

# PROVOCATOR

May 2019

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION VOLUME 49/NUMBER 5

DEDICATION  
SOLIDARITY  
PROFESSIONALISM  
PRIDE  
SECOND TO NONE



*Are you ready?*

*Cost effective  
and efficient*

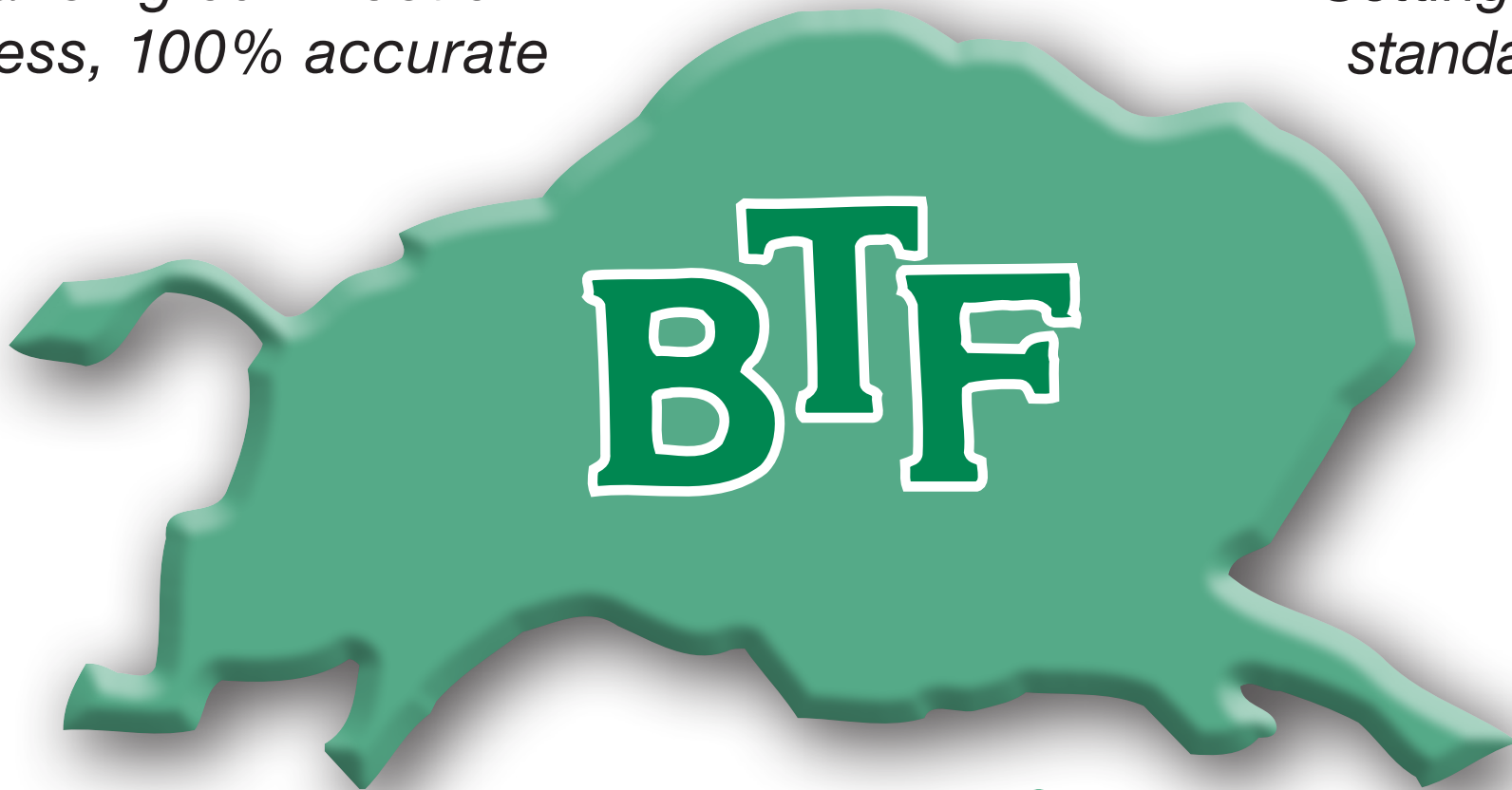
*Online voting,  
No Paper Ballots*

*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 6, 2019**

*“Going Green”  
Save-a-Tree*

*21st century  
technology*

*Convenient,  
easy, fun*

*Secure, proven,  
streamlined*

*Confidentiality,  
Vote in your PJ's*

*Secure Online  
Elections  
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.”

Together we have negotiated a three-year contract that:

- Raises the MS +30 maximum from \$77,666 to \$96,401;
- Eliminates 2-year hold steps at 15, 17, 19, 21; teachers are no longer held at these steps for 2 years – there are now steps at 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22;
- Rejected 15% healthcare payment for a fixed dollar amount;
- Provided a substantial SBF increase that has enabled a significant increase in dental and optical benefits;

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

- School Board Elections – All nine (9) seats will be voted upon. Need I say more?
- Negotiations – The district will continue its attempts to divide us and impose unacceptable proposals, while we continue the fight for teaching and learning conditions that are safe and that foster learning.

And we will never give up until Buffalo teachers receive the wages and benefits that reflect your dedication to our students despite the obstacles you face.

- APPR – Continuing the battle to remove student test scores from the APPR.
- 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 vocational/technical programs, art, music and physical education.

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-eight year Buffalo Teachers Federation member, I am seeking your support to once again serve as your Vice President. I believe that experience is critical and I have held many positions throughout my public school career.

It has been my privilege to serve as your Vice President for the past two years and as Treasurer two years prior. During this time I have been able to witness first hand that our Buffalo Public School teachers are dedicated, caring, hardworking and innovative. Although the challenges you face are sometimes overwhelming, you are unwavering in your commitment to the children you teach every day.

