

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 2
Spring/Summer 2023

A Letter from President
Tomas Fret

Brothers and Sisters, it has been a super busy year and a wild ride! Here we are at the end of another school year. We could not have made it through without you!

With that said, there's still plenty of work to do.

I want to remind you to attend our monthly general membership meetings. More than ever, you should attend these meetings to hear important updates on Paratransit, MTA, School Bus, and School Districts. Please make every effort to attend. Your shop steward will post when and where. These monthly meetings are postponed over the summer months and will resume in September.

Although we took strike authorization votes in NYC for some of the NYC school bus companies, negotiations continue. We have contract negotiations continuing over the summer. Stand by for special announcements in case I call for a Special Order of Business in July and August.

**TOGETHER WE FIGHT –
TOGETHER WE WIN!**



**From Left to Right -Senator Chuck Schumer
(Majority Leader of the United States Senate)
& President Tomas Fret (ATU 1181-1061)**

ATU INTERNATIONAL 2023
CONFERENCE – COPE AND
LOBBY DAY!!!

COPE IS THE ATU'S COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL EDUCATION.

WE SUPPORT CANDIDATES WHO SUPPORT OUR ISSUES IN TRANSIT, PARA, AND SCHOOL BUS INDUSTRIES (REGARDLESS OF POLITICAL PARTY).

WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER!



Washington D.C.



ATU International President John Costa with Senator Chuck Schumer, ATU Local 1181 President Tomas Fret with the International VP's and Local Presidents.

NYC Public Schools (formerly known as the DOE)

- Back-pay issues although not resolved the Union continues to fight for what members deserve!
- Communication is key! We met with OPT all school year and bi-monthly meetings are back on the calendar!
- Meetings with the Chancellor and the Chancellor's Executive Team – The Union expects to have a follow-up meeting over the summer sometime in July.
- Chancellor's Regulations – together with the Union's New York City Lobbyist, we can make a difference- these regulations must be fair and the process should be consistent! The Union continues to fight the good fight.

A TRUE HERO

Lorissa Bus Driver Ijandor Manesy AKA 'Manny'

HEADLINE: Quick-thinking driver prevents injuries in Rego Park, Queens, school bus fire - Witnesses described the heroic actions of the bus driver.

THIS IS SCHOOL BUS – SAFETY IS OUR PRIORTY!



HAITIAN FLAG DAY PARADE- SATURDAY JUNE 3, 2023 CENTRAL PARK NYC



Mayor Adams in the house!



From left to right: Executive Board member Nicko Hedge, shop stewards Brunot Fleuriot, Paulett Thompson, and Arcadio Fret, President Tomas Fret, Executive Board members Georges Saint-Victor and Mario Jean

UPCOMING:

LABOR DAY PARADE- September 9, 2023

President Fret, the Executive Board and Staff WANT TO SEE EVERYONE – **ALL SHOP STEWARDS AND MEMBERS WITH THEIR FAMILIES THIS YEAR-** DETAILS WILL BE SENT AS TIME GETS CLOSER. MARK YOUR CALENDARS ACCORDINGLY.

The Union is fighting to get back what members previously had and everything they lost. A fair contract for all senior and new members is the answer to making school bus a career again.

Drivers, Attendants and Mechanics – **Who Moves this City?! Who Moves the Children of New York?!?! DON'T MESS WITH OUR FAMILIES! DON'T MESS WITH OUR MONEY!!**

STRIKE AUTHORIZATION VOTES IN NYC – June 2023

- **NYCSBUS BK/BX/QNS/SI**

Total 929 yes/64 no/ 9 Void

- **Consolidated+ companies BX&BK**

Total 872 yes/34 no/7 void

- **PIONEER BX&SI**

Total 576 yes/ 83 no / 2 void

- **Logan+ companies BX&QNS**

Total 338 yes / 38 no

**Bittersweet Farewell – Counsel Gilberg will be missed!
17 years representing ATU Local 1181-1061**



Union Counsel Rick Gilberg

**April 2023- ATU International Shop Steward Training
CONGRATULATIONS to the Class:**

MV SI:	Orlando	Gordon
MVT BK:	Sabrina	Motaleb
GVC LTD:	John	Vidal
GVC II:	Vernon	Holder
Maggies:	Miguel	Rodriguez
Boro Trans:	Kirk	Barrett
MTA Bus Co.:	Greg	Sirit
MV Harlem:	Jamal	Quattlebaum
Boro Trans:	Gordon	Baumann

DURING RAIN, SNOW, SLEET OR SHINE THE UNION CONTINUES TO NEGOTIATE AS WELL AS RESOLVE ANY ISSUES THAT MAY ARISE DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS. DON'T SEE YOUR COMPANY? PLEASE CONTACT YOUR SHOP STEWARD OR EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER FOR QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS.

