

COMMUNIQUE



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EQUAL PAY DAY

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Story and Photos By Marci Rosenblum
Local 1180 Communications Director

The bitter cold temperatures and predicted precipitation did not stop Local 1180 from making its voice heard on this year's Equal Pay Day. The weather forecast only prompted a last-minute change of venue to the second floor of 6 Harrison St.

Local 1180 was joined en masse this year by another City union fighting for equal pay for its workers, United Probation Officers Association, as well as members of the City Council Women's Caucus, Council Speaker Adrienne Adams, and of course, PowHer New York whose initial idea kicked off the first Equal Pay Day rally 17 years ago.

"It's nice to see so many familiar faces back with us today as we mark another Equal Pay Day. It's NOT nice that we have to be here at all to recognize a day that should not even exist," said **Local 1180 President Gloria Middleton** in her speech. "This is not the first Equal Pay Day rally that has brought us together, and it won't be the last. At least not in the near future."

She emphasized the importance of Equal Pay Day because women are important.

"Today is about raising awareness of gender pay gaps and realizing we have an opportunity to continue taking the positive steps needed to end the inequalities that have persisted for centuries. We have made great strides, but still have a long way to go," Middleton said before the large crowd, which included many of the metropolitan area's media outlets.

She continued her remarks by saying, "Women traditionally have been impacted by the social norms that label us as caregivers, housewives, and stay-at-home moms. The skills we have honed in these classifications, however — project managers, financial analysts, event coordinators, teachers, and nurses — during all those hours of unpaid work aren't seen as professional or considered relevant experience when we try and re-enter the workforce.

"Today's assumed gender roles and expectations are antiquated and unrealistic. They have held back women from advancing in their careers at the same pace — and salary levels — as men."

According to one recent study, nearly 56% of those exiting the workforce since the start of the pandemic have been women who previously made up 48% of the U.S. workforce. That same study also found that employment for women isn't projected to return to its pre-pandemic numbers until at least 2024.

That's millions of women forced to struggle for years just to get back to making \$0.82 for every dollar a man makes.

"It's worse for women of color," Middleton said. "Salaries and career opportunities should be based on qualifications and experience. Not gender. Not race. Not religion."

To create more equality, leaders like women in the City Council are spearheading action to address the biases that cause the wage and equity gaps.

First the Council passed Local Law 18 of 2019 that required the City to track and disclose the wages of all City employees, including statistics by race and gender, so leaders who think they can still offer unscrupulous salaries based on gender could be called to task.

This year, the Council has passed new legislation that:

- Would require city agencies to conduct an analysis of compensation data and measures to address pay disparity, occupational segregation, diversity and inclusion training, and schedule/workplace accommodations. The head of each agency would be required to submit an annual report on staff retention, promotion, termination and resignation, with accompanying compensation information. Finally, this legislation requires DCAS to contract with a private sector expert to conduct a three-year pay equity analysis on a minimum number of civil service titles. The analysis would examine civil service titles with the largest gender and racial or ethnic demographic difference from the demographic found in New York City (Int. 515-A)
- Would require each city agency and department that requires job applicants to take a civil service exam to report on data related to those exams in order to evaluate and expand diverse recruitment and retention within city government. It would also require reporting on the agencies and departments' training programs to evaluate recruitment efforts across government. The Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) would be tasked with coordinating the data collection and reporting to the Council. (Int. 527-A)
- This bill would expand the existing Pay Equity Law, Local Law 18 of 2019, by requiring the DCAS to collect and provide additional employment and pay data to the Council. It would capture more of the city workforce and provide year-round access to pay and employment data, so the Council can provide more robust oversight at its discretion. (Int. 541-A)

"There's clearly a lot of work to be done, and with the help of the City Council, it is possible to level the playing field for working women by increasing transparency



around wages across the board, disrupting occupational segregation, expanding access to paid leave and child and elder care, and creating more good union jobs," Middleton said.

"We have a goal. Our goal is to celebrate Equal Pay Day on Jan. 1 because that will mean men and women doing substantially similar work will earn similar salaries. It's past time to close the pay gap," she said.

Carmen De La Rosa, New York City Council Civil Service and Labor Committee Chair, said in a written statement, "Municipal workers are the backbone of our city, and operating with a skeleton staff in some of the most in-demand departments will not cut it. Our city is still recovering from the effects of the pandemic, and we need our municipal workforce fully staffed and trained so that we can continue delivering the many necessary services that our New Yorkers depend on. Introduction 527-A would uplift our efforts in filling these vacancies in an equitable manner while creating strong accountability measures to ensure our government is delivering those services."

This package of bills focuses on addressing pay disparities across the municipal workforce and builds upon existing efforts to tackle pay parity across race and gender within the municipal workforce.

"Civil service employment can be a gateway to economic mobility for the middle class in our city," said Council Speaker Adrienne Adams. "However, for civil service opportunities to meet this potential, we must eliminate pay disparities based on gender, race, or ethnicity. While there have been minor improvements, pay disparities within titles continue. Our Pay Equity package will provide key data and analysis on inequity in our municipal workforce and enact practices that help promote workforce diversity and pay equity." ■





ECONOMIC PATTERN

Set By DC 37's Ratification of Their Contract

Months of negotiations with the City of New York came to a close in mid-February when DC 37 finalized the terms of the citywide contract. The deal, which was ratified by the DC 37 membership on March 31, includes 3% annual raises for the first four years with 3.25% in the fifth year, which are compounded and retroactive. That brings the total raise to 16.21%.

The deal also includes a signing bonus of \$3,000 for employees active on the date the agreement is ratified and increases additions to gross by 3.25% effective May 26, 2025.

"In light of the City's current supposed fiscal dilemma, this is a great contract for all city workers, including our own members," said **Local 1180 President Gloria Middleton**. "The City had stood firm in its stance that resolving a contract was tied directly to the health care crisis, something that has not happened, so we are very happy with the terms DC 37 worked out."

Health insurance will continue with premium-free health plans provided for by the Municipal Labor Committee Health Agreement.

The deal covers the period from May 26, 2021, when the previous contract ended, through Nov. 6, 2026. In order to help fund the raises, the contract term was extended by five months and 12 days. Nearly all of the city's approximately 300,000 unionized workers have expired collective bargaining agreements.

The deal also will allow unions and the city to explore work-from-home and other flexible work options, and represents a shift in the city's policy on employees working remotely, something the mayor has opposed since he took office.

"One thing we have learned from the pandemic is that many New York City workers are able to continue doing their jobs from home just as effectively as they

can by sitting in an office," Middleton said. "A hybrid work schedule will cut down significantly on the number of hours workers spend commuting to an office, time that can be better spent addressing personal needs and family matters."

The city's strict prohibitions against employees working from home has caused many to seek jobs elsewhere and has led to job vacancies the city has been unable to deal with.

Middleton said that unless government leaders start to think out of the box in the way they recruit and retain workers, there will continue to be a shortage of employees to provide vital services to New Yorkers.

"Everything we know about a work schedule has changed in the past few years," Middleton said. "Workers are no longer willing to accept jobs that require long commutes and tie them to an office five days a week."

The work-from-home provision in the contract stipulates that a "work flexibility committee" will be created with city and unions establishing a remote work pilot program within 60 days of the deal's ratification. That program will include exploring flexible work options aside from remote work, including flexible scheduling, compressed work weeks, and even transit benefits.

The proposed contract also creates a \$73 million "equity fund" to recruit and retain employees for departments and roles that have been experiencing chronic understaffing, especially post pandemic.

DC 37 members' ratification of this contract now sets pattern bargaining for other municipal labor unions waiting to negotiate their contracts, including Local 1180. ■

DC 37 ECONOMIC AGREEMENT

Term of Contract: May 26, 2021 - Nov. 6, 2026	Additional Compensation Fund: Funds equaling .5% of payroll available to each bargainign unit for negotiations.
Compounded Wage Increases: 3%, 3%, 3%, 3%, 3.25% TOTAL: 16.21% in compounded wage increases	Equity Panel: A tripartite panel will examine titles that have inequities and new job requirements.
Additions to Gross increased by 3.25% effective May 26, 2025	Welfare Fund Contributions: A \$50 recurring contribution will be added effective May 26, 2023
Retroactive Pay from first day of agreement	Payroll: No more paper pay stubs unless opt in
Ratification Bonus: \$3,000 for everyone on payroll at time of ratification	Work Flexibility Committee to implement a remote work pilot plan no later than June 1, 2023; develop policies for compressed work schedules and flex scheduling; expand transit benefits
Health Insurance: Continuation of premium-free health plans provided for by the MLC Health Agreement	Pandemic Reponse Joint Committee to review/improve City's ongoing response to COVID and future contagious diseases



3,800+ Members Fill Out Contract Bargaining Surveys

Local 1180's history of building unity by engaging in a transparent, democratic process to formulate contract demands, once again has prompted the union to send out bargaining surveys to active, dues-paying public sector members.

"In order to represent our members effectively, and secure a new PAA et al contract that best reflects the needs and desires of our membership, we need to get the input of our members. In the past, we have mailed out bargaining demand surveys but in keeping with the times, we emailed the surveys this year," said Local 1180 President Gloria Middleton. "We need to be confident our demands reflect real issues our members are most passionate about."

The first email was sent on Feb. 10, with multiple email reminders and Union Strong mobile app pushes following. A notice also lived on the Local 1180 website beginning in early February. At the close of the two-month period, 3,800-plus members — more than a third of the dues-paying active membership — completed the survey.

"We did our best to reach as many active, dues-payers as we could," Middleton said. "This is the first year we did the surveys electronically and this is by far the largest response rate we have seen. Members really took the time to provide their feedback."

Shop Stewards held worksite lunch meetings wherever they could to answer questions and help members with the online survey. Now that the deadline has passed to complete the surveys, Local 1180 is convening two meetings with Shop Stewards to categorize the demands that then will be researched and evaluated by sub-committees. The Shop Steward body will elect five Stewards to be members of the Bargaining Committee that will conduct the actual bargaining negotiations with the City, together with five members elected by the Executive Board.

"Our goal, obviously, is to have unified demands from our entire membership to negotiate a contract we can be proud of," said **Second Vice President Teesha Foreman**.

New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), New York City Transit Authority (NYCTA), School Construction Authority (SCA), and the Department of Education (DOE) have their own contracts that will be negotiated after the Local 1180 Contract has been executed. However, NYCHA and DOE members were asked to still complete this survey as their contracts follow along the same lines as the PAA et al contract. ■

COVID Vaccine Mandate ENDS for City Workers



New York City municipal workers no longer need to be vaccinated against COVID-19 — but those terminated for refusing to get immunized will not automatically be reinstated.

The city announced in early February that a 96% compliance rate from the municipal workforce prompted the mayor to reverse his position on the vaccination. The contentious coronavirus vaccine mandate left a reported 1,780 workers terminated due to non compliance. Mayor Eric Adams said these workers wanting to return to city service will need to reapply.

Terminated permanent competitive and labor class employees (for failure to comply with the vaccine mandate) will have one year from the date of termination to apply for reinstatement. Those terminated on Feb. 11, 2022, will have a 30-day grace period to apply, meaning the reinstatement application will need to be filed by March 10, 2023.

Those who retired or resigned will need to go through the traditional personnel process to be reinstated or rehired.

