

NEW JERSEY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

REVIEW

March 2018
NJEA.ORG



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One: Why Every
Vote Matters

Building Habits
of Mind Through
Writing

Art and Autism

Lynda Miller

NJEA's 2018

ESP of the year



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ABOVE: At Winter Leadership South in Atlantic City, Sharita Stinson, Haddon Heights EA; Steven Riggs, Willingboro EA; Christian Clark, Ocean City EA; participate in a table discussion during "Principles of Leadership" program.

BELOW: Hillsborough Education Association President Henry Godhue opens a Saturday morning community discussion with parents, board members, residents, law enforcement officers, and others about the community's response to the local and nationwide opioid epidemic and student self-harm. HEA has taken a leadership role on the issue in Hillsborough.



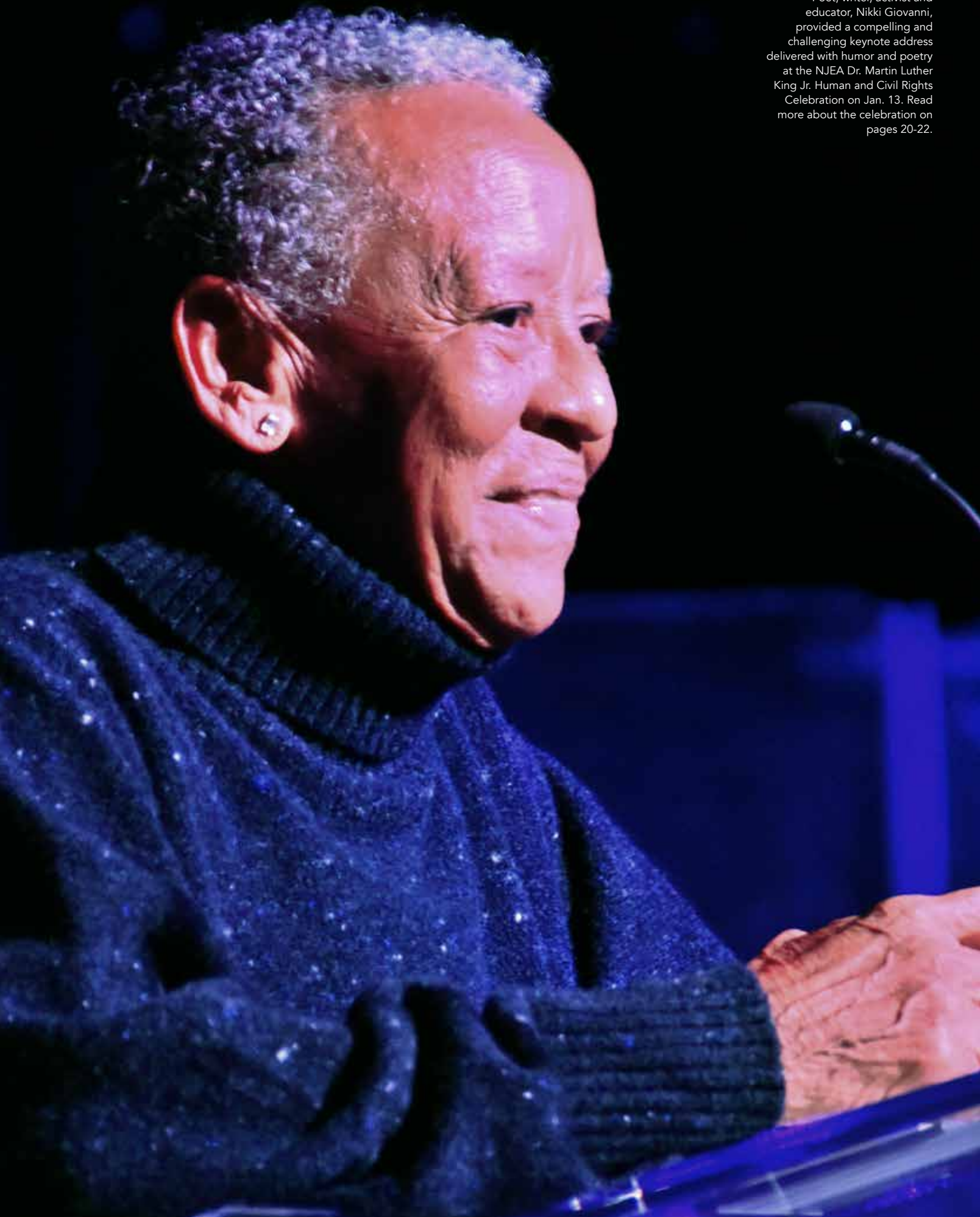
ABOVE: From left: Anjali Kallianpur, Angela Cordova, Antionette Corbett all of the Randolph EA, prepare for the NJEA Educational Support Professionals (ESP) Conference. The April edition of the *Review* will feature more from the conference.



LEFT: At Winter Leadership South, Stacey Robinson of the Atlantic City EA asks a question during the "How To Demand Healthier Schools" workshop.



Poet, writer, activist and educator, Nikki Giovanni, provided a compelling and challenging keynote address delivered with humor and poetry at the NJEA Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Human and Civil Rights Celebration on Jan. 13. Read more about the celebration on pages 20-22.



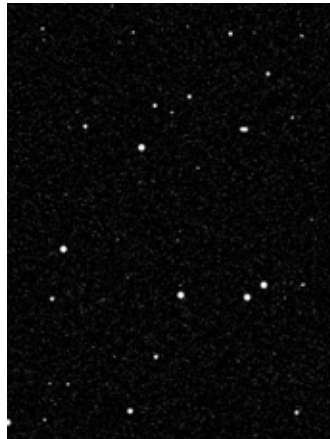
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BY DANIEL VOLLRATH AND
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BY PATRICK RUMAKER

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ON THE COVER:

Lynda Miller is the 2018 NJEA ESP of the Year. She is the Lenape High School registrar.

PHOTO BY
KATHRYN COULIBALY

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REVIEW



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MEMBERSHIP

Annual membership dues are: Active professional: \$897 (full time); \$448.50 (part time) \$448.50 (on leave). Active supportive \$438 (full time) \$219 (part time) \$219 (on leave). Retired: \$84; \$985 (retired life). Retired ESP: \$59; \$610 (retired ESP life); Preservice \$32. General professional (outside N.J. public education employment): \$250. Subscribing \$250. Only those in education positions in N.J. public schools and colleges are eligible for active membership. Payment of annual dues entitles a member to receive the *Review* for one year, from January through December. Dues include \$5 for the *NJEA Review*.



Epidemic of gun violence against children must stop

Just as we were going to press for this edition of the *NJEA Review*, we received the horrifying news that 14 children, a geography teacher who coached cross country, a security guard who coached football, and an athletic director who coached wrestling were brutally murdered by a student who should have never had the means to do so.

Every NJEA member I talked to reacted with sadness and anger as the reports emerged of the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. We mourn with the families and loved ones of those killed, as well as those who were injured. This type of violence is far too common, but we must remember that mere sympathy without meaningful action will not prevent another shooting.

This latest school shooting is a tragic reminder that our nation still refuses to acknowledge and address the scourge of gun violence. Our schools should be safe havens for learning. America's failure to protect its children from gun crime is inexcusable. Parents should never have to fear for the safety of their children while they are at school. Students should never have to wonder if they will fall victim to gun violence at school.

This epidemic of gun violence against children must stop, but that will not happen until more of our elected

leaders decide that they value the lives of our children more than they value the political agenda of the gun lobby. I call on all NJEA members to reach out to our elected leaders and demand action that will help prevent the next mass shooting before it happens.

Sen. Robert Menendez and Sen. Cory Booker have already expressed their support for action in the Senate. To find contact information to thank them, visit senate.gov and click on "Senators." To find contact information to call your member of the House of Representatives, visit house.gov and click on "Representatives."

And, if you haven't already done so, visit NEA's action center at bit.ly/neacommonsense to send an electronic message to our congressional representatives and senators demanding commonsense gun violence laws.

Along with our colleagues who work in schools across America, we strive every day to create safe, healthy school environments where our students can learn and grow without fear. Our nation, though, has allowed guns to threaten nearly every safe haven, including our schools. We must demand better from those elected to represent us.

Marie Blistan



NJEA President Marie Blistan, Vice President Sean M. Spiller (l) and Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty (r).

This epidemic of gun violence against children must stop, but that will not happen until more of our elected leaders decide that they value the lives of our children more than they value the political agenda of the gun lobby.

Officers Online

Marie Blistan
Twitter

@MarieBlistan: Our struggle to keep our schools the safest place a child could be will continue.

NJEA President Marie Blistan shared NEA President Lily Eskelsen García's statement on the day of the school shooting in Parkland, Florida. The statement had been posted to Lily's Blackboard. That statement and those that followed in subsequent days can be read at lilyblackboard.org.

Sean M. Spiller
Twitter

@SpillerForNJEA: Awesome @NJEA @CCUNJ on Civics Unplugged at Arthur L. Johnson HS. I am impressed! This is how we ensure our civil democracy survives & thrives.

NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller spent Feb. 6 at Arthur L. Johnson High School in Clark with "Classroom Close-up NJ" and the students and educators who explore in depth the U.S. Constitution, examining voting rights, trade, immigration, press, PACs, think tanks, campaign finance, and other issues that affect our system of government.

Steve Beatty
Facebook

NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty: Engaging the community and having important conversations in Trenton with the leadership of Trenton EA. Screening "Backpack Full of Cash" and engaging for the good of our communities and our kids.

NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty posted photos of his and NJEA President Marie Blistan's attendance at a screening of "Backpack full of Cash" on Feb. 13. The screening was hosted by the Trenton Education Association and the Journey for Justice Alliance. For more information about the documentary, visit backpackfullofcash.com.

Know. Lead. Act.

DA votes to join national call for Black Lives Matter at Schools Week

The NJEA Delegate Assembly (DA) voted at its meeting on Jan. 20 to join the national call for Black Lives Matter at School Week, which began in Seattle in 2016 and was held this year Feb. 5-11. The DA is the Association's highest policy-making body consisting of elected representatives from each county, higher education, retirees and preservice members. The DA meets five times a year in September, November, January, March and May.

The purpose of the week's activities during school and in the evening is to support the movement's call to end zero-tolerance discipline measures that disproportionately affect minority children, implement restorative justice in schools, hire more black teachers in education and ensure they have the support they need to be successful, and to mandate black history/ethnic studies in kindergarten through 12th grade.

Black Lives Matter at School Week seeks to educate all students about structural racism, intersectional black identities, and black history. While it coincides with Black History Month, the intention is to begin, or continue, conversations around these topics throughout the year.

In addition, the DA voted to:

- Create and prominently publish content that informs members and the public at large about the racial disparities in discipline that exist in schools throughout the state, and the power of restorative practices to help address these disparities.
- Convene a task force as a joint effort between the Human and Civil Rights Committee and the Professional Development Committee to develop a program that will assist members in advocating for the full implementation of the Amistad curriculum in their districts, as well as informing and educating community members about the Amistad Law.
- Survey local presidents to determine which districts are currently implementing the Amistad curriculum resources developed by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) and what types of support resources are most needed to assist local associations in advocating for increased implementation.
- Write to the State Board of Education and NJDOE to urge the strengthening of accountability for compliance with the Amistad Law.
- Advocate for research on the impact of charter proliferation, school closures, ACHIEVE NJ, and high-stakes standardized testing on the push-out of teachers of color.
- Actively advocate for the development of programs and supports that are purposefully designed to increase and retain the number of black teachers and teachers of color, and that may include such programs as expanded pathways to certification, specific mentoring programs, and the development of new and targeted recruiting methods.
- Publish an article in the *NJEA Review* and on njea.org highlighting the work of those districts that actively participate in the National Black Lives Matter at School Week of Action.

An article on participation in New Jersey schools is planned for the April *NJEA Review*.

For more information about National Black Lives Matter at School Week of Action, including resources for educators, go to educationvotes.nea.org/neaedjustice/black-lives-matter-at-school.

Other DA business

NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty presented the Independent Auditor's Report, which is provided annually to the DA. The accounting firm Novak Francella, LLC, conducted the audit of NJEA's financial statements for the fiscal year ending Aug. 31, 2017. The report will appear in the April *NJEA Review*.

Delegates approved recommendations put forward by the Budget, Higher Education, and Working Conditions committees. The Budget Committee recommended a budget transfer from Organization Projects to Strategic Organizing. The Higher Education and Working Conditions Committees recommended policy revisions as part of an ongoing effort to update and better organize Association policies. In addition, the Higher Education Committee recommended that "NJEA oppose any action, including legislation that would move active and retired county college employees from the School Employees' Health Benefits Program (SEHPB) to the State Health Benefits Program."

The exact text for these resolutions and their accompanying rationales can be found at njea.org/da. Under "DA Books," select January 2018.

Dues task force

Delegates also received a report from the Dues Task Force, which was charged with studying a previous New Business Item that recommended "that NJEA freeze dues levels at the 2017-18 level for the 2018-19 school year."

Annual NJEA dues are calculated based upon a formula found in Section 1 of NJEA's bylaws. Freezing dues would require a change to the bylaws to suspend the application of the formula in a given year freezing the dues at their current level. In March of 2012, the DA approved such a bylaw change, freezing dues for the 2012-13 and 2013-14 school years at the 2011-12 level.

In its report at the Jan. 20, 2018 DA meeting, the Dues Task Force concluded that "continuing to implement the dues formula is fiscally prudent in the current financial landscape of the Association." The task force unanimously approved a motion to not freeze dues.

The report of the Dues Task Force can be found at njea.org/da. Under "DA Books," select January 2018.

Participation by non-delegate NJEA members

At 11 a.m., the DA meeting paused to hear from any NJEA member who wished to address delegates. Jon Coniglio, president of the Dover Education Association, and Shari Mendelson, PRIDE Chair of the Education Association of Paramus, discussed the Dues Task Force Report. Coniglio asked for details on the number of NJEA members surveyed as part of the task force's analysis. Mendelson said that the conclusion of the Task Force was a missed opportunity.

Lori Lalama, legislative chair and PRIDE chair of the Clifton Teachers Association requested that NJEA produce a one-page document that summarizes *Janus v. AFSCME* and how members and local leaders can prepare for a decision in the case.

Minutes of all DA meetings are published at njea.org/da and in the *NJEA Review* when they become available. Minutes from the November meeting can be found on Page 52 of this edition of the *NJEA Review*.

Buena Vice President Melissa Tomlinson delivers the NJEA Working Conditions Committee report at the Jan. 20 Delegate Assembly meeting. As a DA-alternate, Tomlinson later made the motion to add NJEA's support for "Black Lives Matter at Schools Week."



NJEA seeks distinguished service award nominations

Do you know an individual or group that has made a significant contribution to public education in New Jersey?

Nominations are now being sought for the 2018 NJEA Ruthann Sheer Award for Distinguished Service to Education. The award is named in memory of an educator from Hackensack who was its 1994 recipient. The award was first presented in 1934.

The award is designed to call public attention to those who greatly serve New Jersey public schools and children. Such service to education may take any form that in the opinion of the Distinguished Service Award Committee most merits the recognition this award involves.

Any New Jersey resident or organization, including educators, may be nominated. Excluded are NJEA officers during their terms in office.

Past award recipients have included state and federal lawmakers, reporters and editors, newspapers, the New Jersey Congress of Parents and Teachers, PTA leaders, former NJEA presidents and staff, State Board of Education members, museum curators, school board members, and others who have promoted public school employee rights and public schools.

Nominations must be sent in writing with reasons for the recommendation. Send nominations to:

NJEA

Ruthann Sheer Distinguished Service Award

PO Box 1211

Trenton, NJ 08607-1211

Nominations must be received no later than June 15, 2018.

Communications Tools Workshop this May

A strong local or county association uses effective communications strategies to engage and organize its members and the community. Learn ways to keep your members informed and ready for action by attending the NJEA Communications Tools Workshop on Saturday, May 5 at NJEA's headquarters in Trenton.

The workshop fee is \$20 and includes continental breakfast and lunch.

The NJEA Communications Tools Workshop is the perfect place for local and county association editors, social media teams and public relations committee members to strengthen their message development and delivery skills.

Registration begins at 8:45 a.m. The day concludes at 2 p.m. For a registration form, visit njea.org/CommTools or contact Liz Murphy at 609-599-4561, ext. 2321 or lmurphy@njea.org.

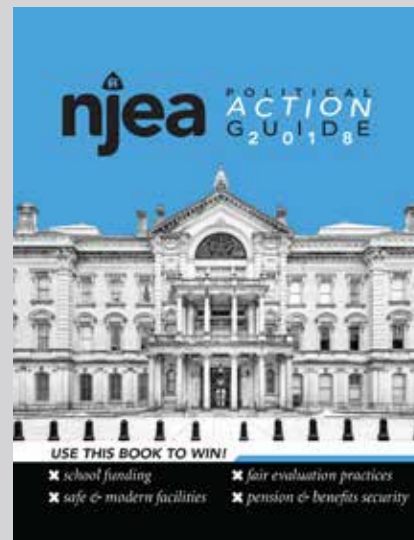
Selfie of the month

With the ESP Bee, Edison Township EA member Susan Campione (r) tweeted (@Suziecue64) a selfie with her colleagues, Coleen Mount (l) and Sue Cox while at the NJEA Educational Support Professionals Conference on Feb. 3.

Attending a local, county or state training or meeting? Working a PRIDE event? Send your selfies to njeareview@njea.org. Be sure to identify where the picture was taken and the members who appear in the photo.

Get your 2018 Political Action Guide

NJEA members know that as educators and citizens, it is our responsibility to engage in political action. To make that responsibility easier, NJEA's Government Relations Division produces a Political Action Guide every year that contains all the information you need to take action from your local school board to the U.S. Congress. Get your copy by attending a county legislative dinner or online at njea.org.



