

SEBAC Contracts Approved by General Assembly!

Members in Action Results in BIG Win for State

Workers with a Four-Year Contract

Throughout the past year and a half CSEA members have partnered with the 14 other unions that comprise SEBAC to raise their collective voice to demand fair and honorable contracts that not only respect the work that they do but protect the critical public services that they provide. After rallies, email and call campaigns, meeting with legislators, speaking with

the press, CSEA members finally have a contract. Each bargaining unit contract includes \$3,500 in one-time payments, solid general wage increases (GWI) and steps in all three negotiated years, plus retropayment. Without members raising their voices, standing together, and refusing to settle for less than what they deserve, this deal would not have been possible.

A LOOK BACK AT HISTORY

The 2017 SEBAC agreement ended on June 30, 2021, meaning that state workers have been working without a contract for almost an entire year. In addition, since this was the first set of contract negotiations in many years that wasn't happening in the middle of a state budget crisis, CSEA
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Paraeducator Appreciation Week

The first week of April has officially been proclaimed Para Educator Appreciation Week. CSEA members along with Governor Lamont wasted no time celebrating, uplifting positive stories of the work paraeducators do and pushing our legislative priorities.

Paraeducator Council President, Cynthia Ross-Zweig, travelled throughout the state to ensure that the voices of CSEA paraeducators were heard in the Governor's Office, the State Board of Education, the General Assembly and press outlets from across Connecticut.

The week kicked off with two proclamation signings from both the Governor and the State Board of Education where Ross-Zweig proudly represented CSEA. She also addressed the Commissioner

of Education Charlene Russell-Tucker and legislators to talk about the need to pass meaningful legislation to help paraeducators help their students.

Ross-Zweig also joined in interviews with outlets across the state were Jennifer McLarney, a paraeducator at Birch Grove Primary School in Tolland, Kelly McQueeney, a para-professional in the Avon school district, Cindy Giammatti, a paraeducator within East Haven Public Schools, and Victoria Ceylan, a paraeducator in the Danbury school district along with her son AJ Ceylan, a student who benefited from his paras in Danbury. Check out some quotes from their interviews below, and be sure to listen for another interview on NPR with Vicky and AJ Ceylan!

"In her role as a
continue onto page 4



Para Council President, Cynthia Ross-Zweig helps a student in an art class at New Fairfield High School. (Photo Credits to Yehyun Kim of CT Mirror)

Who is Council 400?

And why should you join after retiring from the state?

By: Kevin Sullivan

With so many State of Connecticut employees retiring, we have been getting a lot of questions. Two of the most common questions are: "Who is Council 400?" and "Why do I need a union once I am retired?" As the Council 400 Retiree Organizer, I thought it would be appropriate to answer these questions.

Council 400 is a CSEA council made up of approximately 12,000 retired State

of Connecticut employees. They could have worked for any State Agency or been a member of any union.

Some members were never even given the opportunity to join a union until they retired! Whether they worked as a behavioral specialist at one of our training schools, community college employee, an engineer at the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, a member of the Connecticut Legislature, or any other position with the State - they are eligible to join Council 400. And many of them do!

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

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



Meetings And News

MEETING DATES

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

The June Delegates Meeting will be held as a hybrid meeting on Thursday, June 16th at 10am at the CSEA Union Hall

Chapter 401 (Hartford area):
SPRING LUNCHEON
Thursday, June 2nd, 11:30am - 2pm
USS Chowder Pot
165 Brainard Rd, Hartford, CT 06114
Sharon D. Mounds (860) 529-9885
(leave message)

Chapter 402 (Danbury area):
SPRING LUNCHEON
Wednesday, June 8th, at 12PM
Chuck's Steakhouse, Danbury
\$25 per person
20 Segar St, Danbury, CT 06810
June 3rd Deadline
Send checks to :
"CSEA Chapter 402"
to Krista L. Judson
475 Berkshire Rd. Southbury, CT

Chapter 403 (Norwich area):
SPRING LUNCHEON
Tuesday, June 21st at 11:30 a.m.
Montville Polish Club
85 Maple Ave. Uncasville, CT 06382
Buffet will be available including; Crudites,
Garden Salad, Beef Tenderloin, Chicken,
Meatballs, Glazed Carrots, Pasta & Ice Cream.
Coffee bar, Cash bar and Raffle will be available
as well
RSVP by June 6th to: Gail Carr
14 Forge Ln. Franklin, CT 06254
The cost is \$15 for members and \$18 for
guests
Make checks payable to "CSEA Chapter 403"
Gail Carr: (860) 822-0788
(860) 377-8198

