New York State Paid Family Leave Begins January 1

All Local 153 Members employed in New York State are eligible!

Beginning January 1, 2018 a new law takes effect in New York that provides paid family leave. This law will beneficially impact all Local 153 members employed in New York State. And that shouldn’t be surprising because it came about as a result of strong lobbying efforts by Local 153 and other unions in New York. The paid family leave program will be funded entirely through a minuscule payroll deduction on employees, and it will cost businesses—both big and small—nothing. But it will make a

Continued on page 12

Local 153 Contract & Settlement Round-up

Local 153 has had a number of important contract victories and other settlements in the last few months, and here are some of them.

At Adelphi University there was a new bargaining committee but it worked out just fine. Only one past committee member returned to the bargaining table but Local 153 delivered real results for its members at Adelphi in 2017. Led by first-year Chief Shop Steward Lori Letzler, the committee offered a bold and energetic approach to negotiations, as well as a platform that sought to improve lives from the bottom to the top of the seniority list.

The membership’s gains are specifically highlighted by an agreement on new labor grades and a system of reclassification. Until now almost all Local 153 members were classified under one, single grade, creating stagnation within the rank and file’s ability to seek promotion. Because of this, the newly minted bargaining committee sought to organize the entire unit over the vision of a system of grades, which Letzler outlined almost a year prior to the commencement of negotiations. When the committee sat down with management for the initial bargaining session members were prepared and they were resolute in their mission. They bargained until the final hours before contract expiration. The five-year contract will run until 2022 and will no doubt improve lives at Adelphi University. Other contact highlights include:

• More than 18% in aggregate wage increases during the five-year term.
• Softening Restrictive Salary Caps.
• Additional floating holiday (9/11 Remembrance Day).
• Most Favored Nations Clause: healthcare and tuition remission.

Continued on page 11
By Michael Goodwin, Business Manager

We Are The Majority

Did you know that more than 50% of Americans approve of the Affordable Care Act; a majority of Americans, more than 60%, support access to birth control; 2/3 of Americans say they are concerned about the impact of climate change; more than 60% of Americans oppose building a U.S./Mexico border wall; nearly 7 in 10 Americans approve of bank and Wall Street regulations created by the Obama administration; 4 out of 5 Americans support voting rights such as early voting and automatic voter registration; and support for same-sex marriage is at an all-time high of 64% and still on the rise?

Yes, we are the majority!

Those who think differently are simply wrong on the issues that matter most and are heartless about the real needs of Americans.

We all have to start to come together on social media platforms, at rallies and protests, by making calls to Congress and showing up at town hall meetings and making sure our voices are heard. Now our task is to harness our strengths to win elections, from school boards to the Senate and from mayors to the White House.

We are just one year out from the 2018 mid-term elections, our best chance to take back the House and Senate. In order to win in the months ahead, we need to fight to protect and expand the right to vote; strengthen our grassroots efforts and engage, recruit and find strong candidates to run for office. We need to connect with younger voters and amplify their voices.

The plan is to fill every available seat with progressive allies, not just in Washington, DC, but in every state and local government elected position.

Commit to Truth
Stand for Families
Fight for Justice

We need your help to protect and expand the right to vote; we need to fight for equal pay and equal opportunity for all those to whom equality has been denied. We embrace the great diversity within our country, recognizing that our diversity is our greatest strength!

In Washington, DC, one party has majorities in the House and Senate and they have been hard at work undoing the previous administration’s legacy, intending to take away healthcare from millions by repealing and replacing the Affordable Care Act and gutting Medicaid, as well as rolling back environmental protections and weakening public education.

We need to protect our progressive legacy, but each day brings fresh evidence of extreme right-wing policies, willful ignorance and wildly erratic behavior putting us and our country’s future in increasing danger.

We are on the right side of history. When we stand together and lead with our values, we win. We win because our values include a commitment to the truth. That means speaking truth to the “alternative facts.” We stand for fairness for stronger schools, greater access to affordable college education and a minimum wage that meets the needs of all Americans. We believe in justice that means fighting for the rights of those who have been unfairly targeted for deportation or restricted from coming to America in the first place. We believe in equality, which is why we are not giving up the fight for equal pay and equal opportunity for all those to whom equality has been denied. We embrace the great diversity within our country, recognizing that our diversity is our greatest strength!

