

PROVOCATOR

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BUFFALO TEACHERS FEDERATION VOLUME 53/NUMBER 2

DEDICATION
SOLIDARITY
PROFESSIONALISM
PRIDE
SECOND TO NONE



Snowstorm, Closed Schools, and a Driving Ban Could Not Stop BTF's Annual Thanksgiving Food Drive

It will take more than a Buffalo snowstorm, even an epic one, to stop the BTF from collecting and distributing Thanksgiving dinners to needy families.

It wasn't the usual crowd that gathered to pack bags of food for distribution; after all, there was six feet of snow and a driving ban in some parts of the city, but a few hardy members made it happen.

President Phil Rumore, Vice President Becky Pordum, Treasurer Joseph Montante, Executive Committee member Melissa Kenney and BTF administrative assistant Sierra Umhauer met at the office and did the work usually done by the JROTC students from Hutch Tech High School.

Because of their dedication, for the 26th consecutive year, the Buffalo Teachers Federation was able to make Thanksgiving "a day of thanks" for many needy families in the Buffalo School District. Thousands of dollars in food and gift certificates were donated by BTF members and distributed through several charitable and non-profit groups which were able to pick up and deliver the food.

The annual event is held to "make sure those families enjoy a 'meal of thanks' on

Thanksgiving Day", BTF President Phil Rumore explained. "As we do each year, Buffalo teachers wanted to do their part to make sure families, who might otherwise go without, enjoy their Thanksgiving meal", Phil said. "Over 3,500 families have benefited from the BTF Thanksgiving Food Drive through the years. This is a wonderful way for all of us to give thanks for what we have. After all, isn't that what Thanksgiving is all about?"

In all, 120 shopping bags were filled with cans of corn, green beans, sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce, stuffing mix, dinner rolls, and a \$15 gift card for the purchase of a turkey.

The Thanksgiving Day meal donations were distributed to families through The Gloria Parks Community Center, Native American Community Services, Fulgham Family Foundation, City Mission, and Friends for a Better Buffalo.

When school resumed November 29, Hutch Tech teachers delivered two truckloads of food they had collected for the Food Drive. Those food items were distributed to people in need by charitable and non-profit groups.

Teachers Vote 'No Confidence' for BPS Superintendent, Board of Education

Teachers in Buffalo Public Schools, working without a contract for over three years, overwhelmingly approved a vote of No Confidence for Superintendent Dr. Tonja Williams and the Board of Education.

The results of a poll conducted by the BTF are as follows:

- 90.68% (1,713) I vote No Confidence for Superintendent Tonja M. Williams and the entire Buffalo Board of Education.
- 3.44% (65) I vote against a Vote for No Confidence for Superintendent Tonja M. Williams and the entire Buffalo Board of Education.
- 5.88% (111) I abstain from voting for No Confidence in Superintendent Tonja M. Williams and the entire Buffalo Board of Education.

"The overwhelming vote speaks loudly and needs no comment", BTF President Phil Rumore said.

"Once again, if there is no substantial movement, there will be another vote of No Confidence. This will be the first time there will be two votes of no confidence.

Hopefully, there will be substantial progress. You and our students deserve a contract that reflects your dedication and commitment to our students and each other."

On December 8th, the parties met. Since there was progress made, a second vote of No Confidence was not held. Both parties are scheduled to appear before a Fact-finder and will await his recommendations.



1. With stuffing in hand, Joseph Montante, Phil Rumore, Melissa Kenney, and Becky Pordum fill bags for the Thanksgiving Food Drive.

2. Carrying a box full of bags for families in need, a volunteer from the Gloria Parks Center looks forward to distributing the food.

3. With a truckload of donations from Hutch Tech, teacher Dan Stumpf begins the unloading.

Hardly one day goes by that you, probably one of the most important people in your students' lives, don't give gifts more precious and more important than many they will receive — you in your own way shape knowledge and provide encouragement. Indeed, through your caring, you become an important part of your children's lives. Every one of us can remember an important teacher in our life. That important teacher is and will be you for someone. On behalf of the Buffalo Teachers Federation and Staff, may the precious gifts that you give so freely enrich your lives and be returned to you one hundred fold during this holiday season and throughout the New Year.