According to new rules, vaccination for the coronavirus would become optional for current and prospective city workers, and visitors to city schools will no longer be required to provide proof of at least one dose of the vaccine to enter. Vaccination requirements for private employers and for indoor dining ended last year, followed by New York State ending mask mandates on subways and buses. On May 11, President Biden is expected to lift the national health emergency.

City health care workers will still have to be vaccinated, at least for now, as they are regulated under state, federal, and employer vaccine mandates.

"While this ruling means we are out of the pandemic phase of COVID, we are definitely not out of the woods totally," said Local 1180 President Gloria Middleton. "This winter saw a resurgence in the number of cases, although nothing like we experienced during the pandemic itself"

According to published reports in early February, the city reported more than 331,000 city workers had been fully vaccinated. In announcing the new vaccine rules, the city said the terminated workers would "not be able to automatically return to their previous positions, they will be able to apply for positions with their former agencies through existing city rules and regulations and hiring processes."

The vaccine mandate became a bone of contention between then-Mayor de Blasio on Oct. 20, 2021, when he imposed it without union input or sitting down with the Municipal Labor Committee to negotiate the process and terms. Slightly more than one week later, city employees were required to show proof of at least one dose or be placed on unpaid leave until they did.

"From the start, Local 1180 encouraged all our members and their families to get vaccinated as a life-saving measure. We were losing far too many members and friends during the worst of the pandemic," Middleton said. "Now, city agencies are understaffed, with thousands of vacant jobs in numerous titles. The city needs to do something to start filling these positions as our members, and those from other unions, are stretched to the limit." ■



UNION STARTS PREPARING FOR

Collective Bargaining

Collective bargaining is the process by which unions negotiate contracts with the City or other employer to determine terms of employment, including pay, benefits, hours, leave, job health and safety policies, and ways to balance work and family. While it sounds simple, it's anything but.

"The reality is that the process is tedious and lengthy," said **Local 1180 President Gloria Middleton**, who has been involved in multiple contract negotiations. "The Union has one goal in mind and the City has another. The Union wants to get the most it can for its members, and the City wants to give the least."

She said multiple moving parts to the negotiating process means coming to terms on an agreement with the City takes a minimum of several months after the Union gets a date on the calendar to start bargaining.

Middleton said the Union gets asked often why the process is so long. Members also ask for a date the contract will be resolved.

"I wish I knew the answer to those questions," she said. "I understand that the contract bargaining process can be long and frustrating for our members, who

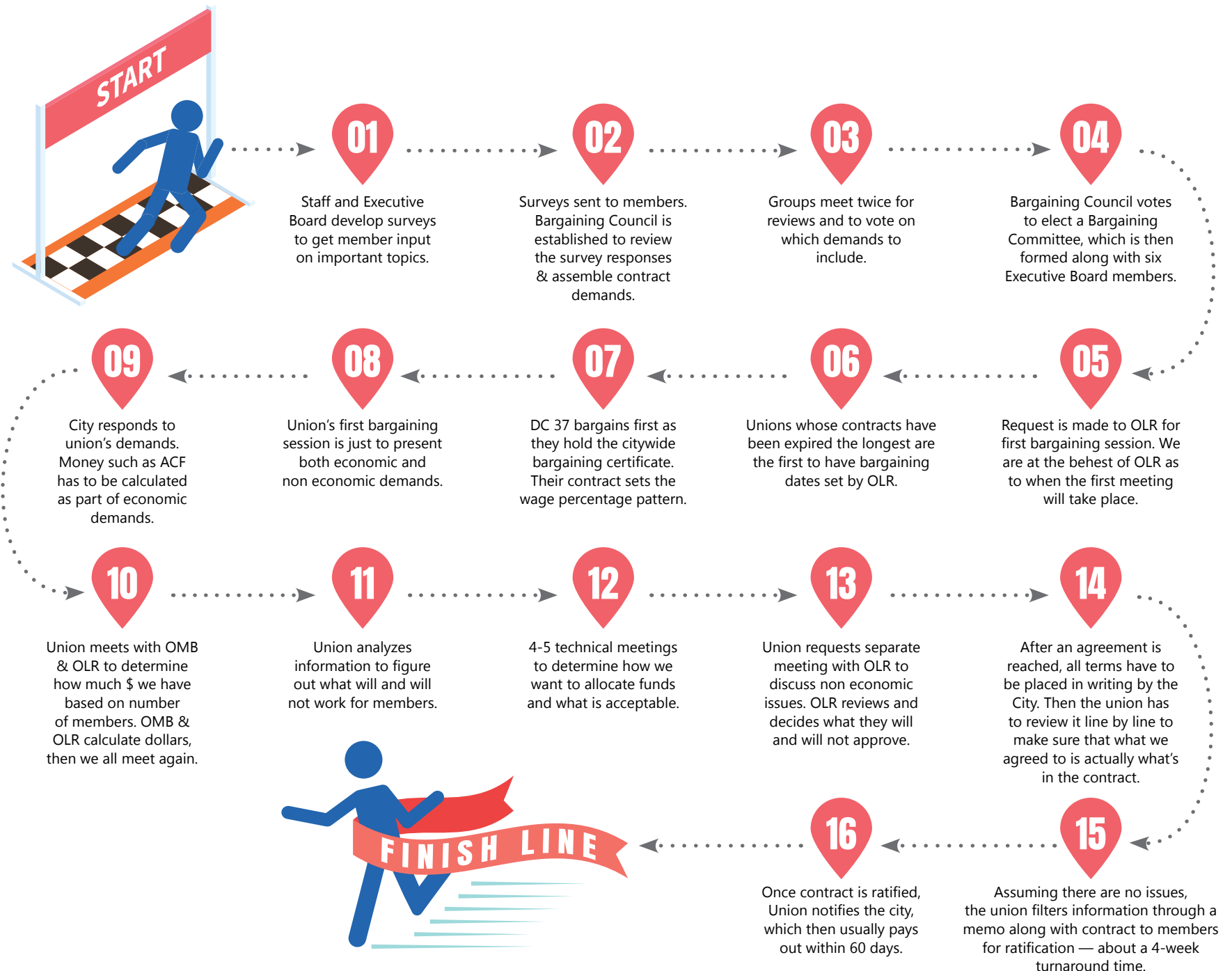
are rightfully anxious to receive their raises and back money. Just as we asked for our members' input on demands, we will in turn keep everyone informed of the status of our negotiations."

Local 1180 emails weekly to all members with a personal email address on file, and sends mobile app push notifications to those who have registered for the Union Strong mobile app. Middleton said members who have not signed up for either will need to do so in order to always have the latest updates.

As soon as an agreement with the City is reached, members will receive retroactive pay to the date that the previous contract ended.

"While we all wish we could reach the finish line in a short time span, that's just not reality. The city negotiates with hundreds of locals, all of which want their contract done first. So much goes into the process that members just are not aware of before we even get to the first bargaining session," Middleton said.

The chart below is a small indication of what the process looks like and why it is so lengthy. ■





GLORIA MIDDLETON

President

Does One Month of Recognition Make a Difference?

February every year is Black History Month, a time when the country pays tribute to generations of African Americans who struggled with adversity in an attempt to achieve full citizenship in our society. It is an annual celebration that allows us to spotlight famous, and not-so-famous, Blacks who made significant contributions to history.

There are literally hundreds of famous Black Americans who changed the world, from activists, authors, actors, and historical leaders, to entrepreneurs, musicians, designers, doctors, and inventors. There would be no way to spotlight them all, and what happens is that the “typical” ones get talked about every year. Not that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rosa Parks, and Malcolm X aren’t worth talking about. They most certainly are.

International Women’s Day, then became a week, and finally an entire month of recognizing accomplishments and contributions of females.

Year after year, the women featured the most are those like Louisa May Alcott, Susan B. Anthony, Clara Barton, Coretta Scott King, and Amelia Earhart. But how much do you know about Margaret Chase Smith, Muriel F. Siebert, or Mercy Otis Warren?

Probably not much, which is why one lone month to celebrate women’s history is simply not enough.

Just as we have months for Black History and Women’s History, we also have months earmarked for Asian-Pacific Americans, Jewish Americans, LGBTQ+ Pride, Hispanic Heritage, Native Americans, and more. Basically, historically marginalized groups get their one month to be acknowledged.

These “heritage months” as they are called provide an opportunity to spotlight the people, their traditions, and the experiences overcoming oppression and the great contributions made in the past and the present.

They provide the space to teach and learn about cultural history and examine the myriad ways in which various lifestyles are viewed within the framework of our country today.

They offer the chance to not only celebrate various heritages but examine just how their contributions have impacted what our country has become.

They give us all the opportunity to learn more about one another, our neighbors, our coworkers, and our friends.

And they remind teachers to highlight the achievements of particular cultures and teach their students about the heritages and observances of others. It’s often during these special months that Black students, or Hispanic students, or Asian Pacific students are made to feel special and can talk openly about their families’ backgrounds.

But is this a good thing? The observance of heritage months presents a social justice problem whereby featuring nondominant groups may marginalize them even more than they already are. Heritage months have been shown to separate diverse groups rather than unite them as these celebratory

months emphasize the differences among us. Yet not featuring them could very well mean that most Americans learn nothing about minor groups of society.

Shouldn’t it be that we learn more about the stories and histories of ethnic cultures all the time and not just for one month a year?

Don’t get me wrong. There is inherent value in having an entire month to highlight individual groups, but why must it be limited to just 30, or 28 or 31 days?

America is a melting pot, a society comprised of so many people from diverse ethnic backgrounds. While we are a multicultural population, the majority is abysmally slow about accepting and including the minority.

It’s past time that our schools’ academic curriculums focus on the melting pot we have always been and teach our children from a young age that there is more than binds us together than separates us.

We need to make the histories of Blacks, women, Jews, Asian Pacificers, and others part of the everyday conversation. It can no longer be about “us” and “them”. It needs to be about “we” for today’s students to see just how important all groups have been throughout history.

Talking about race, gender, sexual orientation, and religion cannot happen for just one month out of 12. It’s a conversation that needs to take place 365 days a year. While one heritage month a year is a positive step, it does not go far enough to change the narrative.

Societal evolution cannot happen through a heritage month. Celebrating various histories throughout the year is what will start to bring about much-needed change. ■

Don’t get me wrong. There is inherent value in having an entire month to highlight individual groups, but why must it be limited to just 30, or 28 or 31 days?

The problem is the hundreds of others who do not get discussed because one month a year is nowhere near enough time to delve into Black achievements.

Black History Month started in 1925 as Negro History Month and was first celebrated as a week in February 1926. The response to this week was more than anyone expected, with teachers demanding materials to instruct their students, to progressive whites coming forward to validate the effort.

One month later, in March, we are marking Women’s History Month by commemorating and encouraging the study, observance, and celebration of the vital role women have played in history. The month is supposed to empower young girls with the courage and self-esteem they need to become the leaders of tomorrow and inspire them to emulate the women who laid the framework for us to succeed today.

Like Black History Month, Women’s History Month first started as one day called

MLC APPROVES New Medicare Advantage Plan



The MLC approved on March 9 moving forward with a Medicare Advantage PPO agreement between the City of New York and Aetna, with 79% of the votes cast in favor of the agreement. “We look forward to ensuring a robust quality plan for our retirees and their families. We will be vigilant in making sure that our retirees’ welfare remains front and center in the administration of the plan,” said an MLC statement. The MLC is a consortium of 102 municipal unions representing approximately 385,000 active workers and 250,000 retirees. The below chart is a summary of the Aetna Medicare Advantage PPO and a comparison to the GHI/Empire BlueCross BlueShield Senior Care Plan.