As a presidential assistant I am involved full-time in many aspects of our Union. Prior to the Janus decision, our team organized a very successful recommitment campaign that sought to have our BTF members pledge to remain as a Union member. I

also attend the New Teacher Orientation meetings on a weekly basis welcoming our newest members to our Union.

As a member of the BTF negotiations team we worked together to negotiate a Collective Bargaining Agreement in October 2016 that our dedicated teachers deserved. There were many decisions made during the process that were made to reward teachers for their dedication and experience as well as enhance the quality of education our students need to be successful.

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 workshops provided by NYSUT. Unions are at a crucial crossroad and it is my core belief that we need to be well informed in order to protect our rights as union brothers and sisters.

I am respectfully asking for your vote of confidence.

# 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*

It has been my honor to serve as the BTF treasurer and chair of the Finance Committee for the last two years. During that time, I have continued the tradition of transparency the Federation has always demonstrated with its funds. If the BTF’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. I am happy to report that over the past two years we have brought you:

- balanced budgets with only modest dues increases
- monthly financial reports before the Executive Committee and Council of Delegates
- an updated procedure for reimbursing convention expenses for delegates that reflects current accounting practices
- an expected surplus in this year’s budget that will help replenish our reserves

In addition to serving as your treasurer, I also work full time at the BTF office as a Presidential Assistant. In that capacity, I have managed the Extended Pay Plan for over 1900 teachers, helped many with various problems, and served as managing editor of the Provocator. This union is important to me and I am asking for your vote as BTF treasurer.

**2** Trust in my record of experience, integrity, and accountability.



# Executive Committee Candidates

## Pre K-6 Elementary (6 to be Elected)

### 4. Janine Schuster

I am thankful to be nominated for re-election to the B.T.F. Executive Committee (PK-6). Currently, I teach Pre-K at B.E.S.T. #6 and have over 30 years teaching experience with 18 of those years in BPS. The past two years on the Executive Committee have been a major learning opportunity into the dynamics of the teachers' union. I've been delegate chair, delegate and building committee member in the past, spurred on by my late father's union involvement as a City of Buffalo Water Dept. employee.

With so many educational issues looming in recent years, I had no choice but to become more involved. I'm a member of Refuse Receivership and Opt Out of Testing activist groups, as well as others. I am passionate about upholding a developmentally appropriate curriculum in early childhood classrooms with play as an essential component of learning. It is personally important for me to keep on top of educational issues.

My aim is to continue advocating for students and educating my colleagues on the provisions of our contract as well as crucial educational issues relating to their everyday lives. Please support me in my quest to represent you on the Executive Committee!



### 5. 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 10 years, I have been privileged to represent PreK-6 teachers. 9 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 has ALWAYS remained the same. I will represent YOU to the best of my abilities, and work toward amicable relations between the board and teachers; which will strengthen appropriate and positive morale toward teachers... both current and retired.

I will continue to help build a community among the shareholders in the Buffalo Schools. I was elected to the Executive Committee (PreK-6), 10 years ago. I thank you for allowing me to work in this capacity. My purpose is to continue to bring the concerns of Elementary teachers to the board, administration, our community, and to the parents! I remain excited, and look forward to serving YOU in the next term! Thank you in advance for your support.



### 6. Sophia Howard-Johnson

As the school year ends, I am grateful to continue to serve on the Negotiations team ensuring that we continue to maintain a collective bargaining agreement that gives us fair wages and good working conditions that we deserve. I am currently a kindergarten teacher at School #54, with 27 years of teaching experience. I have served as Delegate Chairperson, SBMT and Building Committee Member.

I continue my involvement in our union by Co-chairing the Minority Ethnic Involvement Committee, Sick Bank Trustee, Political Action Committee. I have formed alliances with community organizations NAACP, Citizen Action and Economic Justice Coalition that supports our views, advocating with us for school funding and teacher support. I spend my summers canvassing and talking to our members about issues that we face and I am proud of the work our union does to help increase union member through NYSUT Member Organizing Institute.

You can count on me to be at marches and rallies speaking out against injustices that impact our profession and our students. I grant you my word that I will continue to Serve, Agitate, Engage and Mobilize against forces that tries to weaken our strength. My sincere thanks for supporting me.



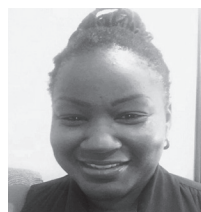
### 7. Ruyvette D. Townsend

Dear Brothers and Sister our union has been working for the wellbeing of children and teachers ever since its existence. This union represents teachers at all levels, in the schools, city hall, the courts and the state. I have been vocal for you on every level. I am asking for your vote so that I can continue to represent you as a member on the Executive Committee. This allows me to speak for you not just locally, but throughout the state and nation.

As we embarked on a new contract we already see that the enemies of public education are still close at hand. We just experienced this, with the stress put on our students and us as we endured the pressures to partake in these flawed tests.

During my previous terms I have worked diligently with my colleagues to fight against the injustice brought on by those who do not promote the educational frame that we believe in. I look forward to continuing to show my commitment by working towards completing the current issues that we face. I believe that united we provide a safe, positive, and creative environment.

I thank you for your vote.



### 8. April C. Hall

I am a teacher at BPS #80, Highgate Heights. I have been teaching in the district for 23 years. Over the last several years, my interest has peaked regarding union work and dedication. I've eagerly participated in many union summer activities to include the Juneteenth Festival, Labor Day and Hispanic Parades. I am honored to celebrate education, teachers, staff and students. I am a member of the Ethnic Minority Involvement Committee. The goal is to heighten minority teachers' awareness and importance of unionism.

