



Kevin Lembo has served as Connecticut's Comptroller since 2010 and will leave big shoes to fill.

Comptroller Kevin Lembo Announces Resignation

Comptroller Kevin Lembo has been a strong advocate for state employees for the last decade, working tirelessly to ensure that state benefits are protected and enhanced. His resignation leaves a hole in state leadership that will be difficult to fill.

As Comptroller, Kevin Lembo

has withstood decades of strong opposition from the private insurance companies while fighting for accessible, affordable and equitable health care for all of Connecticut's residents. Through these fights he reminded us of the qualities we hope to find in all public servants - intelligence, integrity, kindness and

unwavering dedication.

Even in the last few weeks of his tenure, Comptroller Lembo has worked vigilantly to ensure that essential workers who have risked their health and safety throughout the pandemic have access to resources through the Essential Workers COVID-19 Assistance Fund. The announcement of his resignation is a real loss for Connecticut, but we wish Comptroller Lembo a full recovery and send our thoughts to his husband Charles and their children.

CSEA Legislative Agenda

The 2022 General Assembly will be in Session Starting in February

As we say goodbye to 2021 and look forward to what 2022 has the potential to bring, CSEA members are focused on the coming start of the General Assembly's next legislative session. From February 9 through May 4, 151 state Representatives and 36 state Senators serving constituents from throughout the 169 municipalities of Connecticut will convene to conduct the people's business. What this session will look like - in-person or virtual - and which people will be served - working and middle class residents or the super rich and large corporations - remains to be seen. The ongoing pandemic will dictate the former, but the latter is up to us. CSEA members have a long history of pushing General Assembly members to make the right choices when it comes to budget and legislative priorities, and that involvement and activism will be crucial to ensure our elected officials are advancing legislation which puts working people first.

The CSEA Legislative Action Committee (LAC), which is composed of members from every council in our local, working with rank-and-file members, member-leaders, and staff have recommended and the Executive Council has approved a strong and expansive agenda for the 2022 legislative session. It is one that includes items which impact every member of CSEA. The next legislative

session presents a range of challenges and obstacles, but also significant opportunities to shape critical public policies that will improve our careers, our lives, and the services we provide.

2022 Legislative Agenda

Approval of Collective Bargaining Agreements. All state employee collective bargaining agreements and arbitrated awards must be voted on by both chambers of the General Assembly. Currently, the seven state bargaining units represented by CSEA, as well as the 27 others represented by different union locals, are negotiating contracts with the State. In the 2022 legislative session, we are hopeful that all state employee bargaining units will have agreements or awards before the legislature. CSEA members will fight to pass, not only, our own contracts, but will work with our fellow union members to ensure that every contract is approved. CSEA represents multiple state bargaining units:

- *P-3A (Education Administrators);
- *P-3B (Education Professions);
- *P-4 (Engineering, Scientific, & Technical);
- *NP-8 (Correction Supervisors Council);
- *Police Inspectors Council;
- *Supervising Judicial Marshals; and
- *NP- 9 (State Police Lieutenants and Captains).

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I'm Not Okay

White Paper Reveals Mental Health Crisis in Corrections

There is a mental health crisis in corrections that must be addressed. It is estimated that over 150 officers and staff take their own lives each year. The stresses that correctional officers and staff are facing on a daily basis are resulting in an alarming rise in suicides, divorce, substance abuse, increased mortality and numerous physical ailments long associated with elevated levels of stress.

Tara Keaton, Vice President of the Corrections Supervisors Council is a part of One Voice United, a group of correctional officers and staff who have come together to ensure that our voices are heard at the tables where corrections reform is discussed. One of the most critical areas this group believes must be addressed is the mental health of corrections officers and staff if any meaningful change

is to occur. To fully understand the depths of the problem One Voice United embarked on an 18-month project that started with a survey of officers and staff across the nation on the issues they felt were most important to them. Ninety-one percent identified mental health and PTSD as critical areas of concern. These results led to extensive research on this topic resulting in the release of the white paper, "I Am Not Okay." An excerpt can be found on page 7, but the full paper can be found on our website at CSEA-CT.com. Written and researched by correctional officers, staff and professionals, this white paper is an important tool that delves into the complexities of the problems the corrections work environment presents. It does not simply identify the problems,

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Visit our union's website at: CSEA-CT.com

Postmaster: Please forward address changes to:
CSEA, 760 CAPITOL AVE., HARTFORD, CT 06106

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Meetings And News

MEETING DATES

The Council 400 Delegates Meeting is always held on the third Thursday of the month.

The February Delegates Meeting will be held as a hybrid meeting on Thursday, February 17th at 10am at the CSEA Union Hall

All meetings are subject to change/cancellation depending on the state of the global pandemic

Chapter 401 (Hartford area):
Thursday, February 3rd, 12:15PM
lunch, meeting at 12:45PM
CSEA Union Hall
760 Capitol Ave., Hartford, CT
Patrice Peterson: 860-416-0306

Chapter 402 (Danbury area):
Wednesday, February 9th at 10:00AM
United Methodist Church
5 Clapboard Ridge Rd., Danbury, CT
Linda Albanese: 860-354-6965

Chapter 403 (Norwich area):
Tuesday, February 8th at 1:30PM
Rose City Senior Center
8 Mahan Dr., Norwich, CT
Carol Burgess: 860-859-3641 (h)
860-303-7267 (c)

Chapter 404 (Waterbury area):
Tuesday, February 8th at 10:00AM
Holy Trinity Greek Community Center
937 Chase Parkway (exit 17 off I-84),
Waterbury
John Quinn: 203-804-0189

Chapter 405 (New Haven area):
Thursday, February 10th at 11:30AM
Guest Speaker:
Cigna Dental Representative
Hamden Town Office Building
Third Floor
2750 Dixwell Ave., Hamden
Ron Osokow: 203-671-7685