Major Benefit Comparison: Senior Care and Aetna Medicare Advantage PPO

The \$15 GHI/EBCBS Senior Care Plan copays listed in the table, which are subject to the plan deductible, and which were jointly agreed to by the City and the Municipal Labor Committee (MLC), are temporarily suspended (revert back to \$0) as of Jan. 12, 2023, due to litigation.

	GHI/Empire BlueCross BlueShield (EBCBS) Senior Care Plan	Aetna Medicare Advantage PPO
NETWORK	All Medicare Participating Providers	95% of utilized providers are either in-network (1 million+ providers) or accept Medicare and agree to accept the Aetna plan on an out-of-network basis. You can see providers in or out of the Aetna network as long as they are eligible to participate in Medicare and accept Aetna MA PPO plan.
Deductible	2023 calendar year, you pay \$276. Deductible (\$50 GHI + \$226 Medicare Part B). Part B Deductible CHANGES EVERY YEAR.	You pay \$150 deductible. Part B deductible does not apply. Aetna MA deductible is guaranteed at a minimum until 2029. Aetna MA deductible is waived for 2023.
Annual Maximum Out of Pocket (OOP) (includes copays and deductible)	No limit.	\$1,500 is the most you pay out of pocket (deductible & copays), then MA plan pays 100% & you pay \$0.
OFFICE VISITS		
PCP Office Visits	\$15	\$0
Specialist Office Visits/Mental Health/Substance Use	\$15	\$15
PREVENTIVE SERVICES		
Medicare Preventive Screenings/Immunizations	\$0	\$0
Routine Vision Exams (eye refraction) (non-Medicare covered)	Not covered	\$0
Medicare covered vision is a medical condition and falls under a specialist office visit	\$15	\$15
INPATIENT SERVICES		
Hospital Admission*	Days 1-60: You pay \$300 per admission, up to \$750 max./calendar year Days 61-90: You pay 100% (currently \$400/day) of the Medicare coinsurance Days 91-201**: You pay 50% & Empire pays 50% of the cost (Medicare rate) Days 202-365**: You pay 100% of all costs	\$300 per admission, \$750 max./calendar year 0% coinsurance for all 365 days*** (cost share waived for 2023)
Inpatient Mental Health Inpatient Substance Use*	Days 1-60: You pay \$300/admission, up to \$750 max./calendar year Days 61-90: You pay 100% (currently \$400/day) of the Medicare coinsurance Days 91-201**: You pay 50% & Empire pays 50% of the cost (Medicare rate) Days 202-365** You pay 100% of all costs	\$300 per admission, \$750 max./calendar year 0% coinsurance for all 365 days*** (cost share waived for 2023)
Skilled Nursing (100 days per benefit period)	\$0 days 1-100	\$0 days 1-100
Emergency Room (ER); waived if admitted to hospital	\$50	\$50

	GHI/Empire BlueCross BlueShield (EBCBS) Senior Care Plan	Aetna Medicare Advantage PPO
Worldwide ER	\$50. Waived if admitted to hospital; covered for emergency services only	\$50. Waived if admitted to hospital; covered for emergency services only
Outpatient Surgery	You pay \$0 after Medicare Part B deductible	\$0
Emergency Hospital Admission when outside the U.S.A	Days 1 -90, you pay: \$300 per admission, up to \$750 max. per year	\$300 per admission, \$750 maximum for emergency services only (cost share waived for 2023)
DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES		
Lab Tests, X-Rays & Complex Radiology (CT Scan/PET/MRI)	\$15	\$15
OUTPATIENT SERVICES & OTHER PART B SERVICES		
Diabetic Monitors/Supplies (lancets, lancet devices & blood glucose test strips)	\$0	\$0
Durable Medical Equipment/Ambulance****	\$25 Deductible \$2,500 annual benefit maximum	\$0, no annual benefit maximum
Private duty nursing (PDN)****	\$25 Deductible, then you pay 20% coinsurance \$2,500 annual benefit maximum	20% coinsurance \$5,000 annual benefit maximum
Home Health Care Services	\$0	\$0
Urgent Care	\$15	\$15 \$0 CVS Minute Clinic, Walmart Clinic, Kroger Clinic
OUTPATIENT SERVICES		
Part B Drugs: includes Immunizations (flu, pneumonia, and hepatitis B)	\$0	\$0
Allergy testing and Allergy shots	\$15	\$0
Therapy (Physical, Occupational & Speech)	\$15	\$15
Cardiac Rehabilitation Therapy Pulmonary Rehabilitation Therapy Radiation Therapy	\$15	\$0
Outpatient Kidney Dialysis, Self-Dialysis Training, Home Dialysis Equipment and Supplies	\$0	\$0
Chiropractic (Medicare covered only)	\$15	\$15
Non-Routine Podiatry (Medicare covered only) diabetes or specific circulatory illness impacting the feet	\$15	\$15
Routine Podiatry (non-Medicare covered) Cutting or removing corns and calluses, trimming, cutting, clipping nails	Not covered	\$15
PLAN ENHANCEMENTS		
Fitness Benefit	Not covered	SilverSneakers at no cost
Healthy Home Visit by a licensed clinical professional who provides a health assessment	Not covered	Annual home visit at no cost
Hearing Aid Reimbursement	Not covered	Up to \$500 reimbursement, every 12 months
Hearing Exams (non-Medicare covered)	Not covered	\$0
Healthy Rewards	Not covered	Earn up to \$200 (voluntary incentive Gift Card) by completing wellness services
MDLive Telemedicine Behavioral Health	Not covered	\$0 cost share per visit no deductible & unlimited visits
Meals after each Hospital Stay & after each Skilled Nursing Facility Stay	Not covered	28 meals, up to 14 days
Medical Alert System to be immediately connected to a care specialist at LifeStation for emergency care	Not covered	Included at no cost - the device and monthly monitoring fee
Non-Emergency Transportation to and from medical appointments	Not covered	24 one-way rides, per calendar year and up to 60 miles, per ride
Over-the-Counter (OTC) Allowance	Not covered	\$120 annual (\$30 per quarter) allowance on health & wellness products

*365-Day Hospitalization is an "Optional Rider" that can be purchased in the Sr. Care plan to cover hospitalization coinsurance in full. The \$300 copay per stay for days 1-60 days will always apply, even with the purchase of the rider.

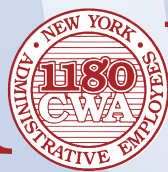
**Medicare has 60 lifetime days. You may elect to use any of the previously unused lifetime reserve days in which you pay the current coinsurance rate of \$800 per day in lieu of the 50% of the Medicare allowed rate.

***The Aetna Medicare Advantage plan covers 365-day hospitalization automatically, at no additional cost, and does not require purchase of rider.

****Combined benefit: Deductible and annual max. for Durable Medical Equipment (DME), Private Duty Nursing (PDN) and Ambulance.

Shop Steward

CONFERENCE



Shop Stewards met for a two-day conference called “From Pandemic to Endemic: Where Do We Go From Here?” that was a chance to share ideas and brainstorm different ways to better help the membership.

It wasn’t all about learning, though. Local 1180 took the opportunity of having almost 75 Stewards in the same location to present Certificates of Appreciation to everyone for the work they do in dedicating their time and effort to being the conduit between members and the union.

There are always some Stewards that go way above and beyond, and they received special recognition.

For the first time, Local 1180 instituted a Priscilla Carrow Award, given to the Shop Steward for “exemplary service to community, workplace, and union.” That award was presented to **Elaine Blair** who spends so many hours helping others that she makes everyone believe there are more than 24 hours in a day. Local 1180 featured her in a Communique story, which can be read in the July-September 2021 Communique at cwa1180.org/local-home/communique.

Upon receiving the Priscilla Carrow Award, Blair said she was truly surprised.

“I was not expecting this at all and am very humbled to know that everyone thought of me in the manner in which the award was given,” Blair said. “My outlook on life is that everyone should give and not expect anything in return. I

believe that those I’ve helped should just pay it forward and always find someone to help in return.”

That is the essence of Priscilla Carrow, a beloved Shop Steward who, during the height of the pandemic, was more concerned about health care providers in her Queens hospital receiving PPE that she did not take a face mask for herself despite the fact it was her job to dispense the PPE. Needless to say, she caught COVID and passed away.

“Although she worked at the hospital with the largest number of COVID cases at the time, Priscilla didn’t think about herself at all,” said **Local 1180 Second Vice President Teesha Foreman** who presented the award. “She was a loving, thoughtful, kind, and considerate person who would do anything for someone else, even if that meant putting herself second. This is who Priscilla was and who Elaine Blair is.”

Special awards for Outstanding Shop Steward went to **Carol Griffith, NYPD**, and **Sonya Grant, NYCERS**, while the Political Action Fund (PAF) Award was presented to both **Norma Lynch, DSS**, and **Meredith Transberg, DCAS**.

“I would like to thank CWA Local 1180 for even thinking of me as a nominee for Outstanding Shop Steward,” Grant said. “When I think about receiving this award, I tell myself that I can do better and I will do better as a Shop Steward. I will try



to even do better with my participation at the union. Most of all, I am so happy to be in a position at NYCERS where I can assist any member of CWA Local 1180. If you need me, I am only a telephone call or email away."

The PAF award is for exemplary contributions that continue to increase through the years. Through PAF, CWA will have the strength needed to pass laws that protect our jobs and fight for quality public services. Foreman said that both Lynch and Transberg understand that political power and influence help us win for CWA members.

Overall, the conference was a huge success.

"The Stewards engaged in many workshops that will help put them in a better position to do their jobs. They also had the opportunity to create their own vision boards that will provide them with the tools to see the next steps to continue to fight the good fight while we still have the power," Foreman said. ■





Best Ways to Represent Members

UNION TRAINS NEW SHOP STEWARDS ON

Almost three dozen newly elected Shop Stewards received hands-on training from Local 1180 Staff Representatives at a two-day training. The Feb. 25 and March 4 training days covered a vast array of topics, including roles and responsibilities of a Shop Steward; connecting with members; overview of Weingarten Rights; Political Action Fund and why it's important; health and safety; time and leave; paid family leave vs. family medical leave act; contracts, rules, and regulations; grievances; and supervisory meetings vs. counseling/warning sessions.

Second Vice President and Supervisor of Staff Reps Teesha Foreman said that since Stewards are the first line of contact with the union, it's important for them to fully understand their duties in representing and defending the interests of members at their work locations.

"Representing the rank and file of Local 1180 as the link back to the union and a conduit of information between members and the union is an important position that we do not take for granted," Foreman said. "It's not simply about saying 'I'm your Shop Steward.' It's knowing all the ins and outs of how to deal with most types of situations that can arise."

Staff Representatives Desiree Waters, Shakima Ivory, Denise Duncan, Romano Jones, Anthony Lewis, and Greg Smith planned and coordinated the training, with each one presenting on a different topic. The entire group also reviewed the PAA et. al. contract, effective dates for contractual raises and how merit raises come into play, transfers, salaries, additions to gross, and the grievance procedure.

Waters said making sure that the Stewards understood their clearly defined roles and responsibilities was of the utmost importance. "There is so much to know and understand if you are going to be an effective Shop Steward. It's about reaching out to the members you represent and letting them know that they should come to you with a question or if something is wrong on the job. Shop Stewards really need to have a wealth of information."