No Greater Gift

by PHIL RUMORE

Though a month away, Don and Julie's excitement about the upcoming holiday easily reflected that of "their kids." "Yes, even though their students sometimes seemed intent upon exhausting the last remnants of their patience and sanity, they were still "their kids."

The winter holiday break was Don and Julie's special time together. This year they would once again wing their way across the country to the West Coast to have their Christmas dinner in the warmth of the old hotel with the giant Christmas tree. After dinner, the voices of the boys' choir would fill the air with songs of the holiday season.

They had been married there, and every year since then had scrimped and saved so they could return to the wonderful old hotel they accidentally discovered. Each year it brought them closer together. Each year's visit became ever more special. It had been "one of those years." Once in a while, either Julie or Don would get what they would jokingly call "a class from the dark side." Each student, by themselves, was fine; but all in one class — that school bus never looked so good at the end of the day!

This year, they both had "classes from the dark side." "I know it's the ghost of my third grade teacher getting back at me for hitting her smack in the middle of the forehead with a spitball," Don said. "How was I supposed to know that Carl was going to put his head down on his desk at the exact moment I shot it. I know it must be her. There's no other answer," Don sighed. "You know that's it. The ghost of one of our old teachers is getting back at us. There's no other answer," Julie said as they both laughed.

The catalyst in each of their classes seemed to be Nicole and Michael Warren. Nicole was in Julie's fourth grade class and Michael was in Don's sixth grade class. The Warren children weren't bad kids. They were bright, friendly and motivated to learn. They just had that touch of the dark side that made each of their classes bubble beneath the surface, only to bubble over when you least expected it. Of course, the anticipation of the holiday season stirred the pot even more.

The holiday season always found Don and Julie having students discuss their own holiday and how they would observe it. They talked of Kwanzaa, Chanukah, Christmas and all the holidays each one observed. They remembered how they always seemed to learn something new from one of the kids.

Of course, their students knew about Julie and Don's yearly pilgrimage. "What do you do in a plane for that long?" "Do you have to bring food on the plane?" "How big is the Christmas tree?" "How come there are only boys in the choir?"

were but a few of the endless questions that each day came out of nowhere.

"Do they stay up nights thinking of these questions?" Don asked Julie one day at lunch.

"They must stay up nights thinking about our trip," Julie said as she smiled and shook her head. They agreed that they would tell their classes that they would bring back pictures of the old hotel, the giant Christmas tree and the boys' choir.

One evening as they were making final flight and hotel arrangements, Don mentioned that his class had been quiet with Michael out. The kids said that he had the flu.

"Is Nicole in school?" Don asked.

"Yes, but she must be getting something, too. She's been very quiet," Julie answered.

"I think I'll give the Warrens a call to see how Michael is doing and find out when he'll be back. You know — I'll deny I said this — but we sort of miss him," Don said shaking his head as if he couldn't believe what he had just said.

When Don came back into the room, Julie knew something was wrong.

"Michael... Michael... has leukemia. He has leukemia," Don said as he sank into the chair.

He put his head back, closed his eyes, and could say no more. Michael needed an immediate bone marrow transplant and the only hospital that had perfected this procedure was the San Diego Medical Center. But since the Warrens couldn't afford the expense, Michael was to begin a promising chemo treatment at one of the local cancer treatment centers. The doctors gave no guarantees, but the treatment had shown promise.

Soon, everyone at school knew Michael was sick, very sick. During the week before the winter break, Michael was in everyone's thoughts. Somehow the family had put together enough money to fly Michael, his mom and sister to San Diego and back (as well as pay for a place to stay). Michael recovered completely. It seems that his sister's marrow was a perfect match.

Michael, that holiday season, and the sense of being one family would long be remembered by the East Rockaway Elementary School students and staff. All of their individual trials and tribulations faded from view and became so very trivial.

It was a lesson that was not, but was — one that each in his own way did not learn, but understood. That made it all the more important.

Now, 25 years later, this was to be Julie and Don's last winter holiday season as teachers. In all, they had only missed one visit to the old hotel. Their retirement was set for June. The anticipation

of their annual visit to the old hotel still was there — still very special. They were getting ready to leave on the last day before the break, when the always-too-loud intercom blared out "Don and Julie Adams to the office please."

