

# The Congressional Record

## Teachers & Stress

Studies have shown [that a good work-life balance is key to teacher satisfaction and retention](#). Teachers who are stressed or feel overwhelmed are more likely to leave the profession, which makes the quest to hire and keep quality teachers that much more difficult.

Last summer, U.S. Rep. Tim Ryan (D-Ohio) introduced the Teacher Health and Wellness Act in the House of Representatives. As [Ryan wrote in an op-ed for \*The Hill\*](#), the act creates a pilot study at the National Institute of Health to analyze programs that promote teacher well-being.

How do you support teacher stress management in your school community? What are you doing to help manage your stress, for let's face it, stress is *really hard* to eliminate completely. How are you helping your coworker's and friends manage stress? Are there ways you can reach out in the New Year to make 2019 the best it can be for everyone?



## Season's Greetings from the YCSD Retirees!

The Luncheon Committee recently welcomed Diane Frail and Kathy Young as they met to plan an event for Spring 2019. A luncheon will be held on Tuesday, May 7, 2019 at Four Brothers Restaurant in Mahopac. Information will go out in the New Year to everyone included in the Retiree database (contact us if you need to be or know someone to add). Retirees have been active in many YCT fundraisers, notably by Maureen Dunleavy, Gina Pitruzzello, and Diane Frail. We are hoping to see continued and increasing Retiree participation in future events.

**Save the Dates!**

### ASK YCT Dress Down

Coming this spring—our 3<sup>rd</sup> Community Dress Down! We've already raised 2500 for Support Connection and 4000 for the Yorktown Community Help Food Pantry!

### Welfare Fund Forms

All forms are due by the end of March, but get them in early to avoid the rush!

### End of Year Party

Date, Time, and Location TBA in June!



## A Message from the YCT President...

Go Labor! Rah. Rah....ugh.

Well, at least I'm trying. The truth is we've faced so many challenges to labor over the years the pendulum demise of unions has made these holiday newsletters challenging to write. In *Abood v Detroit Board of Education* (1977), the Supreme Court established that non-union members must pay an agency fee because they benefit from collective bargaining agreements. In 2014, *Harris v Quinn* tried to overturn agency fee rights established by the *Abood* case. Then Rebecca Friedrichs challenged the same issue in California. This year started out no differently as the Supreme Court heard the case of *Janus v AFCSME* on February 26, 2018. Like the Friedrichs case in 2016, I was in the courtroom. Unfortunately, that was the only similarity, because unlike Friedrichs, this year the Supreme Court ruled that public sector union dues were a violation of the first amendment and members could be free riders by not paying agency fees. Not only does that not bode well for labor, it also makes for lousy material for a union holiday newsletter.

Luckily, we at NYSUT and at the YCT had been preparing for the potential impact of the JANUS case for over two years. We had been reviewing budgets, planning member organizing activities, and strategizing to combat the anti-union activities that were sure to follow a negative ruling. BUT...we never expected what happened next.

What actually happened in the wake of Janus? Teachers unions and membership have grown stronger. Membership sign-ups have occurred faster than ever before. Dropouts, even with anti-union organizations spending millions, have been far lower than anticipated. Labor has organized to help striking teachers in Kentucky, Arizona and most recently Illinois. In the private sector, employees at Amazon in New York City and Tesla in Buffalo are trying to unionize.

So what has the wave of anti union activity really done? It appears it has strengthened labor. Workers have realized that we are stronger together and the only way to protect our wages, benefits and working conditions is to stay organized and stay together. Most importantly, I am proud to say that 100% of the teaching staff has stayed committed to the YCT. And it is with that commitment we can and will continue to build the schools, the district, and the future that we envision.

So, maybe there is still plenty left to cheer about after L1.

Here's to 2019 - The Year of Solidarity!

**Have a Restful Break and a Happy New Year!**

**In Solidarity,**

**Sean**

## Meet Our Interns!



My name is Chris Perrino, and I am one of the YCT student-interns, along with Sayli Satpute. Life as YCT intern has been an enjoyable, meaningful experience. It's been an excellent addition to my senior year, and a new activity that has opened my eyes to the working world. Every week, we meet with Mr. Kennedy to discuss any updates within the YCT, and do any work that he might need. This ranges from sending emails, to taking inventory of the YCT sweatshirts (which are really comfortable, so if you don't have one, I strongly encourage you to get one). Those are some of our "busy work" tasks, but we've taken on other responsibilities also. One of these was helping to organize the annual YCT food drive, and then packaging the donated food for delivery to Yorktown Community Help. Another thing we participated in was the Support Connection walk for Breast and Ovarian cancer. It was amazing to be part of the outpouring support for those individuals and families affected by cancer.