One of the new Shop Stewards attending the training was **PAA Theresa Williams** (Department of Finance), who said the program was "amazing!"

"As a new Shop Steward with CWA 1180, I now feel equipped with the information needed to assist my union members efficiently," she said. "The trainers were informative, patient, and clear with each presentation. We received insightful material regarding benefits and procedures for various types of disciplinary issues. As a collective, we participated in comprehensive and hands-on activities, which allowed the new Stewards to activate our thinking caps."

Post training, Williams said she is now ready to rerepresent workers from Finance.

"Prior to coming to this training, I was unsure about the many aspects of being a Shop Steward and what it entails. Now post training, I feel confident that I have the knowledge, along with my skill set, to perform to the best of my ability for our members. Everyone was absolutely wonderful and welcoming," Williams said.

Administrative Manager Tiffany Ferguson (Department of Design and Construction) agrees that the training was just what she needed to help settle into her new role.

"Great presentation style with lots of opportunities to ask questions and talk about educating ourselves in order to help our members," she said. "The Shop Steward Training was enjoyable and informative, and met my expectations." ■





MEMBERS IN ACTION

Testifying on Administrative Code Change

President Gloria Middleton was one of dozens of labor leaders and hundred of interested parties to testify before the New York City Council's special hearing on changing the Administrative Code that would have allowed the Municipal Labor Committee to better negotiate health insurance for active members and retirees.

In her speech, Middleton said, "In order to fulfill our duty to ensure the City's health care plans meet the needs of both our members and our retirees, the MLC has been working with the City nonstop since 2014 to reach savings that keep the Stabilization Fund afloat. To generate savings, the MLC negotiated the Medicare Advantage Plus Plan for retirees that provides for equal or better benefits and qualifies for federal subsidies needed to reduce the current \$600 million health care deficit that is rising daily."

Pictured from left are Teamsters Local 237 President Greg Floyd, President Middleton, DC 37 Executive Director Henry Garrido, and MLC Chairman Harry Nespoli. ■



Supporting Our Sisters and Brothers

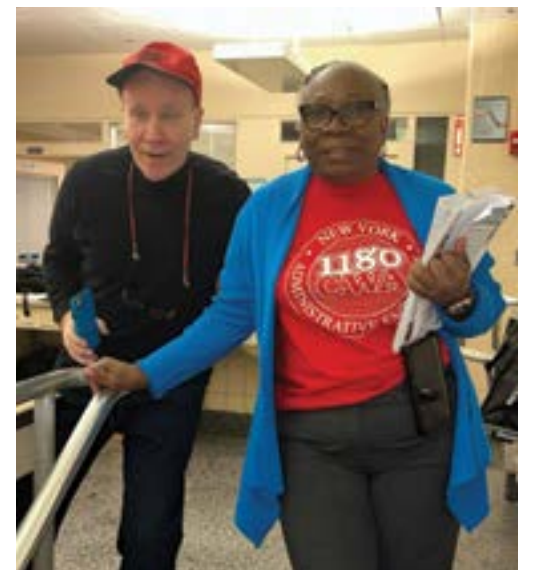
Local 1180 Executive Board members turned out to support SSEU Local 371's annual Charles S. Ensley Scholarship fundraiser that honored Former NYS Senator Diane Savino, Former 32BJ President Kyle Bragg, and DC 37 Associate Director Rose Lovaglio-Miller. President Gloria Middleton, pictured center, said it's important for all New York City unions to support one another as it builds union solidarity. Pictured from left: **Second Vice President Teesha Foreman, Staff Reps Denise Duncan and Romano Jones, Member-at-Large Amica Benjamin, Middleton, Member-at-Large Helen S. Jarrett, Secretary-Treasurer Robin Blair-Batte, and Member-at-Large Hazel O. Worley. First Vice President Gerald Brown** also attended. ■



Local 1180 Wins PAF Rabble-Rouser Award



First Vice President Gerald Brown said Local 1180 was honored by CWA District 1 for raising the most money in 2022 out of all locals within the district for the Political Action Fund (PAF). **Retirees Lelia Brunson and Dan Cunningham** (pictured at right), **Mobilization Coordinator Helen S. Jarrett** and **Membership Coordinator Deborah Valentin** all worked on the PAF campaign from October-December 2022 by going to site meetings and leading PAF presentations to get members to contribute. PAF money is used for political action purposes since union dues money cannot be allocated for this purpose. ■



Healthy Heart Day



PAs Otissa Dillard (center with glasses) and **Nurys Wright** (center with plaid dress) were joined by coworkers represented by other city unions to mark Healthy Heart Day on Feb. 3. The group works for HRA on the 30th floor at 4 World Trade Center in the Customized Assistance Services (CAS) area. Everyone wears red on Healthy Heart Day to raise awareness about cardiovascular disease in hopes of eradicating heart disease and stroke in millions of women across the nation. ■

Union-Backed Legislators Take Office



Local 1180 endorsed both Monique Chandler-Waterman in her race for the New York State Assembly and Iwen Chu in hers for the State Senate. When both candidates won their respective seats, they invited Local 1180 to attend their swearing-in ceremonies. Above left, **Shop Stewards Ava George and Ava Green-Harris, Member-at-Large Helen S. Jarrett, Sen. Chu, and Shop Steward Audrey Henderson, members Nelida Velazquez and Carol Jenkins, and Shop Steward Ingrid Robinson.** Above right: **Beverline Parks, Henderson, Sandra Rosario, and Jarrett** attended the Inauguration for Assemblywoman Chandler-Waterman (second from right) of Assembly District 58 in Brooklyn on Jan 28, 2023. ■



The Power of Diversity

Local 1180 was once again represented at the Somos Conference, this year from March 10-12 in Albany. **Recording Secretary Lourdes Acevedo** and **Executive Board Members Debra Paylor, Rosario Roman, and Hazel O. Worley** participated in the event with the mission of addressing the needs of New York's Hispanic population and serving as a platform for legislators, scholars, and business and labor leaders to address various concerns pertinent to this community. Somos also empowers youth with scholarships that encourage furthering their education, college internships to promote retention, and apprenticeships to introduce newly graduated adults into the public, nont-profit, labor, and private sectors. Somos aims to create opportunities for Hispanic youth that will facilitate their professional development, growth, and future success. ■

MEMBERS IN ACTION

Will the 2024 Democratic National Convention Be In NYC?



Hosting the Democratic National Convention in New York City would be a huge boost to the economy that struggled so much during the pandemic and has a long way to go in recouping lost income. That's why Local 1180 joined with elected officials and other unions at a Labor Rally on March 18 in Times Square in support of hosting the 2024 DNC. The last time the DNC was held in New York City was in 1992 when former President Bill Clinton was elected. The big apple is up against Chicago, Illinois and Atlanta, Georgia. Madison Square Garden has been proposed as the central convention site, with the Jacob Javits Center to play a supporting role. Representing Local 1180 were **Doreen Dixon (Shop Steward, Metropolitan Hospital)**, **Ingrid Brown (Shop Steward, ACS)**, and **Membership Coordinator Deborah Valentin**. They are pictured with State Assembly Member Tony Simone (AD 75) at left, and State Assemblyman Alex Bores (AD 73) at far right. ■

CWA Lobbies in Albany



Local 1180 members joined with CWA District 1 for a mini Lobby Day event in Albany to meet with state legislators and let them know CWA's stance on five pending bills — increased hospital funding to protect health care workers, keep hospitals open, and ensure the best quality of care for all New Yorkers; eliminating fees for SUNY graduate student workers; raising New York's minimum wage for almost 2.9 million workers to \$20/hour and indexing annual statewide increases to inflation and labor productivity; securing additional funding for the CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies; and establishing a regulator framework for public banking. In top photo below, **Membership Coordinator Deborah Valentin** and **Otissa Dillard (PAA, HRA)** join other CWA locals in meeting with Assemblyman Zelnor Myrie (AD 43), pictured below, and with Sen. Andrew Gounardes (SD 26). ■

SI BCCC Resumes In-Person Meetings

The Staten Island Borough Community Coordinating Committee was the first to return to in-person monthly meetings. Chair Dolores Andino said it was important to have members come together in person after more than two years virtual. The SIBCCC is now hybrid, meaning those who want to attend via RingCentral are still able to do so. Pictured from left: **SI BCCC Chair Dolores Andino (PAA, DOT)**, **Joann Olbrich (Admin Manager, DOT)**, **John Esposito (PAA, FDNY)**, **Javonne Parker (Admin Manager, DOT)**, **Jessica Ramos (PAA, DEP)**, and **Rosario Roman (Member-at-Large)**. ■

It's Such an Honor

President Gloria Middleton recently attended a Labor Reception for Hakeem Jeffries, the first African-American Minority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives. Middleton, the first African American and first female to lead Local 1180, said the two discussed these historical "firsts" as well as issues impacting the labor movement in New York and across the country. ■



ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER PROMOTIONAL LISTS (#1552) ESTABLISHED AUG. 17, 2022

Red lines indicates agency without a viable list (less than 3 individuals).

	AGENCY	# ON LIST*	STAFF REP
9	NYCERS	12	Waters
12	BORO PRESIDENT BROOKLYN	2	Waters
15	NYC COMPTROLLER	11	Duncan
19	OMB	2	Jones
21	OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE TAX APPEALS	2	Waters
25	LAW DEPT.	2	Ivory
30	CITY PLANNING	2	Waters
32	DOI	3	Duncan
40	DOE	58	Waters
41	TEACHERS RETIREMENT SYSTEM	6	Waters
54	CIVILIAN COMPLAINT REVIEW BOARD	1	Waters
56	NYPD	116	Jones
57	FDNY	70	Smith
63	VETERANS AFFAIRS	1	Duncan
67	ACS	123	Duncan
69	DSS/HRA	341	All Reps
71	DHS	19	Ivory
72	CORRECTION	48	Smith
103	CITY CLERK	1	Waters
125	DEPT. OF AGING	6	Jones
127	FISA	5	Duncan
131	OPA	13	Duncan
132	INDEPENDENT BUDGET OFFICE	1	Waters
134	CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION	1	Jones
156	TAXI AND LIMOUSINE COMMISSION	12	Smith
214	OFFICE OF LABOR RELATIONS	3	Ivory
256	POLICE PENSION FUND	5	Ivory
257	FIRE PENSION FUND	2	Duncan
267	DEPT. OF YOUTH & COMMUNITY DEV.	10	Duncan
383	COMMUNITY BOARD 3 BRONX	1	Duncan
781	PROBATION	10	Waters
807	NYC DEPT. OF SMALL BUSINESS	4	Waters
806	HPD	49	Waters
810	DEPT. OF BUILDINGS	37	Ivory
816	DEPT. OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE	115	Duncan
820	OATH	3	Smith
826	DEP	155	Ivory
827	DEPT. OF SANITATION	30	Waters
836	FINANCE	113	Waters
841	DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION	105	Duncan
846	PARKS AND RECREATION	82	Jones
850	DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION	18	Smith
858	DOITT	56	Duncan
860	DEPT. OF RECORDS AND INFO SERVICES	2	Ivory
866	DEPT. OF CONSUMER/WORKER PROTECTION	5	Waters
868	DCAS	59	Duncan
901	DA MANHATTAN	1	Duncan
902	DA BRONX	4	Ivory
903	DA BROOKLYN	9	Duncan
904	DA QUEENS	5	Jones
905	DA STATEN ISLAND	1	Smith
996	NYCHA	40	Ivory
998	NYCTA	11	Ivory

Administrative Manager Open Competitive list #1195 was established on Sept. 28, 2022, with 4,550 eligibles on the list. The above chart was revised on March 14, 2023.