Chapter 406 (Middletown area):
Tuesday, February 8th at 1:00PM
American Legion Post 75
58 Bernie O'Rourke Dr.,
Middletown, CT
Joe Formica: 860-347-4532

Chapter 407 (Bridgeport area):
Wednesday, February 16th at 1:00PM
St. Joseph's of Stratford National
Catholic Church
1300 Stratford Rd., Stratford
(on Rt. 113 toward Sikorsky Airport)
Carol Donofrio: 203-888-2920

Chapter 408 (Willimantic area):
Thursday, February 10th at 12:30PM
Guest Speaker: United Healthcare
Representative
Mansfield Senior Center
303 Maple St., Mansfield, CT
Marleen Dutra: 860-477-0858

Chapter 409
(State University Professors)
Friday, February 18th at 10:00AM
Guest Speaker: Kevin Sullivan, CSEA
Retiree Organizer
CSEA Union Hall
760 Capitol Ave., Hartford, CT
Dave Walsh: 860-684-4773

Chapter 410 (Windsor Locks area):
Monday, February 14th at 1:00PM
Guest Speaker:
United Healthcare Representative
Suffield Senior Center
145 Bridge St., Suffield, CT
Amelia Smith: 860-687-1848

Chapter 411 (Rocky Hill area):
Thursday, March 17th
CSEA Union Hall
760 Capitol Ave., Hartford, CT
Guest Speaker:
Cigna Dental Representative
Sebastian Puglisi: 860-529-8336

Chapter 412 (Putnam area):
Tuesday, February 15th at 1:30PM
Congregational Church of Putnam
175 Main St., Putnam, CT
Don Gladding: 860-564-9092

Chapter 414 (Torrington area):
Monday, February 21st at 10:00AM
Five Points Center for the Arts
843 University Dr., Torrington, CT
Karen Pineman: 860-354-6727

Chapter 415 (Manchester area):
Monday, February 28th at 1:00PM
Guest Speaker: Representative from
Czepiga, Daly, Pope & Perri, Estate
Planning Law Firm
Elks Lodge
30 Bissell St., Manchester, CT
Donna McElduff: 860-454-0480

Chapter 416 (New London area):
Tuesday, February 8th at 12:00PM
Guest Speaker:
United Healthcare Representative
Waterford Public Library
49 Rope Ferry Road Waterford, CT
John Knaff: 860-857-4244

Chapter 417 (Plainville area):
Wednesday, May 11th at 1PM
Guest Speakers:
United Healthcare Representative
& CSEA Retiree Organizer:
Kevin P. Sullivan
Plainville Public Library
56 East Main St., Plainville, CT

Chapter 418
(Community College Retirees):
Tuesday, February 1st at 10:00AM
4 C's Union Hall
907 Wethersfield Ave. Hartford
Bill Searle: 860-745-3692

**FEBRUARY FLORIDA
MEETING DATES WITH
UNITEDHEALTHCARE,
CIGNA AND CSEA
REPRESENTATIVES -
DEPENDING ON THE STATE
OF THE PANDEMIC
**Details will be sent to chapter
members****

Chapter 421 (Daytona, FL Area):
Wednesday, February 9th 11:30am
Social, 12:00pm Lunch,
Speakers to Follow
Halifax Plantation ClubHouse,
3400 Clubhouse Drive,
Ormond Beach, FL 32174.
Meal Choices: Chicken Piccata, Beef
Burgundy/Mushroom, and Baked
Stuffed Shrimp
Members: \$30 -
Non-members: \$34.70
Checks should be made payable to
"CSEA Chapter 421" and mailed
before Jan. 31 to:
John Veray, 107 White Ibis Court
Daytona Beach, FL 32119 -
(386) 871-0573
Please indicate meal option in Memo
line of check.

Chapter 422 (Ocala, FL Area):
Wednesday, February 2nd 11:30am
Social, 12:30pm Lunch
Francesco Ristorante,
16770 South Highway, Suite 608
Summerfield, FL 34491
Meal Choices: Chicken Parmesan
w/pasta, Beef Marsala w/mashed po-
tatoes, White Fish Piccata w/angel
hair. All include: salad, bread,
coffee/tea, dessert
Members: \$18 - Non-members \$23
Checks should be made payable to
"CSEA Chapter 422" and mailed to:
Hilda M. Spotts 513 Fairways Circle
Unit A. Ocala, FL 34472 - (352) 843-
7988

Chapter 423
(Highland Beach, FL Area):
Wednesday, February 16th 12:00pm
Renzo's Café and Pizzeria,
6900 North Federal Highway,
Boca Raton, FL
Select from menu & pay for own
meal. No RSVP necessary.
Ron Herzig (561) 994-6428

Chapter 424 (Sarasota, FL Area):
Monday, February 7th 9 am - 12 pm
Courtyard Marriott, 8305 Tourist
Center Dr., Sarasota, FL 34201
Breakfast Buffet includes Scrambled

Eggs, Crisp Bacon, Sausage Patties,
Savory Potatoes, Breads w/butter &
preserves, Fresh Fruit, Starbucks
Coffee, Assorted Juices and Tazo Tea.
Members: \$15 - Non-members: \$20
Checks should be made payable to
"CSEA Chapter 424" and mailed to:
Bob Mackiewicz, 414 Pelican Moor-
ings, Venice, FL 34285
RSVP before February 3rd 2022 -
(941) 387-4408

Chapter 425 (Dunedin, FL Area):
Friday, February 4th 11:00am Social,
12:00pm Lunch
Olive Garden 29461 US Hwy 19 N,
Clearwater, FL
Cost per person is \$8.99
Meal Choice: Spaghetti w/marinara or
meat sauce, Eggplant parmesan
w/mozzarella and marinara, Cheese
ravioli w/mozzarella and marinara or
meat sauce, 5 cheese al forno (oven
baked italian cheeses over pasta).
Checks should be made payable to
"CSEA Chapter 425" and mailed to:
Ursula Bracker 3673 Rockaway Dr.,
Holiday, FL 34691
(727) 848-0089 - Please RSVP by
December 29th