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Higher Education Conference scheduled for April 13-14

**Standing Together:
Advocacy, Leadership, and
Professional Development**

The NJEA Higher Education Conference will be held on April 13-14 at the Princeton Marriott at Forrester. The conference begins with registration at 1 p.m. on Friday followed by workshops, dinner, and the keynote speech by Howard Parish, Arbitrator and former NJEA UniServ Consultant for Higher Education. On Saturday, the conference continues with more workshop sessions and concludes with lunch.

Workshops will address these topics:

- Treasurer's Training
- Keep Calm and Prepare for Retirement—Get the Most Out of the Alternate Benefits Program (ABP)
- 2018 A New Administration in Trenton
- Sexual Harassment and Bullying
- Preparing for Negotiations—Part 1 & 2
(You must take both Part 1 & Part 2)
- Creating a Culture of Accessibility in Higher Education
- Kaleidoscope
- Social Media in Higher Education
- Thriving in a Post-Janus World
- Local Leadership Development Institute—
Panel Discussion

Higher education members will soon receive a registration form in the mail, or you can register by sending your name, address, cell/work/home phone numbers, and local association to:

NJEA Higher Ed Conference

PO Box 36361

Newark, NJ 07188-6361

Registration is required by March 23. The cost to attend is \$98-resident (per person, double occupancy); \$148-resident (per person, single occupancy); or \$68-commuter. The conference fee includes accommodations, meals, and materials. For additional information or if you have a disability-related need that may require assistance to facilitate your participation in the conference, contact the NJEA UniServ Region 29/Higher Education office at 609-689-9580 or kperry@njea.org.

Do you know someone who worked in Robbinsville in 2010-11?

Robbinsville Education Association members who worked there that year are to receive payment for furlough days, but REA needs your help in locating members who have since moved or retired.

On Jan. 9 the Robbinsville Education Association and the Robbinsville Board of Education came to a financial agreement for compensation of the three furlough days. Anyone on staff for the 2010-11 school year will receive a non-pensionable stipend based on the 2010-11 salary guide. People who are no longer with the school district should send an email ASAP to Debi Bella, REA President, bella@robbinsville.k12.nj.us, to update their address to receive payment.

If you know someone who worked in the Robbinsville school district in the 2010-11 year, please pass this information along to him or her.

Annual election for NJEA representatives slated for April

NJEA will hold its annual elections in April for NJEA county (and other unit) representatives. Voting on certain NJEA constitutional amendments may also appear on the ballots. This year, approximately one-third of the Executive Committee and approximately one-half of the Delegate Assembly and Delegate Assembly Alternates will be elected.

Balloting is conducted with the assistance of an outside vendor. A ballot and a postage-paid return envelope are sent to each member who has not opted to vote online. The ballot will come via first class mail at the address currently on file. A paper ballot will be used. Complete instructions for voting will be contained in the ballot mailing. To be counted, voted ballots must be mailed to the address specified in the ballot mailing. Ballots sent to any other address will not be counted.

If there are any unanticipated changes in procedure, this information will be published in the April *NJEA Review*, publishing schedules permitting.

Elections will be held between April 2 and noon of April 16. In order to be counted, ballots must be received at the address indicated in the ballot mailing no later than noon on April 16.

For complete elections rules and procedures, visit njea.org/njeaelections.

Online voting an option for NJEA elections

The NJEA Elections Committee encourages members to register to vote online for the 2018 NJEA elections. To do so, go to njea.org/njeaelections. Sign in using your PIN (found on your NJEA membership card) or the email address through which you receive email from NJEA. Your password is the last four digits of your Social Security number, unless you've changed it.

Look for "Request an electronic ballot."

Balloting opens on April 2 and concludes at noon on April 16. You will again need your PIN/email address and password to vote. You can vote online even if you did not previously register. The first ballot that NJEA receives (paper or electronic) is the one that will count. All ballots will be encoded to ensure both member privacy and ballot security, while protecting the principle of one-person, one-vote.

The initiative is designed to improve member participation in the Association's democratic process while reducing cost of conducting the annual elections. 🗳️



Brent Costleigh of Brookdale Community College and Lori Podstupka-King of Warren County College at last year's NJEA Higher Education Conference.

Cool Stuff

Summer immersion program for girls interested in computer science

A seven-week summer immersion program is being offered free to 10th and 11th grade girls throughout New Jersey, and particularly in and near Newark and Jersey City, by the nonprofit organization Girls Who Code (GWC).

GWC is working to close the gender gap in technology and change the image of what a programmer looks like and does. Their programs inspire, educate, and equip young women with the computing skills to pursue 21st-century opportunities.

Applications for the 2018 Summer Immersion Program in Newark and Jersey City are now open. Girls Who Code Summer Immersion Programs are free seven-week summer programs for 10th-11th grade girls to learn computer science, get exposure to tech jobs and join a supportive sisterhood of thousands of girls across the U.S.

In the Summer Immersion Program, students will learn about:

- **Tech Companies**—They'll meet female engineers and get an inside look at technical roles in the world's top companies.
- **Project-based learning**—They'll learn computer science through real-world projects in art and storytelling, robotics, video games, websites, apps and more.
- **Sisterhood**—They'll work in teams and make lifelong friendships with a supportive and diverse community of thousands of girls.

In addition to providing a free program in Newark and Jersey City, Girls Who Code provides summer stipends to cover transportation and living costs for Summer Immersion Program students! The summer stipend is available for all Summer Immersion Program applicants who qualify.

The application deadline is March 16. For more information or to apply for the program, visit www.girlswhocode.com/sipapply.

March is Gifted Students Month in New Jersey

Devote some time to learning more with these free and easy, online sources for educators about gifted students:

- Free webinars from Rutgers University: gifted.rutgers.edu/free-demand-webinars
 - Free access to hundreds of articles: Subscribe to byrdseed.com to get tips about creativity, math, language arts and social-emotional needs. Join 18,000+ educators and get the PDF "10 Ways To Make Your Class Cozy For Gifted Students" plus free monthly updates. Look for the link to subscribe to Puzzlements, a great monthly e-zine.
 - Free curricula for gifted students from Exquisite Minds – Latin, philosophy, myths and legends and links to subject specific TED talks. Visit exquisite-minds.com and look for the "Curriculum" tab.
 - Free access to the Stock Market game – Your students will have opportunities to learn and compete. Visit stockmarketgame.org.
 - Visual arts – The Hub provides strategies for teaching and anecdotes of musically gifted students. Visit bit.ly/hubgifted.
 - Bright or gifted? – bit.ly/brightvgifted
 - NPR: Who are the gifted and what do they need? bit.ly/giftedtalented
- Find more resources at www.njagc.org.

Enter the New Jersey Hall of Fame essay contest

New Jersey public school students are invited to participate in the New Jersey Hall of Fame essay contest. Students may nominate potential Hall of Fame inductees—living or deceased. Nominations may include famous people as well as ordinary citizens who do extraordinary things. Students should research or interview, if possible, the person they wish to nominate and write an essay no longer than 500 words.

Essays must be typed and double-spaced. The student must include his/her name, age, grade level as of March 15, 2018, address, phone number, parent/guardian's name, school name, and school district. If the essay is a school project, the student should also include the name of the teacher who assigned the activity.

Nominations must be postmarked by March 16, 2018. Send entries to NJ Hall of Fame Contest, NJEA, 180 West State Street, PO Box 1211, Trenton, NJ 08607-1211, Attn: Dawn Hiltner or email dhiltner@njea.org with "NJHOF Essay Contest" in the subject line.

Entries will be divided into two age categories: Intermediate (Grades 4 through 8) and High School (Grades 9-12). Entries will be judged by a panel of NJEA and New Jersey Hall of Fame representatives. Winners will be notified in by early April. The winning students will be invited to the New Jersey Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony on May 6, 2018.

The winning students' nominations will be forwarded to the New Jersey Hall of Fame Academy for consideration in 2019. This ethnically and culturally diverse body, composed of 100 of New Jersey's most prominent organizations and media outlets, will review nominees and ultimately select Hall of Fame nominees to be put forth for the public vote in the fall. NJEA serves on the Voting Academy.

For more information about the New Jersey Hall of Fame, visit www.njhalloffame.org.

NJEA and Amboy Bank present iPlay America's 2nd Annual Science Fair

Are your students excelling in science? Want an opportunity to show off their great work? Then get your students entered in the iPlay Science Fair on Sunday, June 10 from noon to 5 p.m.

Students in Grades 3 through 12 can present their projects and compete for over \$5,000 in cash and iPlay America prizes. The school with the most entries wins Free Unlimited Ride Passes for the entire school to use on Friday, June 1 from 5-9 p.m.

Registration is \$25 and includes a six-foot table to display the project, an Unlimited Ride Pass, and a t-shirt. The winners in each of three categories—Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8, and Grades 9-12—will be chosen by a panel of judges. The deadline to register is April 15, 2018. iPlay America is located in Freehold.

Register at iPlayAmerica.com/ScienceFair.

Essay contest will bring a hot air balloon to winner's school

The QuickChek New Jersey Festival of Ballooning and PNC Bank invite New Jersey students in Grades 2 through 12 to take part in the 15th annual PNC Bank "American Patriot Essay Contest" by writing a short essay on the topic "What the American Flag Means to Me."

The Grand Prize winner will receive a visit to his or her school by a 75-foot-tall hot air balloon in June and a special VIP package at this year's balloon festival in July: a hot air balloon ride for two, four Blue Sky Club VIP tickets, and the opportunity to meet one of this year's concert headliners, which in the past have included Disney teen sensations the Jonas Brothers, Demi Lovato, and Sabrina Carpenter. The Festival will be held at Solberg Airport in Readington on July 27-29.

Last year, Kawameeh Middle School in Union, NJ produced our first ever first and second-place finishers. Guy Francis, a seventh-grade student, was our Grand Prize winner as he wrote about his ancestors fleeing the Nazis in World War II as well as his ancestors' freedom from slavery. Classmate Judd Espejo, also a seventh-grader, was runner-up.

This year's winning student's immediate classmates will each receive one complimentary general admission ticket to the Festival. The winning student's teacher and school principal will each receive two Blue Sky Club VIP tickets. Second and third place prizes consisting of festival admission and merchandise will be also awarded.

All teachers in the state who submit a group of 15 essays or more on behalf of their students will receive two free general admission tickets to the festival regardless of whether one of their students submits the winning essay.

The essays must be 100 words or less. They will be judged by a panel of representatives from PNC Bank and the balloon festival. Winning essays will be selected based on creativity, poignancy and clarity with consideration given to the grade level of the contestant. Contestants are not required to be U.S. citizens.

Entries should be mailed to Essay Judges, QuickChek New Jersey Festival of Ballooning, 363 Route 46 West, Suite 200, Fairfield, NJ, 07004, or emailed to pncessay@balloonfestival.com. Entries should include the student's name, home or school address, home or school telephone number, grade, age, school name and the name of his or her teacher. The deadline to enter is May 1.

Additional information may be found at www.balloonfestival.com/pncessay.

Send us photos from your RAA Celebration

The *NJEA Review* will print selected photos from Read Across America celebrations around the state. To have one of your photos considered for publication, choose your favorite two or three photos from your event and send them to ProudMoments@njea.org. In the email, provide a **brief** caption for each photo you send.

If children are identifiable in the photos, a media release must be on file with the district or you may use the release from found at njea.org/PRIDE. You must log in with your NJEA PIN number to access the page that includes the photo release form.

You may keep the signed release forms on file at your school and simply indicate that you have secured them when you send email your photos to NJEA. From all of the photos submitted prior to March 9, five to 10 will be selected for publication in the April *NJEA Review*.

Photos, regardless of whether they are selected for publication in the *NJEA Review*, will be part of an online gallery at njea.org/raa. Some photos may also be shared on NJEA's social media platforms. 📱

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The Law and You

Your rights in workers' compensation

By Michael C. Damm, Esq. and Daniel Geddes, Esq.

Workers' compensation provisions and requirements can be confusing to anyone who does not deal with them on a regular basis. That's why it is important to have NJEA at your side.

A clerical worker develops carpal tunnel syndrome, a custodian sustains a back injury, a shop instructor acquires lead poisoning, a science teacher has chemical burns, and a physical education teacher contracts an antibiotic-resistant staph skin infection. What should happen next with these work-related injuries and illnesses?

The Workers' Compensation Law in New Jersey, as well as several education statutes specifically applicable to certain types of school employees, set forth the benefits available to an employee who is injured on the job provided that appropriate notice has been given to the employer. Those benefits may include:

- Medical treatment paid for through workers' compensation, not through the employee's own health insurance.
- Wage-loss benefits that are not chargeable to sick leave.
- A permanency award where there are permanent residual effects from the employee's injury that have a substantial impact on the employee's ability to do her or his job or maintain her or his lifestyle.

In most circumstances, absent intentional actions, the only remedy permitted against the employer in connection with a work injury is through the workers' compensation system.

Contact your building rep and local president

Workers' compensation provisions and requirements can be confusing to anyone who does not deal with them on a regular basis. That's why it is important to have NJEA at your side. An employee who sustains an injury at work, or who suspects that his or her illness is caused by a circumstance in the workplace, should reach out to his or her building rep and local president as soon as possible for guidance. Local leaders should consult their UniServ field representatives.

Timelines matter

14 days

For a traumatic work accident, the law requires that an employee must give notice to the employer when the employer has no actual knowledge of the claim. Notice is supposed to be given to the employer within 14 days of the incident. There is no requirement that workers' compensation benefits be paid by the employer until notice or knowledge is obtained.

30 days

In the event notice is given or knowledge of the injury is obtained by the employer within 30 days, benefits are denied only if the employer is "prejudiced" and only to the extent of the prejudice. For example, imagine an employee who sustains an injury at work and sees his or her own doctor for treatment, rather than the district's workers' compensation doctor. The employee fails to report the incident within 14 days, but does report it within 30 days.

The school district, if it had no knowledge of the incident, might argue that it should not have to pay for treatment up to the day it was notified as it had been "prejudiced" in not being able to designate its doctor to treat the injured worker as permitted under the law.

90 days

Where notice is given or knowledge of the injury is obtained after 30 but within 90 days, a claim will not be barred if failure to give notice was due to mistake; inadvertence; ignorance of fact or law; inability; or to the fraud, misrepresentation or deceit of another person; or any other reasonable cause or excuse. In the event notice is given or knowledge of the injury is obtained by the employer after 90 days, no compensation is due the injured employee (N.J.S.A. 34:15-17).

48 hours

It should be noted that there are special rules that apply to hernia issues that contain a much shorter 48-hour notice provision (N.J.S.A. 34:15-12(c) (23)).

Permanency awards and employer claim refusals

In order to obtain the permanency award or to compel the employer to furnish medical treatment or pay wage-loss benefits where it refuses to provide treatment or wage loss benefits, a formal workers' compensation Claim Petition must be filed within two years of the date of the traumatic incident or two years from the employee's last receipt of authorized benefits in workers' compensation, whichever is later. After this date expires, the employee will be barred from filing a workers' compensation Claim Petition and seeking any further benefits.

Claims of an occupational nature

Where a claim is of an occupational nature (i.e., exposure over a period of time), there are no specific notice requirements; however, a workers' compensation claim must be filed within two years of the date the employee became aware of the condition and its relation to employment. After that time, a claim will be barred.

Claims against persons or entities other than employer

The statute of limitations for filing a claim against any other person or entity, other than one's employer, who the employee believes is responsible for the employee being injured, is two years from the date of the incident. After that date, the employee will be barred from filing this type of claim.

Health insurance versus workers' compensation

Injured employees should be aware that if they attempt to seek treatment for a work injury through their own health insurance rather than workers' compensation, the health insurance carrier may deny the claim. It may also deny payment of any bill or bills it has already

paid asserting that they are properly chargeable to workers' compensation and not through an employee's personal insurance. Thus, an employee could be held personally financially responsible. Also, if an employee is Medicare eligible, charging Medicare for a work injury could result in the employee having to reimburse Medicare.


Wage-loss benefits

School board employees are entitled to full salary not chargeable to sick leave for up to one calendar year from the date of the injury where the workers' compensation doctor holds the employee out of work. After one calendar year, benefits are reduced to 70 percent of one's salary up to the statutory maximum in effect for the year of the accident.

School board employees are defined in the law as persons holding office, position or employment in a local school district, regional school district, or county vocational school who are steadily employed by the board of education or who are protected by tenure in office, position, or employment except persons in the classified service of the civil service.

Injured employees should be aware that New Jersey provides that it is the workers' compensation doctor who controls treatment and the payment of wage-loss benefits. So long as the workers' compensation doctor recommends treatment or holds the employee out of work, she or he will be entitled to such benefits.

In order that they be fully apprised of their rights in worker's compensation, school employees who are injured on the job should consult with experienced workers' compensation attorneys who are familiar with the special rules applicable to them. Attorneys' fees in workers' compensation are set by the workers' compensation judge and are usually contingent upon the amount of the award in favor of the injured worker.

To gain access to experienced workers compensation attorneys, see your building rep and/or local association president. 

Michael C. Damm is a partner at Selikoff & Cohen. Daniel Geddes, Esq., is an attorney with Zazzali, Fagella, Nowak, Kleinbaum and Friedman. Damm and Geddes are two of NJEA's network attorneys.



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NJEA Report

Jersey City EA rallies for new contract

Members of the Jersey City Education Association (JCEA) took to the streets on Jan. 25 and again on Feb. 15 demonstrating the power of their collective strength. Both JCEA rallies occurred just prior to board of education meetings to demonstrate members' willingness to fight hard for a fair settlement.