Upon reaching the office, the clerk advised that a Dr. Anderson and a lawyer were there to see them. Don and Julie looked at each other wondering what had happened.

"Mr. and Mrs. Adams?" "Yes," Don and Julie replied hesitantly. "We came to thank you," said the young woman, tears welling in her eyes.

"Thank us for what?" replied Don.

"I'm Michael Warren, the boy whose life you saved," the young man said, his voice almost breaking.

"I'm Dr. Anderson, Nicole Anderson. It used to be Nicole Warren, Michael's sister," the woman explained.

The young man stepped forward, tears continuing to well in his eyes. "Mom passed away last month; but before she died, she told us that you had made her promise that she would never tell us that you — our teachers, had given us the tickets and money to go to the hospital in San Diego," he said.

Nicole, unable to contain her emotions any longer, threw her arms around Don and Julie, as did Michael. It was one of those moments when no words need be spoken—when no words could be spoken, but so much was said.

Nicole had become a doctor. Her specialty was pediatric oncology.

Michael, while a lawyer, had returned to school a year ago. It seems that he had long wanted to be a teacher. Student teaching would begin next September. They both had families and were doing well.

"We have always wanted so much to see you again to tell you how much you both meant to us even before we knew what you had done. You were our favorite teachers," Michael explained.

"We wanted to give you something you missed," Nicole said softly.

In the card Michael handed Julie were two tickets to San Diego and a certificate for a week at the old hotel.

"It's funny the things you remember from your childhood, but both Nicole and I remembered, as if it were yesterday, where you both went every winter holiday," Michael said.

Don, Julie, Michael and Nicole spent the rest of the day as if they were family. And although they had not seen each other for years, it seemed as though they had been together forever, and always would be.

That year, as Julie and Don looked up at the giant Christmas tree, listening to the voices of the boys' choir enveloping them, they thought of all the Michaels and Nicoles whose lives were intertwined with theirs, and how, on this special night, somehow they were all together.

Each light on the giant tree was one of "their kids."

Yes, there had been some very tough times, but they wouldn't trade places with anyone. They had meant something to thousands of lives. It was they who had been touched. They who were blessed. They were teachers

Letters to the Editor

Firefighters Thank BTF for Support of Ball

Local 282 and our members would like to thank you for your support with the 2020/2021 Buffalo Professional Firefighters Annual Award Balls which were held together on October 16, 2021. With the Covid-19 pandemic, times have been different, and changes have been made, but it worked out in the end with a wonderful night and many honorees.

We celebrated two years of honorees, and each year had its own program book. Your ad was used in both books.

Thank you again for your support of the Buffalo Fire Department and Local 282 with our Buffalo Professional Firefighters Annual Award Ball!

Sincerely,
Vincent Ventresca, president
Local 282
Christopher Whelan
Awards Ball Chairperson

Visit Our Updated Website

www.btfny.org

Save the Date

December 24-31

Winter Recess

January 1 & 2, 2023

New Year's Day
(actual and observed) - no school

January 12

Council of Delegates Meeting
The Grapevine Banquets

January 16

M.L. King, Jr. Day - no school

January 24-27

Regents Exam Week

February 16

Council of Delegates Meeting
The Grapevine Banquets

February 20-24

Mid-winter recess

Senator Sean Ryan Thanks Supporters

As the dust continues to settle after Election Day, I wanted to take a moment to thank the people of the 61st NYS Senate district for putting your trust in me, and to all those who played a role in building our winning campaign. I appreciate everyone who cast a ballot and participated in our democracy.

A campaign for State Senate is a major undertaking and I am grateful to my family, my staff, friends and supporters, campaign workers and volunteers, those who donated financially, and everyone who gave their time, energy, and support to my re-election campaign.

The results from the 2022 midterm elections here in New York and around the nation have given me renewed hope that the American people are determined to build a future that honors our democracy, embraces fundamental rights for women and focuses on doing what's right for our communities.

I thank the people of the 60th Senate District for believing in me these past two years, and when the New Year begins, it will be my honor to represent the people of the new 61st District.

Thank you and Go Bills!

Sean M. Ryan
NYS Senator

BTF Supports the YMCA's Annual Event

Thank you for supporting the YMCA's 2022 Annual Campaign.