Chapter 404 (Waterbury area):
Tuesday, June 14th,
TIME TO BE DETERMINED
Holy Trinity Greek Community Center
937 Chase Parkway (exit 17 off I-84),
Waterbury
**June Luncheon will be held at
regular meeting location with catered
lunch**
Please RSVP to:
Linda Mazzaferro (203) 573-1598
Susan Mirabito (203) 250-0215
John Quinn: (203) 804-0189

Chapter 405 (New Haven area):
SPRING LUNCHEON
Thursday, June 9th at 11:00AM
Location TBD
Ron Osokow: (203) 671-7685

Chapter 406 (Middletown area):
Tuesday, June 14th at 1pm
American Legion Post 75
58 Bernie O'Rourke Dr., Middletown,
Joe Formica: (860) 347-4532

Chapter 407 (Bridgeport area):
Wednesday, May 18th, at 1:00PM
lunch served
Guest Speaker for May: UnitedHealthcare
Representative
Wednesday, June 15th, at 1:00PM
lunch served
June Guest Speaker: TBA
St. Joseph's of Stratford National Catholic
Church
1300 Stratford Rd., Stratford
(on Rt. 113 toward Sikorsky Airport)
Carol Donofrio: (203) 470-4833

Chapter 408 (Willimantic area):
SPRING PICNIC
Thursday, June 9th at 11:30am to 3:00pm
Cost: \$15.00 per person
Includes: BBQ Chicken, Hotdogs,
Hamburgers, Ziti w/ Marinara Sauce
Pasta Salad, Potato Salad, Fruit Salad, Cookies &
Cash Bar
Franco American Civic & Social Club
116 Club Road, Windham, CT
Make checks payable to CSEA Chapter 408 and
mail with your payment to:
Christine Ashe, 141 Love Lane,
Coventry, CT 06238
Reservation Deadline May 31st
Questions/dietary concerns call Christine Ashe
at (860) 742-0667

Chapter 409
(State University Professors)
Friday, May 20th, at 10AM
Friday, June 17th at 10AM
CSEA Union Hall
760 Capitol Ave., Hartford, CT
Dave Walsh: (860) 684-4773

Chapter 410 (Windsor Locks area):
Monday, June 13th at 1PM
Suffield Senior Center
145 Bridge St., Suffield, CT
Amelia Smith: (860) 687-1848

Chapter 411 (Rocky Hill area):
Thursday, June 16th 1:00PM
Guest Speaker: UnitedHealthcare
Representative
CSEA Union Hall
760 Capitol Ave., Hartford, CT
Sebastian Puglisi: (860) 529-8336

Chapter 412 (Putnam area):
NEW LOCATION
Tuesday, May 17th, at 1:30PM
Putnam Town Hall
200 School Street Putnam, CT
Don Gladding: (860) 933-9998

Chapter 414 (Torrington area):
Monday, June 20th, at 10:00AM
UConn Extension Service Building
843 University Dr., Torrington, CT
Karen Pineman: (860) 354-6727

Chapter 415 (Manchester area):
Monday, May 23rd, at 1:00PM
Guest Speaker: UnitedHealthcare
Representative
Monday, June 27th at 1:00PM
June Guest Speaker: TBA
Elks Lodge
30 Bissell St., Manchester, CT
Donna McElduff: (860) 454-0480

Chapter 416 (New London area):
SPRING BANQUET
Tuesday, May 10th at 12:00PM
Location TBD
John Knaff: (860) 857-4244

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

Chapter 418
(Community College Retirees):
SPRING GATHERING
Tuesday, June 14 at 11:00am
Gillette Castle State Park
Contact Bill Searle at sacobills@aol.com or
(860) 745-3692 for more information

Important numbers to have on hand:

Retirement Division Payroll: 860-702-3528

UnitedHealthcare Dedicated Hearing Aid line: 1-855-523-8355

Retirement Division Life Insurance: 860-702-3537

UnitedHealthcare: 1-888-803-9217

Retirement Division Health Insurance: 860-702-3533

Caremark: 1-800-318-2572

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

Cigna: 1-800-244-6224

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

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



Are You Overwhelmed by Bills?



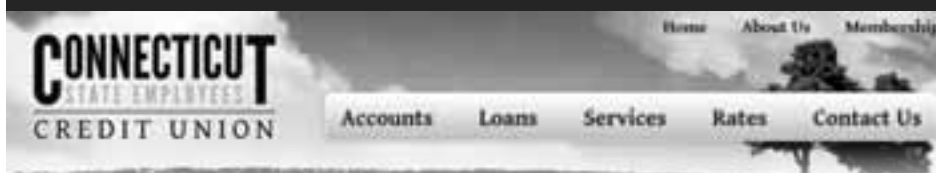
A CSE Credit Union Debt Consolidation Loan Can Help!

Loans up to \$25,000 are available
7.99% APR* fixed rate
One bill to pay each month

Applications must be received by September 1, 2022.