On Jan. 26, JCEA and the board of education sat down at the table to continue negotiating a successor contract. That meeting, like many before it, yielded little progress. Many previous bargaining sessions have been held that did not lead to settlements. The board has repeatedly stalled negotiations by not being prepared to make decisions, often cutting meetings off after only an hour or two.

"We would rather negotiate and reach a settlement, but we need to be prepared for all contingencies," said JCEA President Ron Greco.

Throughout January and February, JCEA's 4,200 members engaged in informational picketing at their respective schools before the school day started. They shared their story with the parents and community who remain supportive. Putting pressure on the board, actions escalated as hundreds of members attended each of the rallies. Many brought buckets to drum, bells to ring and whistles to blow, making sure that BOE members could hear the association's settlement demands.

The NJEA Leadership Team spoke to members before heading into address the board. "The board of education loves you when they need you, but when we ask for our fair share they turn a blind eye," said NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty at the January rally. "Enough is enough."

Jersey City schools' accomplishments, such as its blue-ribbon Academy I Middle School and the nationally recognized McNair Academic High School, contribute to New Jersey's standing as number two in the nation for student achievement.

"You have achieved those recognitions because of the women and men in this room," NJEA President Marie Blistan told the board in January. "They need you to preserve the integrity of the reputation of the great public schools in this city and that starts with respect."

The January rally was also attended by a large contingent from the Paterson Education Association, as well as NJEA members who arrived from around the region to demonstrate their solidarity with JCEA.



So many JCEA members turned out for the Jersey City school board meeting on Feb. 15 that its location was moved from the board office to Martin Luther King Jr. School PS 11.



JCEA members demanded relief from Ch. 78, a law which has caused members to receive less take-home pay year after year.

School nurse receives \$1,000 thank you from California Casualty

The New Year is starting well for registered nurse, Kellie Whelan, who is still in shock after receiving a \$1,000 Nurses Night Out from California Casualty.

"I was so surprised and honored to have received this prize," she said. Her name was randomly pulled from 11,000 entries received from nurses across the country.

Whelan, the school nurse for Alloway Township School in Salem County, said working with students and families to improve the health of the school community is her calling. "I have been a school nurse for six years and I truly feel that I have found

my passion," she added.

Whelan is an NJEA member who has also taken advantage of her NEA Member Benefits and is a satisfied California Casualty policyholder.

The Nurses Night Out award was created to thank registered nurses and nurse practitioners for the long hours they put in offering comfort and healing to patients and families. Winners can use the \$1,000 prize any way they wish: hitting the town in a rented limousine, hosting a party, or taking a relaxing day at the spa. They are only limited by their imagination.

Whelan plans on using most of the funds for a

summer vacation tour of the National Parks with her family, but will also treat teachers and staff at the Alloway Township School to a breakfast in the near future.

NJEA members can sign up for a chance to win a Dodge Journey with California Casualty's "Wherever Your Journey Takes You... We'll be There" sweepstakes at www.takeajourneywithus.com.

For more information about what California Casualty offers NJEA members, visit calcas.com/NJEA.



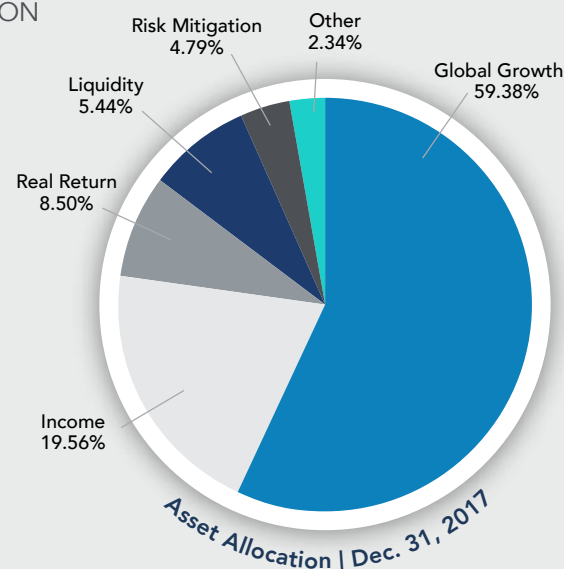
From left: Christina Ramos, California Casualty Field Marketing Manager; Kellie Whelan, Alloway Twp. School Nurse and Award Recipient; Richard Kaufmann, teacher and president of Alloway Education Association; Amy Gross, California Casualty field relations manager; Kristin Schell, Alloway Twp. superintendent; Barbie Ledyard, Alloway Twp. assistant principal.

PENSION UPDATE

TOTAL PENSION FUND: \$77.55 BILLION

The totals below reflect market values as of Dec. 31, 2017, and for comparison, June 30, 2017. The figures, which are rounded, may not reflect the current market values of some alternative investments through the period noted, because of lags in reporting under industry standards.

	Dec. 31, 2017		June 30, 2017	
	Market Value (\$ billions)	Asset Allocation	Market Value (\$ billions)	Asset Allocation
Global Growth	\$46.05	59.38%	\$43.35	57.07%
Income	\$15.16	19.56%	\$15.25	20.08%
Real Return	\$6.59	8.50%	\$6.12	8.05%
Liquidity	\$4.22	5.44%	\$6.14	8.09 %
Risk Mitigation/Capital Preservation	\$3.71	4.79%	\$3.20	4.22%
Other	\$1.81	2.34%	\$1.90	2.50%
Total	\$77.55	100%	\$75.96	100%



Mantua Township EA, NJEA assist former military service member to advocate for service credit

Most elementary school English language arts teachers are unaware of New Jersey's P.L. 18A:28-11.1, but Mantua Township Education Association (MTEA) member Cheryl Tunstall can tell you all about what the law means for her and her family.

The law requires that members of the military are given service credit of four years for time served in the military.

From 1990-1997, Tunstall served in the United States Air Force during Desert Shield/Desert Storm. She worked as a physical therapy technician who implemented exercise programs and treatments that fulfilled a vital role in helping injured service members make a full recovery and return to duty. Tunstall served on Air Force bases in Texas, Maryland, New York and Upper Heyford, England. She left the service to raise a family with her husband Mike, who is retired from the Air Force.

NJEA Patriots Alliance

Tunstall might never have known that she was due a substantial amount of money, if it were not for the efforts of NJEA's Patriots Alliance. Initiated by Meredith Barnes, an NJEA Communications Division staff person and the daughter of a veteran, and Keri Giannotti, a member in Bloomfield, an NJEA Apprentice and Museum Educator at the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Foundation, the NJEA Patriots Alliance was founded to create a space where NJEA members who have served or are currently serving in the armed forces can network and share important information. Barnes contacted every regional UniServ office to inform them about the organization and encourage them to share the information with their members.

When the MTEA's co-presidents Kathy Cartwright and Jackie Hill received the email, they immediately thought of Tunstall, who had been organizing outstanding events highlighting military service since she joined the district in 2015. These activities included writing letters to veterans and inviting a Gulf War veteran into her classroom as well as a group of Marines from various wars into the school. Tunstall's grandfather, Theodore Schulz, a U.S. Navy veteran of World War II, gave a firsthand account to her students about his experience being aboard the USS Fiske, which was sunk by a German U-boat in 1944.

Tunstall was excited to join the Patriots Alliance planning board and connect with educators who are also military veterans. "The military was my family, and now educators are my family," Tunstall said. "I see this group as a way to connect those two families, and

I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to share ideas with other military veterans who are educators."

That connection paid off almost immediately when Barnes mentioned P.L. 18A:28-11.1 and the service credit that another local had been able to win for a teacher. In addition, Barnes shared with the group what some local associations had been able to negotiate for their educational support professional (ESP) members who are also veterans, but not covered under that statute.

NJEA assists veteran with salary guide placement, seniority

Barnes connected Tunstall with NJEA UniServ Representative John Staab who assigned UniServ Consultant Alison Braun to work with Tunstall and MTEA leadership. Braun explained the process for requesting the service credit, and outlined the steps the administration would have to take in order to grant it.

Braun worked with Tunstall to write a letter officially requesting the service credit and the back pay to which she was entitled. Tunstall, who is nontenured, was nervous about asking for more when she felt so grateful for the job she had. But she was strongly encouraged by Cartwright and Hill and her teaching partner, Bill Falcone.

When she submitted the letter on Dec. 13, she was immediately contacted by the superintendent who apologized for the oversight. By Jan. 8, the board voted to approve her service credit and disburse the back pay she was owed.

When Tunstall reaches tenure, she will also be credited with the additional seniority to which she is entitled.

"Having a veteran as part of our membership benefits students and staff alike," said Kathy Cartwright, MTEA co-president. "Cheryl has brought a renewed sense of patriotic pride to our district. It has been a pleasure advocating for members who had given a part of their lives defending our freedoms."

"Not only is Cheryl proud of her time in service, but she shows her students how to give back to the soldiers that are enlisted now," said Jackie Hill, MTEA co-president. "My daughter enlisted in the Army last year and Cheryl took it upon herself to send my daughter a card from her class that everyone signed to lift her spirits during her basic training, which Cheryl knew would be tough. My daughter could not talk to anyone; this was her only way of keeping in touch with her family.

This meant a lot to me and my daughter. We are so glad that we could do something for her as a union."

"I'm new to the union concept," Tunstall said, "I've been very impressed by the amount of support I've received from my education family. It's just been a very exhilarating experience for me."

If you are a military veteran or currently serving (JROTC instructor, New Jersey National Guard, or the reserves) who would like to join the NJEA Patriots Alliance, email Meredith Barnes at mbarnes@njea.org.



I'm new to the union concept. I've been very impressed by the amount of support I've received from my education family. – Cheryl Tunstall.

The military
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New Jersey Hall of Fame Announces Class of 2017

Induction ceremony set for May 6

The New Jersey Hall of Fame (NJHOF) announces the 16 newest inductees it will honor at this year's Induction Ceremony on May 6th, 2018, at the historic Convention Hall in Asbury Park, New Jersey. NJEA is a major sponsor of the Hall of Fame

The Class of 2017 currently includes:

- Arts and Letters: Author Harlan Coben and author and journalist Anna Quindlen.
- Enterprise: Real Estate executive Jon Hanson, publishing executive Steve Forbes, businessman Joe Buckelew, and celebrity chef Cake Boss, Buddy Valastro.
- Performing arts: Actress Meryl Streep, musician and actor Steven Van Zandt, the band The Four Seasons including members Frankie Valli, Bob Gaudio, Tommy DeVito, Nick Massi and Joe Long, singer Gloria Gaynor, and singer-songwriter Debbie Harry of the band BLONDIE.
- Public service: Astronauts Mark and Scott Kelly, nurse Clara Maass and politician Millicent Fenwick.
- Sports: Major League Baseball player Al Leiter and runner Mary Decker.
- Unsung hero: To be announced in April.

"Induction into the New Jersey Hall of Fame is the highest civilian honor that our state can bestow on someone," Gov. Phil Murphy said. "It's a celebration of New Jersey that inspires the next generation of New Jersey leaders. Our inductees remind us how so many of our citizens have transformed the world, and how proud we should be of that fact as New Jerseyans."

All living inductees are expected to attend the 2017 Induction Ceremony; a friend or family member will represent inductees who are no longer with us. The New Jersey Hall of Fame may select additional inductees based on their availability for the ceremony.

"Our May 6 induction ceremony is the NJHOF's 10th-anniversary celebration, and former inductees will help us to induct this year's class. It will be an inspiring ceremony, with lots of surprises," said Steve Edwards, NJHOF Foundation board president.

For information on sponsorship and ticket packages, please contact Lisa Fielding, partnership director, at lisa@princetongroup.com.

The official 2017 Public Vote Ballot contained 50 nominees—10 in each of the five categories.

The public voting, along with input from the Hall of Fame's Board of Trustees, determined this year's class. More information about the selection process and the "Recommend a Nominee" is on the NJHOF www.NJHollofFame.org.

\$5,000 scholarships available to high school seniors

NJHOF will also recognize the recipients of the third annual Arête Scholarship on stage at the Induction Ceremony. Named for the Greek concept of "Arête" meaning the realization of one's highest potential, these \$5,000 scholarships are awarded to New Jersey high school seniors to help them achieve their potential.

Students can apply for these scholarships online at www.NJHollofFame.org/arete before the deadline on March 17. The NJHOF presents the Arête Scholarship in partnership with NJEA.

Hall of Fame essay contest winners invited

The winners of the New Jersey Hall of Fame Essay Contest are invited to attend that induction ceremony. Details on how to enter the essay contest can be found on Page 12 and have appeared in previous editions of the *NJEA Review*.

the numbers:

52,770

The number of students enrolled in public preschool in New Jersey.

New Jersey ranks second highest in the nation for state spending on high-quality public preschool for children who are three and four years old, serving 31,800 four-year-olds and 20,970 three-year-olds. New Jersey ranks fourth highest in access for three-year-olds among the 29 states that enrolled three-year-olds.

Source: 2016 State of Preschool Yearbook, the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER).



Gov. Phil Murphy announcing the 2017 Hall of Fame inductees at a Jan. 30 press conference at the New Jersey State Museum.
Photo courtesy of Gary Gellman/Gellman Images.

Paterson EA member Zellie “Imani” Thomas receives the NJEA Human and Civil Rights Martin Luther King Jr. Award. From left: NJEA President Marie Blistan, Thomas, and NJEA HCR Committee Chair Jacqui Greadington.



Paterson teacher, Palmyra graduate honored at NJEA Human Rights Celebration

The NJEA Martin Luther King Jr. Human and Civil Rights Celebration annually reflects on the history of the human and civil rights movement and honors individuals for their work in promoting social justice. Zellie “Imani” Thomas, an elementary school teacher at School No. 16 in Paterson, was awarded the NJEA Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Human and Civil Rights Award for his social justice activism inside and outside of his school. Clarence B. Jones, a 1949 graduate of Palmyra High School, was honored for his life’s work, including his service to the Civil Rights Movement with Dr. King.

Poet, writer, activist and educator Nikki Giovanni delivered the keynote address. Grammy-winning performer Stephanie Mills offered musical entertainment.

Greadington reflects on social, economic and racial justice

Jacqui Greadington, the chair of the NJEA Human and Civil Rights Committee, and East Orange Education Association president reflected on the theme of the evening. The committee selects a quote from Dr. King for the annual event. This year’s quote was, “There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor political, nor popular, but he must take it because conscience tells him it is right.”

Greadington linked this quote to another quote from Dr. King: “This is not the time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or take the tranquilizing pill of gradualism.”

“I guess I’m drawn to these quotes because they incite action,” Greadington said.

Greadington reminded attendees that at her and the NJEA HCR Committee instigation, the NJEA Delegate Assembly (DA) approved a recommendation last year to enter into a cooperative initiative with the

National Education Association (NEA) to develop and implement a social justice program addressing racial justice.

“I know that many of the people in this room are already working in your schools and communities to ensure your students are treated with respect, fairness, and dignity,” Greadington said. “You recognize that our children, no matter where they come from, are our most precious resource and deserve every chance to succeed.”

She noted, however, that only so much can be accomplished when schools are underfunded, short on even the most basic supplies, and school buildings are unhealthy and unsafe. She noted that the change in leadership at the state level offers hope, but that now was not the time to become complacent.

“Every one of us has a role in this movement and every one of us is needed,” Greadington concluded. “The time to dream is over! Let’s wake up. It’s time to act!”

Blistan presents Human Rights awards

Prior to the awards presentation, Blistan expressed her pride in leading an organization that understands that collective bargaining and grievance adjudication are a vital part of what NJEA does, but that the association’s work does not end there.

“Those things are important, but they are not enough for us to fulfill NJEA’s mission to promote a quality system of public education for all students,” Blistan said. “For decades, NJEA has understood that human and civil rights, are inextricably linked to the fight for great public schools.”

Blistan noted that as far back as 1947, NJEA had a Human Relations Committee, with a Subcommittee on Civil Rights. In 1968, the Human Rights Committee became a standing committee of NJEA. For five decades, Blistan said, the members of this committee have been at the forefront on

RIGHT: Dr. Clarence B. Jones' goddaughter, Valerie Stiles, and Palmyra Mayor Michelle Arnold accept the NJEA Martin Luther King Legacy Award on behalf of Dr. Jones. From left: NJEA President Marie Blistan, Arnold, Stiles, and NJEA HCR Committee Chair Jacqui Greadington.



NJEA's fight for racial, social, economic and educational justice.

Turning to the present, Blistan's said, "Each of you make a difference in the lives of our youth. You influence your communities. Together with union members and activists around the country, you drive progress."

Zellie "Imani" Thomas honored with Human Rights Award

Thomas, a teacher in and graduate of Paterson Public Schools, received the NJEA Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Human and Civil Rights Award. He is a member of the Paterson Education Association. The word Imani—Thomas is respectfully known as Zellie Imani—means "faith" in many African and Middle Eastern cultures.

"Zellie Imani seeks to empower the children in his class, but his reach isn't confined to the walls of his classroom," said NJEA President Marie Blistan. "Zellie's passion for education is infectious. And his commitment to issues of social, racial and economic justice is inspiring."

Thomas traveled to Ferguson, Missouri multiple times after the death of Michael Brown in August 2014. He helped to organize youth to protest the police-involved shooting and the police response toward the protestors afterwards. While in the city, Zellie and others were met with tear gas and rubber bullets. He used social media to publicize the unfolding events. With 105,000 followers on his Twitter feed, @zellieimani, his coverage had considerable reach.

In return, Thomas risked arrest and received hate mail and death threats. Nonetheless, he continued to organize in Ferguson and other communities.

Thomas co-founded #NJShutItDown and the Black Liberation Collective, a coalition of college student groups that challenge racism in higher education. More recently, Thomas co-founded the Paterson chapter of Black Lives Matter. He is also the owner of Noir Reads, which is a subscription box of books by black authors.