School Bus Contracts

Upcoming Negotiations Summer 2023

All American: Met June 26, 2023- next negotiations date TBD

NYCSBUS: July 13, 2023

B-Alert: June 30, 2023

Leesel: July 6, 2023

Arrow Rail Link: July 11, 2023

WESTCHESTER CONTRACTS

CLARKSTOWN – July TBD

CROTON HARMON – JUNE 29, 2023

LONG ISLAND CONTRACTS

Floral Park: TBD - We expect to schedule a meeting after the District's BOE meeting which is currently set for July 10th.

FRANKLIN SQUARE: AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE – MOA is not finalized – We expect members to vote sometime in September once the MOA is signed by both parties.

WE TRANS – Communication – Radio Repair Techs: July 14, 2023

PARATRANSIT

Maggies: June 28, 2023

MVT: July 7, 2023 & July 12, 2023

CONTRACTS RATIFIED!

- WeDriveU - April 4, 2023 – **11-7!**
- Royal Coach-Somers - June 2, 2023 **30-11!**

WE TRANS – Shop Steward Elections

Congratulations Anthony Napoli (Mechanics) and Monica Jimenez (Cleveland depot) on your shop steward election in June. Welcome to the shop stewards ATU Local 1181 family!

Pension and Welfare

A special message from Robert D’Ulisse, Funds Administrator:

In order to eliminate some confusion that we have had in the past, I would like to emphasize if you are on Disability or Workers’ Compensation for the maximum amount of time, allowed in your contract, and are not able to return to work, please contact the Fund Office for them to determine if you are eligible to retire or vest your Pension benefit for a future date. This could prevent any loss in your monthly Pension benefit if you are eligible due to any late filing. You can request the Pension Department to do a work up and inform you if there are any Pension contribution shortages that you may owe while you were out of work for any reason.

Also, if you are not able to return to work and are not eligible for a Pension, you still need to contact the Pension Department for them to do a work up for you to get a refund of the contributions and interest that you would be entitled to, if you do not have vesting rights.

Please be aware that if you were on Disability or Workers’ Compensation and did return to work, your employer will be doubling up on the Pension deduction for time that you were out on Disability or Workers’ Compensation for which there were no contributions made on your behalf. This will prevent issues that may come up at retirement because of failure to pay your portion for the time you were out.

Welfare Fund:

The Welfare monthly reserve for April was 11.82 and for May is 12.21 months.

There was a recent mailing sent out to inform everyone that back on March 1, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Labor had extended certain deadlines for:

- The date participants may file a benefit claim or appeal the denial of a benefit claim;
- The 30-day period (60-day period in certain circumstances) to request enrollment in the Plan due to a HIPAA special enrollment event);
- The 60-day period to elect COBRA continuation coverage;
- The 30-day grace period to pay COBRA premiums;
- The 45-day period to pay the first COBRA premium after electing COBRA; and
- The date for participants to notify the Plan of a COBRA qualifying event, such as a birth or adoption of a child, marriage, or determination of disability for the purposes of the COBRA disability extension

This extension was called the “Outbreak Period.” Now that the National Emergency has ended the tolling period of your deadline for any of the above actions on April 10, 2023, there is 60 days grace from the end Outbreak Period. Therefore, on June 9, 2023 the normal deadlines will begin again.

Pension Fund:

The preliminary Pension Fund’s Assets for April was \$668,911,016. The preliminary Pension Fund’s Assets for May is \$662,168,882.

There was a recent mailing sent out to inform everyone that back on March 1, 2020, the Department of Labor had extended certain deadlines for the submission of pension plan claims and appeals in response to COVID-19 pandemic. This extension was called “Outbreak Period.” Now that the National Emergency has ended on April 10, 2023, the Outbreak Period extending the Fund’s claims and appeal deadline has ended on June 9, 2023.