Remember, we are the majority and WE outnumber THEM, so let’s get started and exercise that power before it’s too late!
Membership Meetings Matter!

At the most recent general membership meeting, held on September 19, Local 153 members learned about the paid family leave program that begins in New York State on January 1, 2018 (see related article in this edition of Local 153 News), as well as valuable information on the New York Union Child Care Coalition and the importance of voting "NO" on the New York State Constitutional Convention. Three guest speakers made presentations on these subjects, showing why membership meetings matter.

Alex Gleason, New York City Central Labor Council Policy Associate spoke about the importance of voting down the proposal on this year's ballot to have a New York State Constitutional Convention. This measure comes before New York State voters every 20 years, Gleason explained. He presented a cogent explanation of why working families should vote "NO," not the least of which is the fact that the delegates to the convention would be the same political representatives we already have but who would earn an additional $79,000 a year. There were other valid reasons to vote "NO" on the Constitutional Convention provided by Gleason and they are spelled out on page 11.

The next speaker was Donna Dolan, Executive Director of the New York Paid Leave Coalition, and she explained this program that will benefit working families in New York State beginning January 1, 2018. Ms. Dolan explained how the program works and answered questions from members who were very interested in what she said. Members reading this publication should be interested, too. Beginning January 1, paid family leave becomes the law in New York State. Members can read about it in this edition of Local 153 News.

Local 153 Director of Organizing Nick Galipeau, who has been active with the New York Union Child Care Coalition (NYUCCC), introduced Jocelyn Mazurkiewicz, who explained how the program works. In short, NYUCCC provides subsidies for child care costs for families. Applicants must live in the five boroughs to be eligible and there are some other requirements, but many members of Local 153 could find the program helpful. If you have child care expenses you can see if you qualify for subsidies by answering questions online at bit.ly/prescreenfe

In his Business Manager’s report Michael Goodwin talked about some of the benefits available to members and he announced the four Local 153 members who were winners of the new Local 153 student debt reduction program. They were Latoya Johnson, Pratt Institute, Alyssa Messina, FCT, Moses Merisier, PSC and Zoe Bonaparte, EmblemHealth. In addition, Tolbert Lapomarel of the Hilton Garden Inn was one of the winners in the OPEIU student debt reduction program.

Continued on page 4

Business Manager Michael Goodwin gives his report.

Secretary-Treasurer Richard Lanigan congratulates Tolbert Lapomarel, one of the members who received a student debt reduction award.

Sharon Sykes, Michael Paige, Phyllis Avilez, Deborahann Harris, and Stephanie Elliott said they hoped they’d win raffle prizes. Later, Avilez and Harris did win!
Goodwin provided information on other benefits, as an example reminding members that the towing benefit applies to all household members.

Goodwin reviewed the state of the U.S. under the Trump administration, urging members to exercise their power as activists—and voters—to protect the progressive gains of the labor movement.

Secretary-Treasurer Richard Lanigan pointed out that promises made during the 2016 election campaign have not done well. The promised $1 trillion to be spent rebuilding the nation’s aging infrastructure (roads, bridges, electric grid, etc.) has never materialized. The promise to improve health care has been broken. And worst of all, the promise of tax reform has Republicans talking about reducing or even eliminating the tax deduction for mortgage interest, which would be a real blow to middle income homeowners, and tinkering with tax benefits enjoyed by workers who have 401 (k) accounts.

The meeting concluded with raffles that had great prizes. Richard Tom, of the Trump International Hotel, won an Echo Dot; David Haines, Actors Equity, won a JBL Bluetooth Speaker; Heather Hardy, BHC, won Beats EP Headphones; Phyllis Avilez, BHC, won a Fitbit Alta; Brenda St. John, who came to the meeting from Buffalo, won a Samsung Galaxy Tablet; and Deborahann Harris, HTC Funds, won an HP Chromebook Laptop.

There is also a raffle for members who live more than 50 miles from Manhattan. Theresa Swain, EmblemHealth, won Beats EP Headphones; Cherylann Natale, K of C, won a Samsung Galaxy Tablet; and Susan Blood, UAW Local 686, won an HP Chromebook Laptop.