In his remarks accepting the award, Thomas used the metaphor of a machine to illustrate institutional racism.

"Racism is a cold, hard machine," Thomas said. "As a black educator, I find myself in constant motion trying to prevent that machine from crushing my students into nothingness, while at the same time protecting myself as a black educator."

He also challenged the notion that institutional racism is a thing of the past.

"There are those of us who thought that the election of Obama meant that the machine was finally breaking down," Thomas said. "But 45's [Trump's] election showed that all it needed was a little bit of oil. But there's still some who think there's no machine at all. So there is a lot of work to be done."

Clarence B. Jones receives Legacy Award

As the Palmyra High School Class of 1949 valedictorian, Clarence B. Jones demonstrated that he was already on the path to social justice and social advocacy. His valedictory speech, "Tomorrow a Better World," addressed breaking racial barriers. After graduation, Jones earned a bachelor's degree from Columbia University and a Juris Doctor from Boston University's School of Law.

In February 1960, the 29-year-old Jones met Dr. King as one of a team of lawyers who successfully defended King against trumped up charges of tax fraud in Alabama.

Jones was unable to attend the event to receive the NJEA Martin Luther King Legacy Award, which was accepted on his behalf by his goddaughter, Valerie Still, and Palmyra Mayor Michelle Arnold. Still serves as president of the Dr. Clarence B. Jones Institute for Social Advocacy. Arnold is its vice president.

"It was impossible for me to foresee or imagine that in February 1960 I would meet Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and for the next successive seven-and-



Poet, writer, activist and educator Nikki Giovanni provided a compelling and challenging keynote address delivered with humor and poetry.



Grammy-winning performer Stephanie Mills concluded the event with a concert.




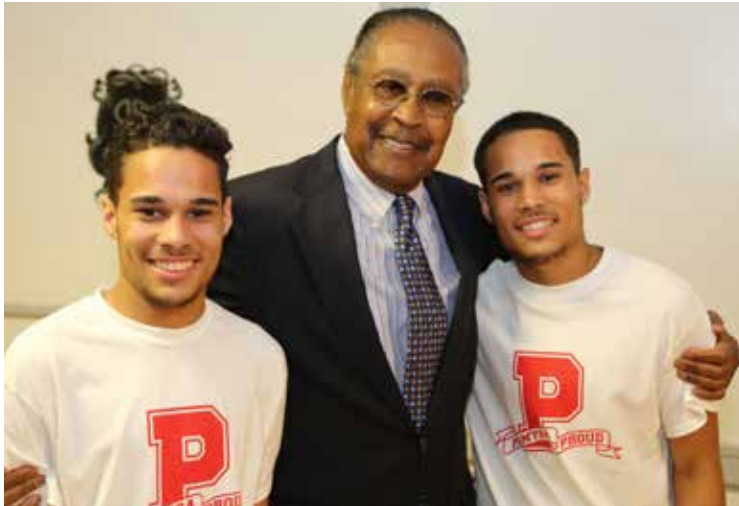
Retired Princeton Public Schools teacher Evelyn Counts; Olive Giles, president of the Princeton Regional Educational Support Staff Association; and her husband, PRESSA member Michael Giles, opened the celebration with the "Star Spangled Banner," "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing" and other selections.

a-half years serve as his political adviser, personal lawyer, and draft-speech writer until his assassination in Memphis, Tennessee, April 4, 1968,” Jones wrote in a message read by Still.

Jones assisted in drafting the first portion of the iconic “I Have a Dream” speech, delivered by Dr. King at the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Jones is responsible for preserving the copyright of the address. In addition to his direct work with Dr. King, Jones became general counsel for the Gandhi Society for Human Rights, the fundraising arm for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

He is the author and co-author of three books: *What Would Martin Say?*; *Behind the Dream: the Making of a Speech that Transformed a Nation*; and *Uprising: Understanding Attica, Revolution, and the Incarceration State*.

On June 6, 2017, Palmyra High School renamed its library in honor of Jones and dedicated the Clarence B. Jones Institute for Social Advocacy, which is housed in the school. Jones visit to the high school on that day was featured on “Classroom Close-up, NJ” and can be viewed at classroomcloseup.org/segments/behind-the-dream. 



TOP PHOTO: Dr. Clarence B. Jones at Palmyra High School with PHS students in June 2017, when the high school library was named in his honor.

BOTTOM PHOTO: NJEA Vice President Sean M. Spiller with Dr. Clarence B. Jones at Palmyra High School in June 2017.

The NJEA Human and Civil Rights Committee

For 44 years, the NJEA Human and Civil Rights Committee has planned and presented the NJEA Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Human and Civil Rights Celebration, but the committee’s work extends far beyond the annual event.

The committee:

- Studies and recommends how members and their associations can contribute to equal opportunities and improved human relations.
- Develops and publicizes teaching strategies to promote diversity education for children and adults.
- Reviews timely issues such as diversity, ethnicity, human relations, and discrimination.
- Conducts the annual human rights conference and recommends Human Rights Award winners, if any.
- Develops and initiates training opportunities for school personnel.

The members of the committee are:

Chair: **Jacqui Greadington**, Essex County

Alphonso P. Harrell, Atlantic County

Yolanda Salazar, Bergen County

Carmen S. Cooper, Camden County

Carol E. Sabo, Cape May County

Geraldine A. Lane, Cumberland County

Venus Yearwood, Essex County

Deborah S. Wilson, Gloucester County

Ferdinand Orock, Higher Education

Tanea L. Greco, Hudson County

Marie Corfield, Hunterdon County

Paige J. Hinton-Mason, Mercer

Ramona L. Brown, Middlesex County

Bridget D. James, Monmouth County

Sheri L. Bradshaw-Newton, Morris County

Lisa M. Simone, Ocean County

Kathy Rogers, Passaic County

Betty Meeks-Manning, NJREA

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The spotlight finds a reluctant star
Lenape High School Registrar

Lynda Miller

NJEA's 2018 ESP of the Year

By Kathryn Coulibaly

Miller is responsible
for the student
activities account
and is the ticket
adviser for all the
paying athletic
events. Miller
doesn't just oversee
these programs:
when she is not
working, you can
often find her at
school activities and
sporting events. She
enjoys watching the
students perform
and compete, even
though they may
not know her.

For 44 years, Lenape High School Registrar Lynda Miller has successfully avoided the spotlight, even while proving herself to be a go-to employee, friend, family member and volunteer. But the spotlight finally caught up to her when she was named the 2018 NJEA Educational Support Professional (ESP) of the Year.

A graduate of Lenape's sister school, Shawnee High School, Miller began working at Lenape as a secretary in 1973 at just 19 years old. She went on to work in the attendance and guidance offices until 1999, when she became the school's registrar.

While working in the guidance office, Miller worked closely with the school's then-registrar. She found the work interesting, so when the position became available, she jumped at it.

Since then, Miller's days have been filled with visits from students requesting transcripts for college applications, calls from employment agencies verifying that a prospective employee is a high school graduate, and helping people interested in returning to school gather the information they need.

In addition, there are calls, emails and questions from colleagues and students. It's a vital position—that is very nearly invisible to most students.

A career behind the scenes

"If you ask a student who the registrar is, or what he or she does, that student would have no idea," Miller said. "Until their senior year, when they apply for college, most of them have no idea that there is someone behind the scenes, maintaining their transcripts and ensuring that all the information is accurate."

Miller maintains transcripts for every student who ever attended Lenape High School.

"When I started, I worked in a classroom with file cabinets full of papers," Miller recalled. "Now, everyone's records fit on a tiny disk that sits on the top of my desk."

It's important for Miller to have easy access to those records. She recently had to provide transcripts for a student who graduated in the 1970s who wanted to apply to a college.

The college application process is an important part of her job, one that brings her face to face with nervous, but excited seniors.

"Every year, the college application process seems to start earlier," Miller said. "It used to be that students would apply for early decision in late September or early October. Now, I get requests over the summer for transcripts. But the highest demand is still in November and December."

Some colleges require midyear grades from incoming freshmen to ensure that they continue to prioritize their education. And many scholarships also require transcripts.

Miller also receives requests from college freshman who decide that their dream school wasn't the right fit for them after all and want to transfer.

New student registration is another important

part of the job, and Miller has to create a transcript for each student once the district receives his or her records. For students who attended schools in other states, it can be challenging to convert their previous school's transcript into one that is compatible with Lenape's system.

For international students, it can be even more difficult, as transcripts are often in other languages.

"Sometimes, you just have to sit with students and ask them about their previous school's requirements and what they did in order to be able to convert their transcript," Miller said.

Overall, the job requires attention to detail, something that Miller enjoys.

"We deal with a high volume of requests," Miller said. "We handle requests related to colleges, student registration, student withdrawals, grade changes, home instruction, etc. These are all important tasks; you have to be able to juggle each of them, and be accurate and efficient, to make sure that nothing falls through the cracks."

A labor of love

But for Miller, the work is a labor of love. Her affection for Lenape is obvious, from the two huge bulletin boards crowded with clippings of Lenape students' achievements, to the fact that she has taken on two part-time jobs with the district that keep her at the school well after her day as the registrar ends.

Miller is responsible for the student activities account and is the ticket adviser for all the paying athletic events. Miller doesn't just oversee these programs: when she is not working, you can often find her at school activities and sporting events. She enjoys watching the students perform and compete, even though they may not know her.

Miller describes Lenape as a family. "Lenape High School is a special place," Miller said. "The people here make it easy to come to work every day, even when you have to get up at 5:15 a.m. five days a week!"

In fact, Miller is such a fan of the school that she enrolled her son, Shaun, now 36, in the district. He graduated in 2000 and now works for a medical equipment company.

When Miller is not at Lenape or volunteering with her church, the Protestant Community Church of Medford Lakes, you can find her and Shaun at every Philadelphia Eagles game during football season. They have been season ticket holders for 20 years and have created a community with the other ticket holders who sit near them.

Building a local association

Miller also has played an active role in her local education association. As a new hire, she and the other secretaries in the district felt the need to organize a union for secretaries, so they created the Lenape District Secretaries Association.

"We wanted to organize because, while we thought our job and benefits were secure, we really couldn't be sure," Miller remembered. "We wanted

to make sure that we could keep what we have.”

In 1977, they organized the association, and after a few years, Miller became the president.

In 1992, the secretaries were approached by the teachers’ union, the Lenape District Education Association, about merging with them. The secretaries agreed in order to maximize their strength, and Miller became the recording secretary and served as the secretaries’ representative on the negotiations team.

An honor to be acknowledged

Through all the changes over the course of her career, Miller thinks the students today are very similar to when she went to school.

“Sometimes I see the way students dress or the music they listen to, and I think, well that’s different,” Miller said. “But then I think, when I was in school, I bet the older generations looked at what I wore and the music I liked and thought that was pretty strange, too! Kids are kids, and I’ve met a lot of good kids along the way.”

Despite all her volunteer and leadership positions, Miller has always fled from the spotlight, so it is challenging for her to receive the recognition.

“It’s overwhelming to be named the ESP of the Year,” Miller said. “It’s a lot of attention for someone used to doing behind the scenes work.”

Miller’s mother is unwilling to let her daughter’s reticence hold her back from sharing the news.

“My mother has called every living relative and friend we have,” Miller laughed. “But it really is an honor to be acknowledged, and I am very proud to represent ESPs and my colleagues here at Lenape.”

As the 2018 ESP of the Year, Miller has already been nominated by NJEA for the NEA ESP of the Year award. She will attend the NEA ESP Conference in Orlando, Fla., funded by NJEA, and will receive a weeklong Disney vacation. To commemorate the experience, NJEA will present her with an ESP of the Year ring, and she will be a special guest at the 2018 NJEA Convention. 📍

Kathryn Coulibaly is the associate editor of the NJEA Review and provides content and support to njea.org. She can be reached at kcoulibaly@njea.org.

As a new hire, Miller and the other secretaries in the district felt the need to organize a union for secretaries, so they created the Lenape District Secretaries Association.





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BUILDING HABITS OF MIND THROUGH WRITING

By Daniel L. Vollrath, Ed.D. and Scott Einhorn

It is no secret that as teachers we want our students to behave intelligently. The more we model, promote, infuse and build a culture of effective habits within the classroom, the more inclined students will be to display them spontaneously.

What habits are we talking about?

The Habits of Mind, developed by Arthur Costa and Bena Kallick, are a set of 16 dispositions to help people confront challenges. Instead of giving up, these 16 habits are essential in figuring out solutions. One way to support the Habits of Mind within the classroom, and infuse them into an aspect of curriculum, is through writing.

How can the Habits of Mind improve behaviors and writing?

As writers it is always important to develop and improve your writing to create the best piece possible. This process takes time, commitment, and mental energy. While the fundamentals of writing emphasize grammar, structure, fluency and style, it is also important to focus on developing habits.

In all aspects of life, in order to be successful in a particular job, sport, hobby or other endeavor, one needs to develop and build on the habits necessary to complete the task with success. For example, F. Scott Fitzgerald, author of *The Great Gatsby*, is believed to have had a learning disability—most likely dyslexia. He was reportedly kicked out of school at the age of 12 for not focusing or finishing his work. He also had a very hard time spelling words correctly, but he nonetheless succeeded as a writer.

Develop the Habits of Mind as an internal compass that will guide your students through the entire writing process—from concept, inquiry, and research through outlining, drafting, and revising.

What follows are the 16 Habits of Mind for Writing that you can share with your students. While the Habits of Mind can be applied to many aspects of life, writing is a useful activity around which to reinforce them.

Habits of Mind for Writing

Persisting

Are you going the extra mile and working to complete your writing goal?

You have 40 minutes of writing workshop time, so you set a goal for yourself to complete a well-developed introductory paragraph. As you push yourself to finish this goal, consider the commitment you are putting forth. The goal is not to just get it done so you can be ready to leave class; the goal is to complete the piece of work with excellence.

Persisting through distractions is key here. You have a computer in front of you, and YouTube is a click away—it's tempting. This is where you remind yourself that not only did you commit to completing the paragraph, but that you are also practicing persistence. This is being mindful of the habit.

Managing impulsivity

How did I manage my pacing of work?

We all have been there: it's Wednesday night and your analytical essay is due first period tomorrow morning. You hate this feeling of stress, anxiety, procrastination and regret. You hate knowing that you need to pull an "all-nighter" to get it done. So how can you prevent this from happening over and over?

Well, when you receive a writing assignment, make sure you put the final due date on your calendar, and then create a schedule to complete the project. Consider a timeline of personal due dates for different sections along the way. This kind of tracking will alleviate stress and anxiety, which in the end will eliminate your impulsivity. Ultimately, this habit will have a positive impact in most aspects of your life, whether it's getting to the airport on time or wrapping up your boss's project ahead of schedule.

Listening with understanding and empathy

Are you listening to other viewpoints?

Get into the habit of listening closely to what others have to say when presenting information and conversing. The idea is to try and understand another person's perspective and feelings, especially when they differ from your own. In other words, put yourself in the other person's shoes.

An argumentative classroom discussion is a great example: certain topics can elicit valuable conversation and offer the opportunity to understand opposing views. Picking up on a peer's tone of voice, emotion and conviction will enable you to empathize with them. This habit is particularly useful, even necessary, when researching, outlining, and drafting claims and counterclaims.

Thinking flexibly

Is there another way to write this?

During the narrative writing process you go back and edit your paper. You find two paragraphs that you believe suffer from one or more of the following: they're ineffective, not captivating, and/or just plain boring. Ask yourself, "What can I do to improve these paragraphs?"

Many times you have opportunities in your writing to show your ideas in a way that most writers would never think of. This is thinking flexibly.

Thinking about thinking (metacognition)

How did you organize your thinking? What was the process you used to begin your writing? Know your knowing.

You receive a literature analysis essay assignment and feel overwhelmed because of your lack of knowledge about the process of literary analysis. At this point you know that you need to figure something out. When such problems arise, try this checklist:

- Take some time to research the issue you are having.
- Search out some examples of good high school-level literary analysis essays.
- Talk with friends/peers about the issue.
- Ask the teacher questions.

In my experience, this was most successful in helping me understand what I needed to do in order to be successful. I know myself and what works best for me.

Striving for accuracy

Are you asking, "Is this my best piece of writing?"

After finishing an argumentative essay you are unsure about the proper way to cite refer-

ences. Set aside time to research, proofread and edit the citations found in your paper. Do it again. If the paper references six items, make sure you included six items. What about grammar, structure and fluency? Check the paper again.

Questioning and posing problems

Are you asking other people questions?

Before you begin writing your feature article for your blog, make a list of questions about the style of writing you plan to use. Discuss these questions in writing workshop or in a conference with your teacher. Pose some problems to your peers or your teacher about issues that might occur in the writing process. The idea is to get a clear understanding of the writing style before you begin.

Perhaps you have to produce a video essay, but you've never done one and have no idea what software to use or how such software works. Don't throw your hands up in confusion or put your head down in despair, ask your peers in class as well as your friends outside of the class if they know something about video essays.

Applying past knowledge to new situations

Have you thought about connections to what you have learned in prior courses on the topic?

While brainstorming topics for your video essay script, think about topics that interest you while tapping into prior learning in your life and classes. You think of a topic—"The Return of Records." This allows you to draw upon your knowledge of the early 1900s, which you studied intensively during freshman year. In addition, you love music and the history of music. These two areas of prior knowledge can mesh together to make for a great video essay. You are not quite sure how yet, but they will.

Thinking and communicating with clarity and precision

Are you communicating your ideas with clear writing, thinking, and speaking?

An effective approach to making sure your thoughts and ideas are communicated clearly in your writing is to read your paper out loud to yourself or a friend. Ask yourself and a peer, "Is this essay communicating what I want it to?" "Does it sound like I want it to sound?"