New Members

Welcome to the Union Family! Please see your shop steward to enroll in the Union timely.
Union Strong- “The most important word in the language of the working class is *SOLIDARITY* Harry Bridges”

Reminders:

- Want the EPP – Donate to COPE. See your shop steward to enroll today.
 - ❖ The Union will continue to fight for what our members deserve- EPP! EPP! EPP! Session resumes in September and you bet we’ll be there with bells on.
- Update your address and phone number- please contact the Union office, your shop steward or Executive Board member if you have questions on how to update.
- **Office Phone Numbers:**

Union Office	718-845-5600
Pension & Welfare Funds	718-845-5800
Credit Union	718-425-1312
Babylon Long Island Office	631-587-4300

- Please note, if you have recently moved and have not notified the Fund Office, please call and we will gladly send you a form to complete so we can update our records, and for you to be able to receive all future mailings timely.
- We encourage you to go to the website (<https://atul181.org>) from time to time to see if any new documents or information have been added to keep you informed.
- In order to eliminate some confusion that we have had in the past, I would like to remind you that if you are suspended from work or laid off through furlough, your Welfare benefits will cease at the end of the month that you were suspended or laid off. You have the right to take COBRA and will receive a COBRA Notice in the mail from Conexis. If

you do not take COBRA, you will be responsible for any medical claims for that time period that you did not have medical coverage.

- If you are on Disability or Workers' Compensation, you are covered for Welfare benefits for the time you are eligible per your contract with your Company. After such time is exhausted, you will no longer have Health and Welfare coverage unless you opted for COBRA, or if you are eligible to retire with at least ten years of service.
 - ❖ If you are on Disability or Workers' Compensation and return to work, your Employer will be doubling up on the Employee welfare (Cafeteria) deduction for the period that you were out of work.
- If there are any major changes in your life, you may want to confirm who you have designated as your beneficiary and contingent beneficiary for your life insurance under the Welfare Fund.

UNION OFFICE

Executive Officers

President/Business Agent	Tomas Fret
Financial Secretary-Treasurer	Jean Claude Calixte
Recording Secretary	Anthony Cordiello
Vice President	Robin Benedetto

Executive Board Members

Renee Jean Louis	Fred Andreani
John Deloatch	Joseph Micciulli
Georges Saint-Victor	John Cleary
Nicholas (Nicko) Hedge	Mario Jean
Mark Peay	

Long Island Field Representatives

Willie Castillo
Guy Prosper
Jakki Scholl

OFFICE STAFF ON NEXT PAGE

Office Manager/Assistant to the Financial Secretary-Treasurer	Donna Walsh
Enrollment/Seniority/Retirees	Ines Sanchez
Data input/Distribution List/Ad Hoc	Christina Ruggiero
Administrative Assistant	Aliyah Somerville
Administrative Assistant	Kassandra Sanchez
Chief of Staff	Carolyn Rinaldi
Union Consultant	Michael Cordiello



ATU Local 1181-1061 Executive Officers, Executive Board members, LI field Reps and Office Staff

Welfare & Pension Funds

Ambrina Aslam	Medical & Dental Supervisor
Ann Bachan	Billing/Enrollment Supervisor
Nicole C. Bongiorno	Pension Examiner
Brian Chabra	Pension Examiner
Margaret M. Difano	Receptionist/Appeals & Liens
Robert D'Ulisse	Director of Pension & Welfare Funds Disability/Life Insurance/Customer Service Assistant
Amy Gartland	Dental Examiner
Norma Gayle	Pension & Welfare Consultant
James P. Hedge	Director's Assistant
JoAnn Isolano	Accounts Receivable/ Data Entry
Daniel R. Istrico	Dental Consultant
Warren A. Kabash	Billing/Enrollment
Margaret H. Lamonica	Pension Supervisor
Hilder L. Laverde	Accounting Department
Gunther Mejia	Dental Customer Service
Ashley Micciulli	Enrollment Department
Anne Oakes	Pension Examiner
Renee D. Pinckney	Billing/ Accounts Receivable
Sally Pun	IT Assistant/ Imaging/Mailing
Roger S. Santos	IT/Imaging Supervisor
Donna A. Scala	Administrative Assistant/Liens
Donna A. Schuster	Enrollment Department
Iris Torres	Medical/Dental Customer Service
Linda Vecchio	Accounting Department
Anna E. Virgona	Accounting Supervisor
Andrea Zito	Controller of Pension & Welfare Funds
Vincent Zito	

Meet your Division 1181 A.T.U. Welfare & Pension Funds Staff



Transit Federal Credit Union - PICTURE OF STAFF TO FOLLOW (NEXT NEWSLETTER)

George Robinson

Paul Fedus

Gerry Auricchio

Nicole Badome

Amy L. Georgoulas

Manager

Loan Officer

Head Teller

Teller/Payroll Officer

Teller/Payroll Officer

SUMMER WISHES

May this summer bring joy, happiness, and great memories with friends and family!

Have a safe summer and remember-

**TOGETHER WE FIGHT – TOGETHER WE
WIN!**