*Annual Percentage Rate. Not available to pay off CSE loans, including CSE VISA cards. Total CSE unsecured debt limit (excluding CSE VISA) not to exceed \$25,000. Rate may change without notice. Terms up to 5 years are available.

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

www.CSECreditUnion.com

**Good Friday - April 15th
Closed**

Dividend Rates - First Quarter 2022

	Dividend Rate	Annual Percentage Yield
REGULAR SHARES	0.50%	0.50%
SHARE DRAFTS (Checking)	0.25%	0.25%
CLUB ACCOUNTS	0.35%	0.35%

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

7 Full Service Offices To Serve You

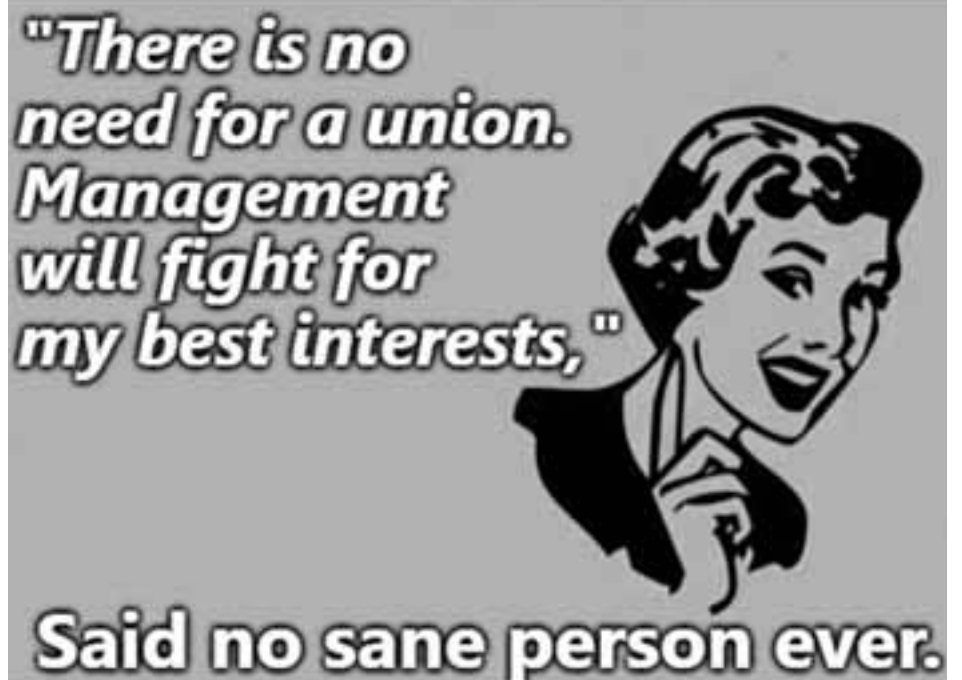
NORWICH Uncas on Thames 401 West Thames St. Norwich, CT 06306 (860) 889-7378	HARTFORD 84 Wadsworth St. Hartford, CT 06106 (860) 522-5388 (Savings) (860) 522-7147 (Loans)	NEW HAVEN 1666 Litchfield Turnpike Woodbridge, CT 06525 (203) 397-2949
MIDDLETOWN Connecticut Valley Hospital P.O. Box 2485 Middletown,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

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

Gone too Soon: CSEA Members Who Have Passed On

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

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| Alves, Henry | Kalwat, Katherine |
| Balkan, Shirley | Karpf, John |
| Bastedo, David | Kenney, Michael |
| Boston, Rena | Lazeren, Kathy |
| Boulay, Jeannine | Lozier, Donna |
| Byrd, Marcile | Maffessoli, Louis |
| Caraminas, William | Michaud, Richard |
| Caron, Gilbert | Morey, Natalie |
| Cassista, Joel | Nice, Joseph |
| Connolly, Patricia | Palmer, Doris |
| Dardis, Kathleen | Peay, Tommie |
| Depolito, Nicholas | Peloso, John |
| Desmarais, Robert | Pittman, Leroy |
| Dowdell, Karen | Quigley, George |
| Dufault, Vera | Quinn, Philip |
| Fanelli, Norman | Service, Fred |
| Fiske, Diane | Shute, Malcolm |
| Gallagher, Michael | Silva, Maximo |
| Goding, Jeannini | Sundwall, Linda |
| Gostyla, Lea | Tomlin, Lula |
| Green, John | Vecchio, Rhonda |
| Hall-Jones, Mary | Webb, James |
| Hughes, Maurice | Weik, David |
| Jacobson, Dolly | Weingart, Robert |
| Jurovaty, Christine | Welsh, Barbara |



CSEA NEWS

The Voice of Connecticut's
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CONNECTICUT STATE EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATION

Local 2001, Service Employees International Union, CTW/CLC

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

INSERTION DEADLINE: 1st of prior month.