Chapter 426 (Ft. Myers, FL Area):
Monday, February 14th 11:00am
Cape Coral Moose Lodge 2199,
155 Santa Barbara Blvd. North,
Cape Coral
Linda Benoit (239) 489-1787

Chapter 427 (Vero Beach, FL Area):
Friday, February 11th 11:30am Social,
12:00pm Lunch, Speakers & Door
Prize Raffles to Follow
C J Cannon's 3414 Cherokee Dr.
Vero Beach (at the airport)
Meal Choice: Turkey or Stuffed Cod.
Includes Salad, Trimmings, Vegetable,
Dessert, Coffee/Tea
Note meal choice on check and
make payable to Tim Jurek
4065 Merritt Island, FL 32952
Cost is \$25 per person. Please RSVP
by Feb. 4th - (321) 452-7843

**MARCH SOUTH CAROLINA
MEETING WITH UNITED-
HEALTHCARE, CIGNA AND
CSEA REPRESENTATIVES
**Details will be sent to
chapter members****

Chapter 431
(Myrtle Beach, SC Area):
Tuesday, March 15th 11:00am-1:30pm
Golden Corral Restaurant 688 Oak
Forest Lane, Myrtle Beach, SC 29577
Buffet will be available for
\$10 per person
Checks should be made payable to
"Chapter 431" and mailed to:
Virginia Nolan, Treasurer,
Chapter 431
3204 S. Memorial Ave.,
Nags Head, NC 27959

Important numbers to have on hand:

Retirement Division Payroll: 860-702-3528

Retirement Division Life Insurance: 860-702-3537

Retirement Division Health Insurance: 860-702-3533

Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield: 1-800-922-2232

CSEA Retiree Organizer, Kevin Sullivan: 860-951-6614 x118

UnitedHealthcare: 1-888-803-9217

Caremark: 1-800-318-2572

Cigna: 1-800-244-6224

HEP Care Management Solutions: 1-877-687-1448 or visit them at their portal:
<https://www.connect2yourhealth.com/ParticipantPortal/Default.aspx>

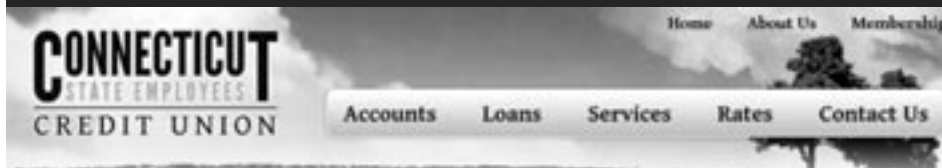


Happy Holidays
From All of Us at CSE Credit Union!



**We Wish Everyone a
Happy Holiday & A
Healthy New Year!**

Visit Our Website: www.CSECreditUnion.com



Find all the essential information about the products and services we have to offer. You can even print a loan application online! Best of all, it's accessible from your personal computer 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

www.CSECreditUnion.com

**Closed Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Monday, January 17**

Dividend Rates - Fourth Quarter 2021

	Dividend Rate	Annual Percentage Yield
REGULAR SHARES	0.60%	0.60%
SHARE DRAFTS (Checking)	0.25%	0.25%
CLUB ACCOUNTS	0.35%	0.35%

Minimum opening balance \$25.00. The annual percentage yield is accurate as of the last dividend declaration date. Rate may change after the account is opened. Fees or other conditions may reduce the earnings on the account.

7 Full Service Offices To Serve You

NORWICH Uncas on Thames 401 West Thames St. Norwich, CT 06306 (860) 889-7378	HARTFORD 84 Wadsworth St. Hartford, CT 06106 (860) 522-5388 (Savings) (860) 522-7147 (Loans)	NEW HAVEN 1666 Litchfield Turnpike Woodbridge, CT 06525 (203) 397-2949
MIDDLETOWN Connecticut Valley Hospital P.O. Box 2485 Middletown, CT 06457 (860) 347-0479	STORRS 1244 Storrs Rd. Storrs, CT 06268 (860) 429-9306	SOUTHBURY Southbury Training School P.O. Box 644 Southbury, CT 06488 (203) 267-7610
		NEWINGTON O'Neil Plaza 2434 Berlin Turnpike Newington, CT 06111 (860) 667-7668

Hours: Main Office: Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Branches: Mon-Fri, 9:30am-4pm
Drive-Up Teller (Hartford Only): Mon-Fri, 8:30am-4pm; Paydays Open Until 5pm

**Gone too Soon:
CSEA Members Who Have Passed On**

The Office of the State Comptroller has provided CSEA with the following members that have recently passed away. Our condolences are with their friends, family and loved ones.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Aslanzadeh, Jaber | Ocif, Donna |
| Bak, John | Oconnor, Doris |
| Barry, Lynn | Pacyna, Walter |
| Benoit, Ernest | Pawloski, Carl |
| Bonfiglio, Richard | Petrella, Barbara |
| Brassard, George | Portelance, Paul |
| Cobb, Richard | Riley, Neil |
| Cody, John | Rotenberg, Charles |
| Difronzo, Italo | Sallstrom, Malte |
| Dube, Clarence | Santoro, Richard |
| Formato-Smith, Janice | Sedlak, Robert |
| Fuller, Hilary | Sergobin, Leila |
| Gracie, Dolores | Shive, Peter |
| Haney, Donna | Skelly, Roger |
| Hill, Darrell | Smith, Richard |
| Johnson, Robert | Sullivan, Bernard |
| King, Carol | Teubner, Otto |
| Lewis, Donald | Todd, Leonard |
| Mack, Michael | Valliere, James |
| Maestrini, Leonard | Wachman, Murray |
| Mcdonald, William | Williams, Leslie |
| Mckellar, William | Winarski, Edward |
| Meyers, Blanche | Woodworth, Leona |
| Muttart, William | Wortman, Jeraldine |

Thank you to all of the CSEA members who showed up on the strike line in solidarity!