Gathering data through all senses

Have you considered the senses within your writing, explaining the sights, taste, touch, and smell?

Make the reader feel that he or she is physically there in the story. Show the use of sound,

taste, sight and touch. Check this out from a sophomore's narrative feature.

"As soon as I walked inside, still lost in thought, my senses were overwhelmed. The lights in the lobby flashed purple and pink. Huge speakers blasted pop songs. Flamenco dancers swirled around offering free samples. There was more designer perfume in the air than oxygen. I loved it."

Creating, imagining, innovating

Is your writing imaginative and original?

Writing a narrative feature blog about a trip to Hawaii with your family seems like an interesting topic that could be easy to write about. What would make it even more exciting? Think about the big takeaway from the vacation and then focus on the experiences that lead to that. Let's face it: the reader doesn't want a chronological laundry list of everything you did: first we went to the beach, and then we swam with sea turtles, and finally we ate at a luau. This is expected.

Developing a thematic insight in your narrative by showing a gradual transformation or an unanticipated understanding is the main goal. Remember, when the narrator or character changes, the reader can as well.

Responding with wonderment and awe

Are you inquiring about your topic? What is exciting?

You have the opportunity to choose your own topic for an argument project. Don't just grab something off a list of top debates; select something that's always intrigued you or that's always bugged you. This is how you will inspire yourself and your audience. Even though you may be happier with no assignment at all, seize the opportunity to explore a topic that you really want to know more about.

Taking responsible risks

Are you trying different approaches to writing?

During the writing process you feel that improved word choice will help the reader understand your ideas. When tweaking your word choice, you have some doubts about whether your writing is awkward or sounds insincere or if you have developed the appropriate voice in the piece. These concerns are good to have; you should question your choices in your writing. When you revise with a peer or teacher, have discussions around those questions. Taking these risks will develop you as a writer.

Finding humor

Is it funny?

Before beginning a writing task, think about

the funny aspect and making someone laugh. Often when you read a funny anecdote within a piece, it draws you in and you want to read more.

Ask yourself, "Would my humor in the introductory paragraph captivate the reader?" Remember, you're not trying to constantly crack jokes and get your reader to fall off his or her chair in a belly laugh. However, when appropriate, getting the reader to chuckle inside and smile here and there is what it's about—your writing becomes well-rounded. It becomes enlightening and entertaining.

Thinking interdependently

Have you worked together with other peers to get ideas? Maybe they have some insight.

Before selecting a topic, share your ideas with a group of students. The more you share with them the better. You can benefit from this experience by obtaining new ideas, information, insights and perspectives that you hadn't considered. Plus, your peers will be a big help with your project down the road.

Remaining open to continuous learning

Have you gone back to research more information to add to your already great piece of writing?

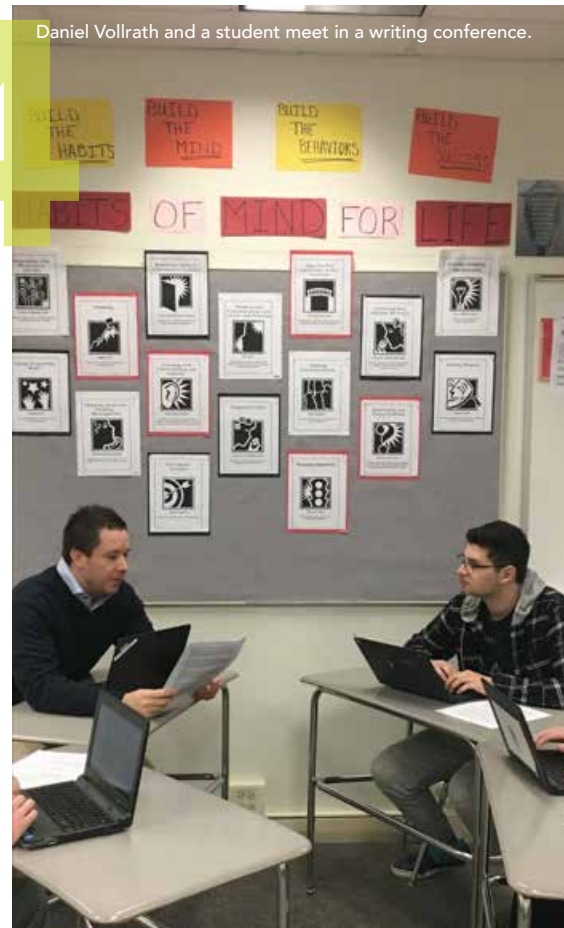
You decide to have a writing conference with your teacher about your narrative feature article. While conferencing, your teacher repeatedly points out, "You need to show, not tell."

After the conference you think about the meaning of that statement and realize it is something that you never ever think of while writing. With that feedback you begin to research some additional examples that show this idea, which in turn assists in developing your skills as a writer and a storyteller. 📖

Scott Einhorn has been teaching English for 18 years—the past 16 at Hunterdon Central Regional High School in Flemington. With his sophomore classes he uses the Habits of Mind to frame both reading and writing workshops, giving students time throughout the week to apply and reflect on behaviors that are crucial for success both in and out of the classroom. He can be reached at seinhorn@hcrhs.org.

Daniel Vollrath is a special education teacher at Hunterdon Central Regional High School, and a United States Professional Development Trainer with The Institute for Habits of Mind. With a strong passion for developing curriculum, classroom culture and mindfulness based upon the Habits of Mind, Vollrath has infused dispositional thinking and reflection into the reading and writing workshop process. You can follow him on Twitter at @HabitsOfMindInc and on Facebook at "Habits of Mind Inclusive Teaching and Learning." On LinkedIn look for Daniel L. Vollrath, Ed.D. You may email him at danvollrath44@gmail.com.

Daniel Vollrath and a student meet in a writing conference.



Scott Einhorn (l) and Daniel Vollrath



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THE POWER

Why EVERY vote matters

OF

By Kimberly Crane

ONE

The crowd in Room 101 craved fresh air and resolution as officials from the New Jersey Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC) opened ballots at the Academy of Urban Leadership Charter School (AULCS) in Perth Amboy.

"Twenty-five for each side with three contested votes," the ballot counter announced. "At the moment, we have a tie."

An uncomfortable shuffling of the group indicated a mental groan from both sides of the vote. It wasn't over.

The Academy of Urban Leadership Education Association (AULEA) faced decertification on Dec. 18, 2017, just a year and eight months after unionizing. A contested vote would decide their fate.

They had only just begun

In 2016, new school leadership arrived at AULCS with a rumored bad reputation pertaining to staff equity. Soon after, a teacher new to the charter school was hired at a salary above that of most veteran staff. This inequity and others led to grumbling among colleagues and the idea of forming a union took hold.

A sizable majority of AULCS staff signed cards in 2016 to indicate their desire to unionize. On March 31, 2016, NJEA filed a certification request with PERC and the AULEA was born. That was the last easy action for the local association. The following year brought troubled negotiations with conflicts over the smallest points of contract language and uncompromising board opposition to any salary guides put forward by the union.

Administration was suspected of using divisionary tactics as a decertification movement grew. There was a growing fear of retaliation among AULEA members. The uncertain climate forced an AULCS high school social studies teacher, Rose Ann Berberich, to make difficult choices.

A leader rises

Berberich arrived at AULCS in 2010, the school's inaugural year. One of the first questions she asked was if the staff was part of NJEA. She received a frosty response from

school leadership and was told, "No. We will never have a union here."

But by 2018, Berberich had become president of the union that AULCS leaders insisted would never exist.

"People knew I was union supportive, but I initially said that couldn't be president because I was focusing on my family," Berberich recalled.

That changed when two former AULEA presidents left the district. Berberich stepped up, refusing to let her union deteriorate without a leader. She is one of only three teachers who were hired by AULCS at its inception that remain at the school. Nonetheless, she has built close relationships with her colleagues and students over the last eight years. Some of those relationships were tested by her decision to become a union activist and leader.

Self-doubt

School officials encouraged a campaign to destroy the local association, and they were gaining ground. Berberich began to doubt her convictions as she watched this battle unfold around her. Her closest colleagues were on the other side, and they believed that she was putting herself at risk.

"You need to distance yourself from the union," said Berberich's best friend. "I'm only trying to look out for you."

Berberich was fearful of losing her job, her students, and her friends. She didn't know what to do.

"I worried that I was the lone person who supported the union," Berberich recalled. "Then the petition to decertification happened in May of 2017, and I was really on the fence."

To maintain the right to represent members' interests, a majority of eligible union members must vote "yes" if a decertification vote is called. Votes that are contested by either side remain sealed until PERC reaches a decision on their validity. AULEA had three contested votes. PERC quickly rejected two of those ballots based on the eligibility of the individuals voting. One tie-breaking vote remained.

"The important thing to remem-

ber about decertification movements is that they are usually encouraged by a hostile administration seeking to break the union," said Brian Furry, the NJEA UniServ Field Representative assigned to AULEA. "Administration encourages members to sign the petition by making false promises about how great it would be without the union getting in the way. Nothing could be further from the truth."

AULCS's school leadership allegedly held meetings with decertification supporters.

"It was reported to us that they were very careful of their wording in these meetings," said Berberich. "They promised to create a more 'balanced' salary guide if the union was gone. They told AULEA members that the union was the reason they couldn't change the salary guides immediately because negotiations was holding up the process. Yet, at the bargaining table it was administration that was being unreasonable."

A path is chosen

"Rose Ann, I have known you for many years—you are not anti-union," said a colleague that Berberich describes as her sounding board.

It was a conversation that moved Berberich into a state of self-reflection. As a result, Berberich realized that she would be going against every moral belief that she had ever held if she supported the decertification.

"This decertification conflict was a representation of what has been going on between workers and employers in this country for 100 years," said Berberich. "I couldn't let anti-unionism win."

She further reflected that her decision was less about thwarting administration and more about building a union family. "Administrators come and go. We are here for the long haul."

On the front lines

Stephanie Valenti, a middle school language arts teacher at AULCS, felt the full support of union membership when the local association in her former district helped her win a conflict. She was pleased to find that

**"Information
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Berberich
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work that way.
Something was
very wrong
here."**

"I see a renewed sense of passion and purpose in my colleagues now because of our union. I am so proud and thankful to have had the opportunity to represent our members."



AULEA President Rose Ann Berberich.

her new charter school had a union.

Unfortunately, the good vibe did not last. Valenti realized quickly that the administration and association did not see eye to eye.

"Information was given that blamed the union for a long work day, poor salaries, and a 190-day school year," she said. "I knew from past experience that unions don't work that way. Something was very wrong here."

A letter from AULEA requesting help and member support moved her to act.

"The letter outlined a few facts about our declining working conditions and high turnover, which everyone knows is bad for students," said Valenti. "The letter really resonated with me so I phoned one of the contacts listed to see how I could help."

Region 11/12 UniServ Consultant Ted Tympanick was the voice on the other end of the line. He worked closely with AULEA to organize one-to-one conversations with members and assess their immediate needs.

"Ted had excellent advice on how to learn what is most important to our

members in their work environment," said Valenti. "He gave me strategies on how to represent our union in a positive and factual manner. I used those strategies when speaking to my colleagues."

Berberich credits Valenti with giving her the final inspiration she needed to fight the decertification.

"I went to a meeting of the decertification supporters," said Berberich. "Stephanie spoke passionately in support of the union at that meeting. I thought that most of the union-supportive staff had left the district. She gave me heart."

Both the union and school officials launched aggressive public relations campaigns as the vote got closer. AULCS's lead administrator, Nestor Collazo, wrote a memo to staff that stated if the decertification went through, NJEA "...will no longer have control over your work lives at AUL." The letter was viewed as arrogant and hostile by many members whose vote was previously undecided. It was enough to push many of them to vote yes for their union.

Valenti literally stepped up to the

table during the decertification vote. She was the association's designated representative at the ballot counting and stood as the local's witness to the PERC process.

The power of one

The last contested AULEA vote was legitimized by PERC. On Jan. 19, at 2:08 p.m. that vote was opened in PERC's offices. The vote was in favor of the union and majority status was upheld. The deadline to challenge PERC's decision on the decertification passed quietly. The process of re-build unity has begun.

"You will find that major movements are started by one significant element," said Marguerite Schroeder, the NJEA organizing field representative working with AULEA. "In this case, the power of one vote strengthened the backbone of the rest of this group and gave them the courage to come on board."

Schroeder is referring to the fact that in the few weeks since PERC ruled in the association's favor, members who had previously supported decertification switched camps and

are approaching association leadership to ask how they can get involved. NJEA has several professional development sessions scheduled for AULEA members, and support for the association is growing every day.

Valenti recalls the day she found out the association won.

"I was ecstatic," she said.

Berberich said that she now looks forward to fair and civil negotiations.

"I look forward to the chance for our members to come together and embrace being a union family instead of fearing it," Berberich concluded thoughtfully. "I can't wait to show them the great things that we have the opportunity to do together." 🇺🇸

Kimberly Crane is an NJEA Communications Consultant and the vice president of the Highland Park Education Association. She previously served as HPEA president. She can be reached at kcraane@njea.org.



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Art and autism

Celebrating and creating

By Patrick Rumaker, NJEA Staff



The students are using disabilities as their capabilities. This public art show demonstrates how far our students have come and how they've stepped out of their comfort zone and used it to make these beautiful works of art.

An art opening in New York City might feature choice white wines and rare cheeses. Guests draped in designer fashions may move among the works of a promising young painter as they endeavor to divine the artist's vision. The residents of Lakewood and Brick townships enjoyed an art opening of their own last November, but with bottled water and cupcakes. And while the labels on the guests' clothes reflected more economical choices than their New York counterparts, the art on display still reflected the work of visionaries.

The artists are students with autism and multiple disabilities at Lakewood Middle School. They had worked throughout the spring, summer and fall of 2017 to create 43 works of art to be displayed in the Brick Township Library. They are preparing for another show in April, this time at the Lakewood Public Library, to coincide with Autism Awareness Month.

The show is titled "Art and Autism: Celebrating and Creating."

"The students are using disabilities as their capabilities," says Lakewood Middle School art teacher Diana Ehlers. "This public art show demonstrates how far our students have come and how they've stepped out of their comfort zone and used it to make these beautiful works of art."

Ehlers, who teaches art to sixth, seventh and eighth graders throughout the school, works with special education teachers Julie Bruno, Danielle Young, Brenda Douglas and Carmella Quick to find the best ways to bring out the best in their students. The program is supported by paraprofessionals Grace Tront, Sue Rivera, Diane

Weber, Chante Jackson, Michele Donato, Andrea Levine and Melissa Pick

Inclusion and focus

Art and Autism began in 2013 as a fundraising project that sold student creations through a private Facebook page. Works of art were sold to faculty and friends at school. The money raised was used to fund field trips and purchase items that supported occupational instruction in the classroom such as baking supplies and hygiene products.

"Over time we saturated the school staff art market and finding new buyers among staff and friends was a challenge, so we decided to slow things down," Ehlers says.

At the time, Ehlers was teaching one class of students with multiple disabilities and autism for 43 minutes each day, while teaching students in the schools general education program the rest of the day. Later an additional multiple disabilities/autism class was added. Two years ago, the students in the special needs art classes were combined and included in the general education art classes.

In the general education art classes, students with autism and multiple disabilities are able to focus on the adaptive techniques and modifications they need to create projects like those of their nondisabled peers. But while the move to inclusion enabled the students with special needs to learn alongside their peers, Ehlers missed the dedicated time she previously had to focus on the specific tactile skills of her special needs students.

"I started to recognize how

valuable the time was that I had spent with the students as a group, where I could challenge them to work on their mobility, tactile sensitivities, and artistic skills," Ehlers says.

Ehlers now carves out time in her week to work with the students in their self-contained classrooms. Late in the evening, after her own children go to bed, she scours the internet for ideas that will challenge the students, but lead them to the successful completion of projects that produce compelling works of art and new experiences.

Discovering a venue

A resident of Brick Township, Ehlers makes regular trips to the local library there. The Brick Township Library is only one mile from Lakewood Middle School. On one trip in February 2016, she discovered a seniors' art exhibit in the front room.

"It dawned on me that this would be the perfect place to show the public the beautiful creations these amazing and hardworking kids were making," Ehlers recalls. "I went in the room and counted 43 hooks on the wall. We now had a goal: create 43 pieces of art."

Ehlers scheduled an art display with Brick Public Library for the month of November, giving her students and her colleagues eight months to prepare. They planned to not only showcase student work, but to educate the public on educational programs such as applied behavioral analysis (ABA) and on the role of a paraprofessional in the special education setting.

From March through October 2016, including the summer,

students worked to produce the pieces needed for the show. Teachers and paraprofessionals used the opportunity to advance goals found in the students individualized educational programs (IEPs). Students worked with a broad variety of media and used some imaginative strategies to meet the challenge.

Using disabilities as capabilities

Diego has been using a wheelchair most of his life. He often did not want to interact with other students because he was self-conscious about the chair. With his mother's permission, staff suggested to Diego that he use his chair as a tool for his art.

On a large sheet of bulletin board paper, paper plates with various colors of paint were strategically placed near several paper canvases. Diego rolled over selected colors and used his wheels to apply them to each canvas, consciously choosing his streaks and blends.

"At first, Diego was hesitant because he's particular about his clothes, but the other kids cheered him on and he embraced it," Ehlers remembers. "His peers made him feel like a rock star."

Many students with autism are sensitive to touch. When Ehlers accompanied the class on a trip to the beach at Seaside Heights, she noticed that some of the students were hesitant to even take their shoes off because the look and feel of sand was uncomfortable to them.