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

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CSEA Celebrates Paraeducator Appreciation Week!

paraeducator, Cynthia Ross-Zweig has helped kids learn to read and write, she's prepped for SATs, and lately, she's been learning to use a bandsaw. 'We really do everything,' Ross-Zweig said. Paraeducators serve many roles and often work with students with various disabilities. But training for the role can vary by school district, Ross-Zweig said. Some districts have it, and others don't. 'I strongly feel that the training we get should be universal and unified across the state,' she said.' (CT Mirror, 4/8/22)

"I think it'll provide more legitimacy to being a paraeducator, and people will realize that this really can be a long-term career choice,' McLarney said of the bill. [She] said in an interview that often paraeducators who work closely with children with disabilities get information second-hand about their education programs." (CT Mirror, 4/8/22)

"Paraprofessionals who spoke to CT Examiner, said that development opportunities, including the chance to learn the jargon used in special education plans, would better prepare them to do their jobs, and give them a way to move upward in their careers. And not having this professional development, they warned, would have a negative effect on students. In the case of McQueeney, and many other paraprofessionals, at least some of those students have special needs. 'The more training we get, the more diversified the training is ... the more universal it is across the state,' McQueeney told CT Examiner, the more students will have the necessary support." (CT Examiner, 4/20/22)

"Cindy Giammatti, a paraeducator within East Haven Public Schools, said the bill "is a great step in the right direction for much-needed improvements for work life, the whole climate and culture for paraeducators. What's most important that this bill addresses is the treatment, dignity and respect that paraeducators

deserve that in many cases is not evident." (Hartford Courant, 3/25/22)

"Now, she and her son are advocating for a bill that would provide professional development for paraeducators, better involve them in planning and placement team meetings for special education students, and create a group that would work toward developing a professional certification process for these staffers.' But most of all: this bill is an opportunity to begin to treat paraeducators with the respect and dignity that they have earned," Vicky Ceylan said." (News Times, 3/26/22)

Throughout the entire week, the Para Bill, HB5321, was at the forefront, reminding legislators and the press of the importance of going beyond an "appreciation week" and enacting meaningful legislation that would help to improve the services paraeducators provide to students across the state.

HB5321 came out of the Education Committee with a version that made all paras, and their students, rejoice. Unfortunately, however, upon being voted out of the Appropriations Committee, it was gutted.

The version that passed out would allow paras to attend PPT meetings at the parent's request, and allow paras to look at the IEP. It also still has the requirement that the State Department of Education has to include the number of paras, wages, healthcare expenses, and other data on strategic school profiles, but requires SDE to do it "within available resources"- a legislative term that means it won't get done because there's no money. An annual review of healthcare plans available to paras, the creation of a working group to explore a paraeducator certification program, and the establishment of clear professional development plans for paras were cut from the bill.

At the time of this printing, CSEA paraeducators are continuing to partner with our coalition allies to fight

to revert the bill back to the post-Education Committee version. Be on the look out for an email with the most up-to-date information on

where this bill stands in the Legislature.



ABOVE: Danbury Paraeducator, Vicky Ceylan poses with her son AJ who benefited from the services of his paraeducators throughout his time in Danbury and now at UConn.



ABOVE: Para Council President, Cynthia Ross-Zweig (middle right) stands with the Commissioner of Education Charlene Russell-Tucker (middle left) holding the State Board of Education's Para Appreciation Week Proclamation.



ABOVE: Para Council President, Cynthia Ross-Zweig stands with Lt. Governor Susan Bysiewicz as she reads a Proclamation declaring the first week of April of 2022 Para Appreciation Week.



ABOVE: Para Council President, Cynthia Ross-Zweig addresses the State Board of Education during their public meeting proclaiming their recognition of Para Appreciation Week.

It's election time for CSC!

The election will be held on Tuesday, June 7, 2022.

SEBAC Contracts Approved by General Assembly!

Members in Action Results in BIG Win for State Workers with a Four-Year Contract

continued from page 1 bargaining teams knew that they had to press for contracts that capitalized on the moment and made up for sacrifices made over the last decades.

In fact, in the past 12 years, state workers sacrificed six years of wage freezes and produced over \$1.6 billion in savings for fiscal years 2018 and 2019 to help the state out when Connecticut was in tough economic times. State workers are proud residents of Connecticut and when the state needed them to step up and take sacrifices for the betterment of our state, they have done so.

FAST FORWARD

Negotiation Teams started at the local table back in January of 2021, but after months of lackluster progress, it was clear that a new approach was needed. Thankfully, CSEA, which represents seven bargaining units and approximately 3,500 state workers pressed for a "strenght-in-numbers" approach through SEBAC which represents 35 bargaining units and 43,000 state workers.