After being on strike for more than 2 months, SEIU 1199 Sunrise Workers won historic wage increases, affordable healthcare and a strong retirement plan.

CSEA NEWS

The Voice of Connecticut's
Public Service Employees & Retirees

USPS # 224-100 ISSN # 0273-6055

Published Monthly by:

CONNECTICUT STATE EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATION

Local 2001, Service Employees International Union, CTW/CLC

- | | |
|------------------|------------------------------------|
| Travis Woodward |President |
| Milagros Brown |Secretary/Treasurer |
| David Glidden |Executive Director |
| Drew E. Stoner |Communication Specialist |
| Jason P. Webster |Graphic/ Technical Assistance |

INSERTION DEADLINE: 1st of prior month.

MAILING ADDRESS: CSEA/SEIU Local 2001, 760 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106;
PHONES: (860) 951-6614, toll-free: (800) 894-9479, FAX: (860) 951-3526; INTERNET:
www.csea-ct.com.

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CSEA Legislative Agenda

The 2022 General Assembly will be in Session Starting in February

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SEBAC Legislative Proposals.

- The State Employee Bargaining Agent Coalition (SEBAC) is made up of the unions that represent state employees. And, while the coalition was created by state law to consolidate bargaining over pensions and healthcare, there is no denying the power of all state employee locals coming together to advocate with one clear voice.

For the 2022 session, SEBAC unions will be working to advance legislative proposals that fund services and jobs, protect against the misguided push for privatization, and address the longstanding problem of short staffing. CSEA members will also work with our allies in SEBAC to get the General Assembly to, not only, restore full funding of the State Contracting Standards Board (SCSB), but also pass legislation that will improve and enhance its operations. A properly resourced SCSB will be an effective tool for safeguarding public dollars, services, and jobs.

Recovery for All Legislative Proposals - CSEA members helped form the Recovery for All coalition because we know that every working person is an ally in the battle to create an economy that works for

everyone. Recovery for All is a statewide coalition of labor, community, and faith organizations representing hundreds of thousands of people united in a long-term mission to eliminate systemic inequalities and rebuild a better Connecticut. CSEA will work with our partners in the Coalition to support legislation focused on creating a truly equitable state tax system, protecting funding for public services and jobs, and establishing racial and economic justice.

Paraeducator Legislation from the School Paraeducator Advisory Council

- Last session, CSEA members helped pass House Bill 6621: An Act Concerning Assorted Revisions and Additions to the Education Statutes which included language directing the School Paraeducator Advisory Council to put together a study and legislative recommendations regarding improving para career development, professional training, pay, and benefits. The Council formed a task force, that includes CSEA members, which is working on the study and recommendations which will be submitted to the Education Committee for action in the 2022 legislative session.

Zoning for Child Care Providers

- In the previous legislative session, CSEA supported a bill championed by our allies in All Our Kin - an organization that trains, supports, and sustains family child care educators, SB 87: An Act Concerning Certain Protections for Group and Family Child Care Homes, that would "clarify and enforce protections for licensed group child care homes and licensed family child care homes and prevent landlords from placing restrictions on the operation of such homes." This is an important bill for the home-based family child care providers represented by CSEA that made it all the way to the floor of the Senate, but was not called for a vote before the end of session. Next session, we will join with our allies to get it to the Governor's desk.

Indoor Air Quality in Schools

- During the 2021 session, CSEA joined with a wide range of other unions and organizations to support a bill to improve indoor air quality in schools, SB 288: An Act Concerning Indoor Air Quality in Schools. This bill made it out of the Education Committee, but did not make it any further. This has always been an important piece of legislation, but especially so in the time of the airborne, deadly COVID pandemic. While this bill fell short in the last session, CSEA members and the other supporters of this legislative proposal will be

working hard to get it signed into law in the upcoming one.

Probate Court Collective Bargaining - For the past several sessions, CSEA has been working to pass a bill that will give employees in Connecticut's probate court system collective bargaining rights and the ability to join a union if they want. Last session, the bill was HB 6382: An Act Concerning the Status of Probate Court System Employees. It is just plain wrong that there is a group of workers who are legally barred from even thinking about joining a union and engaging in collective bargaining. CSEA members stand with the probate court workers and will work with them to pass this necessary update to Connecticut's labor laws.

It turns out the old saying "Laws are like sausages. It is best not to see them being made," is wrong. The only way to ensure good laws - or sausages that won't give you food poisoning - are made is to be involved. That's why we put forward this agenda, testify at public hearings, contact our General Assembly members and do what we can to be part of the legislative process. After all, there is another old saying that is accurate: "If you're not at the table, you're on the menu."

State Retirees: Don't Forget About Part B!

A Note From Retiree Organizer Kevin Sullivan

Many of you have begun to receive your end of year Social Security statements regarding how much you will be paying for your Medicare Part B (and Part D and any IRMAA costs if applicable) for 2022.

The monthly basic amount for Medicare Part B for 2022 will be \$170.10, which is what most retirees will be paying.

If that is the amount listed on your Social Security statement, there is no need for you to do anything further, the Comptroller's Office will automatically make that adjustment and your reimbursement will be increased in your January pension check.

If your Social Security statement shows that you are paying an amount different from \$170.10 (higher or lower), or that you are paying an amount for Part D, then you will need to submit a copy of your Social Security statement to be reimbursed the correct

amount. You should make a copy of the front page showing the amounts you pay and write your State Employee ID number above your name (you can find your state employee ID number on your pension pay stub).