And while not everyone who attends membership meetings is a prize winner in the raffle, everyone who attends gets a firsthand opportunity to learn about benefits, meet with the union’s officers and have questions answered. The next Local 153 membership meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 16 at 6:00 p.m. at Gertrude Lane Auditorium, 305 West 44th Street.
Local 153 Is Proud to Be a Sanctuary Union!

The Local 153 Executive Board unanimously passed the following resolution at its meeting on January 19. We are indeed proud to say that Local 153 is a sanctuary union!

Local 153 OPEIU Sanctuary Union Resolution

Local 153 is committed to the fight for racial and economic justice for our members both in and out of the workplace. Many of our members are immigrants or part of immigrant families. These communities are currently under attack. Local 153 vows to do everything it can to protect Local 153 members, immigrants and those of us who work.

Whereas, Local I 53 is dedicated to its responsibility to represent all of its members, regardless of race, immigration status, religion, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation and will continue to do so and will not be intimidated or prevented from exercising that responsibility, and

Whereas, Local I 53 will do all it can to lawfully protect its members from government agents who have been arresting and deporting immigrants with little regard/or how long they have lived in the United States, whether they have families that are dependent upon them, ties to their local communities or are currently studying in our institutions of learning, and

Whereas, many cities, including New York City, have declared themselves Sanctuary Cities and Local 153 represents many workers in our communities. Local 153 and its members vow not to volunteer information to government agents, the immigration status of their members, co-workers, and students.

Therefore, be it resolved:

Local 153 OPEIU declares itself a “Sanctuary Union.” Local 153 will protect the rights and safety of all of our membership, regardless of immigration status.

• We will not volunteer information to government agents in the prosecution or attempted deportation of our members;

• We will not collect personal information from our members that may be used to challenge their immigration status;

• We will negotiate stronger language in our collective bargaining agreements to protect our immigrant members;

• We will work to build alliances with other members of our communities to protect the undocumented, and participate in organizing our members in response to government raids;

• We will commit to urge Congress to pass the DREAM Act incorporating DACA and;

• We will proudly declare support for Sanctuary Unions and Cities.

Be it further resolved:

Local 153 stands in solidarity with all communities under attack. We stand united with all workers, particularly the most vulnerable among us.

"An injury to one is an injury to all."

Local 153 Endorses Bill de Blasio and Phil Murphy

Local 153 has endorsed New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio for re-election and Phil Murphy for Governor of New Jersey. Here, Business Manager Michael Goodwin greets Mayor Bill de Blasio during a tour of the Hotel Trades Council’s $150 million dollar “state of the art” health center in Brooklyn. When it opens, the new center will serve over 75,000 members and family in the hotel industry represented by the Hotel Trades Council. "President Peter Ward, the hotel industry, Dr. Robert Greenspan and everyone involved in making this wonderful facility become a reality should be congratulated!” Goodwin said, “and Bill de Blasio deserves re-election; our union endorses him with great fervor.” In the photo on the right, Secretary-Treasurer Richard Lanigan meets with Phil Murphy, Democratic Candidate for Governor of New Jersey. Murphy told Lanigan, “It’s time for an economy that works for every family—with good jobs, equal pay, fully funded public schools and a growing middle class. It’s time for a new Governor who’ll have your back. I will.”
Local 153 Celebrates Labor Day in Manhattan, Syracuse, Buffalo and New Jersey