In July of 2021, SEBAC members came together for a massive rally at the State Capitol with over 500 members waving union flags and holding signs calling on the Lamont Administration to offer fair and honorable contracts. This event catapulted SEBAC into successfully approaching the Lamont Administration with a request for coalition bargaining for a general wage pattern which would be granted to each of the individual 35 bargaining units, with the understanding that further negotiations were necessary at each table to address bargaining unit-level concerns.

Once the wage pattern was es-

tablished (\$2,500 lump sum one-time payment and a 2.5% GWI plus a step for contract year (CY) '21-'22; \$1,000 lump sum one-time payment and a 2.5% GWI plus a step for CY '22-'23; a 2.5% GWI plus a step for CY '23-'24 and a wage and step re-opener in CY '24-'25), it was time for the bargaining unit negotiation teams to gather and begin working on finishing the contract.

Negotiation teams worked tirelessly with long meetings, late nights, missed holidays and weekends, but in the end secured strong contracts that addressed the concerns and needs of all CSEA members.

Once negotiations were finished, the ratification process began. After a series of informational meetings with members, an electronic voting day and two in-person voting days, **all seven CSEA bargaining units ratified their contracts with no less than 96% of members in favor.**

Upon successful ratification of all 35 bargaining units in SEBAC, the contract was sent to the General Assembly for approval.

UNDER THE GOLD DOME

The first step in Legislative Approval was a public hearing in the Appropriations Committee where members of the public were welcomed to testify in support or opposition of the contract. This



ABOVE: The fight for fair and honorable contracts included a rally back in July of 2021, when 500 SEBAC members rallied at the State Capitol to call on the Governor and General Assembly to protect public services and fund our future.

hearing went on for several hours where we heard from opponents like the Yankee Institute who sent out shameful flyers referring to state workers as blood-sucking parasites. Our very own P-4 member, Srinivas Banda, an Information Technology Subject Matter Expert (IT SME), testified during this hearing to push back against the misinformation being spread by our opponents and to remind legislators of the critical public services state workers provide.

"Without proper staffing, I've already seen my co-workers' and my workload increase, meaning that the critical work we perform to keep Connecticut's IT infrastructure secure and efficient is at threat. We need these contracts to help recruit and retain the talented and knowledgeable workers that can perform this work," said Banda.

The contract passed out of the Appropriations Committee with a vote of 9-3 on the Senate side and 25-11 on the House side, a party-line vote.

A few days later, the contract was debated on the House floor which culminated in a bipartisan approval with 96 Representatives voting "Yes" and 52 Representatives voting "No".

The very next day, the Senate debated the contract. Senator Cathy Osten who is both the Appropriations Co-Chair and former CSEA President, led the charge for approval. The Senate approved the contract on a straight party-line vote with all Democrats voting in favor and all Republicans voting against.

The fight for this contract reminds us of the keys to victory:

1. Lifting up members to tell their stories is paramount to garnering positive press and cutting through the opposition's misinformation campaigns.

2. Members in action is the only way to push forward throughout the process - whether you served on a negotiating team, attended a rally, testified in public hearings, emailed or called your legislators, showed up to press conferences, were interviewed by the media, or sent in letters to the editors - your action mattered.

3. Legislators hold our futures in their hand throughout the legislative session, we hold theirs during election season. We will remember who voted "no" and who voted "yes" on these contracts.

WHAT'S NEXT?

We still have a big fight on our hands, we must pass HB5441 and SB 473 to secure our staffing and recruitment language, our racial justice demands and critical funding for the State Contracting Standards Board.

These bills are critical to ensuring that the public services state workers provide are properly staffed by requiring automatic refilling of vacancies and continuous recruitment of positions. It will also take meaningful steps towards racial equity inside state government by creating a zero tolerance policy, a career development fund and an ombudsperson for racial justice. Finally the State Contracting Standards Board bill will ensure ethical procurement practices are followed for contracting out of services.

Stay tuned for emails asking you to once again raise your voice to push these priorities through the General Assembly.



ABOVE: P-4 member Srinivas Banda testifies in support of the SEBAC contracts during the Appropriations Committee Public Hearing.

CSEA Members in the News!

In addition to the press push for Paraeducator Appreciation Week, our members have been working diligently to elevate our members' stories and ensure that the legislature and public understand the importance of their work and the need to protect public services. CSEA President, Travis Woodward, spoke with John Craven on "Power and Politics" following the success at the Appropriations Committee with legislators voting to recommend the SEBAC contracts out of committee.