You can submit it two ways, by sending it in the mail or by email. To send it by mail, send it to:

UnitedHealthcare Benefits Services
PO Box 740221
Atlanta, GA 30374-0221

It is a good idea to send it certified so you have proof that you sent it and the date you sent it. You can also send it as an attachment by email to Direct-Bill_KYOperations@uhc.com. Sending it by email is also proof of when you sent it. You can call to confirm they received it at 1-866-747-0048 Monday-Friday 8am-8pm.

If you send it to them by February 28, 2022, it will be retroactive to January 1st of 2022. If it is received after that date, it will be adjusted after they receive it.

It is always a good idea to check your advice (what the Comptroller's Office refers to as your pay stub) regularly so you know the amount you are being reimbursed. Since they no longer send out monthly advices, you will need to go online to review it at the Retiree Portal at <https://retirees.ct.gov>, or you can call them to have one sent to you at 860-702-3480, which will bring you to a menu - press "7" to leave a message to request a copy of the retiree direct deposit advice.

The Comptroller's Office will be sending this notification to you in the mail, which you should receive at the beginning of December. Remember to always check for the Comptroller's stamp on any letters you receive from the State of CT!

Announcement of Kronos Ransomware Attack Highlights CSEA Member Concerns

On Monday, December 13th Kronos, the human resource management platform that the State of Connecticut awarded a contract to for centralizing HR functions, announced they have been hit with a ransomware attack. They have warned that information from many customers may have been accessed and that their service will be out for "several weeks," urging that customers "evaluate and implement alternative business continuity protocols."

"The biggest security concern for us at the moment is the loss of data and the unknown of what personal information has been exposed. Kronos has personnel, medical, and worker's compensation data so the impact could be far reaching," Warren Lundquist, a CSEA SEIU Local 2001 Steward and Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) IT Architect warned, "As the State enters into more and more

cloud-based contracts, they are continually failing to spell out restoration and back-up guarantees with cloud-based vendors. Furthermore, the State is failing to keep a local copy of the data maintained by cloud-based vendors for continuity of operations in the event of such an attack. Kronos is only the latest example of this behavior, but this experience should serve as a real eye-opener for the State when they enter into these types of contracts."

"Kronos's product is not only a dangerous security risk with on-going timekeeping inaccuracies, but comes with a \$150 million price tag for taxpayers, money that was borrowed and must be paid back," CSEA SEIU Local 2001 President Travis Woodward lamented, "The State decided once again to spend more money on a private contractor for services that could have been done better, for cheaper, in-house."

SEBAC & Recovery For All Highlight Need for Public Services

Service Recipients Address the Press on Underfunding & Understaffing

On Wednesday, December 1st at 2:00 p.m., recipients of public services from various state agencies held a press conference on Zoom to demand that Governor Lamont protect and expand vital state services. Speakers addressed the need for increased funding and higher staffing levels in order to ensure a strong future for Connecticut.

In the decade after the Great Recession, the state government cut the state employee workforce by more than 20%. This destructive trend has accelerated during the pandemic: according to a recent report by the Pew Charitable Trusts, the state slashed the government workforce (excluding the education sector) by 7.6% between July 2019 and July 2021 alone -- one of the largest reductions anywhere in the country.

Now, amid the greatest crisis in a century, some forces in the state are seeking to take advantage of an anticipated state employee retirement wave by accelerating the privatization and destruction of the vital state services that all working people across Connecticut depend on, in particular black and brown workers, women workers, and immigrant workers. SEBAC and RFA are calling on Gover-

nor Lamont to publicly commit to protecting and expanding -- not shrinking and privatizing -- state services by filling the thousands of current vacancies, re-filling positions that will open due to retirements, and increasing funding for programs and services that build equity.

Francesca Palmer, a Central Connecticut State University student, called on Governor Lamont and the State Legislature to fund our future, "Today I ask: Governor Lamont, State Representatives, State Senators- do you see us as the future of Connecticut? If you do (and I certainly hope you do), then I have a simple but vital message to leave with you: if you want us to BE the future of Connecticut, then you need to FUND our future."

Taiz Marlene Gonzalez told her story as a client of the Bridgeport YAS residential program in the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, "I've learned to be more responsible independently, I've learned how to cook and clean, I've learned how to maintain my personal hygiene and staffers have

worked with me to make sure I make better life choices. But one of my biggest concerns is feeling a sense of safety from staff after coming from a toxic and dysfunctional family."

John Brady, RN, recounted his experience as a recipient of public higher education services when he became unemployed, "My retraining helped me find a fulfilling career that made a stable life for my family and that got me off of a cycle of unemployment and I think it was good for the people of the state of Connecticut. So I urge the Governor and the legislature to fund Connecticut's future and to continue services such as those that I was able to take advantage of."

John Jairo Lugo, Co-Founder and Community

Organizing Director of Unidad Latina en Acción, reminded the audience of the importance of these state services on vulnerable populations, "We work on wage theft cases because it is an issue that affects most of our community. There is a tendency to take advantage of our members because they are undocumented. We have a good relationship with the Labor Department of Connecticut, but one of the problems we are facing is a shortage of workers at the Labor Department. . . . What happens when an employee files a [wage and hour] complaint? Who is going to take those cases if there are not enough workers at the Labor Department?"

State Senator Saud Anwar, a champion for public

services, spoke about the negative impacts that funding and staffing cuts have on our state, "We also know there are so many different crises we are dealing with [that are the result of] lack of investment. . . . The support that we are providing to our senior citizens, the support we are providing to individuals in our society with mental health and substance use issues, have been neglected because we have not had the workforce to address those issues." Senator Anwar went on to explain that privatization is not the answer: "When we move work to contractors, they show numbers that are short lived and not actually calculating the overall cost to society. This is a failed strategy."