The strength of a union is its numbers in people. I've attended BTF's Leadership Summits and gained a closer look at what our union has to offer its members. Classes focused on Vote Cope membership, grievance procedures, and member benefits. In 2015, I helped spearhead the NYSUT Apprenticeship, the "Buffalo Believe" Campaign. Alongside my union sisters and brothers, together we canvassed Buffalo communities. Our mission was to give the people a voice concerning Buffalo Public Schools. I've also attended rallies in support of increased resources for students, improved working conditions and wages. I have developed a perspective and a backbone that speaks solidarity. I stand strong for you. Vote April Hall and vote solidarity.



### 9. Trisha Rosokoff

As a current member of the Executive Committee, I represent our teachers at the local, state, and national level. This past year, I graduated from the 2018 NYSUT Leadership Institute. It's been an honor to advocate for our members and students while serving on the District's Stakeholder Committee, the Commissioner's Advisory Council and NYSUT's English Language Learners Committee.

I have taught in Buffalo for 21 years. I currently teach 1st grade at International School #45 and also taught at #78. My first year of teaching I experienced the pitfalls of working in a North Carolina district that didn't have a union. Low pay, poor benefits, endless working hours, and overcrowded classrooms in trailers. We're very fortunate to have BTF!

As Co-Chairperson of our Membership Committee, I was able to work closely with our BTF officers, Executive Committee and Delegates to ensure our members re-committed to our union to keep BTF strong! Janus did not destroy us!

We have many battles ahead, a new contract, continued violations to our CBA, and constant threats to our union and profession. These issues influence all of our teaching and working conditions, but united we can overcome anything! Thank you for letting me represent you.

# Executive Committee Candidates

## 7-12 Secondary (7 to be Elected)



### 10. 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 Grievance Committee, BTF and NYSUT Leadership Workshops, serving as a NYSTRS Delegate, a 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 representing you** for the challenges ahead.

**Please vote for Dennis Brancato for 7-12 Executive Committee.**



### 11. Eve Shippens

Being in a union is more important to me today than ever. Watching my two grown kids struggle in non-union jobs with low wages, wage theft, poor working conditions, and being terminated without cause, I realized how much I benefit from the union! I have decent wages, health insurance, a pension, and most importantly, due process! Unions have been under attack for decades, and workers' rights have declined as a result. This is unacceptable to me. My passion is to revive the labor movement so working conditions improve for all workers.

I have been teaching Science in middle and high school in Buffalo since 2001. About 9 years ago, I became a Building Delegate, and later Delegate Chair. I currently Co-chair the BTF Community Engagement Committee, am a member of Executive Committee and PAC, and am a Delegate to NYSUT and AFT. I also serve on the NYSUT Human and Civil Rights Committee and am a member/coach for the Member Organizing Institute that has done member to member campaigns about the *Con Con* and *Sticking with Our Union*.

I'm running for re-election because I want to continue to fight for our union values and workers' rights for all!



### 12. Patrick Foster

It has been an honor to represent you these past two years as we have faced and met challenges to our public schools and public sector unions. Solidarity is our strength in meeting challenges and emerging with ever greater purpose and optimism. Together our voices resounded NO to a Constitutional Convention that threatened to diminish funding for our students and compromised the future livelihood of teachers. In unison we declared YES in affirming our unions to be central and critical within our democratic society.

As BTF we have many pressing issues yet a new contract for our members stands foremost. Buffalo teachers deserve a compensation package reflective of their outstanding dedication and professionalism, including step compression, salaries more commensurate with surrounding districts, and excellent healthcare with containment of costs to our members.

A new contract should lower class sizes and provide up to date language on student populations. The excellent language on discipline should more directly inform the District's student code of conduct. The school-based budgeting process should be reformed to provide appropriate funding for all subjects.

It would be my honor to earn your vote for re-election to Executive Committee. Thank you.



### 13. Chris Salamone

The last few years have been difficult for unions, but with hard work, perseverance and solidarity we not only survived, but we are stronger!

As a seasoned member of the Executive Board and a participant in the NYSUT Member Organizing Institute, I have spent countless hours phoning members and visiting their homes in the fight against a Constitution Convention, and the Janus Supreme Court case. And when we lost the Janus decision, I hit the doors again to secure commitments from our members to stay with the union.

I have phone banked and petitioned for numerous union-endorsed candidates, attended bi-annual NYSUT Leadership Workshops, represented the BTF on employee interviewing committees and at conventions of NYSTRS, NYSUT, NEA and AFT, and participated in BTF activities, including protests, parades, the annual Breast Cancer Walk, and Variety Club Telethon. I am also an active member of many BTF committees and the editor of the Provocator.

I am a graduate of BPS and have been a Social Studies teacher in the District for 21 years. My three children are also graduates of BPS.

If re-elected to the Executive Committee, I will continue to fight for your rights!

Please vote for CHRIS SALAMONE!

### 14. 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 as Vice-Chair 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.



### 15. Melissa Kenney

In the past 21 years as a BTF member, Delegate, Building Committee member, Sick Leave Bank trustee, Technology Committee member, Action Committee member, and Executive Committee member I have witnessed and faced many challenges placed on our membership. It has been a pleasure to represent fellow members and their best interests in these challenges. Concerns and questions about the Collective Bargaining Agreement or benefits that we receive as members of a collective bargaining unit have been brought to the table on your behalf and have been acted upon as necessary by the committee.

As a trustee for the Sick Leave Bank it has been an honor to ensure that members are meeting the guidelines of usage and receiving necessary benefits. As a member of the Technology Committee we are working to bring the computer network needs up to date to better serve our membership. Serving on the Teacher Center Policy Board gives teachers a voice regarding the need for more online courses.

Thank you for your vote it has been my pleasure to work for you as an executive committee member and I would love to have your support to continue serving our membership in this capacity.



