

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3
Fall/Winter 2023

A Letter from President
Tomas Fret

Brothers and Sisters, another year gone by and we made it! It is the **U** and **I** in **UNION** that makes us strong.

This has been one of the roughest years of negotiations. Between strike vote authorizations, averting a strike, and long days and nights fighting for what **YOU DESERVE (A FAIR CONTRACT)**, it was your dedication, passion and loyalty that got us through this.

Make no mistake, our work is never done. We will continue to fight for what you deserve. We will continue to make sure that you are treated fairly and the companies are not violating the contract.

Over the next few months, we'll be back at it in Albany fighting for the EPP amongst other things!

Until then, I hope you are able to rest over the Holiday break celebrating with your family and friends.

God Bless You All!

From Left to Right -Local 1181 President Tomas Fret with ATU International President John Costa at City Hall – debriefing after meeting with Mayor Adams and staff to discuss one contract – September 7, 2023



City Hall September 7, 2023



NYC Central Labor Council AFL-CIO Annual Labor Day Parade- Saturday, September 9, 2023 – NEXT YEAR WE WANT TO SEE YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES- WE ARE LABOR!



Washington DC – White House - December 2023



Local 1181 President Tomas Fret with Marty Walsh 6th Executive Director of the National Hockey League Players Association and Former United States Secretary of Labor.



Mr. Fret with Elizabeth H. Shuler President of the AFL-CIO, Shuler is the first woman leader of America's labor movement.

NYC Public Schools (formerly known as the DOE)

- 14 backpay cases (some pending since 2019-2021). This past October we received 10 awards and 4 denials.
- The Union will continue to meet with OPT leadership bi-monthly and resume meetings in 2024 with the Chancellor's office to fight for fair regulations.
- Please remember to speak with your Executive Board member (delegate) or shop stewards directly if you have questions and/or concerns.

Long Island

Will Smith – Trainer - We Transport (Elmont Yard) – School Bus Driver of the Year! Congratulations Will...



NYC School Bus Contracts Ratified in November and December 2023

All American

Bay Parkway (Shop only)

B-Alert (Attendants only)

Consolidated companies
(SNT/ANJ/Boro)

Hoyt

IC Bus

Leesel including the Shop

Logan companies (Logan Trans,
Bobby's, Grandpa's, Lorissa)

NYCSBUS

Pioneer Transportation including
the Shop

TOTAL: 3,438 yes – 784 no

OTHER COMPANIES INCLUDING PARATRANSIT AND DISTRICTS RATIFIED BETWEEN SEPTEMBER AND NOVEMBER

ARROW RAIL

CLARKSTOWN

CPT

CROTON HARMON

FLORAL PARK

FRANKLIN SQUARE

MAGGIES

TOTAL: 341 yes – 99 no

REMINDER - Upcoming Contracts Expiring:

- First Student- Negotiations ongoing
- Selby –Negotiations commence January 12, 2024
- Division 1181- expires 12/31/23 – Negotiations ongoing
- MTA-expired 10/31/23- We expect negotiations to commence in a few weeks- stay tuned!

MV PARA

Strike Authorization Votes

December 20th (BK) – 182 yes – 1 no

December 21st (SI/Harlem) 154 yes – 1 no

**Your Executive Board members will keep you posted –
Stand by for updates!**

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:

Welfare monthly reserve for October is 11.69 months and for November is 12.19 months.

As you are aware, the Union has negotiated and their recent Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Contractors in which they were successful in eliminating the copays for Radiology and Lab work. This is to be effective as of January 1, 2024. Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield is in the process of updating their computer system to accommodate this change in your Welfare benefits. Unfortunately, they will not have it updated by January 1. Therefore, you may be charged for these copays until their system has been fully updated. Please be assured that Blue Cross Blue Shield has committed to us that any claims that you may have paid for these

copays starting January 1, 2024, will be recycled and generate a reimbursement check to you. We have been assured that you do not have to present a receipt that you paid these copays. If you have recently moved and have not updated the Fund Office, kindly do so immediately because Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield will generate the check and mail it to the address that the Fund has on file. We are sorry for any inconvenience that this may cause. We are told that Blue Cross is working diligently to update their system as soon as possible.

Effective as of April 1, 2024, Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield will be changing their name to Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield. Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield has been operating under Anthem since 2006. There will be no impact or changes made to their pricing, networks, coverage, or level of support that you have been receiving in the past. You should receive your card sometime in March. Once you do, kindly disregard your old card for April 1st going forward. It is imperative that the Fund Office has your current address since Blue Cross will be mailing out your card based on the address we have on file. If you need to change your address, contact the Fund Office as soon as possible.

Pension Fund:

The Preliminary Pension Fund’s Assets for October was \$638,274,408, and the Preliminary Pension Fund’s Assets for November is \$675,082,017.

New Members

Welcome to the Union Family! Please see your shop steward to enroll in the Union timely. ‘Union of hearts, not hands, does a marriage make, and sympathy of mind keeps love awake’ – Aaron Hill.

Reminders:

- 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 January – Together we Fight – Together we WIN.
- 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.
- **Important 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.
- As a reminder, we are updating our computer system and we would like to have your email address so we can send you correspondence on a timelier basis. We will send you correspondence asking for your email address and if you would want all your

correspondence sent by email, if possible. If we do not hear from you, we will assume that you do not want to receive documents by email.

- We encourage you to go to the website (<https://atu1181.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.

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	Service Assistant
Norma Gayle	Dental Examiner
James P. Hedge	Pension & Welfare Consultant
JoAnn Isolano	Director's Assistant
Daniel R. Istrico	Accounts Receivable/ Data Entry
Warren A. Kabash	Dental Consultant
Margaret H. Lamonica	Billing/Enrollment
Hilder L. Laverde	Pension Supervisor
Gunther Mejia	Accounting Department

Ashley Micciulli	Dental Customer Service
Anne Oakes	Enrollment Department
Renee D. Pinckney	Pension Examiner
Sally Pun	Billing/ Accounts Receivable
Roger S. Santos	IT Assistant/ Imaging/Mailing
Donna A. Scala	IT/Imaging Supervisor
Donna A. Schuster	Administrative Assistant/Liens
Iris Torres	Enrollment Department
Linda Vecchio	Medical/Dental Customer Service
Anna E. Virgona	Accounting Department
Andrea Zito	Accounting Supervisor
Vincent Zito	Controller of Pension & Welfare Funds

Transit Federal Credit Union -

George Robinson	Manager
Paul Fedus	Loan Officer
Gerry Auricchio	Head Teller
Nicole Badome	Teller/Payroll Officer
Amy L. Georgoulas	Teller/Payroll Officer

A message from George Robinson Manager of the Credit Union:

The Transit Federal Credit Union would like to announce that Affinity Lending through Cross Country Mortgage is now extending Home Loan services to all Credit Union and Union members.

Not to mention the great products already offered to our members from Savings accounts, Personal and Auto Loans, Voluntary Benefits (Short-Term Disability and Critical Illness plans), and Vacation & Holiday Clubs.

For more information visit the Credit Union office, 3rd Floor (same building as Local 1181) or give us a call at (718)-425-1312 and speak to your Credit Union Customer Service Representative. Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year to all!"

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	Kasandra Sanchez
Chief of Staff	Carolyn Rinaldi
Union Consultant	Michael Cordiello

The Union, Funds and Credit Union wish you happy holidays! We hope you enjoy this time with your loved ones. Let's bring in the New Year with love, prosperity, health and kindness.

The force of union conquers all– Homer