PICTURED ABOVE: Francesca Palmer, Gateway Community College student; Puya Gerami, Director of Recovery for All; John Brady, RN, Recipient of public higher education services; David Glidden, Executive Director of CSEA SEIU Local 2001; John Jairo, Founder of Unidad Latina en Accion; Taiz Marlene Gonzalez, Client in Bridgeport YAS residential program in the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

From the President's Desk:

As we kick off 2022, I am excited to see what a new year of union advocacy and organizing can bring to our working class union families! With many activities up ahead, it will be more important than ever for our members to stand together and fight for fair contracts, expanded public service and a future that is bright for all working families in Connecticut.

To help us with this fight, we have hired a new Staff Representative who brings with him decades of experience in union organizing across New England. John Murphy will be a much appreciated addition to our CSEA family and his expertise will be crucial in the many fights we have up ahead.

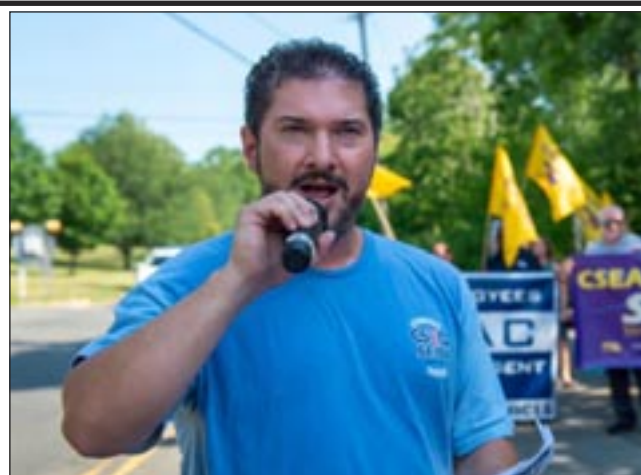
We are also gearing up for the 2022 Legislative Session so be sure to look out for emails from our Political Director, Danny Medress for opportunities to testify and meet with legislators to push along our legislative demands. He will be hosting a two-part activist training with our Communications Director Drew Stoner and Field Service Director Kevin Mercik to help prepare members for these opportunities.

Member advocacy for our legislative agenda is critical to our success so please plan on participating.

To round out the year I have been busy attending webinars, doing press interviews and engaging with our legislators to ensure our voices are heard. I spoke with Brandon Crowley and Steve Jensen of the CT Examiner about DOT staff shortages and the Kronos ransomware attack - both articles can be found on the CSEA website.

I have also been busy advocating for the best way to use the Infrastructure federal dollars that Connecticut will be receiving. I spoke with DOT Commissioner Guilietti, Speaker of the House Matt Ritter, Senate Transportation Chair Will Haskell, Representative Roland Lemar and Representative Brandon McGee about these federal dollars as well as the risk privatization poses on the vital public services our communities rely on.

Looking around Connecticut there have been plenty of opportunities for CSEA to stand in solidarity with our fellow union brothers and



sisters. Just this month, the SEIU 1199 Sunrise Workers won a contract after nearly two months on strike in Hartford. By sticking together and amplifying their collective voice, they reminded us of the power that comes from union membership. I also attended a rally at the Governor's Mansion (the smallest of his three mansions in Hartford) against the consolidation of our community colleges which offered another example of union power through collective action. Onto 2022!

- Travis Woodward
President

CT Workers Assistance for Essential Workers Who Have Contracted COVID-19

Essential workers who contracted COVID-19 and experienced financial hardship due to lost wages, out-of-pocket medical expenses or funeral expenses may be eligible to apply for the Connecticut Essential Worker COVID-19 Assistance Fund.

Who can apply?

- Essential workers who lived in Connecticut and were affected by COVID-19 (between March 10, 2020 and July 20, 2021) and were unable to work due to contracting

the virus. Visit:

CTEssentialWorkerRelief.org to view a CDC list of essential worker job categories based on immunization. This list is only a guideline and may not contain every essential worker job type, so if you are an affected worker you may apply.

- Families on behalf of Connecticut essential workers who died from COVID-19.

What benefits are available?

- Lost Wages – Unpaid leave and lost wages if an employee was

unable to work after contracting COVID-19 or due to symptoms later diagnosed as COVID-19.

- Out-of-Pocket Medical Expenses – For medical services related to contracting COVID-19 that were not covered by insurance.

- Burial Expenses – Burial/funeral expenses of \$3,000 for an eligible essential worker who died from COVID-19.

Who is running the program?

The Connecticut General Assembly authorized \$34 million in funding

for the relief program, which will be administered by the Connecticut Office of the State Comptroller. Public Consulting Group will assist with claims processing and payments.

How do I check if I am eligible and then apply?

You can visit the CTEssentialWorkerRelief.org website and answer a few quick questions. If you are eligible, you will be provided with a link to apply.

IT Optimization Update

The Lamont Administration continues to move forward with its “IT Optimization” project. While there are aspects of the project that sound promising, many members have expressed concern about where this train is going. **To date, the Administration has failed to work with the union or even the legislature to make sure that all key stakeholders are heard and invested. Without that work being done, “BITS” (which is the latest name for the proposed centralized IT entity) cannot effectively leave the station.** CSEA IT leaders continue to press the Administration toward a collaborative approach. Specifically, the CSEA IT Leadership Team has communicated some core issues that need to be addressed.

These include:

-Training: Provide work time and access to relevant and self-directed training;

-BITS slotting: Work with the union to address challenges in the job mapping process. The parties would pledge to work together to seek the proper fit for every employee;

-IT titles: Work with the union to modernize IT titles to reflect 21st century IT work;

-Work Hours: Achieve equity by providing the forty hour workweek option for all IT staff;

-AWS: Expand Alternate Work Schedule opportunities thereby helping workers achieve the appropriate work/life balance; and

-Contracting out: Work with the union to reduce the State’s reliance on expensive and ineffective consultants.