Your gift of \$250 will open the door to countless opportunities for children, families, adults, and seniors to benefit from the Y's many life-changing programs and services. Together with the Y, you are giving everyone, regardless of their means, the chance to learn new skills, set and achieve goals, build new friendships, and find a place to belong.

Thank you again for your support.

Sincerely,
Danielle Roberts
Executive Director

BTF Donation Could Save a Child's Life

The National Child Safety Council and your local law enforcement thank you, Buffalo Teachers Federation, for your recent donation of \$250.

National Child Safety Council takes pride in working with dedicated organizations such as yours, who are committed to teaching your children and community how to prevent accidents and needless tragedies through child safety education programs. Your generosity will allow your local law enforcement to distribute these materials to a larger number of children and individuals in your area.

On behalf of your local law enforcement departments, parents, and their children, we thank you for recognizing the need for this type of life-saving prevention program.

Your donation may directly save the life of a child.

Sincerely,
SafetyPup and
National Child Safety Council

BTF Donates to Public Media Programs

Buffalo Toronto Public Media works hard to keep Western New York and Southern Ontario informed and entertained. Your gift makes the stories and music we bring you possible and ensures our whole community benefits from programs that inspire and entertain.

Thank you for your recent gift of \$1,500. Without the support of our members, especially members at your level, our ability to serve your interests and the interests of our area's citizens is nearly impossible.

On behalf of the entire team at Buffalo Toronto Public Media, I again thank you for your support. Your investment in the importance of public media in our community is what motivates our work every day.

Sincerely,
Colleen Miller, Sr. Director
Leadership & Legacy Giving

Time Available for Cancer Screening

Getting screened for cancer is extremely important as it could save your life!

As per New York State law, Buffalo Public School employees are entitled to four hours of paid leave per year to have a screening test done for any type of cancer.

To take advantage of this health care opportunity, enter your absence into AESOP as a cancer screening.

A verification form, available from your building clerk, must also be completed by the health care provider. This form is turned into the clerk for payroll purposes.

Pyszczek Appointed to Executive Committee

Richard S. Pyszczek, Jr., a Social Studies teacher on Special Assignment as coordinator for the Social Studies Department, has been appointed to the BTF Executive Committee in the 7-12 category.

Pyszczek fills the remainder of a two-year term vacated by long-time Executive Committee member Lynn Garcia, who retired in June 2022. The seat will be up for re-election in May.

Pyszczek is a member of the Teacher Center Policy Board and president of the Niagara Frontier Council for Social Studies. He is also a member of many professional organizations and has won a number of awards for his work.

Reimbursement for Rx Co-Pay Available

Did you know that you can receive a reimbursement for prescriptions you and your dependents had filled in 2022?

The Supplemental Benefit Fund will pay you \$2 per script for yourself and the dependents who are on file with the SBF, up to \$100 per person.

Starting in January, you must obtain a computer-generated roster from your pharmacist and complete the Rx Co-Pay Claim Form available from either your building delegate, the SBF Office, or from our website, www.btfny.org, under forms.

The deadline for submitting the form is 5 PM, Friday, March 3.

Welcome New Members

The following 42 teachers have joined the Buffalo Teachers Federation since the last printing of the *Provocator*. Welcome to the union!

Jessica Biddlecom
 Mariah Blocho
 Kevin Burgos
 Dayna Caito
 Tara Caldwell
 Kaitlin Cutrona
 Diana Delmonte Bido
 Ashley Desiderio
 Dario Diaz-Barragan
 Michael Dobranski
 Molly Dwyer
 Jessica Freitag
 Ellen Gaines
 Cassidy Gillespie

Diane Higgins
 Celestial Hughes
 Mary Lou Hutton
 Mollie Johnson
 David Klimchuk
 Shannon Lafferty
 Timothy Lavin
 Gabriella Más
 Kayla Miner
 Michele Mueller
 Emma Peirick
 Nelson Rivera
 Dana Rizzotto-Morton
 Elizabeth Ross

Liam Saiia
 Charmaine Schulze
 Alexandria Simonetti
 Courtney Slabyk
 Amanda Sorley
 Gretchen Squier
 Abby Steven
 Samantha Tolentino
 Lisa Volpe
 Zachary Wachob
 Krystal Wildman
 Elizabeth M. Williams
 Molly Woodfield
 Kristina Young-Nagel

BTF-Endorsed Candidates Win Elections

All of the candidates backed by the Buffalo Teachers Federation were successful in the November elections, in part because of the efforts of our members.