# 7-12 Secondary (7 to be Elected)

(Continued from Page 4...)

## 16. Sue Raichilson

I am a Riverside CTE/Business teacher and have been a member of the BTF Executive Committee for many years. Over the years, I have served on many committees in the BTF as well as NYSUT, NEA and AFT. I am currently the Retirement Workshop Chairperson, Trustee of the Supplemental Benefit Fund, and Secretary to the BTF Council of Delegates. I am also a NYSUT Convention Delegate, member of the NYSUT Women's Committee, NYSTRS Delegate, State Delegate to the NEA Annual Representative Assembly, Delegate to the AFT Convention, Northeast Coordinator for the NEA Women's Caucus and the NYS Alternate Director to the NEA Board of Directors.

During my tenure, I have fought vigorously for all our members and stood strong and united against those who have tried to threaten our union, contract and profession. At a time when our integrity and professionalism is under attack and anti-bullying is a major issue, teachers are constantly being bullied. We must remain strong, even more united than ever. I am committed to all of our much-maligned, hard-working Buffalo teachers.

Please allow me the privilege to continue to fight for our union and our profession. Thank you.

## Executive Committee Candidates

### K-12 Art, Music, other... (7 to be Elected)



## 17. Elizabeth (Liz) Spiro-Carman

Art teacher at School #6 for 17 years and currently one of the BTF Executive Committee members for PreK-12 educators. Actively participates on the BTF Political Action Committee and Co-Chairs the BTF Community Engagement Committee - meeting with BPS District Student Council on such issues as voter registration and participation in the Women's March of Buffalo/WNY 2019; helped coordinate student participation in March for Our Lives Buffalo and Girls World Expo Buffalo 2019; attends NYSUT leadership training; and is on the NAACP Education Committee. Strongly committed to continue as a BTF liaison to educators, students and the community.

Seeking to deepen activism on the BTF via the Executive Committee to represent the concerns of K-12 teachers regarding rights, considerations, and fair play; and to assist teachers in embracing their union memberships, benefits and responsibilities.

Strongly believes in her role as an advocate for students as an educator and as an advocate for educators through her work on the Executive Committee. Comes from a long line of union members in education, NYS police, and CSEA and believes in the unionized work force and collective bargaining to build a thriving working and middle class in our society.



## 18. Amy Flynn

The Buffalo Teachers Federation remains one of the strongest post-Janus unions there is. I am proud to be one of the people, with eight years of service on the BTF Council of Delegates, who work to keep it strong. I have been with the district for 12 years, first at Lafayette, then Campus West and finally at Grabiarsz. I have served many years as the Delegate Chairperson, Site Based Management Team member, and Building Committee Chairperson. I have many years of experience fighting for our members both at the building level and at the BTF Council of Delegates, where we fight for every teacher from all over our district. I am committed to BTF and to my colleagues in all schools. We stand strong as a union when we stand behind every BTF member. We stand shoulder to shoulder with newly hired teachers, veteran teachers, and our retired colleagues. It would be an honor to continue my service to BTF on the executive committee. Please vote for Amy Flynn for K-12 Executive Committee. Thank you.

## 19. Susan Baker

My name is Susan Baker. I am once again running for the Executive Board for the Buffalo Teacher's Federation. It has been my pleasure to represent K-12 teachers in Buffalo. I have been actively involved in supporting teacher for the past few years as I attended NYSUT conferences, workshops, worked phone banks and sat at the executive table as your voice. We have made significant progress maintaining a professional educational atmosphere and promoting our brother and sisterhood through solidarity. I would greatly appreciate your vote in running for this office in the upcoming election.

## 20. Nicole Herkey

Nicole Herkey is a Reading teacher at BPS #89 and has been teaching in the district since 2007. She was appointed to the BTF Executive Committee in April 2016 after a vacancy opened due to retirement. In May 2017 Nicole ran for Executive Committee and was elected. She is currently the Co-Chair of the Social Committee, serves on the Grievance Committee, and the PAC (political action committee). In addition to her committee work, Nicole participates in many Union activities. Some of which include the Breast Cancer Walk and the Labor Day Parade. She has participated in numerous phone banks for BTF endorsed political candidates as well as Buffalo BOE candidates, phone banking to encourage members to Vote No to the Con Con, as well as phone calls to BTF members during the Union recommitment campaign over the summer.

Nicole attended the NYSUT Member Organizing Institute (MOI) in May 2018. During the summer of 2018 she worked as a member organizer and visited fellow NYSUT members' homes to get Union recommitment cards signed. Nicole has also attended yearly BTF delegate chair trainings, NYSUT leadership trainings, and in July 2018 Nicole was selected to attend NYSUT Leadership Institute in Albany, NY.



## 21. Mark Mecca

I will serve our membership with a focus on enhancing our political effectiveness. I will do this through my efforts as the vote-cope coordinator. I am also serving as a school board member in another district and in that capacity, I am actively involved in legislative matters. That experience helps me to better advocate for our membership and find ways to enhance our effectiveness.

Thank you for your support which has allowed me to serve on the BTF Executive Committee!

# K-12 Art, Music, other... (7 to be Elected)

(Continued from Page 5...)



## 23. Greg Sawicki

Thanks to you, I have been elected to serve on OUR BTF Executive committee in 2015 and 2017. I humbly seek your support in this 2019 election to allow me to continue representing you on OUR BTF Executive Committee.

Since joining the BTF 11 years ago, I have integrated my previous experience as a Union Representative with the needs of the Buffalo teachers and continually increased my involvement in OUR Union matters.

Here are some of the other areas I continue to be a strong Union advocate for ALL OF US:

- ELECTED – NYSTRS delegate 2016 & 2018.
- ELECTED – AFT/NEA delegate 2018.