We have informed the State that these issues provide a solid basis for the parties to move forward in the collaborative way we all had originally hoped for. The union is now engaged in P4 Contract Negotiations and the aim is to conduct the IT related negotiations during this time. It is important to note that any agreement would have to go to the Connecticut General Assembly for necessary budget support.


As always member input is critical as we move forward. Please contact one of your Union Stewards or Union Representatives (james@csea760.com; odancy@csea760.com) should you have questions or ideas.




UnitedHealthcare
Healthy at Home

With UnitedHealthcare® Healthy at Home, you are eligible for the following benefits up to 30 days following all inpatient and skilled nursing facility discharges:

 28 home-delivered meals through Mom’s Meals® when referred by a UnitedHealthcare Advocate. Contact Mom’s Meals for additional details and to place your meal orders if you have been referred into the program: **1-866-204-6111**, TTY 711, 7 a.m.–6 p.m. CT, Monday–Friday.

 12 one-way rides to medically related appointments and to the pharmacy when referred by a UnitedHealthcare Advocate. Contact ModivCare™ for additional details and to schedule your trip: once you have been referred into the program: **1-833-219-1182**, TTY **1-844-488-9724**, 8 a.m.–5 p.m. local time, Monday–Friday, or by visiting www.modivcare.com/BookNow.

 6 hours of in-home personal care provided through a CareLinx® professional caregiver to perform tasks such as preparing meals, bathing, medication reminders and more. A referral is not required. To access your in-home personal care benefit, contact CareLinx at **1-844-383-0411**, TTY 711, 8 a.m.–7 p.m. CT, Monday–Friday and 10 a.m.–6 p.m. CT, Saturday and Sunday, or by visiting www.carelinx.com/UHC-retiree-post-discharge.



Questions? Or recently discharged and need a referral?

Call **1-800-457-8506**, TTY 711, 8 a.m.–8 p.m. local time, Monday–Friday, or visit www.UHCRetiree.com

CSEA In the News!

The following is an excerpt from the *CT Examiner* on November 18th by Steven Jensen titled, “Anticipating a Wave of Retirements, Unions, Legislators Debate Needs at CTDOT”: “Despite the game-changing billions of federal infrastructure-improvement dollars expected to arrive on the state Department of Transportation’s doorstep within months, the head of the agency’s technical-workers union is charging a lack of urgency by the administration to hire the hundreds of new workers it will take to put that money into action.

“We are way behind the eight-ball when it comes to hiring,” said Travis Woodward, a department of transportation engineer and president of the

CSEA/SEIU Local 2001 union representing about 900 agency engineers, planners, property agents, bridge safety inspectors, materials technicians and IT specialists. “They should be panicking like the building’s on fire but they’re not.”

His remarks come in response to a *CT Examiner* report last week that Connecticut Department of Transportation Commissioner James Giulletti has told industry groups he will need to add more than 300 full-time employees and consultants to his staff of about 3,500 in order to handle an anticipated \$5 billion from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.”

Read the whole article on our website at CSEA-CT.com

I'm Not Okay

White Paper Reveals Mental Health Crisis in Corrections

continued from Page 1

however, it offers ways to decrease the stresses and tensions that come from working in our prisons and jails. Please email TKeatoncsea760@gmail.com with any feedback or to take a related survey.

This summary captures succinctly the numbers that define the wellness crisis facing those working in America's prisons and jails and goes on to lay out a series of clear and specific recommendations. The full report that follows provides greater depth in defining the problem, exploring the causes, and explaining solutions, and incorporates the firsthand experiences of a number of correctional officers to bring a human side to the statistics and studies. Executive Summary

*Note: Statistics above are generalizations based on statistics cited throughout the white paper.

THE PROBLEM

- Correctional officers have a significantly higher PTSD rate as compared to the general public.
- Firefighters, EMTs, police officers, and even returning war veterans do not approach the percentages of correctional professionals who suffer from PTSD.
- Correctional staff across the country believe PTSD is a serious and pervasive issue within corrections that is lacking attention.
- Correctional officers are more likely to commit suicide than all other law enforcement professionals.
- A correctional officer's life expectancy is far shorter than that of the general public.
- Correctional staff suffering from PTSD will use more sick days per year than other staff, which results in increased costs to correctional agencies.
- The majority of staff stress comes from policies, procedures, and the administration.
- Physical assaults, psychological assaults, assaults with weapons, assaults with bodily fluids, and threats to loved ones and families are all part of the dangers that officers contend with on a regular basis.
- The overwhelming majority of officers are never trained to recognize or interact with a population suffering from mental illness.

- All stakeholders are impacted by the stress and PTSD levels within a facility
- ### RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS
- Initiate communications plans that educate all stakeholders on the urgent need to address correctional stress and PTSD and to draw attention to the psychological and physical damage that a career in corrections can induce.
 - Adopt staff wellness programs that begin with the first day at the academy and continue through retirement, including annual training requirements on mental health and stress reduction coping skills for all active-duty staff, including administrators.
 - Commit to administrative buy-in and promotion of Employee Assistance (Wellness) Programs emphasizing confidentiality, 100% differentiation from the discipline process, and destigmatization of occupationally induced stress and other mental health injuries.
 - Place an emphasis on teaching de-escalation skills, including emotional intelligence training for staff and transformational leadership training for management and administrators.
 - Promote a Dignity Assault Initiative at correctional facilities across the country.
 - Build a support program for staff family members that educates them