Apply for the Joe Beirne Foundation Scholarship

The Joe Beirne Scholarship Program offers 16 partial college scholarships of \$4,000 each for the 2023-2024 school year. Winners, selected in a lottery drawing, also will receive second-year scholarships of the same amount contingent upon satisfactory academic accomplishment. Part-time students, less than 12 credits, will receive half of the scholarship monies.

Eligible for the awards are CWA members and their spouses, children and grandchildren, including those of retired or deceased members. Applicants must be high school graduates or at least high school students who will graduate during the year in which they apply. Undergraduate and graduate students returning to schooling may also apply. Prior winners may not reapply.

The CWA Joe Beirne Foundation was established in October 1974 by the Communications Workers of America Executive Board to honor the name and memory of the founding President of CWA, who served for more than 30 years. In his capacity as the first CWA President, Joe Beirne took great pride in the roles he played in the fields of education and learning and other areas of social concern. On April 26, 1999, the CWA Executive Board voted to combine the Joseph Anthony Beirne Memorial Foundation and the Ray Hackney Scholarship Fund, thereby creating the CWA Joe Beirne Foundation.

The deadline to apply is April 30, 2023. For more information and to apply, go to cwa-union.org/pages/beirne

UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION ON FILE WITH UNION

Members are encouraged to log into their Member Management Portal (MMP) and verify that the information CWA Local 1180 has on record is accurate.

If all of your personal information (home address, home and cell phone numbers, personal and work emails, beneficiary information) is accurate, no further action is required.

If any of your information is incorrect, please update it within your portal while you are logged in.

It is particularly important that Local 1180 have an accurate personal email and cell phone number on file as this is how we contact members with important benefit and other updates that cannot be sent to a work email address.

If you need to update your beneficiary information, please fill out this form and return to us via email, fax, or regular mail.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact benefits@cwa1180.org or call 212.966.5353. ■

PRIVATE SECTOR SHOPS

NEW PRIVATE SECTOR STAFF REP TOMAS LASTER

Tomas Laster joined CWA Local 1180 in February 2023 as a Staff Representative for the private sector organizations.

He has demonstrated a commitment to social justice and labor throughout his life, volunteering with farmworkers' rights organizations in his college years and helping to implement a restorative strategies curriculum for public schools in the Sarasota County public school system.

As a Human Rights Investigator and Director of Complaint Investigation in Florida, Tomas investigated and resolved hundreds of workplace grievances affecting low-wage migrant

farmworkers. Through this work, he was able to negotiate systemic changes affecting thousands of workers in industrial agriculture. In the meantime, he volunteered with his local Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) chapter and helped restore lost wages for restaurant workers.

While working as a bartender in Brooklyn, Tomas and his coworkers organized their workplace, achieving a unanimous filing with Workers United and negotiating their first collective bargaining agreement.

Outside of his work with CWA, you can find Tomas cheering on the Argentina soccer team, hanging out with his two large cats, or playing music with his friends and his wife Leah. ■



AUDUBON UNION IS NOW THE BIRD UNION Changes Name to Sever Ties to Enslaver

Local 1180 unionized members at the National Audubon Society have changed their name to distance themselves from the man the Audubon Society is named after.

The Audubon Society is named after John James Audubon, an artist known for his detail illustrations of birds, and less well known for his opposition to abolition of slavery, his owning and trafficking of slaves. He supported "race science" that claimed white superiority over other races.

As a part of recognizing that history and aligning itself with the values of the membership and the work, the unionized staff have elected to change their name to "The Bird Union" while they work on formulating a more final title.

Unionized members hope the name change will encourage the Audubon Board to vote to also change the name of the organization.

"We will not elevate and celebrate a person who would reject and oppress our union members today," the union wrote on its social media. "We invite @audubonsociety to join us."

Union members said the name change is a small step in demonstrating their commitment to antiracism.

"We are fighting for a contract that helps ensure inclusion is the norm and not an afterthought, that provides underrepresented groups with support and protection, and that guarantees working conditions that are beneficial and accommodating for all our members," they wrote in unison.

Christopher Thomas, Local 1180's Private Sector Staff Representative said, "We are elated that E&E News and



PoliticoPro have picked up this name change and that supporters are demonstrating their solidarity by re-tweeting them."

Thomas spoke about the name change at the March General Membership Meeting, and called for all public sector members to support Local 1180 brothers and sisters at The Bird Union.

Please follow @birdunion on Twitter and Instagram for updates and to show support for Local 1180 members in the private sector. ■

BARGAINING UPDATES

Type Media Center — We have finished negotiating a tentative contract with the Type Media Center and will be in talks with members to ratify the agreement. In the draft contract, Local 1180 fleshed out discipline language, solidified language on staff providing feedback to managers, secured a commitment from the organization to regular fiscal presentations to the members, recognized duration-limited staff as a part of the union, expanded anti-discrimination language, and won an ongoing remote work option for the members. This is the first contract with Type Media since their transformation from the Nation Institute.

"There is still a lot of work to do on normalizing wages and benefits," Local 1180 Private Sector Staff Rep Christopher Thomas said. "We will be reopening negotiations in 2024 to discuss these topics."

Local 1180 continues to bargain at:

- Open Society Foundations
- Human Rights Watch
- Physicians for Human Rights
- Books and Rattles, Inc.
- Audubon Society
- StoryCorps
- Javits Center



JAVITS CENTER EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION

Two Local 1180 members working at the Jacob Javits Center received Employee Appreciation Awards for their years of service — Arnold Lynn, Jose Martinez, and Ruth Castillo. ■

Have an **UPDATE** or **NEWS** from your Private Sector Shop? Send information and photos to Staff Rep Chris Thomas at cthomas@cwa1180.org



TEESHA FOREMAN

Second Vice President

Become Part of the Local 1180 Triangle

It takes a team to run a union, especially one as active as Local 1180. We not only represent members on the job, but we are involved in our communities, our city, and our state.

An integral part of the Local 1180 team are our Shop Stewards. As you can see from the two stories we have on Stewards in this issue, it's not just about holding the title. It's about learning. It's about understanding. It's about doing. It's about involvement.

Did you ever wonder what exactly is a Shop Steward and what they do?

A Shop Steward is elected by a specific job site's workers to represent them in dealings with management. That, however, is just the tip of the iceberg. For Stewards to do their jobs effectively, they must also organize workers at their sites, negotiate workers' issues with management, insure

It is at that very spot — the workplace — that our fight actually begins. To win, we must engage with our members and let them know their union always has their backs.

implementation of agreements, build support for the union, educate members on trade unionism and the workers' movement, communicate with the workers, and be the eyes and ears of Local 1180.

Shop Stewards are the foundation of our union. Those who are truly committed, hardworking, disciplined, and knowledgeable support the principle of workplace democracy.

Our Shop Stewards represent CWA Local 1180, which makes it crucial to know who we are and what we stand for. It's about taking that message and making sure our members understand it, too.

There is still more to being a Steward than all of this, though. Shop Stewards should be engaging, communicative, supportive, and proactive.

Stewards should interact with the members they represent on a regular basis. Check-ins and lunchtime meetings will help members know that Local 1180 is always watching out for them, especially at a time when the labor movement in general is

under attack. Informal get-togethers allow members to ask questions and maybe in these conversations, you will find there are problems or issues that must be addressed that our members were not even aware of.

While not anything new, corporate America and the 1% are still trying to divide working people and weaken the stronghold of unions in the workplace.

It is at that very spot — the workplace — that our fight actually begins. To win, we must engage with our members and let them know their union always has their backs. Our Stewards are the most critical layer of the union leadership because our members look to you for guidance, support, and direction.

It's more than just engaging to have a conversation. It's about getting members excited to be a part of a 9,000-member organization that gets involved in community events, marches in parades, helps others in need through the various collections we do throughout the year, and makes sure labor-friendly politicians are elected into office.

Do You Have What It Takes?

During and after the pandemic, many of our Shop Stewards retired, so now is the time to regroup and grow our team. We are looking for dues-paying members in good standing who are interested in becoming Stewards at their locations.

For every 15 members per location, we can have one Steward. It's not a job to take lightly, but if you are a go-getter, with a take-charge personality who wants to make sure injustice in the workplace is corrected, or you know someone who has these traits, then please reach out to your Staff Representative at staffrepservices@cwa1180.org

Be Part of Our Larger Team

The CWA Triangle has three sides that symbolize the three major programs (representation, organizing, and mobilizing) and pillars of our union. This symbolizes the fact that no one side can stand alone. If the triangle is broken on any one side, then it will be broken on all sides.

Representation is our ability to stick up for each other and enforce our rights. Organizing means building up our membership in existing and new units.

Mobilization means engaging our members and partner organizations across the city to unify in support of economic and social justice and democracy.

All of this takes a strong team of Shop Stewards committed to being a part of the Local 1180 triangle. You are the liaison back to the union and what gives us the power and ability to effectively represent our members.

Shop Stewards build camaraderie among the workers they represent. If members see our Stewards as approachable, they are more apt to reach out for help. The key for every Steward and member alike is to remember that there is no union without "U" and "I". Stronger together, united we win!

Here is a list of just some of the specific responsibilities Local 1180 often calls on Stewards for:

- Sign up employees to the union (Membership Cards, New Hire Orientation & Hiring Pools)
- Sign up members to the CWA Political Action Fund (PAF)
- Act as the face of the union on the job
- Communicate between and connect local leaders with all union members
- Enforce the contract by educating members, monitoring for violations, and filing grievances
- Represent members during employer investigations
- Communicate with management on behalf of members
- Work with local leadership to advance union priorities and build the union's power

More than ever, now is the time to get involved. Step up to the plate and join the group of dedicated members who have taken on the role of Shop Steward. Speak with an existing active Steward to see if this is a position for you.

Shop Stewards are the heart of our union. As workplace organizers, educators, problem-solvers and union representatives, they play a critical role in making 1180 CWA strong! ■

THE AFTERMATH

IMPACT OF COVID ON THE MENTAL HEALTH OF

The value of mental health cannot be emphasized enough, especially post-pandemic. One of the most important lessons learned from the COVID lockdown period is the need to devote sufficient attention to mental health — and the consequences of not doing so.

Unfortunately, there is not adequate education on what mental health truly means in both real and practical terms. According to [mentalhealth.gov](https://www.mentalhealth.gov), mental health is a composite of emotional, psychological, and social well-being affecting how we think, feel, and act, and helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.

Compromised mental health is one of the earliest indicators of just how much a mind can be in turmoil. When that turmoil worsens, it unfortunately can lead to death. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that suicide ranks as the leading cause of death in the United States, which was scientifically corroborated by the National Institute of Mental Health. The relevant question then becomes, “Why do so many people resort to the tragic finality of suicide?” While there are many factors involved, impaired mental health is one of the most significant.

It can be truly incapacitating for people to deal with emotional disequilibrium when they are unable to share their mental trauma with family members or friends who might not be aware there is a problem or to what extent that problem is manifesting itself.

To help curb the debilitating effects of mental health, it's incumbent upon everyone to conduct sporadic checks on the wellbeing of loved ones, friends, and co-workers if only for the simple reason that we might not know exactly what trauma someone is facing. The simple and commonplace question, “how are you?” carries far greater significance and utility than most can truly appreciate.