BTF members helped the candidates by volunteering to make phone calls and knocking on doors. Phone banks were conducted at the BTF and NYSUT offices.

The winning candidates, endorsed by the BTF, were:

- ✓ Kathy Hochul – NYS Governor
- ✓ Antonio Delgado - NYS Lieutenant Governor
- ✓ Letitia James – NYS Attorney General
- ✓ Thomas DiNapoli – NYS Comptroller
- ✓ Chuck Schumer - U.S. Senate
- ✓ Brian Higgins- U.S. Congress, NY District 26
- ✓ Sean Ryan - NYS Senate, 61st District
- ✓ William Conrad - NYS Assembly, 140th District
- ✓ Patrick Burke - NYS Assembly, 142nd District
- ✓ Monica Wallace - NYS Assembly, 143rd District
- ✓ Karen McMahon - NYS Assembly, 146th District
- ✓ Jon Rivera - NYS Assembly, 149th District

Judicial Candidates:

- ✓ Shannon Heneghan - NYS Supreme Court, 8th District
- ✓ Samuel P. Davis - Buffalo City Court
- ✓ Gary Wilson - Buffalo City Court

The endorsements for judicial positions were based on the ratings of the Erie County, Minority, and Women's Bar Associations. The other candidates were interviewed by a panel of members from the BTF Political Action Committee. After interviewing and discussing the candidates, the panel made a recommendation to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee, in turn, made a recommendation to the Council of Delegates and their vote was the deciding factor in which candidates would be endorsed by the BTF.

The Council of Delegates voted not to recommend an endorsement in the race for Erie County Clerk.

And, even though the Political Action Committee interviewed candidates for some of six districts in the Buffalo Board of Education race, the Executive Committee and the Council of Delegates voted not to endorse any of the candidates due to the lack of a new Collective Bargaining Agreement.

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 that you would like to share with your BTF 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 e-mail to salamone426@aol.com.

Name: _____ School/position: _____

Personal Email _____ Phone _____

Description of event _____

All submissions become the property of the Provocator.

Teachers, Seeking a Contract Settlement, Continue Board of Education Picket

Dozens of Buffalo teachers, angry because we do not have a contract, picketed the Board of Education before its November meeting at Southside Elementary School.

BTF President Phil Rumore spoke to the crowd, which included members of the Communications Workers of America union, before attending the meeting and addressing the Board.

He assured those present that the BTF will not settle for a contract that is less than teachers deserve.

Phil also addressed the Board and urged them to continue negotiations and to adopt a contract that reflects the dedication of our teachers to the students of Buffalo.

Three members of the Buffalo Parent Teacher Organization, (BPTO), under the direction of Dr. Kate Haq, BPTO Curriculum Chair, also addressed the Board on behalf of the teachers. They presented each board member and the superintendent of schools with a copy of a letter they read during the comments portion of the meeting.

The letter said the following:

“Teaching has never been an easy profession. Educating our youth in the Buffalo Public Schools brings all segments of our community together for a common purpose. Each day our teachers welcome classrooms full of students, some who are ready and willing to learn, some who are struggling with content or personal issues, and some who face extraordinary challenges that make it almost impossible for them to connect with others in a learning space. Yet each day our teachers work with these diverse groups of learners, trying to meet each person’s needs while moving the class forward as a whole. It’s not an easy job.

The challenging work of teaching became even more difficult in March of 2020 as we encountered unprecedented conditions brought on by our nation’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since then, teachers, learners, and families in our district have weathered remote and hybrid learning models, illness, absenteeism, transportation

problems, a national racial reckoning and polarization, and most recently, a white supremacist attack on our neighbors at the Tops market on Jefferson. In the face of all of this change, trauma, and divisiveness, we struggle to protect, educate, and encourage our children. Yet, even without a negotiated contract, our teachers continue to show up each day to help our children and families in the city of Buffalo.