As interns, we also have the opportunity to attend Rep Council meetings, another very interesting aspect of the Union. To see how organized the Union is truly mind-blowing. Also the Union does remarkable things for its members, and seeing how these meetings unfold and how issues are solved is another truly amazing aspect, that I'm very glad I get to witness. Personally, I never realized how involved teachers' lives are outside of the classroom, but what goes into their jobs behind the scenes is eye opening, and an experience I'm happy to be a part of.

I'd like to thank Mr. Kennedy for selecting me to be a student intern for the YCT. Whether I join a labor union for my future profession or not, the valuable experiences I've had so far will be cherished. I'm looking forward to a great second half of the year!

You'll meet Sayli on the next page!

My name is Sayli, and I've been fortunate enough to be one of the Civic Internship students interning for the YCT this year. In these past few months, Chris and I have enjoyed participating in a "blend" of typical intern tasks, such as emailing the APUSH kids and organizing the YCT apparel at the office, with tasks that have allowed us to gain a deeper involvement and greater understanding of the union. In particular, we were given a portion of the responsibility of running the food drive at the high school and were also able to participate in the annual Support Connection walk. Being able to give back to the community, and help those who need it the most during this holiday season, was a heartwarming experience. We have also had the opportunity to sit in on a variety of union meetings where we were exposed to a more in-depth look at the way the union and Yorktown district, as a whole, functions, as well as how the YCT, specifically, is currently working to better the community, champion public education, improve working conditions and opportunities, encourage students, and support politicians who share these same goals. The YCT demonstrates their slogan "Solutions, Service, Solidarity" in every way possible. Through unity, action, dedication, and proactive decisions, the YCT genuinely and tirelessly works to improve the quality of life of Yorktown employees as well as the community as a whole.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention how thankful I am to get the opportunity to work alongside Mr. Kennedy. After having him for APUSH, it has been an enjoyable experience seeing him in a completely different position: YCT president. His poise, tenacity, assertiveness, and care for every individual he works with translates fluidly from the classroom to the front of YCT meetings. I feel extremely lucky to have learned so much from him, not only as a student, but as an individual. Undoubtedly, our work with YCT has exposed us to new skills and knowledge that will certainly benefit us as we wrap up my time at YHS, and beyond.

### MESMS Teacher Spotlight: Nathan Childers

Nathan is our new band teacher at MESMS and he's having a wonderful first year. He is an accomplished jazz saxophonist and is endorsed as a Yamaha and D'Addario performance artist. He comes to us with over 20 years of private school and professional performance experience. Nathan has played with many famous musicians including Aretha Franklin, Neil Peart, Frankie Valli, and Deep Purple. He has performed on Broadway shows such as Memphis, Kinky Boots, and The Best is Yet to Come. Nathan has also had on-screen and behind the scenes roles in *Sex and the City II*, *Daredevil*, *Wall Street II*, *Mildred Pierce*, *Mr. Popper's Penguins*, *The Post*, and *The Joker* (coming out in 2019). Nathan is a new father to his son Brandon who was born this November. He has started a MS Jazz Band and is coordinating with Ms. Kluga at the high school. Nathan is a wonderful addition to the Yorktown community and to our District. We are very lucky to have him working with our students. A big YCT welcome to Nathan Childers!!



More information can be at: <http://www.nathanchildersmusic.com/>

# **VOTE /COPE**

## **Honor Roll of Top Ten Donors**

- 1. Pauline Quinones**
- 2. Sean Kennedy**
- 3. Elizabeth Flor**
- 4. Janine Gibney**
- 5. John Miller**
- 6. Seth Altman**
- 7. Jean Barber**
- 8. Linda Guidotti**
- 9. Elizabeth Kelsey**
- 10. Jill Proskin**
- 11. Arlene Rasulo**
- 12. Mark Papo**
- 13. Leela Viswanathan**

**In 2018, the Yorktown Congress of Teachers was honored to receive the June Smith Award for its VOTE/COPE contributions.**

**Congratulations to our top donors and to all who contributed! Nearly 1/3 of our members are giving over \$100 a year. If you would like to give more, please contact Pauline Quinones.**

## Meet Virginia Milano

By Lauren Reid and Kris Stilo

At Crompond Elementary School, we know that if we ever need copies printed in a flash, it's no problem. Didn't get a chance to grab breakfast? It's covered. Feeling a chill and need some hot chocolate or a cup of tea? It's taken care of, and so are you at all of these times, and more, because we have the good fortune of working with Virginia Milano.