One of the best ways to treat mental health is to seek a therapist or counselor or speak to someone you trust about your situation. CWA Local 1180 offers resources to help members deal with mental health-related challenges. Sometimes, speaking to a therapist may not be sufficient to manage a mental health issue. In this case, a more comprehensive level of support, in the form of mental health rehabilitation, can offer the stability and guidance necessary to facilitate meaningful progress and recovery.

In Local 1180, if you or your eligible dependent is under the care of an in-network licensed psychiatrist, psychotherapist, psychologist, or certified social worker, the Benefits Fund will reimburse you for the actual expenses you incur for such care up to a maximum of \$300 per calendar year for each eligible covered member of your family. You should check with your employer-provided health plan to determine if services of a licensed

AMERICANS

psychiatrist, psychotherapist, or psychologist, or certified social worker, are covered by their plan.

These benefits will be paid only for out-of-hospital mental health or substance abuse care by a provider who is not part of a hospital or outpatient facility. In New York State, under the provisions of the Health Care Reform Act of 1996, if a doctor or covered provider's practice is part of a certain hospital or outpatient facility, benefits will not be paid for their services.

To see if this benefit applies to you, please refer to the Local 1180 website at cwa1180.org/benefits-home/active-benefits

Mental health can easily lead to disability if not properly managed. In fact, it is regarded as the most common causes of disability in the United States. It can also lead to more serious and potentially life-threatening issues if left untreated. When the mind has been abused and distorted with substance abuse, for instance, addiction can develop, and in the absence of adequate care, suicidal thoughts make their appearance to render a terrible situation even worse.

"Local 1180's mental health reimbursable benefit is one of the most underutilized benefits we offer to members," said **Damien Arnold, Benefits Fund Administrator**. "While it could be the unfortunate stigma associated with mental health, Local 1180 encourages our members to take advantage of this cost-alleviating reimbursement benefit."

In the past couple of years, Arnold said the Benefits Fund has seen an increase in submissions, but no where near what he would expect considering the overall impact of COVID on mental health.

According to Mental Health, NIH COVID-19 Research, "in a 2021 study, nearly half of Americans surveyed reported recent symptoms of an anxiety or depressive disorder, and 10% of respondents felt their mental health needs were not being met. Rates of anxiety, depression, and substance use disorder have increased since the beginning of the pandemic. People who have mental illnesses or disorders are more likely to die than those who don't have mental illnesses or disorders."

The numbers can be shocking. According to hopkinsmedicine.org, "In any given year, an estimated one in four Americans over the age of 18 suffers from a diagnosable mental illness. Anxiety and depression are the most prevalent psychiatric disorders, but rates of other illnesses such as bipolar disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) have also risen."

It is instructive to note that in the Affordable Care Act, mental health was not covered under most insurance

"Local 1180's mental health reimbursable benefit is one of the most underutilized benefits we offer to members . . . We strongly encourage our members to take advantage of this cost-alleviating reimbursement benefit."

plans, which created large holes in the accessibility of care. Many employers do not see taking time off to treat mental illness in the same light as treating medical illnesses. Finding help to deal with mental health can be a challenge, as therapy can be cost-prohibitive, and those without insurance, or with limited means, may not be able to afford care. The end result of these and other factors is that many people in need of treatment go without.

During the pandemic, on seeing the effect and impact the coronavirus was having on families, I used my social media platforms to anchor a seven-week program to help families deal with emotional, mental, and psychological stress, and devoted some degree of focus to money matters, personalities, sexual relations, conflicts, expectations, and how to generally have a successful marriage. Many families expressed a sincere gratitude for the program.

On a self-help level, the benefits of meditation are priceless and can help in reducing anxiety, stress, and anger by improving the memory, helping you focus, and giving insight. During meditation, your pensive mood becomes activated, and your brain stops processing information as it normally should, especially if the thoughts are negative.

Meditation offers a discerning ability and helps you to see life from a different perspective and understanding of life, as well as a keen appreciation of beauty, life, and humanity.

There is no doubt that mental health can be very challenging, especially when combined with the aftermath of COVID-19. The following are some measures that can help improve mental health:

Get enough sleep. The importance of sleep cannot be overemphasized. It's always important to have a regular sleep pattern.

Participate in regular physical activity like exercise. This helps reduce anxiety and improve mood.

Eat healthy. Choose a well-balanced diet. Avoid loading up on junk food and refined sugar. Limit caffeine as it can aggravate stress, anxiety, and sleep problems.

Avoid tobacco, alcohol, and drugs. If you smoke tobacco or if you vape, you're already at higher risk of lung disease. Using alcohol to try to cope can make matters worse and reduce your coping skills. Avoid taking drugs to cope, unless your doctor prescribed medications for you.

Relax and recharge. Set aside time for yourself. Even a few minutes of quiet time can be refreshing and help to settle your mind and reduce anxiety. Many people benefit from practices such as deep breathing, yoga, mindfulness, or meditation. Listen to music, read a book, or do whatever helps you relax.

Take care of your mind. Keep your regular routine. Maintaining a regular daily schedule is important to your mental health. In addition to sticking to a regular bedtime routine, keep consistent times for meals, bathing and getting dressed, work or study schedules, and exercise.

Limit exposure to news media. Constant negative news like COVID-19 stories can heighten fears about the disease. Limit social media that may expose you to rumors and false information. Look for reliable sources, such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization.

Stay busy. Healthy distractions like writing in a journal, making a craft, playing games, or cooking can get you away from the cycle of negative thoughts that feed anxiety and depression. Doing something positive to manage anxiety is a healthy coping strategy.

Focus on positive thoughts in your life instead of dwelling on the negative. Consider starting each day by listing things you are thankful for.

Use your moral compass or spiritual life for support. If you draw strength from a belief system, it can bring you comfort during difficult and uncertain times.

Build support and strengthen relationships: Take care of your body and your mind and connect with others to benefit your mental health. ■

Editor's Note: Henry Ukazu is a Transformational Mindset & Human Capacity Coach



RETIREE REPORT

Message from Retiree Division Director Suzanne E. Beatty, LMSW



As 2022 came to a close, it seems as if life was finally starting to return to some semblance of normalcy. We have spent the better part of the last two years meeting virtually for webinars, programs, and special events, and while that has carried us through to now, there is nothing like in-person events. The new year began the same, with a huge resurgence of live programming.

The Retiree Division jumped right back into scheduling trips, luncheons, Broadway shows, new computer and technology classes, and other events that bring together our retirees for face-to-face interactions — and it's been great.

We rounded out last year with trips to see Dr. K's Motown Revue in New Jersey with lunch at Hunterdon Hills, NJ The Musical at the Neil Simon Theater, an overnight trip to the Pennsylvania Amishlands featuring David, Live on Stage, Retiree Benefits

Overview with lunch at CUNY SLU, and of course, a trip to Radio City Music Hall for the Christmas Spectacular starring the Radio City Rockettes.

For the start of 2023, our retirees went back to Broadway to see A Beautiful Noise and we kicked off our improved computer and technology series with new instructor Armani Simpson. I've heard from many retirees who have already joined the classes that Armani is great and they are looking forward to everything he has to teach. If you have not already joined one of the virtual classes, or our Tuesday in-person programming at CUNY SLU, watch your email for our weekly newsletter that lets you know everything for the coming week.

Of course, you can always visit our retiree page on the Local 1180 website at www.cwa1180.org/retiree/retiree-event-calendar where you will find everything you need to know about benefits classes, computer and technology classes, exercise programs, and our trips. ■

Dr. K's Motown Review



Meet & Greet, Oct. 2022





A Beautiful Noise

Computer & Technology Open House



Sight & Sound, PA



President Gloria Middleton Swears in Retired Members Chapter Officers



Meet the New Retiree Division Technology Instructor Armani Simpson

Armani Simpson has an extensive knowledge of technology and devices, including computers, operating software, and mobile and handheld devices. His work as a Technology Associate in Staples has allowed him to help thousands of clients with technological problems and concerns.

Born in Brooklyn and raised in Queens, Armani enjoys playing piano in his spare time and engaging in sports activities. The Retiree Division is sure you will find Armani to be a patient and dedicated team member whose passion is centered around helping others in need. We are proud to have him on our team.

Armani wants everyone to know that anyone who can access the internet can join our classes. **Online classes** will cover new subject matter and **live classes** will provide hands-on experience based on the previous week's lessons.

New to online classes? Call the Retiree Division at 212.226.5800 to join a live Tuesday class for one-on-one lessons on logging in. ■

Nov. 28, 2022

Meeting called to order at 5:55 p.m.

Executive Board Members in Attendance:

Officers

Gloria Middleton, President; Gerald Brown, First Vice President; Teesha Foreman, Second Vice-President; Robin Blair-Batte, Secretary-Treasurer; Lourdes Acevedo, Recording Secretary

Members-At-Large

Amica Benjamin, Ranston Foster, Denise Gilliam, Helen S. Jarrett, Debra Paylor, Rosario Roman, Gregory Smith, Hazel O. Worley

Absent

Member-At-Large Venus Williams

Minutes of the Sept. 22, 2022, meeting were presented. Motion was duly made, seconded, and carried to accept minutes with necessary corrections.

President's Report

President Middleton discussed the highlights of her schedule since the last Executive Board meeting.

President Middleton chairs the CWA Local 1180 weekly Staff meeting, the General Membership meeting, and the Executive Board meeting. Additionally, every third Thursday of the month, she participates in the CWA National Executive Board meeting.

She discussed the Medicare Advantage Plan. Negotiations between the City and the Municipal Labor Committee (MLC) are ongoing. The New York City Council needs to introduce legislation to amend Administrative Code 12-126 and allow the MLC to negotiate the rights of retirees to choose a health care plan from various plans that meets their needs. It will help build up the Stabilization Fund, which has run out of money. Additionally, it will ensure the preservation of benefits.

Middleton said collective bargaining contract negotiations will commence once the health care issues are resolved.

Oct. 20, 2022 — President Middleton was honored at the Inspire Her Awards Ceremony.

Nov. 14, 2022 — Participated in the Assistant Directors bargaining negotiations. The next meeting is scheduled for Dec. 6, 2022.

Nov. 17, 2022 — Attended Shop Steward Debera Tyndall's retirement party.

President Middleton reported that New York State has set aside \$1.3 billion in the budget to fund bonuses up to \$3,000 for health care and mental hygiene eligible employees at public and private hospitals. The allocated bonus funds are to recognize health care workers as the foundation of our medical system and to acknowledge the sacrifices so many made during the COVID-19 pandemic. Local 1180 is working along with other unions that represent H+H workers to ensure agency title equations are made where titles in the wording do not match with state titles, but job duties are the same.

The union also is advocating for members working at not-for-profit and private sector organizations that provide care and are funded through state Offices of Persons with Developmental Disabilities, Mental Health, and Department of the Aging, or are funded by Medicaid. The dates covered are Oct. 1, 2021- March 31, 2024. For questions about the Bonus Program, go to nysworkerbonus.health.ny.gov/#/ or call 866.682.0077.

President Middleton distributed and discussed the status reports dated Nov. 1, 2022, from the Law Offices of Mirkin & Gordon, P.C. listing legal matters being handled on behalf of CWA Local 1180.

A motion was duly made, seconded, and carried to accept the President's Report.