- ELECTED – NYSUT RA delegate 2019.
- appointed NYSUT Special Area Committee 2017 – present.
- appointed Teacher's Center Policy Board 2015 - present.
- selected for NYSED Committee (NYSTCE item review) 2018 – present.

I regularly attend the BTF's Leadership and NYSUT leadership conferences. I have participated in numerous BTF rallies, political activism in support of UNIONS, attended and spoken at Buffalo BOE public meetings and facilitated parents and students to participate as well.

All teachers in Buffalo deserve the continuity of strong representation. Thank you for considering me to serve you AGAIN for another 2 years.

# At Large Teachers (3 to be Elected)



## 24. Tom Anthony

I have been teaching in Buffalo Public Schools for 13 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 since 2015 - to the present. In addition, I have served as BTF delegate or alternate at Grover/I Prep from 2007 to 2014. I have served on the Executive Committee for 3 years. I also served as a NYSUT RA Delegate from 2011 – 2016, 2019 - 2021 and have attended RA conventions in both Buffalo and Washington D.C. I am the chairman of the BTF technology committee, where I am working to create better communication to our BTF members. I have 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 technology. Our committee will create a new web page to keep our members informed as well as update the BTF Facebook page and Twitter handle.

## 25. Michael Mecca

My name is Michael Mecca: I am seeking reelection for a third 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 24 years as BTF Delegate Chair, delegate, alternate delegate, Building Committee Chair, and most recently with the Executive Committee. I also have gained extensive union experience by serving you on the BTF Finance Committee, BTF Membership Committee, as a NUSUT convention delegate, an AFT convention delegate, and as a NYSTRS 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.



## 26. Mike Jeffers

I will work hard to serve the needs of my fellow teachers, and uphold the values of our Union. In an ever-changing educational landscape that is increasing hostile to teachers, I will continue to fight back against our adversaries and further expand our footprint as a solidified organization of professionals.

## 27. Marc Bruno

Friends and Colleagues, please consider casting your vote to elect me to the BTF Executive Committee for another term. I will continue to be a passionate advocate for the entire membership and will remain steadfast in my defense of the membership when unfairly blamed for all of society's ills. I will continue to network with BTF officers, Community Members, BOE Members and District Officials to articulate the continually deteriorating working conditions BTF members deal with on a regular basis. Many of our schools are not safe nor environments conducive to learning and that is and always will be completely unacceptable to me. It is an honor to call you all my Union Brothers and Sisters and it would be an honor to have your vote.