Virginia has worked in the Yorktown Central School District and been a member of the YCT since 1977. She is the epitome of "All In." At 92 ("It's just a number," she says) she is our most seasoned union member, and shows no signs of stopping. Dozens of staff members knew they mattered to her as students, and they feel the same way as colleagues. Yorktown graduate and 4th grade teacher Lisa Sorrentino Statler states, "Virginia Milano has been a very special and important part of Crompond School for a very long time. She took care of me as a student there many years ago, and still takes good care of me and our entire staff every day." CTA Karol Pernicano would agree. "Virginia Milano, my other mother for 15 years here at Crompond. Love her dearly. A role model to us all. Always there with a smile on her face and to lend you a hand. An inspiration to us all." To Virginia Milano, we're more than just co-workers, we're a family, and she considers it part of her job to look out for all of us.

Virginia is dedicated to her job, and a fixture in the district. In our parking lot there are reserved parking spaces for the principal, the AP, the school nurse... and Virginia Milano. Her space is filled long before the rest of the lot, and she's got our work ready to go, along with a cookie or two, by the time we stop in to say good morning to her.

Summing up why she's still sticking with us after all these years is simple. "I love it here," she said. "I'm still here, right? Since 1977. This school is beautiful, I love everyone here. The Union is beautiful, they take good care of you. We take care of each other."



## YCT Honored Again!

Created as a result of a resolution passed at the 1996 NYSUT RA, the NYSUT community service award recognizes those locals that have made a collective and sustained contribution to community service during the previous year. The efforts on the part of these locals have not only enhanced the learning opportunities of students but also enriched the quality of life in their communities. At the 2018 RA, the YCT was selected once again as a community service winner. Over the course of 2018 we donated nearly \$20,000 to Support Connection, Alliance for Safe Kids, Yorktown Community Help and our own YCT local scholarships. Here are some photos of the YCT in action!



Support Connection Walk 2018



Bowling Extravaganza 2018

## 2018 Bowling Challenge

On Friday November 16th, at the JV Lanes, many of our YCT members took on members of the Carmel Teacher's Association in the 2018 Bowling Challenge. Just over 60 bowlers squared off to celebrate our solidarity and bowling skills(or lack thereof) in a friendly match to benefit the Yorktown Food Pantry. Teams of 4 each bowled two games. Top team for the night was MESMS team of Arlene Rasulo, Kari Purdy, Brian Mundy and Kari Purdy with team game averages of 157 and 153. The YCT had three of the top 6 bowlers of the night: Brian Mundy scored a 184, Kari Purdy bowled 180, and Justin McCarthy.169. Whether a spectator or bowler, strikes, spares, gutter balls or turkeys a good time was had by all.

## Mohansic Staff After Janus: We Are All In!

The recent landmark US Supreme Court ruling in Janus vs. AFSCME has the potential to threaten and weaken unions across America. Here in Yorktown, YCT members were asked to sign re-enrollment forms showing our commitment to our union. Here's why some of our Mohansic YCT members say they are "sticking with our union":

- We are stronger together, than we are apart. ---Nancy Ferrari
- The union gives us the collective power to protect our rights and the interests that we all deserve and value as one. ---Kristen Meola
- Like a community, we support and care for eachother. ---Tim Dwan
- My job and benefits are important to me. ---Jeanne Interlicchio
- I love the camaraderie at all of our YCT community service and special events.  
---Ernie Della Vecchia
- I know what it's like to teach in a non-union environment and I appreciate feeling valued and supported. ---Angela Napoletano
- Together we are "All In!" ---Mohansic CTA's
- I believe in the importance of unions. I know there is always support behind me and it's reassuring to know I'm part of a team working together for the betterment of all.  
---Karen Maddalena
- The YCT means security for a job well done. ---Kindergarten Teachers





### “Balloons Over Brookside”

The third graders at Brookside read and studied the story, *Balloons Over Broadway*, by Melissa Sweet. The story is about Tony Sarg, an artist and inventor, who was responsible for creating the balloons for the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day parade. The story walks readers through each stage of Sarg’s development as a master of puppetry - his childhood fascination with mechanics and marionettes, his first big break as a developer of window displays for Macy’s, and his early parade creations. Our students studied Sarg’s character and how no matter the obstacles he faced, he persevered to greatness.