First Vice President's Report

First Vice President Brown discussed the 2022 mid-term election results and the four referendums on the ballot. Additionally, he discussed the upcoming 2023 City Council elections. Lastly, he discussed the pilot program for the Political Action Fund.

He attended the Shop Steward Conference, the NYS Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie's birthday celebration, and the monthly general membership meetings, Executive Board meetings, District 1 political action meetings, quarterly Trustee meetings, and chaired the quarterly Education Fund meetings.

With no further business, a motion was duly made, seconded, and carried to accept the First Vice President's report.

Second Vice President's Report

Second Vice President Teesha Foreman discussed the H+H Assistant Directors negotiations, Administrative Manager appeals, Rikers Island Community Health Care issues, and DEP personnel changes. Lastly, she participated in the Labor Press reception that honored Henry Garrido, DC 37 Executive Director.

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Secretary-Treasurer Robin Blair-Batte presented the CWA Local 1180 Transaction Detail and Income and Expenditures Reports for September and October 2022. She advised that the T.D. checking account has a balance of \$988,488.76 as of C.O.B. Nov. 28, 2022.

Blair-Batte reported the following member activity for October 2022:

New Member Enrollments.....	55
Deceased.....	4
New Retirements.....	74
Deceased.....	14
Total Active Members.....	8,149
Total Retired Members.....	6,784

CWA Local 1180 Headquarters at 6 Harrison St. is open. Members are being seen by appointments ONLY. Members who need assistance should call 212.226.6565 or e-mail staffrepservices@cwa1180.org.

With no further business, a motion was duly made, seconded, and carried to accept the Secretary-Treasurer's Report.

Recording Secretary Report

Recording Secretary Lourdes Acevedo participated in the LCLAA 2022 Labor Celebration, the Voice of Veterans Reception, and the Somos 2022 Legislative Conference. She continues contributing to the CWA Local 1180 Trustee meetings and the General Membership meetings.

Members-at-Large Reports

Hazel Worley announced the Civil Rights and Equity Committee is conducting a toy drive, is participating in a Fill the Fridge Day of Action, and is working on Black History Month and Festival of Cultures celebrations.

Debra Paylor reported that she attended or participated in the following activities: 10/19 — Harlem Hospital Joint Labor-Management Meeting; 10/19 — CWA Local 1180 General Membership Meeting; 10/24 — PHEW Excel Training; 10/25 — Hispanic Committee meeting; 10/25 — Manhattan Borough Coordinating Committee meeting; 11/3 — Pittsburgh Post virtual strike; 11/5 — CLUW National Executive Board meeting; 11/15 — Civil Rights & Equity Committee meeting; 11/15 — Women's Committee meeting; 11/15 — Manhattan Borough Committee meeting; 11/16 — General Membership meeting; 11/17 — Shop Steward Debera Tyndall retirement party; 11/19 — CBTU meeting; and 11/21 — Voice of Veteran's reception.

Helen S. Jarrett attended the following meetings/trainings/webinars/events from September through November: 2022 Shop Steward Conference, Speaker Carl Heastie's Birthday Bash, NYCCLC Gala, Public Healthcare Education Workers (PHEW) Working Group, Endorsement of Max Rose in Staten Island, Staten Island Borough Community Coordinating Committee, PowHer Equity Summit, Virtual Minority Caucus General Membership, Candidate Iwen Chu's event, 1180's General Membership, President Middleton's InspireHer Award, Queens Borough Community Coordinating Committee, Site meetings at Coler and Elmhurst hospitals, PHEW's Activist Academy Instructor for Excel Beginner class, and Robert's Rules seminar.

Denise Gilliam announced the Women's Committee members are working on hats, scarves, gloves, etc. donations. In order to continue bringing Heart Awareness, the Committee also is working on a Red Velvet Celebration for February 2023.

Next meeting date of the Executive Board is Dec. 29, 2022.

Motion was duly made, seconded, and carried to adjourn at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lourdes Acevedo
Recording Secretary

Dec. 29, 2022

Meeting called to order at 6:10 p.m.

Executive Board Members in Attendance:

Officers

Gloria Middleton, President; Gerald Brown, First Vice President; Teesha Foreman, Second Vice-President; Robin Blair-Batte, Secretary-Treasurer; Lourdes Acevedo, Recording Secretary

Members-At-Large

Amica Benjamin, Ranston Foster, Denise Gilliam, Helen S. Jarrett, Debra Paylor, Rosario Roman, Venus Colon Williams, Hazel O. Worley

Absent

Member-At-Large Gregory Smith

President's Report

President Middleton called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

Minutes of the Nov. 28, 2022, Executive Board and tonight's meeting will be presented for review/approval at the next meeting.

President Middleton discussed the Medicare Advantage Plan. The City Council introduced legislation Intro 0874-2023 to amend Administrative Code 12-126 that would allow for choice in retiree health plans. The changeover is needed for health care cost savings, savings to the Stabilization Fund, and the benefits it supports. The City Council hearing is scheduled for Jan. 9, 2023. If this legislation doesn't pass, the Medicare Advantage Plus Plan will go into effect in July 2023. Collective bargaining contract negotiations will commence once health care issues are resolved.

President Middleton will schedule an H+H Assistant Directors meeting for Jan. 12, 2023, to update members on bargaining. Second Vice President Teesha Foreman will provide the Board with further information regarding these negotiations.

President Middleton discussed the highlights of her schedule since the last Executive Board meeting Nov. 28, 2022.

She chairs the CWA Local 1180 weekly staff meeting and every third Thursday of the month, participates in the CWA National Executive Board meeting.

She said Local 1180 is looking to hire a new staff representative for the non-profit sector in order to be able to better negotiate their contracts and represent the non-profit sector members. She spoke about the new Winston Voluntary Insurance and the Allstate Identity Theft programs for dues-paying members.

A motion was duly made, seconded, and carried to accept the President's Report.

First Vice President's Report

First Vice President Gerald Brown discussed Gov. Hochul's nomination of Hector Lasalle as Chief Judge of the New York State Court of Appeals, which has been met with aggressive opposition. He also announced the New York State legislature will resume legislative session on Jan. 4, 2023.

Although NY Senate Democrats lost a few seats, they still hold the majority.

Brown announced the New York City Council primary election will be in June 2023 with all 51 Council seats up for re-election. The fate of Intro 12-126 is on the line.

He also announced that he participated in the Jewish Labor Committee 2022 Human Rights Awards Gala, monthly general membership meetings, Executive Board meetings, District 1 political action meetings, quarterly Trustee meetings, and chaired the quarterly Education Fund meetings.

With no further business, a motion was duly made, seconded, and carried to accept the First Vice President's report.

Second Vice President's Report

Second Vice President Teesha Foreman thanked everyone for the support demonstrated at the CWA District 1 Conference.

She announced H+H submitted the Assistant Directors salary proposal but Local 1180 rejected it and has filed an Improper Labor Practice Suit. She said H+H has no authority to change titles in order to qualify employees to receive the New York State Health Care Bonus.

Foreman also announced that Administrative Manager Appeals are being represented by Joel Spivak of Mirkin & Gordon. The first appeal will be heard on Jan. 19, 2023.

Second Vice President Foreman announced that the NYPD 911 Pilot Program implemented in 2018 is in jeopardy of ending even though it was just renewed for the next cycle. OLR

and OMB are involved as the goal is to offer it to other agencies that will benefit from it.

Lastly, she announced that Shop Steward Rose Reeves has retired, and Shop Steward Willette Slocumb's last day is tomorrow. Local 180 is looking to honor them both at a later date to thank them for their service.

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Secretary-Treasurer Robin Blair-Batte presented the CWA Local 1180 Transaction Detail and Income and Expenditures Reports for November 2022. She advised that the T.D. checking account has a balance of \$1,110,886.18 as of C.O.B Dec. 29, 2022.

Secretary-Treasurer Blair-Batte reported the following member activity for November 2022:

New Member Enrollments.....	39
Deceased.....	2
New Retirements.....	26
Deceased.....	7
Total Active Members.....	8,201
Total Retired Members.....	6,791

Blair-Batte presented the CWA Local 1180 budget effective Oct. 1, 2022 – Sept. 30, 2023. A motion was duly made, seconded, and unanimously carried to approve the budget as presented as well as authorize President Middleton and Secretary Treasurer Blair-Batte to approve any financial transactions under \$10,000.

With no further business, a motion was duly made, seconded, and carried to accept the Secretary-Treasurer's Report.

Recording Secretary's Report

Recording Secretary Lourdes Acevedo

participated in the CWA District 1 Conference and the Staten Island Richmond Democratic Labor Committee meeting. She continues contributing to the CWA Local 1180 Trustee meetings and General Membership meetings.

Members-at-Large Reports

Hazel Worley announced toys collected from the 2022 Toy Drive were distributed to Medger Evers College for Young Adults and the Brooklyn Cinderella/Young Men's Project. Both were very grateful for the support they receive from CWA Local 1180. The Civil Rights and Equity/Community Services Committee is working on the Festival of Cultures Celebration for June 2023.

Venus Williams announced the Hispanic Committee is working on recruiting members. Additionally, the Committee is looking to host a Hispanic Heritage Celebration in fall 2023.

Debra Paylor reported that she attended or participated in the following activities: 11/28-12/1 — National CWA District 1 Conference; 12/8 — NYS AFL-CIO 2022 Event; 12/10 — CBTU Meeting; 12/13 — Gotham Health/Sydenham Virtual site meeting; and 12/29 — CWA Local 1180 Executive Board meeting

Helen S. Jarrett attended the following meetings/trainings/webinars/events in November and December: 10th Annual Heroes of Labor Award Ceremony; Site meetings at Kings County Hospital, Department of Citywide Administrative Services, Housing Preservation and Development, and Administration for Children Services; Staten Island Borough Committee Meeting; Harper

Collins (UAW) Picket Line; Public Health Care Education Workers working group, NYC Brooklyn's Ballot Observation for Candidates I. Chu, M. Frontus, and J. Scarcella-Spanton; Local 1180's General Membership Meeting; Shop Steward Debera Tyndall's retirement party; Local 1180 November's Executive Board Meeting; and CWA District 1's Conference.

Denise Gilliam announced that she met with Venus Colon-Williams at the Local and prepared the pajamas, hats, scarves, gloves, etc. to deliver.

Amica Benjamin participated in Borough Community Coordinating Committee meetings and in Local 1180 site meetings.

Rosario Roman announced the new chair of the Staten Island Borough Community Coordinating Committee, Delores Andino, and Javonne Parker are excellent. They have many ideas and are trying their best at member outreach.

Ranston Foster is working with members at his site as they face many problems at H+H. Additionally, members have many questions about the state-funded Health Care Bonus. Lastly, he takes the time to call, e-mail, and update his worksite bulletin board in order to remind members of upcoming events.

Next meeting date of the Executive Board is Jan. 24, 2023.

Motion was duly made, seconded, and carried to adjourn at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lourdes Acevedo
Recording Secretary



WTCHP Adds Uterine Cancer to List of Covered 9/11-Related Conditions

Uterine cancer is now recognized as a 9/11-related cancer, giving affected women access to World Trade Center (WTC) Health Program and Victim Compensation Fund benefits.