"I saw one of our paraprofessionals take over an hour



"Stained Glass of Fun" by Kevin



"The Big Show" by Joey



"American Feet" by Edgar



"Rainbow Cars" by Gabriel

bringing one of our students closer and closer to the water until he finally dipped his toes in," Ehlers recalls. "It was a huge moment, and it took the paraprofessional's dedication and patience to get him there."

From that experience, the idea for using feet to paint came about. Every student picked a few colors of paint, which staff applied to the students' feet. Being defensive to touch, some students were very hesitant. The tickle of the brush and the squish of the paint between their toes were new sensations for everyone.

"But once we got past the tickling sensation and allowed them to step on the paper, they had a blast," Ehlers says. "The results were just beautiful: blended colors and foot prints that looked as if someone had danced on the white paper."

One student initially did not want to participate because his disability leads him to be very self conscience. But after he saw how much fun and excitement it brought to the other students, he finally decided to take a turn.

"It was a beautiful moment," Ehlers said. "He chose the colors red and blue and created 'American Feet.'"

One student who had a one-to-one aide had difficulty completing any of his work. For weeks he labored to complete a project that involved making slashes of color with color with crayons. Finally, as a last resort, a crayon that was expected to be too challenging for the student was offered to him. With assistance from paraprofessional Diane Weber, he finished the project using the new tool.

"With Miss Diane's help and that discovery it was amazing!" Ehlers exclaims. "We'd been spending over a year with this student. Who would have known that if we'd given him this material—one that we thought he couldn't handle—he could finish it!"

Joey is a student who is easily distracted. He also loves WWF wrestling shows. Joey also needed to practice fine motor skills. His art project, "The Big Show," addressed all three needs. While singing the theme song, "The Big Show" from WWF, Joey unwrapped a shopping bagful of crayons. He glued the pieces to his canvas and named the result after his favorite song—one the whole class now knows word-for-word.

Student art on public display

"Art and Autism: Celebrating and Creating" opened at the Brick Township Library on Nov. 4. From the many pieces created by the 11 students over the previous eight months, 43 were selected for display. Every student had work displayed. Each piece was mounted in frames donated by staff and collected by Ehlers. Ehlers painted the frames in her garage.

Descriptions written by the teachers and paraprofessionals accompanied each piece, including the story of how each came to be created. Other framed items answered the questions, "What is a paraprofessional?" and "What is an ABA classroom?"

One very special collage was created by all of the students to honor Wesley Bailey, an administrator at Lakewood Middle School, who died

suddenly in the summer of 2017. Students clipped images from magazines that reminded them of Bailey, a man from Liberia who loved sports, his family, and his church and who had, Ehlers remembered, a true passion for the children of Lakewood and their education. The students glued the clippings to a canvas board that a paraprofessional had painted with the students with autism. It was given to Bailey's wife and children on behalf of the students and staff at the middle school.

"Mr. Bailey was always a huge supporter of the autism and multiple disabilities program, going out of his way to visit the kids and attend their events," Ehlers recalls.

When the show ended on Nov. 30, over \$600 was raised in the sale of some of the artwork. From that fund, the students donated \$200 to a Lakewood High School student who uses a wheelchair. The student needed a wheelchair accessible place to live.

Benefits beyond the self-contained class

Since the conclusion of the November art show, Ehlers has observed a new sense of self-confidence among her students with autism and multiple disabilities in her general education inclusion classes. She reports a marked increase of interaction between general education and special education students.

"As a group, they talk more with their general education peers and laugh with them," Ehlers says. "The kids aren't too nervous to talk about their disabilities, therapies and their daily challenges. They aren't embarrassed to use their

bodies and their minds to create art. The "Art and Autism" kids were made into rock stars around school and all the general education kids that knew them cheered them on."



Patrick Rumaker is the editor of the NJEA Review. He can be reached at prumaker@njea.org.

Diana Ehlers was named Lakewood Middle School Teacher of the Year in February. Ehlers can be reached at DEhlers@Lakewoodpiners.org.



Extreme weather and its impact on schools

By Jerrell Blakeley

Frigid temperatures and frequent snow days are no surprise for public school employees and students during the winter months in the Garden State. However, the recent “bomb cyclone” that hit the Eastern Coast in the first days of January lived up to its impressive moniker, with communities from Maine to Florida slammed by sheets of ice, feet of snow and accompanying subzero temperatures.

With bizarre meteorological episodes becoming more common, thanks in part to climate change, public school employees and students continue to bear the brunt of extreme temperatures with increasing frequency. In many of New Jersey’s public school districts, buildings are no match for extreme hot or cold weather, with school leaders often left with no choice but to close the doors.

Impact on schools

Comfortable temperatures are about more than comfort. Teaching, learning and health are likely to suffer if classrooms are too hot or cold. Staff and students may experience headaches, drowsiness and difficulty concentrating. Extreme temperatures can exacerbate pre-existing conditions such as asthma.

Cold weather brings its own challenges to school buildings. The freezing temperatures can wreak

havoc on older heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems and pipes. A lack of heat in schools is usually associated with a temporary breakdown of heaters, boilers and radiators and difficulty getting them fixed in a timely manner. Without proper heating, schools are forced to close and students lose precious classroom time.

Camden City School District extreme temperature challenges

School closings in Camden highlight the significant challenges that many of New Jersey’s districts face. The recent spate of cold weather hit the Camden City School District especially hard, highlighting building design flaws and district described “persistent heating issues” in several schools. The inclement weather affected school operations in a diverse array of schools, from schools erected as recently as 1991 to schools built during the presidency of former New Jersey Governor Woodrow Wilson. In total, nearly a third of Camden’s schools were closed in January. R. T. Cream Family School is scheduled to be closed for the remainder of the 2017-18 academic year due to severe building damage caused by the bitter cold.

With the leadership of Camden Education Association President Dr. Keith Benson, CEA has made school health and safety an association priority, particularly as it relates to school building conditions caused by inclement weather.

“We have a pretty good idea that winter is coming every year,” Benson said. “It’s not a surprise or shock. If schools in Alaska and Canada can figure out how to weatherize schools for extreme temperatures, we can as well. Our students can’t afford to lose valuable learning time due to issues that can be solved with better planning.”

Benson played a major role in informing community and union members about the status of school closings and used social media to organize and inform stakeholders.

PEOSH IAQ standards

The New Jersey Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) standard, N.J.A.C. 12:100-13 (2007), sets benchmarks for indoor air quality in existing buildings occupied by public employees during their regular working hours. The Public Employees Occupational Safety and Health (PEOSH) IAQ standard is one of only a handful of state IAQ standards in the nation.

The IAQ standard requires every school district to have a written plan to comply with the IAQ standard and identify a “designated person” who is responsible for compliance. It requires the district to establish and follow a preventive maintenance schedule for heating and cooling systems. It requires the district to make sure the heating and cooling systems are in proper operating order when temperatures are outside of the range of 68 degrees F to 79 degrees F. Maintenance records must be kept for three years and must be available to employees and their unions.

Temperature Control legislation

In an era of increasing temperatures, longer summers, and harsher winters, the problem of extreme temperatures in the classroom won’t go away anytime soon. In fact, it will likely continue to get worse. We must ensure that classrooms are optimum learning environments.

The Healthy Schools Now coalition, of which NJEA is a member, supports A-665, which would require each board of education to adopt a policy establishing temperature control standards and guidelines for school district facilities. Additionally, the bill would:

- Require that a staff member is designated in each school building in the district to

monitor compliance with the standards and initiate permitted corrective action.

- Establish a protocol to follow in instances where classroom temperatures are identified as being not conducive to learning.
- Identify what temperature control measures are permitted in accordance with local building and fire codes.
- Be informed by the IAQ Standard established by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development.
- Require that corrective measures be addressed, where feasible, by action outlined in the IAQ Standard.

Passage of temperature control legislation would avoid the minute-by-minute waffling that too often occurs when districts are thinking of closing schools because of the weather. It would facilitate planning and make weather-related decision-making processes more transparent for all constituencies: parents, teachers, principals, administrators and students.

Local association action plan

The old axiom that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure is appropriate when

discussing how you and your local can address extreme temperatures and their impact on school buildings. The following steps are ways that your local association can address extreme temperatures:

- Sign and share the temperature control legislation petition with your members: njwec.org/2016/11/temperature-control-petition.
- Establish a districtwide Health and Safety team with regular meetings to proactively address facility issues.
- Ensure that district administrators are aware of and comply with the PEOSH IAQ standard.
- Launch a communication strategy to share pertinent weather-related issues to community stakeholders in a prompt manner.
- Join the Healthy Schools Now coalition to fight for policy and legislative changes for school health and safety issues on the state and local level. 🏠

Jerell Blakeley is a campaign organizer for the Healthy Schools Now Coalition and a staff member of the New Jersey Work Environment Council, which is a frequent partner with NJEA on school health and

safety concerns. He previously taught civics and history at his alma mater, Trenton Central High School-West and served as a NJEA Organizational Development consultant. He may be reached at jblakeley@njwec.org.

In many of New Jersey's public school districts, buildings are no match for extreme hot or cold weather, with school leaders often left with no choice but to close the doors.





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Collective teacher efficacy

By Amanda Adams, NJEA Staff

When educators believe in their students, they are change agents. This means educators move beyond having high expectations for students and do whatever they can to adjust their behavior to help students learn. Over the course of my 20 year career as an educator, I have heard teachers blame several factors on why their students are not achieving the way they would like. “There are so many things I want to do with my students but they just don’t care.” “My students aren’t doing their homework because there is no parental support at home.” “I have the lower achieving class so we can only do so much.” “We have been working so hard to get our test scores up but these students are hopeless.” “We teach because we care, we can’t control what our students do.”

Educators’ beliefs are a self-fulfilling prophesy. If you believe learning will not happen, it won’t. Teachers’ beliefs influence their actions towards their students, which, in turn, influence the students’ beliefs about their own abilities.

According to Jenni Donohoo in her book *Collective Efficacy: How Educators’ Beliefs Impact Student Learning* (2017), “collective teacher efficacy refers to a staff’s shared belief that through their collective action, they can positively influence student outcomes, including those who are disengaged and/or disadvantaged.”

According to John Hattie’s research in *Visible Learning* (2016), collective teacher efficacy has the greatest impact on student achievement, even more than socio-economic status. Hattie also believes that the largest barrier to student achievement is teacher variability. Every teacher knows which of their colleagues they would want their own children to have. The way to reduce teacher variability and increase collective teacher efficacy is through collaboration between the teachers, school leaders, other adults in the schools and the students.

Collective teacher efficacy grows from repeated success with challenging students and when educators see other educators achieve success in similar situations. Collective teacher efficacy grows when a reliable resource such as a supportive peer, an instructional coach or an administrator, encourages educators to be innovative. Collective teacher efficacy grows when a teacher’s level of enthusiasm and emotional energy pay off with his or her students. When educators shift from meeting a standard to the progress of learning to determine the impact of teaching, teachers are more likely to see the student growth they are seeking.

Donohoo identifies six enabling conditions of collective teacher efficacy. While enabling conditions do not cause things to happen, they increase the likelihood that things will turn out as expected.

Educators’ beliefs are a self-fulfilling prophesy. If you believe learning will not happen, it won’t. Teachers’ beliefs influence their actions towards their students, which, in turn, influence the students’ beliefs about their own abilities.

Advanced teacher influence

Advanced teacher influence is the degree to which teachers are provided opportunities to participate in important schoolwide decisions. When teachers are given leadership opportunities they become eager to become proficient in content.

Goal consensus

Reaching consensus on goals not only increases collective efficacy, it also has a direct and measurable impact on student achievement.

Teachers’ knowledge about one another’s work

Teachers gain confidence in their peers’ ability to have an impact on student learning when they have more intimate knowledge about each other’s practice. Teachers work in teams to develop hypotheses about student achievement and work together through cycles of inquiry to investigate the hypotheses.

Cohesive staff

Cohesion is the degree to which teachers agree with each other on fundamental educational issues. When teachers work together through cycles of inquiry, they have opportunities to observe effective teaching happening among them. Teachers are working together to develop new knowledge and implement change in practice.

Responsiveness of leadership

Responsive leaders show concern and respect for their staff and protect teachers from issues that detract from their teaching time and focus.

Effective systems of intervention

Effective systems of intervention help ensure that all students are successful.

Paying attention to all six conditions

When educators pay attention to these six conditions, assumptions shift from “I planned and taught the lesson but they didn’t get it,” to “You haven’t taught it until they’ve learned it.” When teachers hold themselves accountable for student success or failure they come to believe they can influence student achievement.

As educators pay attention to these six conditions, collective efficacy is strengthened. When collective teacher efficacy is strengthened, educators feel empowered to persist in difficult conditions and learning leaders will see a shift in instructional strategies, effective feedback and systems of interventions. The culture within the schools shifts to one of hope and learning for all. 🌟

Amanda Adams is an associate director in the NJEA Professional Development and Instructional Issues Division and the coordinator of the NJEA Priority Schools Initiative. She can be reached at aadams@njea.org.

A CLOSER LOOK

monthly highlights

From Dungeons and Dragons, to unlocking civil right cold cases, "Classroom Close-up NJ" will be featuring stories that will move you. See why a teacher of American Sign Language was selected New Jersey's Teacher of the Year. Tune into NJTV every Sunday, and if you miss the show, go to classroomcloseup.org where you can watch, share and download every story. The show inspires educators, informs the community about the latest educational advances and brings pride to the schools that are featured each week. On March 4, NJTV is conducting its membership drive and the 7:30 p.m. airtimes will be pre-empted. Make sure you tune in to the earlier times at 7:30 a.m. or 12:30 p.m.

watch

MARCH 4

Vineland High School educator Terry Kuhnreich teaches social consciences focusing on tolerance and acceptance. The students are preparing to talk to an investigator of the Nuremberg trials, Benjamin Ferencz, via Skype about his life's mission for peace.

MARCH 11

"Classroom Close-up NJ" host Sean M. Spiller learns about running a beauty shop from kindergartners at Fernbrook Elementary in the Randolph Township School District. This is part of a piloted program that advances student learning through the use of cooperative play called Choicetime.

MARCH 18

Linden High School students work on a program called "Pass the Message On" to reduce bias crime and encourage each other to be socially aware and sensitive to victims. The issues involve crime and bullying targeting LGBT persons, immigrants and other minorities who often fall victim to hate.

MAR. 4



MAR. 11

AIR TIMES

NJEA's "Classroom Close-up NJ" has won 15 Emmy® awards. It inspires and educates the public about the great things happening in New Jersey public schools. The show airs on Sundays on NJTV at 7:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.



classroomcloseup.org

Visit classroomcloseup.org to watch individual segments, the entire show, or to see what's coming up. On Twitter, follow @CCUNJ and "like" the show at [facebook.com/crcunj](https://www.facebook.com/crcunj). The show continues to gain fans, especially since it is available online and can be downloaded or emailed to family and friends.



MAR. 18



Brenda Brathwaite '05, '07, '11 is an eighth grade teacher at Pennsylvania Avenue School in Atlantic City and a student in the Ed.D. in Organizational Leadership Program.



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SUSSEX TO CAPE MAY:

highlights

Writing, Tomorrow's Teachers, environmental education, storytelling and more

These experiences have been endorsed by NJEA's Professional Development Institute and are also posted on NJEA.org. Providers seeking endorsement should call NJEA's Professional Development Division at 609-599-4561.

showcase

19th Annual New Jersey Writing Alliance Conference

Middle and high school writing teachers are invited to attend the 19th annual New Jersey Writing Alliance (NJWA) Conference, "Teaching Writing to Digital Learners," on May 24 at Rutgers University. This year's conference will examine how technology can improve learning and help students process information.

Dr. Marc Cicchino, an English supervisor at Roxbury High School and lecturer at Rutgers University, will deliver the keynote address, titled

"Harnessing the Power of Games to Heighten Students Engagement and Enhance Learning." He will discuss the core principles that make video games such excellent motivators, and he will share practical strategies for integrating these principles into your teaching.

The registration fee is \$75 and includes breakfast and lunch. The registration deadline is May 11.

For more information, contact Olga Polites at polites@rowan.edu or 856-904-5913. You may visit their website at njwritingalliance.weebly.com.

More to learn across the state

states are currently using the Tomorrow's Teachers course curriculum. Tomorrow's Teachers is taught for a minimum of one class period a day for a year or the equivalent of that amount of time in contact hours. A variety of hands-on activities and a strong emphasis on observations, and field experiences are required. Emphasis is also placed on teaching in critical shortage subject areas.

During June's teacher trainings, will be focused on the 11th edition of Tomorrow's Teachers. Composed of three overarching units and fifteen chapters, this newly revised curriculum provides opportunities for future educators to experience education: Experiencing Learning, Experience the Profession, and Experience the Classroom. Training will be conducted by a certified CERRA instructor with the support of a highly experienced New Jersey Tomorrow's Teacher instructor. The days begin at 9:30 a.m. and conclude at 4:30 p.m.

Each high school is invited to send one instructor for training who would then teach the Tomorrow's Teachers course. The trainings are open to all New Jersey public high schools. Funding for this training is being provided by NJEA at no cost to participants. A complimentary lunch will be provided.

The cost for the Tomorrow's Teachers 11th edition course curriculum is \$560 to be paid by each participating high school. Invoices for this curriculum will be sent directly to each school district upon acceptance of the course instructor. Please note that the Tomorrow's Teachers curriculum may not be implemented at a high school unless training has been completed by certified a CERRA course instructor(s).

If you would like to participate in the Tomorrow's Teachers training, or if you have any questions, contact Larry Fieber, Executive Director of the Center for Future Educators at The College of New Jersey at 609-771-2464 or fieber@tcnj.edu. The registration deadline is May 11.