In solidarity now and always,  
Marc Bruno

## 28. Rich Nigro

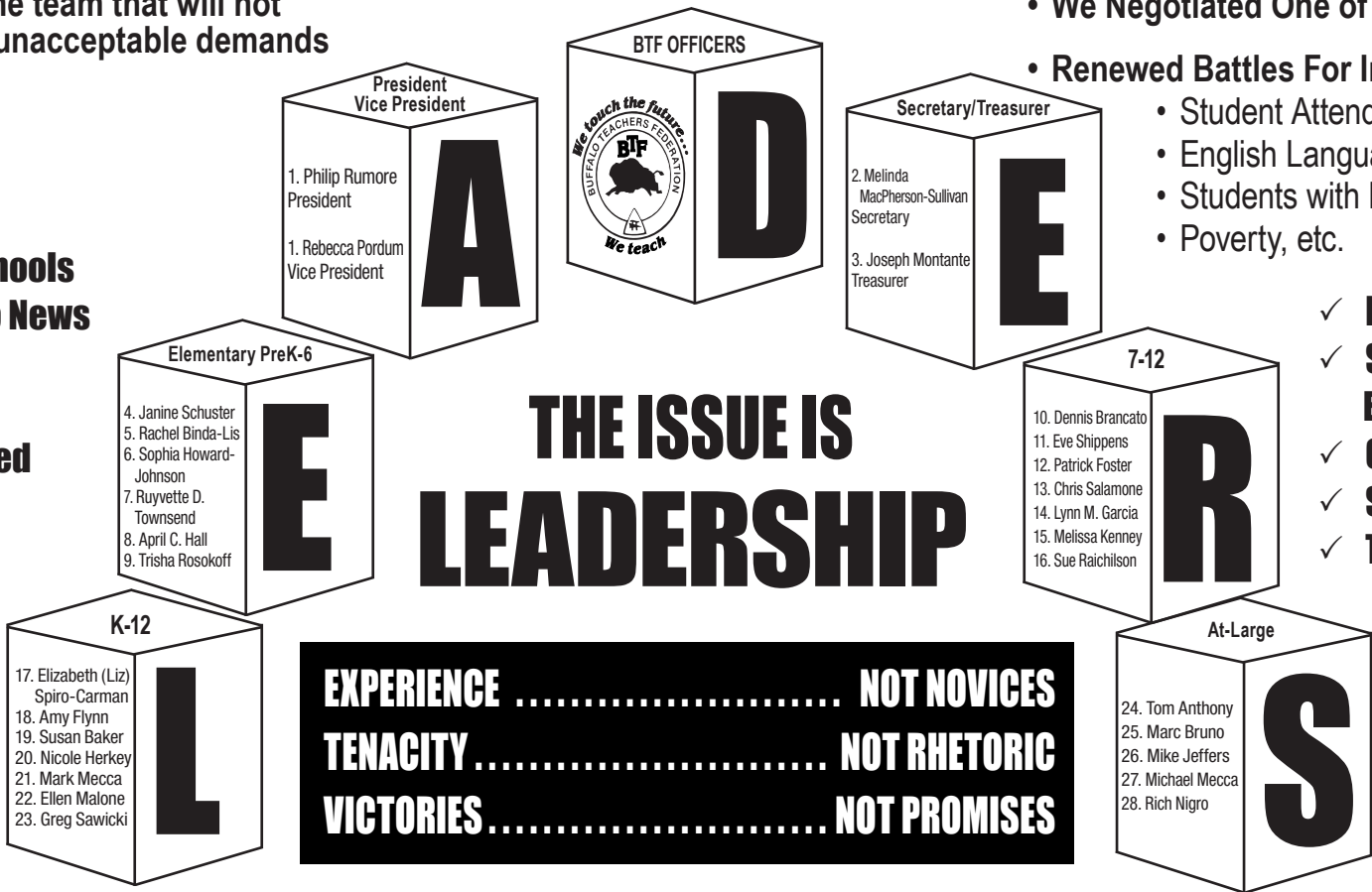


# IN THE BATTLES AHEAD

## Negotiations

- We need the team that will not cave in to unacceptable demands

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



## A New APPR (Required by law)

- We Negotiated One of the Best in NYS
- Renewed Battles For Inclusion of:
  - Student Attendance
  - English Language Learners
  - Students with Disabilities
  - Poverty, etc.

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

***WE ARE THE TEAM THAT HAS AND WILL DELIVER FOR YOU!***

**REMEMBER TO**

**VOTE**

**TUESDAY MAY 7<sup>TH</sup>**

**IN THE BUFFALO SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION**



### Tell Us What's Happening at Your School

Are you running a special performance at your building? Taking students on an overnight field trip? Was there a lesson that went exceptionally well you would like to share with your colleagues? We want to hear about it and may feature it in a future edition of The Provocator. Photos of such events are especially welcome.

Please send the following information and any related photos via email to [salamone426@aol.com](mailto:salamone426@aol.com).

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School/position \_\_\_\_\_

Personal email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Description of event \_\_\_\_\_

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**REMEMBER TO  
VOTE  
TUESDAY MAY 7<sup>TH</sup>  
IN THE BUFFALO SCHOOL  
BOARD ELECTION**



## *Save the Date*

**May 30**

BTF Retirement Dinner  
Salvatore's Italian Gardens

**June 9**

Miss Buffalo Boat Ride

**June 28**

Buffalo Bisons Baseball Game  
Sahlen's Field



**Survey & Ballot  
systems**

**From:** BTF Election Committee

**Subject:** Online Voting

BTF has partnered with Survey & Ballot Systems (SBS) to administer the 2019 election. To assure your election specific broadcast email arrives safely in your inbox on May 6, 2019, simply add the following email address as an approved sender.

[noreply@directvote.net](mailto:noreply@directvote.net)

If you do not receive your election email by May 7, 2019 please contact:

[support@directvote.net](mailto:support@directvote.net)

Online voting  
opens **May 6** &  
continues thru  
**May 20**



Cast your vote  
**TODAY!**

## **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 six times during the 2018-2019 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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May 2019  
Volume 49, No. 5  
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# Candidates Credentials

The list that follows was made in accordance with the Procedures for the 2019 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 2017-18 and 2018-19 only.

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

**1. PHILIP RUMORE**

**2017-2018-** Executive Comm., Negotiations, Political Action Comm., BTF President, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. NEA, NYSUT Director, NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg.

**2018-2019-** Executive Comm., Negotiations, Political Action Comm., BTF President, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. NEA, NYSUT Director, NEA/AFT Deleg.

**1. REBECCA PORDUM**

**2017-2018-** Communication/Technology Comm., Community Engagement Comm., Ethnic Minority Involvement Comm. Executive Comm., Negotiations, Political Action Comm., Teacher Center Policy Board, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT Policy Comm., NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg.

**2018-2019-** Communication/Technology Comm., Community Engagement Comm., Ethnic Minority Involvement Comm. Executive Comm., Negotiations, Political Action Comm., Teacher Center Policy Board, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT Policy Comm., NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg.

**2. MELINDA MacPHERSON-SULLIVAN**

**2017-2018-** Executive Comm., Political Action Comm., Retirement Dinner, Teacher Center Policy Board, NYS Teacher Center Technology Comm., NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. NEA, NYSUT Women's Comm., NYSUT Teacher Center Comm., NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg.

**2018-2019-** Executive Comm., Political Action Comm., Retirement Dinner, Teacher Center Policy Board, NYS Teacher Center Technology Comm., NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. NEA, NYSUT Women's Comm., NYSUT Teacher Center Comm., NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg.

**3. JOSEPH MONTANTE**

**2017-2018-** Communication/Technology Comm., Ethnic Minority Involvement Comm., Executive Comm., Finance Comm. Chair, Grievance Comm. Chair, Membership Comm., Negotiations, Political Action Comm., Public Relations Comm., Provocator, Retirement Workshop, Social Comm., Teacher Center Policy Board, BTF Treasurer, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., NYSTRS Deleg.

**2018-2019-** Communication/Technology Comm., Ethnic Minority Involvement Comm., Executive Comm., Finance Comm. Chair, Grievance Comm. Chair, Membership Comm., Negotiations, Political Action Comm., Public Relations Comm., Provocator, Retirement Workshop, Social Comm., Teacher Center Policy Board, BTF Treasurer, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., NYSTRS Deleg.

**4. JANINE SCHUSTER**

**2017-2018-** Educators of Special Education Comm., Executive Comm., Finance Comm., BTF Deleg. Workshop, NYSUT Winter Leadership Conference, NYSUT Summer Leadership Conference, Rallies, Retirement Dinner, Interview Comm.

**2018-2019-** Educators of Special Education Comm., Executive Comm., Finance Comm., BTF Deleg. Workshop, NYSUT Winter Leadership Conference, NYSUT Summer Leadership Conference, Teacher Center Policy Board, Rallies, Retirement Dinner, Interview Comm., NYSUT State Deleg. NEA.