Local 153 officers and members celebrated Labor Day at four different locations this year. In the top photos are officers and members marching in the Labor Day Parade in New Jersey. Holding the banner during the march are Local 153 Senior Business Representative Seth Goldstein and President Steve Turkeltaub, left photo; the Local 153 float, middle photo, and Phil Murphy, right photo, who is Local 153’s endorsed candidate for Governor of New Jersey, speaking at the American Labor Museum Botto House, as Local 153 Business Manager Michael Goodwin and Secretary-Treasurer Richard Lanigan look on. In the middle row, left, are Federation of Catholic Teachers (FCT) Secretary-Treasurer Joanne Perrotta, Organizer Jennifer Farrell, President Julia Pignataro, Local 153 Business Manager Goodwin, FCT Vice President MaryLou Colucci, and Local 153 Director of Organizing Nick Galipeau, outside of St. Patrick’s Cathedral during the Labor Day observance in Manhattan. In the middle row, right, are members from Emblem Health and Advantage Care Physicians at the Labor Day Parade at the New York State Fair in Syracuse, New York. Bottom row, left, in the City of Buffalo are Local 153 Secretary-Treasurer Richard Lanigan, Business Representative Robert McLennan, who was Grand Marshall of the Buffalo area Labor Day Parade, Local 153 Executive Board Member Brenda St. John, Representative Brian Higgins, who represents New York’s 26 CD in the U.S. Congress, and Business Manager Michael Goodwin. On the right is Robert McLennan and his family.
Local 153 Membership Benefits

▶ DEATH BENEFIT
$5,000 Death Benefit + Additional $2,000 OPEIU Total $7,000. $5,000 AD&D Benefit + Additional $2,000 OPEIU Total $7,000. (Death by accident total $14,000).

Eligibility – Membership in good standing with payment of dues for 12 months during the last 14-month period prior to death, exclusive of the month of death.

For more information, please call 212-741-8251

▶ SUPPLEMENTAL DISABILITY BENEFITS
Supplementary Disability – Flat once-a-year Benefit will be paid to a member in good standing with 12 months membership as follows:
- 6-12 Weeks – Maximum of $300
- 13-18 Weeks – Maximum of $600
- 19-24 Weeks – Maximum of $900
- 25 Weeks or more – Maximum of $1,200

For more information, please call 212-741-8251

▶ TOWING BENEFIT
Two towing/service calls per year for members and family living in the same household, valued at up to $100 each. You will need a “producer code” for “plan letter C”.

For information, call 212-741-8270

For towing and service call information, call 800-617-2677

▶ 401 (K) NATIONAL PLAN
OPEIU has established a voluntary 401 (k) program that charges considerably less management fees than standard 401 (k) plans. Members will be able to enroll in this benefit shortly.

▶ STUDENT DEBT REDUCTION PROGRAM
Students with $10,000 or more of outstanding student debt have an opportunity each year to reduce the amount they owe.

▶ FREE COLLEGE EDUCATION BENEFIT
Members may earn tuition-free an Associate Degree online through Eastern Gateway Community College. The free college benefit provides degrees in Associate of Arts, Associate of Criminal Justice, Associate of Business Management and Associate of Arts in Early Childhood Education, with more free online degree programs to come. To obtain a brochure about this program call Local 153 at 212-741-8282 and press “7” for member benefits.

▶ GENERAL VISION SERVICES “Vision Pass”
Eyeglasses discount packages for you and your family.

Call the union for a “vision pass” 212-741-8250/8251

▶ ENTERTAINMENT
Discount movie tickets ($8.50/Regal – $10.25/AMC) and theme park discount tickets such as Great Adventure.

Call 212-741-8261

▶ DRIVER SAFETY CLASS
Accident prevention/defensive driving workshop at discount rate for drivers with NY & NJ state licenses.

Call Victoria at 212-675-3210

Members in good standing can take an online course at a low cost of $10 with up to 30 days to complete the course. To register, visit Local 153 website www.opeiu153.org.

▶ AFL-CIO UNION PLUS BENEFITS
Discounts for services such as dental, vision, health clubs, legal services, pet and car insurance, car rentals, mortgages, etc.

Visit unionplus.org

▶ WORKING ADVANTAGE
Discounts for theater and events, entertainment, sporting events, shopping, travel, etc.

Visit workingadvantage.com
Create an account using ID#: 924400144

▶ SCHOLARSHIPS
Howard Coughlin, John Kelly Labor Studies, Union Privilege and Lavina Michl Wright with grants of up to $6,500.

Visit opeiu153.org

▶ DEFENSE FUND
Where an authorized strike is called, members will receive $290 per week.

▶ UNION SUPPORT SERVICES
For members and their families who suffer with substance abuse, depression or stress.

Call 212-741-8251

▶ PUBLICATIONS
Steward Update, Local 153 News and OPEIU’s White Collar.