Environmental educators roundtable

The Ocean County Soil Conservation District Announces its 21st Annual Environmental Educators Roundtable, to be held Wednesday, April 18. It begins at 3 p.m. and concludes at 7:45 p.m. The event will be held at the Lighthouse Center for Natural Resource Education in Waretown.

The day will feature an array of hands-on and interactive activities and experiences to motivate and inspire teachers to incorporate Barnegat Bay

Learn how to recruit today's students as tomorrow's teachers

NJEA, the Center for Future Educators at The College of New Jersey (TCNJ), and the New Jersey Department of Education invites up to 35 high school teachers to participate in a Tomorrow's Teachers instructor training opportunity on June 27 and 28 at Rider University.

Tomorrow's Teachers, an elective course for high school juniors and seniors who aspire to become teachers, was developed by the Center for Education, Recruitment, Retention and Advancement (CERRA) in South Carolina. Thirty-eight

More to learn across the state

Watershed topics into their curricula, including exhibits showcasing local environmental organizations and a free resource sharing table. Join the Ocean County Soil Conservation District for an informative and adventurous program exploring our watershed, networking with environmental educators, and gathering resources, ideas and lesson plans to take back to your classroom.

- 3 p.m. – Open House, showcasing resources, refreshments and light dinner
- 4:30-6:40 p.m. – Workshops
- 6:45-7:30 – Keynote presentation
- 7:30-7:45 p.m. – Door Prizes, Evaluations and Professional Development Certificates

Professional development certificates will be provided.

The registration fee is \$30. The deadline to Register is April 1. Contact Becky Laboy, Education Outreach Specialist, Ocean County Soil Conservation District, 609-971-7002 ext. 114 or Education@soildistrict.org.

Garden State Storytellers League free concert and workshop offered

“Australia: Legend and Lore from Down Under,” a storytelling concert and workshop presented by the Garden State Storytellers League, is scheduled for Saturday, March 10, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., at the Hamilton Township Library (Mercer County).

The program will include a didgeridoo performance by AJ Block of the Didge Project based in Brooklyn, N.Y. The didgeridoo (or Yaki) wind instrument, developed by Indigenous Australians in northern Australia, will develop the relationship of ancient Australian music and folktales (e.g. “The Singing Snake”). In addition, storytellers from the Garden State Storytellers will tell folktales from Australia, and workshop participants will develop original, creative folk tales based upon Australian artifacts on display.

Three and a half professional development hours will be awarded to New Jersey educators. The program addresses STEAM (science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics)

curricula and demonstrates the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) in content areas across curricula. This program will be of interest to preschool through college educators, counselors, social workers, school and public librarians, administrators...and anyone interested in storytelling and music.

Admission is free. Onsite registration is available; however, pre-registration is encouraged.

For more information contact Carol Satz at 609-890-3378 or englearnr@aol.com or Gwendolyn Jones at 609-499-0107.

The Garden State Storytellers League is a volunteer/service/nonprofit organization founded in 1982 by Gwendolyn Jones, Professor Emerita, The College of New Jersey. It is an affiliate league of the National Storytellers League, founded in 1903. The league is dedicated to keeping the art of storytelling alive and well.

Camden County College offers mini-courses, free lecture series

The Camden County College Center for Civic Leadership and Responsibility (CCLR) is offering five-week mini-courses starting in September. Each course costs \$30. For \$75, you may take unlimited mini-courses through Aug. 31, 2018. In addition, the CCLR offers a free lecture series, special events, and a free 15-week course.

For more information, visit www.camdencc.edu/civicccenter or call 856-227-7200, ext. 4333 for details.

Mini-courses

Blackwood campus

- March 5-April 16 Dinosaur Families: Classification and Evolution
- March 6-April 10 Pharaoh Tutankhamun – the Boy and the Myth
- March 22-April 26 The Handmaid’s Tale
- March 8-April 12 Ballparks of Philadelphia

Cherry Hill: Rohrer Center

- March 5-April 16 When Power Corrupts
- March 6-April 10 Tim O’Brien and Stories from the Vietnam War
- March 7-April 11 The Tragedies of William Shakespeare

- March 8-April 12 Road Trip! Travels in the American West

Free Special Events

- March 8 – One Book, One Philadelphia: Book Discussion (Camden Campus)
- March 19 – Civil War Presentation: The Andersonville Trial (Blackwood)
- March 27 – A Basic Introduction to Autism (Blackwood)
- April 5 – Letters to a Young Muslim: Book Discussion (Blackwood)

Free Lecture Series

- Terror in the Twenty-First Century – Al Qaeda, Isis and Their Affiliates
- March 7 – The Evolution of Al-Qaeda
- March 28 – ISIS in Europe: Security and Social Implications of Terrorism in the Old Continent
- April 11 – Inside the Caliphate: What ISIS Wants and How It Finally Can Be Stopped
- April 25 – Al Qaeda

Art in the Evening

- March 8 – Asher B. Durand
- March 22 – Albert Bierstadt
- March 29 – Frederick Edwin Church
- April 5 – Thomas Moran

Addictions Awareness Series

- March 21 – Giving Back: Peer-to-Peer Mentoring
- April 18 – Professional Ethics
- May 16 – Neuroplasticity

Intro to Child Abuse and Bullying Prevention

- April 3 – CAP’s Empowerment Theory: Keeping Your Children Safe, Strong and Free
- April 19 – No Means NO: Consent and Other Boundaries for Teens
- April 24 – Preventing Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB)
- May 1 – Empowering Students in a Cyber-World
- May 8 – Trafficking Teens and Children in New Jersey 🏠

NJEA Preservice

Leadership matters

How NJEA Preservice has benefited me

By Heather Spirko, The College of New Jersey

I grew up surrounded by a family of educators, so becoming an educator was always my dream. As a future educator, making a difference in the lives of children is what I strive to do. Joining NJEA Preservice has given me countless benefits while in the process of obtaining my teacher certification. This association has given me many different opportunities as a future educator, networking with others in the field, and gaining valuable skills along the way.

Through the many conferences NJEA Preservice has enabled me to attend, I have learned a great deal about my future as a teacher. The NJEA Legislative and Political Action Conference gave me the opportunity to meet members of the New Jersey General Assembly and Senate, political

candidates, and many other leaders in government that have an effect on me and public education. I learned about important issues such as future of unions, pensions and benefits, and the future of statewide student assessments under a new governor's administration.

Being able to network with current teachers and educational support professionals is another benefit NJEA Preservice has provided to me. I've interacted with teachers from different school districts and even states. These connections yield good advice, connect me with teachers who have been in the field for many years, and provide good leads for future employment as an educator. I've also developed some great friendships along the way.

While attending the NJEA Conventions and other conferences, I am given the opportunity to be a part of many different workshops such as getting hired as a new educator, the effective use of instructional technology, and the leadership skills I'll need to advocate for myself, my students, and other NJEA members.

NJEA Preservice has created an inspiring group of future leaders and advocates in education. NJEA Preservice has helped me gain opportunities as a future educator, network with others in the field, and taught me valuable skills for the classroom. NJEA Preservice is the best association that I could have joined as a future educator. 🙌



At last year's NJEA Preservice Conference, campus ambassadors wore their signature shirts. Ambassadors represent NJEA Preservice on campuses across the state.

Does your school host student teachers and practicum students?

Students who are preparing to become teachers are the future of our profession and NJEA leadership. That's why it's vital that you encourage preservice educators in your school to join NJEA Preservice.

A part of NJEA, the preservice organization offers important professional development opportunities. NJEA Preservice members host their own student-gear conference and attend the NJEA Convention along with NJEA members.

NJEA Preservice members go on to become local association leaders after graduation and lead the profession on their respective campuses. To sign up for membership, visit njea.org/preservice.

NJREA

Past, present and future

NJREA seeks scholarship nominations

Do you know any high school seniors with high academic accomplishments who participate in high school activities and serve their communities? NJREA wants to help them continue their education.

Through its annual scholarships, NJREA aims to assist high-achieving students embark on a successful college career and has done so for well over a decade. This year, NJREA proudly announced that it has added a third scholarship, the Elizabeth A. Allen Four-Year Scholarship.

All four-year and two-year scholarships are available for rising college freshmen, and each is renewable based on the recipient's cumulative grade point average at the end of each academic year and continued enrollment as a full-time student. The four-year scholarship has a total value of \$6,000, or \$1,500 per year, and the two-year scholarship has a value of \$2,000, or \$1,000 per year.

To be eligible for any of the individual scholarships, a student must fulfill the requirements below.

Isabelle M. Hickman and Elizabeth Allen four-year scholarships

- Will graduate from a New Jersey public high school, including vocational-technical and charter schools.
- Has been accepted to a four-year college or university.
- Is in the upper five percent of his or her graduating class.

Fred E. Aug two-year scholarship

- Will graduate from a New Jersey public high school, including vocational-technical and charter schools.
- Has been accepted by a community college.
- Has a cumulative grade point average of 2.75 or higher.

To be considered for any of the three scholarships, the applicant must submit four copies of the following:

- The completed 2018 scholarship application form.
- His or her high school transcript.
- A brief statement of goals, interests, and community service.
- A list of extra-curricular activities, athletics, honors, community services, and employment.
- Two letters of recommendation, one of which is from a teacher at his or her high school.

Encourage eligible students you know to apply today. In order to be considered, applicants must use the 2018 NJREA scholarship form. Applications from previous years will not be accepted.

Both the four-year and two-year applications are available at njea.org/njrea, from county REA presidents, or by contacting Cathy Raffaele at 609-599-4561, ext. 2300.

All applications must be postmarked on or before April 1, 2018. Late applications will not be accepted.

AT RIGHT: At last year's spring luncheon, NJREA members from Essex County Perry Jackson (l) and Nancy Kurbyweit listen to a presentation from then gubernatorial candidate Phil Murphy.

NJREA Spring Luncheon set for April 26

NJREA will host its annual Spring Luncheon on April 26. Throughout this popular member-exclusive event, retirees can learn more about what they can do to help maintain New Jersey's great public schools, how to take action on important issues, and how we can work together to restore respect for public education and preserve the pensions and benefits public school employees have earned.

This luncheon event is held in honor of Dr. Frederick L. Hipp, past executive director of NJEA. Dr. Hipp was instrumental in the formation of NJREA and was a leading advocate throughout the state. In 1976, the New York Times named Dr. Hipp one of the "eight most powerful men" in New Jersey.

The luncheon will be held at the Nottingham Ballroom in Hamilton. The business agenda begins with the Delegate Council meeting at 10 a.m., followed by the "Member Information Session" at 11 a.m. where attendees can receive updates and ask questions about the information shared.

The cost is just \$33, which includes a continental breakfast, your choice of lunch, and all taxes and gratuities. **As per NJREA policy, only NJREA members may attend the business meeting and luncheon.** Any member wishing to sit together with his or her county should indicate this intention on the coupon form provided at njea.org/njrea and in the *NJREA Newsletter*. Reserved seating requests will be honored only if received by the registration deadline.

Can't stay for the whole event? For just \$5, attendees have the option to join their fellow retirees for breakfast and sit in on the day's Delegate Council meeting and/or Member Information Session but not stay for lunch. Should you wish to do so, please indicate your intention on the registration coupon.

To register, send the coupon along with your check (payable to NJREA) to Joan Wright, 109 Bayberry Drive, Somerset, NJ 08873 by **Monday, April 16**. Be sure to include your meal choice of Chicken Francaise, Vegetable Lasagna, or Shrimp Cocktail with soup and salad. All are accompanied by salad, rolls and dessert.



For questions, call your county REA. For trip details, check the county newsletter.

Join **BERGEN COUNTY REA** for its next meeting/luncheon on Tuesday, May 8 at Seasons in Washington Township. Cost is \$25. To attend, call Rina Goldman at 201-660-8200.

CAMDEN COUNTY REA invites you to its upcoming breakfast workshop on Wednesday, April 25 at the CCCEA office in Voorhees. For additional information see the article in CCCEA newsletter. To attend, call Jeanne Kiefner at 856-428-0372.

CCCEA will hold its next spring meeting/luncheon on Monday, May 7 at Palace Caterers in Blackwood. An NJEA representative will be the guest speaker. The cost is \$27. To attend, call Barbara Haase at 856-627-3391.

Join **CAPE MAY COUNTY REA** for its spring meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, May 9 at the Avalon Links Restaurant in Swainton. Local legislators have been invited and county REA officer elections will take place. The cost is \$10. To attend, call Diane Church at 609-884-7800.

HUDSON COUNTY REA will hold its next meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, May 2 at La Reggia Restaurant in Secaucus. Steve Beatty, NJEA secretary-treasurer, will be the guest speaker, and election of HCREA officers will take place. The cost is \$36 for members and \$41 for non-members. To attend, call Arlene Brown 732-493-0662.

HUNTERDON COUNTY REA invites you to its upcoming meeting/luncheon on Tuesday, April 24 at the Mountainview Chalet in Asbury. Member Benefits will be the topic of discussion. To attend, call Doreen Bleck at 908-399-4737.

MERCER COUNTY REA's spring meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, May 9 at the Mercer Oaks Country Club in West Windsor. NJEA staff will be discussing current issues affecting retirees. The cost is \$26. To attend, call Pat Durastanti at 609-737-7992.

MONMOUTH COUNTY REA's next meeting/luncheon will be held on Tuesday, April 10 at Branches in West Long Branch. An NJEA Member Benefits fair will be held. The cost is \$30. To attend, call Sue Shrott at 732-995-7754.

MORRIS COUNTY REA will hold its scholarship fundraiser on Friday, April 20 at the Zeris Inn in Mountain Lakes. The cost is \$35. To attend, call Marianne Dispenziere at 862-684-3818.

MCREA's spring meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, May 9 at the Birchwood Manor in Whippany. The cost for this event is \$30 for members and \$35 for non-members. To attend, call Cheryl Doltz at 973-818-1353.

OCEAN COUNTY REA invites you to its upcoming meeting/luncheon on Thursday, March 15 at the Holiday Inn in Manahawkin. The guest

speaker will be NJEA Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty. The cost is \$28. To attend, call Janice Sovinee at 732-477-1711.

PASSAIC COUNTY REA welcomes you to its meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, March 28 at the Brownstone House in Paterson. To reserve, call Kitty Sausa at 201-445-7577.

SOMERSET COUNTY REA's next meeting/luncheon will be held on Wednesday, May 2 at the Elks Club in Bridgewater. The cost is \$25. To attend, call Diane Lebbing at 908-359-2870.

WARREN COUNTY REA will hold its next meeting/luncheon on Wednesday, April 4 at the Hawk Pointe Country Club in Washington. The cost is \$30. To attend, call Vicki Rhinehart at 908-319-1995. For more information, visit www.wcrea-njea.org.

The next meeting/luncheon of the **NJRE-CENTRAL FLORIDA** is scheduled for Wednesday, April 18 at Chesapeake Bay Grille in Leesburg. A discussion of events affecting NJEA/NJREA members will be the focus. To attend, call Steve Mockus at 352-638-2609.

NJRE-SOUTHEAST FLORIDA will hold its next meeting/luncheon on Monday, April 2 at the South County Civic Center in Delray Beach. To attend, call Doris Zatkow at 561-737-0614. 📍

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Be sure to visit the Member Benefits section at memberbenefits.NJEA.org.

March Web Giveaway

A **Member Appreciation Event** for his/her school from California Casualty**—the provider of NEA Auto & Home Insurance—in appreciation of membership, a local California Casualty representative will coordinate a celebration at the member's school with valuable member benefit information and refreshments valued up to \$150.

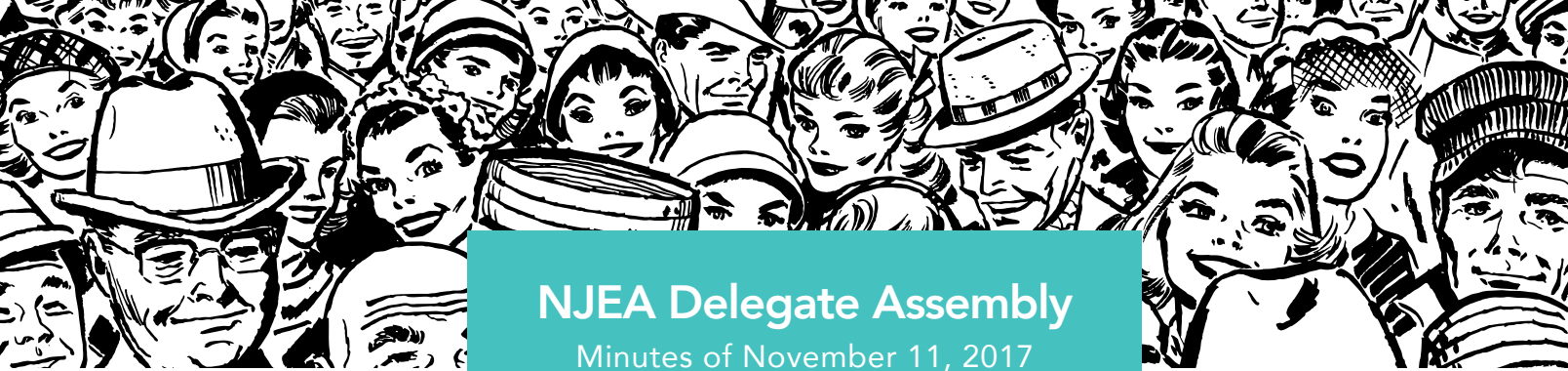
Recent winner:

Diane Howarth-Sobey from the Somerville EA won a \$150 credit toward income tax return preparation from H&R Block* and a \$100 Visa gift card from the NEA Retirement Program.

Be sure to **register online** each month for the web giveaway!