**5. RACHEL BINDA-LIS**

**2017-2018-** Building Comm. Member, Communication/Technology Comm., Executive Comm., Public Relations Comm. Co-chair, Breast Cancer Walk Co-chair, Read Across America Co-chair, Variety Club Telethon Co-chair, NYSUT Conv. Successor, NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., NYSTRS Deleg.

**2018-2019-** Building Comm. Member, Communication/Technology Comm., Executive Comm., Public Relations Comm. Co-chair, Breast Cancer Walk Co-chair, Read Across America Co-chair, Variety Club Telethon Co-chair, NYSUT Conv. Successor, NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., NYSTRS Deleg.

**6. SOPHIA HOWARD-JOHNSON**

**2017-2018-** Community Engagement Comm., Ethnic Minority Involvement Comm., Executive Comm., Negotiations, Political Action Comm., Sick Leave Bank Trustee, Parades, Rallies, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. NEA, NYSUT Member Organizing Institute, NYSUT PreK-Grade 3 Blue Ribbon Comm., NYSTRS Deleg.

**2018-2019-** Building Comm. Member, Community Engagement Comm., Ethnic Minority Involvement Comm., Executive Comm., Negotiations, Political Action Comm., Sick Leave Bank Trustee, Teacher Center Policy Board, Parades, Rallies, Poor People's Campaign, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. NEA, NYSUT Member Organizing Institute, NYSUT Women's Comm., NYSUT PreK-Grade 3 Blue Ribbon Comm., NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., NEA/AFT Minority and Women's Leadership, NYSTRS Deleg.

**7. RUYVETTE D. TOWNSEND**

**2017-2018-** Ethnic Minority Involvement Comm., Executive Comm., Grievance Comm., Political Action Comm., Public Relations Comm., Supplemental Benefit Fund Trustee, Teacher Center Policy Board, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. NEA, NYSUT Comm. Of 100, NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., NEA/AFT Black Caucus, NYSTRS Deleg. *(continues next page...)*



***DON'T DELAY! VOTING RUNS MAY 6-20, 2019***





# Candidates Credentials

**7. RUYVETTE D. TOWNSEND** (cont'd from page 10)

**2018-2019-** Ethnic Minority Involvement Comm., Executive Comm. Grievance Comm., Political Action Comm., Public Relations Comm., Supplemental Benefit Fund Trustee, Teacher Center Policy Board, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. NEA, NYSUT Comm. Of 100, NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., NEA/AFT Black Caucus, NYSTRS Deleg.

**8. APRIL C. HALL**

**2017-2018-** Ethnic Minority Involvement Comm., BTF Leadership Summit, Parades, Rallies, District Interviews, Cancer Walk, NYSUT Phone Banks, NYSUT Winter Leadership Institute, NYSUT Member Organization Institute (MOI).

**2018-2019-** Ethnic Minority Involvement Comm., District Interviews, NYSUT Winter Leadership Institute.

**9. TRISHA ROSOKOFF**

**2017-2018-** Executive Comm., Membership Comm. Co-chair, BTF Vote Cope Comm., District Stakeholders Comm., BTF Member Re-Commitment Campaign (Janus), NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT English Language Learners Comm., NYSUT (MOI) Member Organizing Institute Con Con, NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., NYSTRS Deleg.

**2018-2019-** Executive Comm., Membership Comm., Co-chair, BTF Vote Cope Comm., District Stakeholders Comm., NYSUT Conv. Deleg., 2018 NYSUT Leadership Institute Graduate, NYSUT English Language Learners, NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., NYSTRS Deleg.

**10. DENNIS BRANCATO**

**2017-2018-** Executive Comm., Grievance Comm., Sick Leave Bank Trustee Chair, Fall Delegate Workshop, District Interview Teams, BTF Phone Bank, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT Legislative/Political Action Comm., NYSUT Educational Issues Comm., NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., AFT Political Action/Legislation Comm. 2018, NYSTRS Deleg.

**2018-2019-** Executive Comm., Grievance Comm., Sick Leave Bank Trustee Chair, Fall Delegate Workshop, District Interview Teams, BTF Phone Bank, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT Legislative/Political Action Comm., NYSUT Educational Issues Comm., NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., NYSTRS Deleg.

**11. EVE SHIPPENS**

**2017-2018-** Community Engagement Comm. Chair, Executive Comm., Political Action Comm., NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT Human + Civil Rights Comm., (MOI) Members Organizing Institute.

**2018-2019-** Community Engagement Comm. Chair, Executive Comm., Political Action Comm., NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT Human + Civil Rights Comm., (MOI) Members Organizing Institute Coach, NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg.

**12. PATRICK FOSTER**

**2017-2018-** Executive Comm., Political Action Comm., BTF/NYSUT Commitment Card Campaign, NYSUT Conven. Deleg., NYSUT Leadership Institute, 2019.

**2018-2019-** Executive Comm., Political Action Comm., BPS Athletics Comm., NYSUT Conven. Deleg., NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg.

**13. CHRIS SALAMONE**

**2017-2018-** Communications/Technology Comm., Community Engagement Comm., Executive Comm., Political Action Comm., Provocator, Interview Teams, Phone Bank, Member-organizing Campaign, BTF Rep/NAACP Education Comm., NYSUT Conven. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. NEA, NYSUT Member Organizing Institute, NYSUT Women's Comm. Sisterhood, NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., NYSTRS Deleg.

**2018-2019-** Community Engagement Comm., Executive Comm., Political Action Comm., Provocator, Interview Teams, Phone Bank, Member-organizing Campaign, BTF Rep/NAACP Education Comm., NYSUT Conven. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. NEA, NYSUT Member Organizing Institute, NYSUT Women's Comm. Sisterhood, NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., NYSTRS Deleg.