▶ RETIREE ASSOCIATION
National Council of Senior Citizens Active on Social & Political Issues.

Call 212-741-8262

▶ EDUCATION FOR UPGRADING SKILLS

Call Victoria at 212-675-3210
Office and Professional Employees International Union, Local 153  
Statements of Revenue and Expenses — Cash Basis  
For the six months ended June 30, 2017

Mr. Richard Lanigan  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Office and Professional Employees International Union, Local 153  
265 West 14th Street  
New York, NY 10011

Dear Mr. Lanigan:

We compiled the statements of revenues and expenses — cash basis of Office and Professional Employees International Union, Local 153 — for the six months ended June 30, 2017, in accordance with standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

**GENERAL FUND**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash balance and investments—January 1, 2017</td>
<td>$ 520,120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue Received</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dues</td>
<td>$ 3,366,990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiations</td>
<td>42,037</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health and Pension Funds—Reimbursed Administrative Expenses</td>
<td>82,772</td>
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<tr>
<td>O.P.E.I.U.—Reimbursed Administrative Expenses</td>
<td>101,295</td>
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<td>Federation of Catholic School Teachers—Reimbursed Admin. Expenses</td>
<td>12,764</td>
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<tr>
<td>O.P.E.I.U.—Subsidy</td>
<td>105,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transfers from Local 153 GF Reserve Fund</td>
<td>87,144</td>
</tr>
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<td>Sale of Discounted Movie Tickets (Membership Benefit)</td>
<td>7,221</td>
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<tr>
<td>Redeposit - Returned Check</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue Received</strong></td>
<td>3,805,517</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Expenses Paid</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Salaries</td>
<td>730,180</td>
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<tr>
<td>Officers’ and Business Agents’ Expenses</td>
<td>22,564</td>
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<td>Automobile Expenses</td>
<td>90,086</td>
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<td>Per Capita Taxes:</td>
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<td>Office and Professional Employees International Union</td>
<td>1,008,976</td>
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<td>O.P.E.I.U. Strike Benefit and Defense Fund</td>
<td>225,481</td>
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<td>Long Island Federation of Labor</td>
<td>2,760</td>
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<td>New York City Central Labor Council</td>
<td>22,081</td>
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<td>Dues to Affiliated Organizations</td>
<td>10,893</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arbitration Expenses</td>
<td>3,475</td>
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<td>Organizing Expenses</td>
<td>2,129</td>
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<td>Negotiation Expenses</td>
<td>8,423</td>
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<td>Lost Time Wages</td>
<td>7,033</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shop Stewards’ Expenses</td>
<td>11,711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conferences and Conventions</td>
<td>28,842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting Hall Rents</td>
<td>1,450</td>
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<tr>
<td>Executive Board and Trustees’ Meetings</td>
<td>28,845</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consultants</td>
<td>10,650</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rent and Electric</td>
<td>334,892</td>
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<td>Temporary Help</td>
<td>546</td>
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<td>Telephone</td>
<td>12,426</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office Machine Maintenance and Rentals</td>
<td>42,060</td>
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<td>Office Supplies and Printing</td>
<td>47,059</td>
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<td>General Office</td>
<td>6,084</td>
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<td>Postage and Mailing</td>
<td>27,461</td>
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<td>Insurance</td>
<td>29,445</td>
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<td>Computer Maintenance and Support</td>
<td>30,580</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flowers</td>
<td>1,803</td>
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<td>Auditing and Accounting</td>
<td>9,800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Automatic Data Processing</td>
<td>2,941</td>
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<td>Staff 401(k) Administrative Fees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employee Health Benefits</td>
<td>337,955</td>
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8 | Local 153 News
Life Insurance 6,930
Employee Pension Trust Funds 212,308
Purchase of Discounted Movie Tickets (Membership Benefit) 7,530
Member and Retirement Awards 27,160
Tickets, Ads, Contributions, etc. 17,541
Educational and Publicity 13,230
O.P.E.I.U. Local 153 Newsletter 124,648
Transfers to Local 153 Defense Fund 285,189
Transfers to Local 153 GF Reserve Fund 1,851
Retiree Activities & Expenses 6,805
Retirement Expenses 1,851
Raffle Winners and Gifts 4,858
Purchase of Fixed Assets 1,919
Interest (18)
Holiday Expenses (101)
Employees Withholding Taxes 165,321
U.S. Government and NYS Payroll Taxes 65,388
Expenses Paid before Withholding Taxes 4,039,689
Less: Employees Withholding Tax Deductions 165,321
Total Expenses Paid 3,874,368
Increase (Decrease) in Cash and Investments (68,851)
Cash Balance and Investments—June 30, 2017 $ 451,269