He addressed the baseless accusations from our opponents at the Yankee Institute who lined up a handful of speakers to testify against this fair and honorable contract. They sent out emails, texts, even an insulting flyer to gather as many people as possible to attend their public hearing prep session and sign up to testify at the Appropriations Public Hearing on the SEBAC contracts, but failed to turn out a large crowd, and failed to prevent the contracts from being voted favorably out of committee.

Woodward expertly explained why this was a fair deal and how these contracts are paramount to protecting the critical public services we all rely on.

Woodward and CSEA P-4 member Jeff Beckwith also submitted letters to the editor and op-eds in support of these contracts.

"There is a reason this retirement cliff has been referred to as a

"silver tsunami" and "brain drain" - what we are experiencing has devastating consequences to each and every person that calls Connecticut home. That means unsafe drinking water, unmaintained roads and bridges, unstaffed correctional facilities, schools and hospitals, and much more," said Woodward.

"State workers provide critical public services to Connecticut families - whether you drive over one of our 4,000+ bridges, utilize services at the Department of Motor Vehicles, enjoy a public beach or State park, attend a state university or Community College or receive care from UConn Health. But we are in a crisis. And it's only going to get worse," said Beckwith.

We also had a handful of members quoted in local-level press releases that went out across the state to remind communities of the importance that these contracts have on all our 3.6 million Connecticut residents.

"These fair and honorable contracts come at a time when we are struggling to retain and recruit the dedicated staff we need to provide the quality services our clients rely on," said Dora Bennet a State School Instructor at the Southbury Training School and CSEA SEIU Local 2001 leader, "In my role, I provide treatment to adults struggling mentally and physically at the Southbury Training School, it is as if I'm the teacher, the teacher's aide, custodian, everything our clients

and school needs because we are so short staffed."

"My job ensures that capital projects that use state money are running effectively and fairly to build strong infrastructure for all residents to use," said Dan Wagoner, Associate Project manager with DAS Construction Services and resident of Bristol, "We need to be able to recruit and retain employees to ensure that taxpayer dollars are being used efficiently to address the backlog of projects that are on hold pending additional staffing. This contract helps us do that."

"Being in information technology (IT), I work at DAS with many agencies across the state that provide a wide variety of services to the residents of our state," said James Birok, Information Technology Analyst and Glastonbury resident, "The Governor has put IT at the vanguard of his plan to modernize state government and we are constantly tasked with finding innovative ways to improve state services using technology. This saves the state significant costs and offers convenient ways for residents to do business with us which results in a better customer experience. But being short staffed hinders our ability to deliver services to our customers as it inhibits our ability to move forward and be the progenitor for the way we do business that the governor envisions. Recruitment and retention of per-

manent state positions, particularly in the crucial technology fields, is essential. This fair and honorable contract is the most logical way to attain this and to ensure that we recruit and retain the best candidates."

"As a state worker, I serve our most vulnerable population in the state all day everyday," said Pamela Armstrong, a Disability Claims Specialist, "I make disability determinations for Social Security by gathering medical and educational records for claimants and perform vocational analysis for each case to determine if the claimant is disabled according to Social Security Disability rules. My office is short staffed though and our caseloads keep getting larger and larger, meaning Connecticut residents are waiting longer and longer to have their claims processed and those found to be disabled are going longer and longer without their much needed disability benefits. We need contracts that will address the retention and recruitment issues that are further plaguing our short staffing crisis," added Armstrong, CSEA SEIU Local 2001 leader.

Positive press is critical to winning our fights so we must ensure we put our members out in front and continue to remind the public and the General Assembly why unions, our members and our contracts are important.

Recovery for All April Events

Exposing the Yankee Institute & Calling for Fair Taxation

On Wednesday, April 6th Recovery For All held a press conference with leaders from the state legislature, clergy, community groups, and labor organizations to announce the release of two new reports critiquing the Yankee Institute. The first report details the Yankee Institute's consistent advocacy for austerity policies that harm working families in Connecticut, especially working families of color, and widen the state's extreme inequalities. The second report exposes the Yankee Institute's shadowy funding sources, including over \$3 million in anonymous donations from Donors Capital Fund and Donors Trust, which also contribute money to organizations designated as hate groups by the Southern Poverty Law Center. Recovery For All joined with the Center for Popular Democracy and the Hedge Clippers to produce the two reports. You can read these full reports on our website at CSEA-CT.com

Recovery For All also held a "Tax Day" press conference Mon-

day, April 18th, urging the Governor and legislators to enact bold measures that "Put Children and Working Families First." Legislators, essential workers, and community advocates called on lawmakers to address the urgency of helping struggling working families make ends meet. Their specific demands included expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit, establishing a state-level Child Tax Credit, providing pandemic pay to all essential workers, building a more transparent tax structure, and making historic investments in child care, health care, education, and other public resources our communities need to recover and thrive.