*Member Discount Program and Access: Products and services listed in the NJEA Member Discount Program and Access are provided as a service to NJEA members and do not constitute an endorsement by NJEA or a representation regarding the products' quality or characteristics. NJEA makes no warranties expressed or implied, including the warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose regarding any products or services listed in the NJEA Member Discount Program and Access.

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NJEA Delegate Assembly

Minutes of November 11, 2017

The NJEA Delegate Assembly met on November 11, 2017, at the Atlantic City Convention Center, Atlantic City, N.J., at 9 a.m. President Marie Blistan presided.

Roll call was taken. There were 121 out of 127 present. Alternates were seated as follows: Tomlinson for Steineder (Atlantic); Fletcher for Michels (Bergen); Salerno for Parker (Cape May); Rhue for Bove (Hudson); Hicks for Cardinale (Mercer); Brache for Rodrick (Monmouth); Pizzuto for Morgan and Staples for Ruch (Ocean). Absent were representatives Reagle (Camden); Middlebrooks (Hudson); Carroll and McEntee (Passaic); Reynolds (Warren).\

Eda Ferrante (Passaic) delivered the inspirational message and led the body in the flag salute.

John Zurka moved the Standing Rules provided by the Delegate Assembly Rules Committee. The motion was properly seconded. The motion carried. Blistan asked if there was objection to adopting the agenda with flexibility. There was no objection.

The first order of business was nominations for the Hearing, Censure, Suspension & Expulsion Committee. Five seats were to be filled representing Active Professional and/or Active Supportive for two-year terms from Jan. 1, 2018 through Dec. 31, 2019. After reviewing the duties of the committee and positions available, the president accepted the following nominations from the floor: Active Professional representatives – Peter Blodnik (Essex), Steve Boudalis (Passaic), Patrick Comey (Middlesex), and Andrew Coslit (Somerset); Active Supportive representative – Rosemary Casey (Camden). The number of candidates nominated was equal to the total number of positions available. The body agreed to accept all those nominated as elected.

Blistan began her report by acknowledging the work of the Convention Committee, Professional Development Committee and staff in presenting an excellent 2017 NJEA Convention. She then reported on the results of the elections, in which endorsed candidate Phil Murphy was overwhelmingly elected governor, and 78 percent of NJEA PAC-endorsed legislative candidates were elected. Blistan summarized the components of the Members 4 Murphy Campaign. She also emphasized key legislative victories of endorsed candidates Chris Brown (Assembly, R-2) and Vin Gopal (Senate, D-11). She noted the loss of endorsed State Senate candidate Fran Grenier, and spoke of the statewide nature of this

race, with members from across the state working in Legislative District (LD) 3. She emphasized this battle was part of a larger effort to challenge the political machine that has worked against the interests of NJEA's members. Blistan also noted that there were 267 NJEA members on the ballot, at all levels (more than ever before), and that there were 29 local and county association endorsements (also more than ever before). She congratulated Barbara Rheault (Atlantic) for her election to the Mullica Council, and cited successful board of education campaigns in Belleville and Jersey City, the successful campaign to defeat an anti-public-employee ballot question in Millville, and the election of member Heather Flaim to the Franklin Township Council. Blistan talked about NJEA's public messaging in reaction to the election. A video of her interview with NJTV, which took place the previous Thursday, was played.

Shifting to legislative priorities, Blistan reported on legislation NJEA is seeking to address disparities in local (Public Employees Retirement System) PERS funding, a bill providing for schools to use a trauma-informed approach to educating students, and a New Jersey Promise proposal to fully fund community college for all students. She reported on a new Legislative Action Team (LAT) associate membership, allowing members to join an LAT where they live, and a new workshop offering to help members run for office.

She also reported on difficulties at Essex Community College, and NJEA's work with its affiliates there to address the situation.

Finally, Blistan reported on activities at the federal level affecting public education and NJEA, including the anticipated Janus Supreme Court decision, a regulatory proposal to require that NJEA and other state affiliates meet the requirements of the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959 (LMRDA), and congressional action on tax reform, relief for 'DREAMers,' (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) and funding of the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Blistan responded to several questions regarding her report.

Vice President Sean Spiller began his report by commenting on specific aspects of the Convention, including the Celebration of Excellence featuring State Teacher of the Year Amy Andersen and recipients of grants from the NJEA Frederick L. Hipp Foundation

for Excellence in Education. He then discussed the election and the need to take on a Senate president who repeatedly betrayed NJEA and its members, while supporting candidates, such as Governor-elect Murphy, who support our issues.

Secretary-Treasurer Steve Beatty reported on the dues task force appointed by Blistan, indicating they had met several times and would convene again later in November. Regarding the election, he singled out the Assembly race in LD 16, where incumbent Andrew Zwicker—who won by one 78 votes in 2015, was re-elected, as well as his running mate, Roy Freiman, who defeated an incumbent. Beatty congratulated leaders and members in Somerset, Hunterdon and Middlesex counties for their successful effort on behalf of these endorsed candidates.

Executive Director Ed Richardson reported on the status of pending DA motions, noting that several had been completed, while others were in progress. Regarding the election, Richardson highlighted the work of the NJEA staff, particularly the Members 4 Murphy effort coordinated by Deborah Cornavaca, the team assigned to LD 3 headed by Al Beaver and Marybeth Beichert, and the Independent Expenditure team of Matt DiRado, Mike Giglio, and Christy Kanaby. Richardson then gave a presentation on the campaign to seek relief from Chapter 78, including a legislative package NJEA will seek as its top priority in the new legislative session and under the new governor's administration.

The body suspended business at 11 a.m. for comments from non-delegate members wishing to address the body.

Lori Lalama (Passaic) spoke about the need for talking points for local leaders on the threat of the anticipated Janus decision and efforts to obtain relief from Chapter 78. She also asked if NJEA could create online workshop registration and suggested NJEA explore cost containment such as curtailing food and beverage expenses.

Ashanti Rankin (Cumberland) thanked NJEA for assistance in defeating the ballot question in Millville, suggested that certification for paraprofessionals and substitute teachers be reviewed, and urged NJEA to explore the creation of preservice affiliates at county colleges. He also asked if educational support professional (ESP) members could be included in all NEA events such as the Higher Education Summit.



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Returning to normal business, Richardson responded to several questions regarding his report.

Beatty presented a report without recommendations from the Budget Committee, which studied whether the annual budget should be considered at the March, rather than May, DA meeting each year. The committee did not recommend any change.

There were no comments or questions regarding a report without recommendations from the Elections Committee, which included the 2018 Election Calendar.

Fred Frangiosa (Bergen) moved the recommendation from the Affiliation Committee delineated in the committee's report and supporting documents. The motion was properly seconded. The motion carried.

Eda Ferrante (Passaic) moved the recommendation from the Health Benefits Committee delineated in the committee's report and supporting documents. The motion was properly seconded. Following debate, the motion carried.

Barbara Rheault (Atlantic) moved five recommendations from the Working Conditions Committee delineated in the committee's report and supporting documents. She requested that they be moved and considered in block. The motion was properly seconded. The motion carried.

Carrie Odgers-Lax (Passaic) moved New Business Item #1: That the PAC Operating Committee consider reviewing and revising the PAC Guidelines to require all PAC endorsements be voted on by the full PAC Operating Committee. The motion was properly seconded. Following debate, the motion carried.

Patrick Comey commented on an item he submitted for committee study, noting the need to educate the public regarding the impact of Chapter 78, as many people believe public employees do not pay toward their health insurance.

In recognition of Veterans Day, Blistan acknowledged all veterans and family members of veterans in the room.

Chris Cannella (Essex) commented on the success of the Jim George Collective Bargaining Summit in October. He asked about the composition of the Collective Bargaining Committee and why it was all staff. Richardson explained that the UniServ

Committee and Working Conditions Committee are member committees that focus on collective bargaining issues. The staff Collective Bargaining Committee is a multidivisional team that does the work of planning and organizing the summit, as well as other bargaining-relation issues on an ongoing basis. He noted, for example, that this staff team was assigned to work on NJEA's Chapter 78 strategy.

Rich D'Avanzo (Union) noted that Tom Moran, opinion editor of the Star-Ledger, was continuing his pre-election attacks on NJEA and its leadership.

Marie Corfield (Hunterdon) thanked all NJEA members who ran for office, and everyone who helped with the legislative victory in LD 16. She also noted she had posted a new blog entry—her farewell to Gov. Chris Christie.

Pete Moran (Hunterdon) noted that Tom Moran (no relation) issued an incendiary tweet the previous day that stated, "Top Dems in New Jersey deep down want to murder the leaders of the teachers union." Blistan and Richardson indicated the leadership was not previously aware of this, and would respond forcefully and immediately to such an inappropriate comment.

Mr. D'Avanzo (Union) noted that Jason Sterlacci, a member and elementary teacher in Union Township, had made it to the semi-finals of the Jeopardy Tournament of Champions, having won the Teacher Tournament about a year ago.

Steve Baker, Communications Director, informed the body that he had contacted Tom Moran and demanded a personal apology to the NJEA leadership. He said that, if such an apology is not received immediately, he would contact the publisher of the Star-Ledger.

Sue Clark (Gloucester) spoke on behalf of herself, Deanna Nicosia-Jones (Cumberland), and Colleen Gilmartin (Salem) to thank everyone for helping with the LD 3 senate campaign.

Denise King (Monmouth) moved to adjourn at 12:04 p.m.

Submitted by: Edward Richardson Executive Director.



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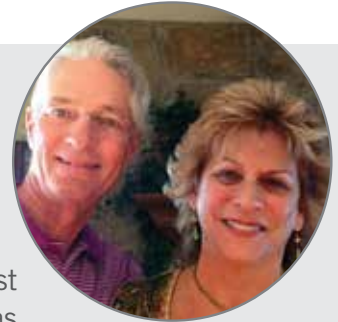
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Staff News



NJEA welcomes **LORI CINTRON** to NJEA staff on temporary assignment as a UniServ field representative in the Region 27 UniServ regional office in Wayne. Prior to joining staff, Cintron was a reading teacher at Hasbrouck Heights Middle School. Cintron served as negotiations chair for the Hasbrouck Heights Education Association and as a UniServ consultant in Passaic County.

Cintron earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in education at William Paterson University. She lives in Hasbrouck Heights with her husband, Peter, and daughter, Alexa.



NJEA congratulates **CINDY VANNAUKER** on her promotion to administrative assistant in the Professional Development and Instructional Issues (PDII) Division in January. Vannauker initially joined NJEA staff in January 2003 as a secretary in the PDII Division. Prior to joining NJEA staff, Vannauker was employed as a legal secretary, was owner/operator of a state licensed family childcare home, and worked as an emergency room

technician at St. Mary Hospital in Langhorne. Her primary area of responsibility will include preparation for and administration of the NJEA Convention among many other duties. Vannauker attended Bucks County Community College and Ultrasound Diagnostic School in Trevese. She resides in Levittown, Pennsylvania with her three adult children, Mark, Kevin and Rachel, her teenage son Jake, and their cat Jada. Cindy enjoys participating in her son Jake's boy scout troop as an active troop committee member, is an avid lover of the outdoors, enjoys camping, gardening, cooking, and attending her son Jake's soccer, football and band events. 🏡

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3/2-3

Fri. & Sat.

Winter
Leadership
Conference-
North

3/9

Friday

Executive
Committee
meeting

3/10

Saturday

Delegate
Assembly
meeting

3/10

Saturday

New Jersey
Preservice
Education
Association
Conference

4/13-14

Fri. & Sat.

Higher
Education
Conference

4/18

Wednesday

NJEA Executive
Committee
meeting

4/21

Saturday

Exceptional
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3/2

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3/23

Higher Education
Conference
Event Date: April 13-14

4/13

Minority Leadership
and Recruitment
Conference
Event Date: May 5-6

A seat at the table

In late January, the Murphy administration released the final transition reports, covering 14 broad areas of policy. Included among them was the “Report of the Education, Access, and Opportunity Transition Advisory Committee.” It provides an interesting contrast to the one submitted eight years ago by former Gov. Chris Christie’s Education Subcommittee. The most obvious difference is NJEA’s participation on the Murphy transition team.

NJEA President Marie Blistan served as co-chair of the committee. Joining her as co-chair were Gayl Shepard, former president of the Montclair Education Association; Donna Chiera, president of the American Federation of Teachers-NJ (AFT-NJ); Mark Biedron, the immediate past president of the State Board of Education; Rev. Dr. William Howard Jr, former chair of the Rutgers University Board of Governors; Dr. Christopher Irving, former president of the Paterson Board of Education; and Dr. Jianping Wang, the president of Mercer County Community College.

The 53-member committee included an NJREA member, Terry Trigg-Scales, and the executive director of the NJEA-initiated Center for Teaching and Learning, Dr. Robert Goodman, who has continued his membership in NJEA. Compare this to Chris Christie’s transition team, which included only one classroom teacher (an

NJEA member), but it had no statewide representatives from NJEA and not a single member of AFT-NJ at the Pre-K to 12 level. The difference in these transition teams is reflected in the reports they produced.

The very first priority listed in the K-12 Education section of Gov. Phil Murphy’s team’s report is “Fully Fund SFRA.” It noted that since its enactment in 2008, the School Funding Reform Act (SFRA) has not been properly implemented and has been underfunded over those years by \$9 billion. It calls for an analysis of the current funding formula and recommendations for improvements that alleviate property tax burdens. The Christie transition team, by contrast, wasted no time looking for ways to reduce spending on Pre-K to 12 education, suggesting cuts in the second paragraph of its report.

Several areas listed as priorities in the Murphy transition team report directly affect the delivery of instruction: developing standards for the whole child, including social-emotional learning; a high-quality science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) curriculum; an expansion and upgrade in vocational-technical education; increased funding for early childhood education. None of these were listed as early priorities in Christie’s report. In fact, the previous governor called for a moratorium on an increase in preschool funding.

Quite notable is the position of the Murphy transition team on retaining and attracting excellent teachers. It reads, “Although New Jersey’s teachers largely earn more than the national average, they are taking home less now than they did in 2010 and have to contend with our state’s increasingly high costs of living. Teachers have felt marginalized as governments have bypassed the collective bargaining process.” Christie’s 2010 transition report, on the other hand, called for a freeze in the salaries of all public employees, including school employees.

The Murphy transition report prioritizes a reassessment of the role of standardized testing in New Jersey. It reads, “This administration should reconsider the state’s reliance on high-stakes testing and reduce the amount of class time spent on testing and test preparation. It further calls on the state to reduce the role of standardized tests in teacher evaluations and to decouple PARCC from high school graduation requirements.” The Christie report relied heavily on the use of testing for teacher evaluation and student and school assessment, indicating scant concern about the impact of high-stakes standardized tests on teaching and learning.

The Murphy transition report calls on the administration to consider a pause in the creation of new charter schools and review the impact of charter schools on

education in New Jersey. The Christie report prescribed the expansion of charter schools as one of its top priorities.

At the higher education level, the Murphy transition report’s first priority is college affordability and recommends that the administration start New Jersey on the path toward offering free community college. In the meantime, it calls on the state to strengthen the Tuition Aid Grant and Educational Opportunity Fund programs. It also calls on the state to alleviate student debt burdens. In fairness, the Christie report also raised concerns about the cost of attending college in New Jersey, but by the end of Christie’s administration, a college education in New Jersey continued to become increasingly unaffordable for students.

The composition of the team that wrote the “Report of the Education, Access, and Opportunity Transition Advisory Committee” and the content of the report itself demonstrate that Gov. Murphy and his administration will value diversity and have a seat at the table for all education stakeholders, including NJEA members at the state, county and local levels. There will surely be differences of opinion over the next four years between NJEA members and Gov. Murphy, but those differences will be debated in a context of mutual respect and honesty—a welcome change from the last eight years. 🏡

“Although New Jersey’s teachers largely earn more than the national average, they are taking home less now than they did in 2010 and have to contend with our state’s increasingly high costs of living. Teachers have felt marginalized as governments have bypassed the collective bargaining process.”

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4 – 6 p.m.	Registration
6 p.m.	Dinner & Awards
7:30 – 9 p.m.	Facilitation: Leading on Racial Justice
9:30 p.m. – 12:30 a.m.	DJ/Social Networking

SATURDAY, APRIL 28, 2018

7 – 8:30 a.m.	Breakfast
8:30 – 10 a.m.	Member Driven Topics (Session I)
10 – 10:30 a.m.	Coffee Break/Check-Out
10:30 a.m. – noon	Member Driven Topics (Session II)
12:15 – 12:45 p.m.	Action Planning
12:45 – 1:15 p.m.	Closing Session
1:15 p.m.	Lunch

Five hours of professional development credit will be provided to participants who attend both Friday and Saturday sessions.



GABRIEL TANGLAO:

As a proud Filipino-American, son of a union nurse, and product of public schools, Gabriel has strong roots as an educator-activist. He started his teaching career at Bergenfield High School in one of the most culturally diverse communities in the state. As a union activist, Gabriel has built capacity at the local, state, and national levels by cultivating networks, organizing members, and facilitating leadership training. He has been at the forefront of advancing racial, social, and economic justice through public education as part of the inaugural class of the NJEA Minority Leadership Training Cadre. Gabriel teaches AP U.S. History at Bergen Tech in Teterboro, N.J.



CINDY MATUTE-BROWN:

Cindy is an advocate, wife, and proud mother of three young adult children, each with continuing and formal higher education careers. Cindy earned undergraduate degrees in English, Women & Gender Studies and Criminal Justice from Rutgers University. Her advocacy work in education led her to become founding president of Golden Door Charter School Education Association. She serves as an active NJEA member in the capacities of an apprentice, Minority Leadership Training Cadre member, chair of the Public Charter Schools Members Work Group and Leadership Committee. She also serves on the NEA Women's Issues Committee.

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