DISPOSITION OF FUNDS
HSBC:
Checking Account $ 376,511
CHCP Settlement Account 24,089
Retirees Account 20,770
Banco Popular 28,699
Petty Cash 700
State of Israel Bond (at cost) 500
Total $ 451,269

DEFENSE FUND
Cash Balance—January 1, 2017 $ 461,744

Revenue Received
Transfers from Local 153 General Fund $ 285,189
Interest Income 458
Total Revenue Received 285,647

Expenses Paid
Membership Benefits:
Disability Benefits 54,600
Life Insurance (Death Benefits) 47,434
Member Identity Theft Program 6,415
Labor Day Expenses 750
Rally Expenses 2,635
Office Supplies and Printing 500
Payments to Affiliated Organizations 90,891
Legal and Arbitration 70,347
Consultants 3,553
Tickets, Ads, Contributions, etc. 287,125
Total Expenses Paid (1,478)
Cash Balance — June 30, 2017 $ 460,266

DISPOSITION OF FUNDS
Amalgamated Bank — Checking Account $ 124,014
Amalgamated Bank — Savings Account 3,118
Chase Bank — Savings Account 223,544 350,676
Amalgamated Bank — Letter of Credit Account 83,092
Amalgamated Bank — Letter of Credit Account 26,498
Total $ 460,266

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LOCAL 153 GF RESERVE FUND
Cash balance—January 1, 2017

Revenue Received
Transfers from Local 153 General Fund $124,648
Interest Income
Total Revenue Received 27
124,675

Expenses Paid
Transfers to Local 153 General Fund 87,144
Total Expenses Paid
Increase in Cash
Cash Balance—June 30, 2017 37,531

$112,724

DISPOSITION OF FUNDS
Amalgamated Bank of New York:
Money Market Account
Total $112,724

$112,724

In Memoriam
Josephine Sano

We regret to report that Josephine Autilio Sano, 97, passed away Monday, July 17, 2017. Mrs. Sano was one of the most important women in the New York State labor movement, and the mother of Joe Sano, Executive Director of the Organization of New York State Management/Confidential Employees (OMCE), which is affiliated with Local 153.

Josephine Sano graduated from N.Y.S. Teachers College in Albany in 1941 and later received masters degrees from SUNY Albany and the College of St. Rose. She taught social studies in a education career that spanned 44 years until her retirement in 1986.

Mrs. Sano was a founding member of the N.Y.S. United Teachers. She was past president of APSTA (Albany Public School Teachers Association); the first woman president of the Albany County Central Federation of Labor, and president emerita of that federation. She was the recipient of many labor awards including the Union Label and the AFT Sandra Feldman award. Mrs. Sano was a longtime communicant of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception and a lifelong member of the Italian American Community Center.

“Josephine Sano was a true champion of labor and there are countless professionals in the education field in New York State who benefited from her dedication,” said Business Manager Michael Goodwin. “She was a labor leader at a time when there were few women labor leaders, paving the way for other women in the field of education and the labor movement itself. I don't think there is any doubt that she had a positive influence on many, including her son, Joe Sano, who does such a great job at OMCE.”

Josephine Sano leaves behind her three sons, six grandchildren, five great grandchildren, numerous nieces and nephews and many others who were fortunate to have known her. Local 153 extends sincere condolences to Joe Sano and his family.
Local 153 Contract & Settlement Round-up

Continued from page 1

Local 153 members in the clerical unit at Wesleyan University won a new contract recently, the theme of which might be titled, “Equal pay for equal work.”