This press conference was part of a national day of action on Tax Day, as community members in states across the Northeast came together to demand that the ultra-wealthy and big corporations contribute more of what they owe to fund public investment in our communities. The press conference drew attention to a new report from the Economic Policy Institute which shows that 69% of all corporations in Connecticut—including those with more than a billion dollars in taxable income—contribute nothing or next to nothing to the state. This report is also available on our website at CSEA-CT.com

Who is Council 400?

And Why You Should Join After Retiring From State Service

continued from Page 1

retired people need a union? A union is much more than an insurance policy that keeps you from getting unnecessarily disciplined at work. A union is a collection of members who work together to accomplish a common goal. In our case, Council 400 holds regular

meetings at each of our 27 different chapters, we have social activities, and a variety of committees. Our members attend rallies, testify on legislation, write letters and make phone calls - they fight to protect the retirement benefits you have worked so

hard to earn!

We keep our Council 400 members notified of changes to the health-care plan, legislative alerts, committee opportunities, social events, etc. through our *CSEA News*, email updates, and our chapter meetings.

Members of Council 400 also gain access to our retiree team. We help with insurance or prescription issues and have direct access to agents at United Healthcare, Anthem and Cigna and can help resolve issues quickly.

Our members have worked all

over the State, in hundreds of different positions and agencies, under different union contracts. But they are all united under CSEA's Council 400. As our Council 400 members often say, "We are retired AND we are active!"

Council 400 union membership dues are only \$5 per month and may be taken directly out of your pension check - if you'd like. Stay active, stay informed, stay UNION with CSEA & Council 400!

Biennial Convention Friday, October 14, 2022

The **81st Anniversary Biennial Convention of the Connecticut State Employees Association, SEIU Local 2001** will convene on **Friday, October 14, 2022** at the Aquaturf Club in Plantsville, CT.

SAVE THE DATE!

Registration will open at 8:00 am.
The convention will convene promptly at 9:00 am.

- Elect President and Secretary/Treasurer
- Vote on any Constitutional Amendments
- Guest Speakers

CSEA Chapters and Councils should be conducting their elections in the coming months. Please contact your staff representative at (860) 951-6614 for information about chapter/council officer and delegate elections.

The CSEA SEIU Local 2001 main office must receive the results of your chapter elections not later than Friday, September 30th in order to properly register and furnish credentials for elected delegates. Only elected delegates and elected alternate delegates are eligible to attend.

Any elected delegate who attends the convention will be compensated for travel, parking and any lost wages.

OPEN ENROLLMENT IS HAPPENING SOON!

Open enrollment for those with Anthem for a health insurance provider or Cigna for your dental provider will be happening soon! The dates for open enrollment are

MAY 2 THROUGH MAY 27!

Meetings will be held virtually, there will not be any in person meetings this year. If you are on the Anthem health insurance

plan or Cigna dental plan you will be receiving links to the virtual meetings and dates soon!

CSEA Pushes to Expand Voting Rights in Connecticut

CSEA and Council 400's Legislative Action Committees have been fighting to expand voting access for all registered voters in Connecticut. This is a significant fight because we have seen other states attempt to restrict voting in their districts.

Connecticut's voting rules are built into the State Constitution, and in order to change the Constitution the voters of Connecticut need to have their voices heard. There are two ways to get a proposed resolution of the Constitution on the ballot.

The first is that a resolution must be passed by a "super majority" (75% or more) in both the State House of Representatives and State Senate.

The other is that if two consecutive General Assemblies (with an election in between) vote for a bill with a "simple majority" (50% plus one) then the resolution will be brought to the voters.

HJ-59

House Joint Resolution 59 (HJ-59) would allow an expanded voting window, rather than only

having Election Day on one specific Tuesday in November.

The Connecticut State Constitution makes it so that in person voting is limited to Election Day. Many see the current language in our state constitution as overly restrictive because it does not allow Early Voting. HJ-59 has already been approved twice by simple majority (50% plus one) through the House and the Senate in 2019 and 2021 and will be on the ballot on November 8, 2022. CSEA is strongly encouraging our members to vote in favor of expanding voting rights and democracy in Connecticut.

According to House Majority Leader Jason Rojas, "Our democracy is stronger when more people can participate in it. With a majority of voters supporting [early voting], we have an obligation to break this steady habit and give Connecticut voters the opportunity to amend our constitution to bring our voting laws into the 21st century."

Follow this link to see how your legislators voted or to read the full text of HJ-59:

https://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/cgabillstatus/cgabillstatus.asp?selBillType=Bill&bill_num=HJ00059&which_year=2021

HJ-58

House Joint Resolution 58 (HJ-58) would allow voters to receive an absentee ballot without having to explain their reasons to the State of Connecticut.