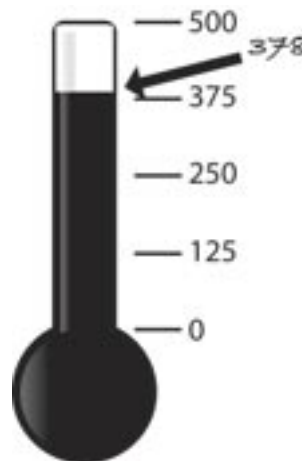
- on the signs of stress, depression, and PTSD and offers emotional and professional guidance.
- Fund continued research on the fiscal costs of lost leave time as a result of staff stress and PTSD.
- Instate Pre-Shift Briefing (Roll Call) for all staff as they enter and leave the correctional facility, updating them on the climate behind the walls, processing anything that may have transpired, and creating a point of contact before and after the workday.
- Form Critical Incident Response Teams that are part of the standard operating procedure and available to "talk-down" or debrief staff having just endured a traumatic incident.
- Adopt minimum staffing levels to limit forced overtime and allow for increased movement plans and programming for those incarcerated.
- Allocate resources to evaluate successes and failures of COVID-19 safety protocols and plan for future pandemics.
- Take policy action to create a standard of Presumptive Workers Compensation for Correctional Officer PTSD.
- Change PTSD in corrections to PTSD, Post Traumatic Stress Injury, as it should be recognized as a workplace injury, not a personal disorder, and covered under Workers Compensation legislation.

Council 400 Membership Drive

Although the weather outside might be getting cooler... Council 400 has turned up the heat on Organizing New Members!!

We have seen a huge increase in State of Connecticut Employees interested in Retiree Membership and decided it was time to stoke that fire!

We have set a goal of 500 new members signing up for Council 400 during the next fiscal year. Help grow our membership during this Quarterly Membership Drive to ensure Council 400 continues to be the largest and strongest Retiree Union in Connecticut!



Ways YOU can help:

- Talk to your friends/former co-workers, ask them if they are interested in joining us in the fight to protect pensions and healthcare!
- Have your spouse sign a Spousal Membership card!
- Volunteer to make calls to your former co-workers!

CLARIFICATION: ACA Expansion in Connecticut

CSEA Fights for ACA Expansion for Dental & Vision Coverage for those Under 26

The following article ran in the December edition of the CSEA News but we would like to make a clarification for our state and retiree councils. The law goes into effect in Connecticut starting January 1, 2022 for your next plan year, which for active state and retired members means you will be able to add dependents under the age of 26 effective July 1, 2022.

In order to avoid the process of terminating coverage and then re-enrolling children turning 19 between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022 the Comptroller will continue dental coverage for this group through June 30, 2022 without interruption. Only dependent children who turned age 19 on or after July 1, 2021 and were removed from coverage will be reinstated at this time. This approach was approved by the Healthcare Cost Containment Committee for administrative convenience and based upon Cigna's determination that continuation of coverage for this group will not impact

current premiums. Below is the original article as it appeared in last month's paper. Since the beginning of CSEA's history, our members have fought to lift up all working families, not just those lucky enough to be a part of a union. That tradition has continued to this day, most recently with our fight to expand the Affordable Care Act (ACA) coverage to include dental and vision for young adults under the age of 26 in Connecticut.

CSEA has been a proud member of the Health Care Cost Containment Committee (HCCC) with the Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) for several years. It is through this committee that our advocacy for expanding and protecting health benefits achieved the expansion of these vital services.

When the ACA went into effect, young adults were able to stay on their parent's medical insurance until they turned 26 years old. Before, young adults were kicked off their par-

ent's medical, dental and vision plans at 19 (or 23 if they were full-time college students). However, the ACA implementation in Connecticut only impacted health insurance so young adults still lost coverage for their dental and vision care at 19.

It doesn't take much convincing to understand that dental and vision coverage are essential health benefits, and that a lack of insurance coverage can easily make access to these crucial services impossible, but without a mandate from the State, fully insured policies had no requirement to treat vision and dental coverage like health coverage under ACA.

Throughout the 2021 Legislative Session, CSEA and SEBAC fought to expand this critical coverage and starting this year young adults can breathe a sigh of relief and remain on their parent's dental and vision plan until they turn 26, just like their medical insurance.

2021 Amistad Awardees Announced

Senator Julie Kushner, Pastor Rodney Wade and Azucena Santiago

This year's People's World Amistad Awards was held on Saturday, December 11th as a virtual program, with the theme "Making Good Trouble, Together We Rise for a Hopeful Future."

The awardees for this year have been in the forefront of fighting for the rights of workers during the COVID pandemic, and organizing for spending priorities that address racial equity, climate change, voting rights and the common good. They represent the kind of unity, solidarity and vision needed to build the movement that can transform our country to put people before profits:

State Sen Julie Kushner, Senate Chair of the Labor and Public Employees Committee, is a lifelong organizer and coalition builder for

worker rights, as the first woman director of UAW Region 9-A, and an outstanding legislative champion who has been at the center of winning paid family and medical leave, raising the minimum wage, and passing climate and jobs legislation including COVID recall rights, and racial and gender equity.

Pastor Rodney Wade, Senior Pastor of Long Hill Bible Church in Waterbury, is a tireless and fearless leader for equity and justice. He is a faith leader of the state-wide Recovery for All coalition of labor, community and faith-based organizations that are united to eliminate systemic inequalities.

Azucena Santiago, is a courageous leader with 32BJ SEIU in the fight for union rights and health protections for Service Plaza

workers. When McDonald's reduced her hours after she began organizing her co-workers, Azucena filed a complaint with the NLRB and won back pay.

All of the awardees exemplified this year's theme of "Making Good Trouble, Together We Rise for a Hopeful Future" and will continue to fight for working people.



PICTURED ABOVE: State Senator Julie Kushner addresses the virtual crowd as she accepts the 2021 Amistad Award.

Don't Miss Another Email! Update Your Information for the New Year!

Please visit bit.ly/UpdateCSEA TODAY to update your contact information for our database. Throughout 2022 we'll be keeping you up-to-date on all things CSEA through your email inbox, the CSEA News and our website at CSEA-CT.com

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