The story inspired our students to create a parade of their own through the ESTEAM process. They designed and constructed “upside down marionettes” that represented a problem or possible solution our world is being faced with. Like Tony, the students had to persevere through many obstacles they faced in building their balloons. As a culminating activity, we hosted a school wide parade for all to see. It truly was a spectacular event!



On Saturday, November 17, two brave YCT members made their way into the frigid Long Island Sound. Clad in nothing but bathing attire and their trusty Yorktown swim caps, they plunged into the frozen surf. Their goal...to get "Freezin' for A Reason" and raise money for the Special Olympics. Arlene Rasulo and Seth Altman were able to raise almost \$1,000 in this year's Polar Plunge and would like to thank the YCT for their support and encouragement. Mother Nature gets a shout out as well, for providing air temperatures in the 50s.

## 2018 Remembrances

Any inaccuracies or omissions are unintended. Please contact us so we can revise or add them!

### Brookside:

Margaret Daddona welcomed a baby in November.

Renee Menzie welcomed her new granddaughter in November.

### Crompond:

Jody Kaplan Kopstein married in the summer.

Amanda Ubertini Angilletta married in the summer. Linda Arko's father died on 1/10.

Jesse Wallace's grandmother died.

John Pastore's mother died.

Jeanine Griffin's father died.

Beth Crescimanno's father-in-law died.

### Mohansic:

JoEllen Nugent died in November.

### MESMS:

Pantelis Ypsilantis welcomed baby Persephone on 2/4.

Erin Vetere welcomed baby Hailey on 2/3.

Nathan Childers welcomed baby Brandon 11/9.

Tom Dunnings welcomed his first grandchild Grady on 12/1.

Theresa Carey's father, Edward Bachorik, died 1/11.

Matt Ladka's father died 1/20.

Michele Colabatistto died 3/30.

Michelle Marchetti's husband Al died 4/30.

Al Torrente's father Aurelio died 5/4.

Sean Carney's grandfather died in May.

Joe Puglisi's father died 6/21.

Vicky Luczkowski's mother Frances Jacobellis died 7/11.

Sheryl Goldberg's father-in-law died 9/24.

Laurie Melagrano's grandmother died 10/9.

Pat Paolicelli's mother-in-law died 11/1.

### YHS:

Monica Fratarcangeli welcomed a baby in October.

Jessica Mackenzie welcomed a baby.

Mary Linder, mother of Paula Morrissey, died 12/14.



I go to the mountain side  
of the house to cut saplings,  
and clear a view to snow  
on the mountain. But when I look up,  
saw in hand, I see a nest clutched in  
the uppermost branches.  
I don't cut that one.  
I don't cut the others, either.  
Suddenly, in every tree,  
an unseen nest  
where a mountain  
would be.

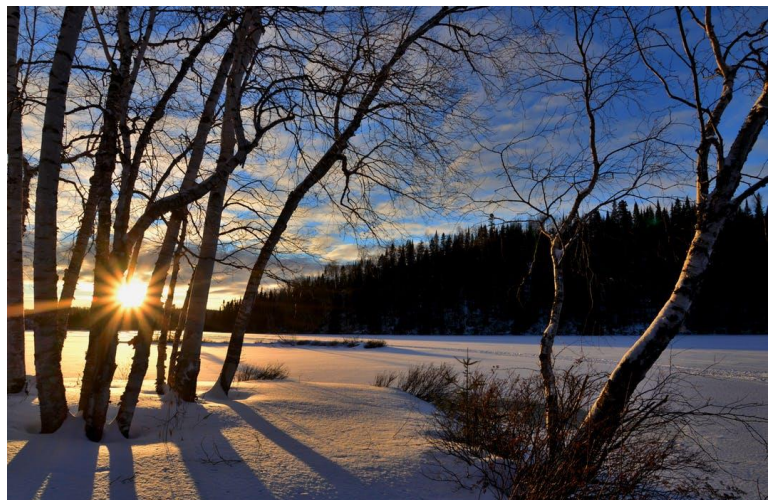
**“Choices”**

--Tess

Gallagher

*For Drago Štambuk*

***Have a Safe,  
Healthy, and  
Happy New  
Year!***



*Sean  
Kennedy*

Danielle Brower

*Pauline Quinones*

Rosemarie Jost

Francine Frey

*Lizz Kelsey*

*Jeff Cerar*

*Lauren Reid*

*Arlene*

Liz Wp

**Daniela Leonard**

Seth Altman