**14. LYNN M. GARCIA**

**2017-2018-** Communication/Technology Comm., Executive Comm., Political Action Comm. Vice Chair, Teacher Center Policy Board Vice Chair, Council of Delegates Asst. Secy., NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. NEA, NYSUT Women's Comm., NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., NEA/AFT Women's Comm. Vice Chair, NYSTRS Deleg.

**2018-2019-** Communication/Technology Comm., Executive Comm., Political Action Comm. Vice Chair, Teacher Center Policy Board Vice Chair, Council of Delegates Asst. Secy., NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. NEA, NYSUT Women's Comm., NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., NEA/AFT Women's Comm. Vice Chair, NYSTRS Deleg.

**15. MELISSA KENNEY**

**2017-2018-** Communication/Technology Comm., Executive Comm., Sick Leave Band Trustee, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT English Language Arts Comm., NYSTRS Deleg.

**2018-2019-** Communication/Technology Comm., Executive Comm., Sick Leave Band Trustee, Teacher Center Policy Board, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT English Language Arts Comm., NYSTRS Deleg.

**16. SUE RAICHILSON**

**2017-2018-** Community Engagement Comm., Executive Comm., Public Relations Comm., Retirement Workshop Chair, Supplemental Benefit Fund Trustee, Secy. to Council of Delegates, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. NEA, NYSUT Women's Comm., NYSUT CTE Comm., NEA/AFT Alt. Dir. to NEA Board of Directors, NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., NEA Conference of Racial and Social Justice, NEA Women's Caucus Northeast Coordinator, NEA edJustice Comm., NEA/AFT Black Educator Caucus Comm., NEA/AFT Hispanic Caucus Comm., NYSTRS Deleg.

**2018-2019-** Community Engagement Comm., Executive Comm., Retirement Workshop Chair, Supplemental Benefit Fund Trustee, Secy. to Council of Delegates, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT State Deleg. NEA, NYSUT Women's Comm., NYSUT CTE Comm., NEA/AFT Alt. Dir. to NEA Board of Directors, NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., NEA Conference of Racial and Social Justice, NEA Women's Caucus Northeast Coordinator, NEA edJustice Comm., NEA/AFT Black Educator Caucus Comm., NEA/AFT Hispanic Caucus Comm., NYSTRS Deleg.



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(Continued from Page 11...)

## Candidates Credentials

### 17. ELIZABETH (LIZ) SPIRO-CARMAN

**2017-2018-** Community Engagement Comm., Executive Comm., Political Action Comm., BTF Parades.

**2018-2019-** Community Engagement Comm. Co-Chair, Executive Comm., Political Action Comm., BTF Parades, Provocator.

### 18. AMY FLYNN

**2017-2018-** Building Deleg. Chair/Building Comm. Chair, Building Comm. Member.

**2018-2019-** Building Deleg. Chair/Building Comm. Chair, Building Comm. Member.

### 19. SUSAN BAKER

### 20. NICOLE HERKEY

**2017-2018-** Executive Comm., Grievance Comm., Political Action Comm., Social Comm., NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., NYSTRS Deleg.

**2018-2019-** Executive Comm., Grievance Comm., Political Action Comm., Social Comm., (MOI) Member Organizing Institute Pre & Post Janus, NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., NYSTRS Deleg.

### 21. MARK MECCA

**2017-2018-** Executive Comm., Vote Cope Coordinator, NYSUT Conven. Deleg., NYSTRS Deleg.

**2018-2019-** Executive Comm., Vote Cope Coordinator, NYSTRS Deleg.

### 22. ELLEN MALONE

**2017-2018-** Building Deleg., Building Comm. Member

**2018-2019-** Building Deleg. Chair/Building Comm. Chair

### 23. GREG SAWICKI

**2017-2018-** Building Comm. Member, Educators of Special Education Comm., Executive Comm., Teacher Center Policy Board, BTF Vote Cope Comm., NYSUT Special Education Comm., NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., NYSTRS Deleg.

(continues next column)

### 23. GREG SAWICKI (continued)

**2018-2019-** Building Comm. Member, Educators of Special Education Comm., Executive Comm., Retirement Dinner, Teacher Center Policy Board, BTF Vote Cope Comm., NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT Special Education Comm., NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., NYSTRS Deleg.

### 24. TOM ANTHONY

**2017-2018-** Building Deleg., Communication/Technology Comm., NYSUT Educational Technology Comm.

**2018-2019-** Building Deleg., Communication/Technology Comm., NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NYSUT Educational Technology Comm.

### 25. MICHAEL MECCA

**2017-2018-** Building Comm. Member, Executive Comm., Finance Comm., Membership Comm., NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., NYSTRS Deleg.

**2018-2019-** Building Comm. Member, Executive Comm., Finance Comm., Membership Comm., NYSUT Conv. Deleg., NEA/AFT Conven. Deleg., NYSTRS Deleg.

### 26. MIKE JEFFERS

**2017-2018-** Building Deleg. Chair/Building Comm. Chair, Building Deleg., Building Comm. Member, BTF Vote/Cope, NYSUT Conv. Successor, NYSUT (MOI) Member Organizing Institute.

**2018-2019-** Building Deleg. Chair/Building Comm. Chair, Building Comm. Member, BTF Vote/Cope, BTF Vote/Cope, NYSUT (MOI) Member Organizing Institute.

### 27. MARC BRUNO

**2017-2018-** Executive Comm., Political Action Comm., NYSUT Conv. Delegate.

**2018-2019-** Building Comm. Member, Executive Comm., Political Action Comm., NYSUT Conv. Delegate.

### 28. RICH NIGRO

**DON'T DELAY! VOTING RUNS MAY 6-20, 2019**

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