The decision follows more than a year of research, discussion, and opportunities for public comment. It makes uterine cancer the 69th 9/11-related cancer — and the first to be added to the 9/11 registry in nearly a decade. Despite evidence linking the disease to 9/11 toxins, uterine cancer had been the only cancer that wasn't covered. Unfortunately, uterine cancer was not on the radar screen until the past five-10 years as most 9/11 first responders who participated in research studies were males.

A statement from the WTCHP last May on the proposed rule change explained that exclusion of this particular cancer was due to "insufficient evidence" to support adding it to the list of covered conditions. However, an advisory committee unanimously approved the recommendation in November 2022 to add uterine cancer to the list of diseases covered by the program for first responders and those close to the attacks.

The final rule allows the WTC Health Program — a federal program that provides no-cost medical monitoring and treatment for certified WTC-related health conditions — to begin covering treatment services as soon as possible for patients with certified WTC-related uterine cancers.

Hundreds of women currently enrolled in the program have uterine cancer, a number that is expected to increase as women who don't have another qualifying 9/11-related

illness become eligible to enroll. Families of those who have died of 9/11-related uterine cancer are also eligible to seek compensation.

After extensive efforts and a recognition of the scientific data that supports the link between exposure to 9/11 toxins and uterine cancer, on Jan. 18, 2023, the WTCHP took the necessary step of adding uterine cancer as a 9/11-related condition. As such, 9/11 toxin exposure victims who are either experiencing symptoms of uterine cancer or have already been diagnosed with this condition, can seek medical monitoring and treatment funded by the WTCHP.

Now that the WTCHP covers all cancer types, no 9/11 survivor or responder who is suffering from uterine cancer — or any other cancer — should be denied medical benefits under the WTCHP.

The two-decade delay in recognizing 9/11-related uterine cancer has been costly for affected women who have had to pay for expensive treatments. Now that uterine cancer is on the list of covered conditions, qualifying individuals who file claims with the WTCHP to seek medical benefits may also be eligible to seek and obtain compensation under the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund (VCF) that provides financial compensation to responders and survivors who have suffered extensively because of their conditions.

Anyone seeking more information or a program application should go to www.cdc.gov/wtc/application.html

COMMITTEES

Civil Rights & Equity/Community Service Committee

Hazel O. Worley, Chair
hworley@cwa1180.org
Meeting: 3rd Tuesday of each month

Editorial Committee

Marci Rosenblum, Chair
mrosenblum@cwa1180.org

Education Committee

Meeting: 2nd Monday of each month
Chair and email to be announced

Hispanic Committee

Venus Williams, Chair
vwilliams@cwa1180.org
Meeting: 2nd Thursday of each month

Legislative and Political Committee

Gerald Brown, Chair
gbrown@cwa1180.org

Men's Committee

Gregory Smith, Chair
gsmith@cwa1180.org

Organizing Committee

Leslie Fine, Chair
lfine@cwa1180.org

People with Disabilities Committee

Edward Yood, Chair
envpush.yme@verizon.net
Meeting: 1st Wednesday of each month

Pride Committee

Vera Jordan, Chair
vjordan@health.nyc.gov

Women's Committee

Denise Gilliam, Chair
dgilliam@cwa1180.org
Meeting: 2nd Tuesday of each month

BOROUGH COMMUNITY COORDINATING COMMITTEES

Bronx BCCC

Zenola Fields, Chair
1mszfields@gmail.com

Brooklyn BCCC

Ingrid Brown-Lewis, Chair
ingrideb.lewis66@gmail.com

Manhattan BCCC

Veronica Windley, Chair
rondiggy@hotmail.com

Queens BCCC

Elaine Blair, Chair
eilblair5@gmail.com

Staten Island BCCC

Rosario Roman, Chair
rroman@cwa1180.org

CONGRATULATIONS & CONDOLENCES

Congratulations to Shop Stewards **Cheryl Argyle** (HPD), **Kecia Edey** (ACS), and **Earlene Powell** (DOT) for winning first, second, and third place respectively in the CWA Local 1180 PAF Raffle Drawing on Feb. 13, 2023. Members who contributed to the Fund received one ticket for every \$5 bi-weekly contribution. Argyle won a tv, Edey a \$100 gift card, and Powell a \$50 gift card. ■



Congratulations to **Staff Rep Romano Jones** who graduated on Feb. 10, 2023, from the NYS AFL-CIO/Cornell Union Leadership Institute. Pictured are **Second Vice President and Supervisor of Staff Reps Teesha Foreman** with Jones. ■



Congratulations to **Shop Steward Willette Slocumb** (H+H, Lincoln Hospital) who retired after more than 33 years on the job. Slocumb was a dedicated worker, often overseeing and improving labor relations between management and labor unions. She was an active member of the Labor/Management Committee, Blood Drive Captain, and presenter at new member orientations. She was adept at arranging and coordinating staff engagement and role playing, both good skills for her role as a Shop Steward.

"Becoming a Shop Steward allowed me the honor of relearning to listen as I helped others and myself," she said. "I learned to truly listen and not jump ahead of the 'assumption' of what's being said. Being a Shop Steward allowed me to be exposed to various cultures. It's truly a blessing that was awarded to me from Local 1180 members and the union."

Slocumb retired with the expectations of luxury "fun work" keeping her mind sharp



and networking to meet new people. "Fun work is meeting others and getting to know what other expressions are and the positive energy levels, which is open for new memories," she said.

As a Shop Steward, Slocumb received numerous awards and certificates of achievement.

At top, Slocumb is surrounded by her friends and co-workers who gathered to celebrate her retirement. Bottom, her **Staff Rep Romano Jones** and **Second Vice President Teesha Foreman** present her with a plaque from the union. ■

MOST meetings start at 6 p.m. and are held virtually until further notice.

IN MEMORIAM

NAME	AGENCY/FACILITY	DECEASED
Elizabeth Baldassare	Brooklyn District Attorney	1/10/2023
Frederick Barnewold	Department of Transportation	12/13/2022
Sheila Benjamin	Police Department	1/18/2023
Craig Brown	Housing Preservation & Development	2/6/2023
Denise Chmielewski	Dept. of Environmental Protection	1/12/2023
Roderick Garcia	Dept. of Social Services	1/27/2023
Michael Harper	Dept. of Social Services	1/4/2023
Lou Johnson	Finance Administration	1/20/2023
Lamorte Ledain	H+H	1/27/2023
John O'Neil	Dept. of Sanitation	12/7/2022
Elmer Pascua	H+H	1/12/2023
Robert Perham	H+H	12/21/2022
Yvette Pompey	Dept. of Health & Mental Hygiene	1/20/2023
Bernice Stephens	Dept. of Homeless Services	12/19/2022
Reather Stevenson	Dept. of Social Services	2/15/2023
Thanh Tran	Dept. of Social Services	12/16/2022
Genesis Washington	Police Department	1/2/2023
Debra Woodland	H+H	2/14/2023

DCAS: ALTERNATES TO IN-PERSON APPOINTMENTS

24/7 Automated info on exams and eligible lists
[212.669.1357](tel:212.669.1357)

Appeal-related inquiries
LMAAppealsUnit@dcas.nyc.gov

Citywide hiring pool inquiries
CWHP@dcas.nyc.gov

Eligible list and status inquiries
IMACustomerService@dcas.nyc.gov

Eligibility, performance, and seniority inquiries
eligibilityandseniorityunit@dcas.nyc.gov

Special Military list inquiries
specialmilitary@dcas.nyc.gov

Exam applications, payments and fee waiver inquiries
OASys@dcas.nyc.gov

Make-up/alternate event date inquiries
TestingAccommodations@dcas.nyc.gov

Investigation-related inquiries
DCASinvestigations@dcas.nyc.gov

Fingerprint-related inquiries
DASFingerprints@dcas.nyc.gov

JUNE 30 Deadline to file for 2022 Prescription and Medical Reimbursements

Please be advised, you may still file your calendar year 2022 Prescription (retiree non-Rx card holders only) and/or General Medical reimbursement claim reimbursements, from now through June 30, 2023. If you filed last year, a form may have been automatically mailed to you within recent months. If you did not receive a reimbursement claim form, please log into your Member Portal account at www.cwa1180.org to access your eligible downloadable claim forms. Also, feel free to visit www.cwa1180.org/benefits for more information about all your eligible benefits, including your full Summary Plan Description that details required supporting documents to submit for each claim form.

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Official Publication

New York Administrative Employees Local 1180
Communications Workers of America, AFL-CIO
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Security Benefits for Active and Retiree Members:
212.966.5353

Claim Forms Hotline: 212.925.1091

Retiree Division: 212.226.5800

For Out-of-Town Retirees

Retiree Division: 800.801.2882

Retiree Benefits: 888.966.5353

Executive Board

Gloria Middleton, President
Gerald Brown, First Vice President
Teesha Foreman, Second Vice President
Robin Blair-Batte, Secretary-Treasurer
Lourdes Acevedo, Recording Secretary

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Helen S. Jarrett, Debra Paylor, Rosario Roman,
Gregory Smith, Venus Williams, Hazel O. Worley

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Communique Editor/Designer

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**Communications Workers of America
Local 1180**

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Union Marks

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

With Bronx Borough President

Women's History Month is a celebration of the countless women who have fought tirelessly and courageously for equality, justice, and opportunity in our country. New York City, home of close to 8.5 million residents of which half are women, has traditionally been run by men. Every top position, from Mayor and agency heads to the City Council and borough leaders, have traditionally been men.

That is, up until recently. In the last decade, women have been taking the helm across the board, with the City's first female-majority Council, the first African-American female Council Speaker, female agency commissioners, and female borough presidents.

One of those is Vanessa L. Gibson, who proudly represents the Bronx as the first woman and African-American Bronx Borough President. In 2020, she announced her run for the position with a mission to move the Bronx forward with a focus on public safety, food equity, housing insecurity, health and wellness, gender equity, and support for the LGBTQIA+ community. She won her primary election in June and the general election that November, with the backing and support of CWA Local 1180.

Gibson was invited by the Local 1180 Women's Committee to speak at the March General Membership meeting in honor of Women's History Month. She talked about her commitment to advancing rights and opportunities for women, and turning around the borough that so many union members call home.

She pointed to the progress that can be seen throughout the Bronx, giving all residents, and women in particular, the chance to live a better life. She spoke about Black women being 9.2 times more likely than white women to die from maternal complications. To address this issue in the Bronx, she will soon release a borough-wide birthing center report with a focus on expanding access to doula and midwifery services for women of color and establishing a Culturally Competent Care Model to support Bronx mothers. She also spoke about the borough's launch of a My Sister's Keeper counterpart to My Brother's Keeper, focused on empowering and uplifting young girls of color.

"I want little Black and Latina girls to see themselves in me. To see all their possibilities, all their dreams and all their hopes and aspirations for a better tomorrow. I don't want our young people to feel blocked by their neighborhood or their zip code," Gibson said.



"When opportunities present themselves for Black and Latino women to step up, sometimes we're not given our fair share. But it has not been a barrier to my success and I want to make sure it isn't a barrier to the success of the next generation of young girls and women," she said.

Gibson wants others to look at her as an example of what can be done with a drive to succeed.

Pictured are Women's Committee members with Bronx Borough President Gibson, from left: **Members-at-Large Debra Paylor and Rosario Roman, Membership Coordinator Deborah Valentin; Women's Committee Co-Chair Debra Bussaco, Gibson, Women's Committee Recording Secretary Kellie Nixon, and Member-at-Large Amica Benjamin. Committee Chair Denise Gilliam** was unable to attend the presentation. ■