm., Sick Leave Bank Trustee, Teacher Center Policy Board, APPR Comm., NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NEA/AFT Conv. Delegate, NYST Retirement Delegate.

2016-17 – Executive Comm., Sick Leave Bank Trustee, Teacher Center Policy Board, APPR Comm., NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NEA/AFT Conv. Delegate, NYST Retirement Delegate.

32. MICHAEL MECCA

2015-16 – Bldg. Deleg. Chairperson, Bldg. Comm. Member.

2016-17 – Executive Comm., Finance Comm., Membership Comm., NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NEA/AFT Conv. Delegate.

PROVOCATOR

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

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