Teachers play a vital role in the lives of our children. Mutual trust and respect are necessary to strong relationship building across our BPS community. Parents and teachers are models for our children so we must work hard to understand each other and establish such trust and respect. We believe that authenticity, thoughtfulness, humility, passion, and love are the keys to nurturing young people in our schools. Just as our children need improved mental and emotional health support, our educators, parents, and family members do as well. Increased mental health services across our District and city are of paramount importance. So if there is a BPS teacher who has made a difference for your family, please reach out and let them know. A kind word of thanks or an acknowledgment of the impact of their work builds stronger connections that will help our District, our city, and our families prosper.

We support our educators and hope their union and the District can quickly embrace an equitable contract that honors their work and attracts more excellent educators to our District. Attracting and keeping top talent means educator salaries that help combat high inflation, educators with more autonomy and control over their classrooms and careers with greater input into curricular and assessment requirements, along with increased support from building and District administration. With these factors in mind, we encourage the Buffalo Teachers Federation and the Buffalo School District to bargain expeditiously in good faith and produce a contract that benefits all of us.”



1. CWA workers from Verizon stand with Executive Committee member Nicole Herkey.

2. Dozens of teachers picket in front of Southside Elementary School before the November Board meeting.

3. BTF President Phil Rumore addresses the teachers before the start of the Board meeting.

4. Frustrated by the lack of a contract, the message on the picket signs speaks for itself.



Bennett Tigers Beat Newburgh to Win NYSPHSAA Class AA Championship

The Bennett Varsity football team soundly defeated the Newburgh Free Academy Goldbacks 42-8 to become the 2022 New York State Public High School Athletic Association Class AA champions.

The December 4th matchup at the Carrier Dome in Syracuse was the second straight year the Bennett Tigers went to the NYS Class AA Championship game.

“I’m so proud of these kids”, Bennett coach Steve McDuffie told news reporters after the game. “This means the world, not only to these kids, but to represent the high school of Bennett, Western New York, and the City of Buffalo.”

The Tigers’ win came exactly one year from its loss in the finals last year.

This year, the team made it its mission to go back to the finals despite forfeiting six division wins when Section VI ruled the team did not file the proper paperwork for a freshman player who transferred to Bennett.

“All of the adversity that we had through Section VI really brought us together and made us a more tight-knit family”, McDuffie told reporters. “If we

look back on this 20-30 years from now, it will always be special.”

“And I’ll make a prediction”, McDuffie added, “we will always be the only state champion that was 7-6.”

Bennett is the second Buffalo Public Schools football team to claim a state championship, joining South Park, which won the Class A title in 2014. This is the sixth time since NYSPHSAA formed its largest classification in 1996 that a Section VI school has won the AA championship, and the first since Jamestown in 2014.

To get to the championship game, the Tigers seized the playoff game last week in Rochester with 34 unanswered points and 535 offensive yards. They pounded the Northstar offense with 12 tackles, including 9 quarterback sacks for minus 55 yards.

The orange and blue tide began its rise in the second half of the Rochester game. The Tigers had their mettle tested early with McQuaid scoring two touchdowns and holding a 14-0 lead at half-time. Bennett responded with a strength and fortitude that has come to define this team. The offense scored 20 straight points behind its imposing offensive line while the defense dismantled the McQuaid

passing and ground game.

The momentum continued in the Championship game when Jayden Lewis plowed through Newburgh’s defense on the first possession of the game and ran for a 77-yard touchdown and then scored the two-point conversion.

Lewis, a Bennett senior, is a University of Buffalo commit. He ended the game with 12 carries for 169 yards, two touchdowns, two two-point conversions, and an interception. In the final four games of his high school career, Lewis had at least 100 rushing or receiving yards making him one of the best offensive players in Western New York, and maybe the entire state.

Bennett had a commanding 30-8 lead at half-time and the pounding continued when the second half started.

Within minutes, Bennett scored twice on a 39-yard rush by Lewis followed by a 55-yard touchdown late in the fourth quarter by sophomore Shamier Land.

It was only at this point that the Bennett Tigers began to relax and celebrate along the sidelines.

A celebration and ring ceremony to present championship rings to the team are being planned.