Connecticut is one of only a few states that require an excuse for requesting an absentee ballot. Currently 34 states permit voting by absentee without offering an excuse. Everyone who is eligible should be able to participate in our democracy safely and conveniently.

During the 2021 session HJ-58 passed through both chambers with a simple majority - not a super majority. So, the General Assembly will have to vote on it again in the 2023 legislative session and the soonest it could be on the

ballot for Connecticut voters is November 2024.

According to Connecticut Secretary of State, Denise Merrill, "Connecticut will take a significant step to join the forty-four states - red states, blue states, and purple states - that allow their voters to conveniently cast their ballots prior to Election Day, by Early Voting, universal access to absentee ballots, or both." She continues, "It is long past time that Connecticut voters had the same opportunity to make their voices heard."

More than 650,000 Connecticut voters voted by absentee ballot in the 2020 CT General Election—which means they voted early on their own schedules. This led to record breaking 80% voter turnout.

Follow this link to see how your legislators voted or to read the full text of HJ-58:

https://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/cgabillstatus/cgabillstatus.asp?selBillType=Bill&bill_num=HJ00058&which_year=2021

Book Review: *The Privatization of Everything* By: Drew Stoner, Communications Director

A few months ago, I had the chance to sit down with Donald Cohen, the founder and executive director of In the Public Interest, a national non-profit research and policy organization that studies public good and services. Donald Cohen partnered up with Allen Mikaelian, an award-winning author, to publish *The Privatization of Everything: How the Plunder of Public Goods Transformed American and How we can Fight Back*.

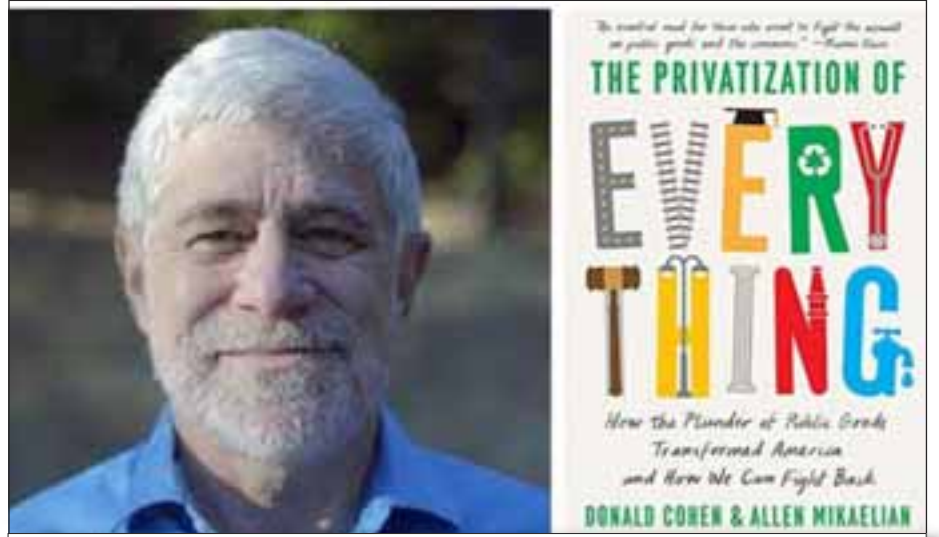
I pre-ordered this book and took a deep dive to give a short synopsis of this well-researched piece (though I highly recommend reading this poignant piece on your own).

To kick it off, the authors chronicle the roots of the privatization of public goods and the dangers of this privatization of common goods. They explain how when private interests take over, they strip public goods of their power to uplift our communities and instead create

further inequity.

One example of privatization that the authors run through is the extremely untimely distribution of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and ventilators, which were handed over to the private marketplace, with the thought that the “free markets will solve this”. After a few weeks we saw a massive uptick in inequity across our country. Masks that once cost \$0.85 each were soon \$7.00, in Louisiana the cost of ventilators were up 23% from pre-COVID prices at the same time that Washington state was paying just slightly more. No one could say why though.

Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker (R), on a conference call with the former President, pointed out that on three separate orders of desperately needed medical equipment, the state of Massachusetts actually “lost out to the feds”.



PICTURED ABOVE: In the Public Interest Founder, Donald Cohen, and author of the *Privatization of Everything*

In just the first few months of the pandemic, it became clear that the chaos of the free-market did not in fact make things more efficient, less costly, or better serve the public. It only benefited those able to exploit the chaos by driving up prices.

This is just one timely example of the negative impacts that privatization has on our society, on our public goods.

Over the next few months we'll continue to review each part of this book to further breakdown the impact that privatization has on our society and the erosion of our democracy and detriment to equity and social justice.

Have you read this book yet? Send your reactions to: DStoner@CSEA760.com

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