Since 2008 new hires in Local 153’s clerical bargaining unit at Wesleyan University were expected to earn up to eleven percent less than his or her fellow unit member. Employees were subject to a two-tier increment scale regardless of whether they performed equal work. Local 153’s 2017 negotiations committee successfully abolished this inequitable practice, while securing wage increases and bonuses that will guarantee almost nine percent in wage increases, plus lump sums and more equitable step increases. Chief Shop Steward Rhonda York shepherded the basis for a tentative agreement on the day of the total eclipse, and now the era of two-tier has been eclipsed. Besides the elimination of the two-tier wage/steo grid, the new contract also includes

- 2.25%, 3%, 3% wage increases (3 years), plus 3% lump sum paid out already.
- Additional $500 ratification bonus, plus $125 lump sum in 3rd year of contract.
- Auto Enrollment in 403(b) for new hires.
- Warning letters sealed after 5 years.

The workers at Resorts World Casino have a contract well into the next decade but for the second time in less than a year the union won a large back pay settlement from management. All Security Officers, EMT Security and Team Leaders were paid out a share of $250,000 on September 8. The payment was the result of a back pay settlement that Resorts World agreed to in order to avoid arbitration over a violation of the seniority and overtime provisions of the contract. Local 153 investigated and pursued this grievance for over eighteen months before winning the $250,000 for members.

Members at the Joint Industry Board also have a new contract. It’s a four-year deal that has 3% wage increases each year, an increase in the minimum wage, a 9% contribution increase each year to the Local 153 Pension Fund and a $2 increase for each year to the employer pension plan.

Members at the Knights of Columbus received a wage re-opener of 3.5% effective 11/1/17.

Peace Officers at Yonkers Raceway—members of the YRPBA—have a new four-year contract. It contains wage increases of 3% each year, two additional sick days and service fees paid directly to Local 153. This contract affects 134 peace officers who are part of the bargaining unit.

And members at Actors Equity received a contract extension with a 3% wage increase that is retroactive April 1, 2017.
New York State Paid Family Leave Begins January 1

All Local 153 Members employed in New York State are eligible!

Continued from page 1

huge beneficial difference throughout the state for working families.

“Bonding with a new child or caring for a seriously ill family member should not cost employees their entire savings or their job,” said Governor Andrew Cuomo, who worked closely with unions in advocating for paid family leave. “New York State’s paid family leave program is a benefit for both workers and employers.”

The paid family leave program (PFL) will be phased in, eventually allowing workers to take up to 12 weeks paid time off from the job to care for newborn or newly adopted children. It will also allow employees to take up to 12 weeks of paid time off from work to care for seriously ill children, spouses, domestic partners, parents, grandchildren, grandparents, and siblings or parents of spouses or domestic partners. PFL will also help military families in their time of need. Workers will be able to use the program to address certain legal, financial and childcare issues related to military service of a spouse, domestic partner, child or parent. Employees taking family leave must be restored to the same or comparable position previously held by the employee prior to taking the leave. Employees will be eligible for the program after having worked six months for an employer.

The provision will apply to union workers, unless their contract has a more generous paid family leave provision.

Like employees covered by the federal law called the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), employers under New York State’s Paid Family Leave Law must maintain an employee’s existing health plan during the employee’s paid leave.

Paid family leave in New York will be instituted in steps, beginning January 1, 2018 at 50% of an employee’s average weekly pay and capped at 50% of the statewide average weekly wage. It will be fully implemented in 2021 at 67% of an employee’s average weekly wage, capped to 67% of the statewide average weekly wage. Benefits will be tax free. On January 1, 2018 eligible employees will be able to take up to eight weeks of paid family leave. On January 1, 2019 they will be able to take up to 10 weeks and on January 1, 2021 they will be able to take up to 12 weeks of paid family leave.

The weekly PFL benefit will be financed solely through employee payroll deductions. These deductions actually began on June 1 of this year (2017) at 45 cents per week. In subsequent years New York’s Superintendent of Financial Services will determine the amount of employee contributions based on the cost per worker of providing PFL through the state insurance fund.

Paid family leave programs similar to the one adopted in this year’s New York State budget have proven to be successful in several other states, substantially benefiting workers and businesses at minimal cost to both.