1. After defeating McQuaid Jesuit High School, the jubilant players celebrate on the sidelines.
2. With the game on the line, Coach Steve McDuffie gives a pep talk to the players.
3. The Bennett Tigers are the 2022 NYS Class AA Champions.

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Scholarships Available for Teachers' Children

Scholarships, funded by a BTF settlement and earmarked for the children of Buffalo teachers first, are being administered by The Community Foundation of Greater Buffalo.

Scholarships for the 2023-24 academic year will be awarded in the spring.

Students who are currently high school seniors or are already enrolled in an accredited program, are encouraged to apply.

Awards range from \$1000-\$6000 and the funds are allocated to the children of Buffalo Teachers before other applicants.

The application process opens on January 1 and closes May 1.

To apply, visit www.cfgb.org and click on the 'Scholarships' tab under Community Change. You also may call the CFGB at 852-2857.

BTF Member Awarded Project Grant

Pamela Brown, a Middle Early College High School School Counselor, was the recipient of a \$500 grant from the Western Zone of the Retired Educators of NY Association (RENY).

The cash award was for a student project called the "History of Step". The goal of this project is to establish a student-directed Step Drill Team that will culminate in a cultural performance for students, staff, and family members during Black History Month in February 2023.

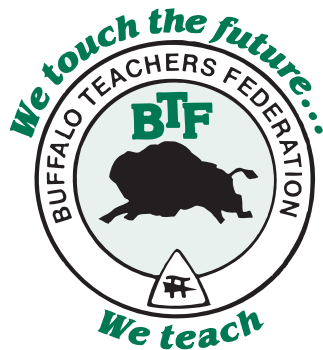
The project will work with the Social Studies, Art, and Music Departments to infuse the history of Step into class instruction time. Students learning and performing Step will have the opportunity to work together as a team. They will be able to learn from each other and share in the success of developing and mastering the Step routine.

The \$500 grant will be used to help purchase footwear required for a Step team.

The award was presented to Ms. Brown at the Early Middle College HS by BTF Retiree Stan Nowak and several members of the RENY Board of Directors on October 26, 2022.



Above: Displaying her certificate from RENY, Pamela Brown is eager to begin the "History of Step" project.



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Joe is the Husband of BTF member Barbara Polino Frandina



Joe Frandina
Optician

Call Today for An Appointment With our Optometrist!

BTF at a Glance

BTF President

Philip Rumore

BTF Vice President

Rebecca Pordum

BTF Treasurer

Joseph Montante

BTF Secretary

Melinda MacPherson-Sullivan



BTF Executive Committee Members

Pre-K-6

Rachel Binda-Lis, April Hall,
Sophia Howard-Johnson,
Trisha Rosokoff, Janine Schuster,
Ruyvette Townsend

7-12

Dennis Brancato, Mike Jeffers,
Melissa Kenney, Rich Nigro,
Richard Pyszczek, M. Sue Raichilson,
Eve Shippens

K-12

Susan Baker,
Desiree Breckenridge-Barnes, Amy Flynn,
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BTF Donates to Breast Cancer Research

On a sunny Saturday in October, Buffalo teachers stepped up to help beat breast cancer by participating in the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk.

The annual event was held October 15 at the Outer Harbor and Buffalo teachers came out to help.

The donation to this worthy cause from Buffalo teachers and the BTF totaled \$2,673. The money was raised through donations and walk participation fees.

This included donations from OTC #42 and 355, Southside Elementary, Adult Learning Center, Attendance Department, and online donations from many individual teachers.

At the October Council of Delegates meeting, many teachers donated baskets for a raffle that was held that evening. The basket raffle, along with a split club raffle, brought in nearly \$400 for the cause.



1. NYSUT Regional Director Joe Cantafio and Executive Vice President Jolene DiBrango joined Phil Rumore, Ruyvette Townsend, Becky Pordum, and Melissa Kenney at the Outer Harbor.

2. BTF participants in the Breast Cancer Walk are joined by a couple of canine friends.

Did You Know...?

That all monitoring or observing of the work or performance of a teacher shall be conducted openly and with the full knowledge of the teacher? In addition, no teacher shall receive adverse comments from any observer in the presence of pupils or any other staff member. This important provision can be found in Article XIII, E of our Collective Bargaining Agreement.

